

Guide to sustainable tourism



CHALLENGES AND CRITERIA FOR THE TOURISM SECTOR'S EVALUATION REGARDING THE 2030 AGENDA



This document is an initiative of the Spanish Network for Sustainable Development (REDS) and the Responsible Tourism Institute (RTI).

Authors: Tomás Azcárate, Javier Benayas, Giuseppe Nerilli and Ana Justel

Edition and revision: Marta García Haro (REDS)

Contributors: Beatriz Margallo, Marta Fernández del Castillo, Elena Ranz, Jorge Rodríguez, Julie Palacios, Daniela Marcano, Giulia Sabbatoli y Patricio Azcárate.

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1. Introduction

Four years after the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in September 2015, we are at a critical moment for the planet as a global ecosystem, both for the biodiversity it hosts and for the people who inhabit it. The social and environmental challenges are so enormous and complex that they require urgent and coordinated responses. Decisions and actions in the face of these challenges will condition the survival of our species. The 2030 Agenda and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) provide us with a roadmap and also a practical guide to change the course and orient ourselves towards fairer and greener development.

The annual report prepared by the Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN), which evaluates all countries concerning their degree of compliance with the 17 SDGs, places our country at the top of the world ranking. However, according to the 2019 report, Spain has not yet approved any of the SDGs, scoring particularly low on Goals 9 (innovation), 12 (consumption and production), 13 (climate change) and 14 (marine ecosystems). We will have to make a great deal of effort in the coming years to achieve the targets defined in these goals by 2030. But, above all, it will be necessary to identify how we can apply this Agenda to the different socio-economic sectors of our country.

Tourism is, undoubtedly, one of the leading development drivers both in Spain and worldwide. It is perhaps the industry with the most higher growth rates, in terms of the number of tourists and its contribution to many countries' GDP. However, this growth is at the crossroads of being carried out either by applying sustainability criteria or, on the contrary, contributing to making our planet an increasingly unsustainable destination. The tourism sector's commitment to achieving the 17 SDGs can play an essential role in engaging the new generations in a sustainability scenario that requires collective involvement and participation.

This report intends to provide the necessary criteria to evaluate the efforts undertaken by the tourism sector to incorporate the SDGs. It is a first approach that can be expanded and improved upon, hoping that it will serve as a starting point. Simultaneously, it can be a guide for self-evaluation and reflection, to facilitate the identification of the weak points of a destination and establish future lines of action. Evaluation is, without a doubt, a basis that helps to build tourism projects and activities that are more committed to a future that must be sustainable.

Various professionals participated in the preparation of this paper. Thus, we would like to thank the members of the RTI's Scientific Council for their inputs to the chapter on tourism's contribution to the SDGs, and the valuable work carried out by the Barcelona Provincial and City Councils in defining the "Biosphere Commitment to Sustainable Tourism".

Also, we would like to acknowledge the different institutions that have supported the conceptualisation of the impact of the 17 SDGs on tourism in more local and regional areas such as the City Council of Vitoria-Gasteiz, the City Council of Arona, the Island Council of Lanzarote, the Government of Castile and Leon, the City Council of Ibagué (Colombia), the Basque Tourism Agency (Basquetour), Thompson Okanagan British Columbia (Canada) and the Historical Villages of Portugal. They have all shared their experiences for the preparation of a guide that intends to provide a series of criteria that can allow tourism projects to take firmer and more committed steps towards sustainability and compliance with the SDGs.

Leire Pajín Iraola

President

Spanish Network for Sustainable Development (REDS)

Tomás Azcárate bang

Chairman

Responsible Tourism Institute (RTI)

2.Executive Summary

This report is an approach to the impact of tourism on the achievement of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), through the analysis of the historical background and the different actors involved in the sustainable development of a territory. It also includes a methodological proposal for applying effectively and efficiently the 2030 Agenda to tourism, considering the systems for assessing compliance with the goals defined therein and the possible relations between the tourism sector and the SDGs.

A Guide to Sustainable Tourism is intended primarily as a practical and useful manual for the tourism sector. Its main objective is to offer a series of criteria for each of the 17 SDGs, which will allow promoters or professionals involved in the tourism sector to reflect on the degree of involvement of their destination or tourism product with the goals defined in the 2030 Agenda.

On the one hand, the guide provides a list of criteria for self-assessment that facilitates the identification of those aspects or dimensions on which each destination should make more significant efforts to achieve a higher level of sustainability commitment regarding its activity. A user-friendly checklist is provided as a reference to evaluate the degree of compliance with these criteria. The guide includes two examples of tourist destinations that have completed the list and whose results are shown through colour code (red, orange, yellow and green). Likewise, the document contains a certification proposal for the sector developed by the Responsible Tourism Institute (RTI); a sustainability seal granted by the entity that has been included as a case study.

On the other hand, the document also includes the research results that seek to relate the degree of commitment that different countries are showing towards the SDGs (based on data published by the annual reports of the SDSN network) with some tourism development indicators. This research indicates that the current model of tourism development based on the increase in the number of tourists and the income generated by them is not serving as an incentive to encourage processes of change that will allow countries to move towards sustainability and the achievement of the SDGs. Although, it is also interesting to note those results that show how the regions with the best scores in the development of measures to improve safety (SDG 16), equality (SDG 10) and infrastructure (SDG 9) also show better results in attracting a higher number of tourists, which increases the income generated by the activity.

With this set of reflections and proposals, the aim is to encourage all tourist activities to continuously and progressively incorporate new criteria to make them more sustainable and respectful towards the planet and to make a more fair and equal society.

3. Background

The environment became an issue of international importance in 1972 in Stockholm, following the **United Nations Conference on the Human Environment** (also known as the Stockholm Conference). During the Conference, a Declaration of 26 principles and an action plan were issued, containing 109 recommendations for incorporating the environmental dimension into both national and international policies.

Subsequently, in 1980, the World Tourism Conference, convened by the World Tourism Organization, was held in Manila, with the participation of 170 State delegations. The Conference aimed to clarify the true nature of tourism in all its aspects and its influence on the establishment of a new international economic order.

The exponential growth experienced by the tourism sector at that time turned it into a focal point globally. This expansion began in the 1950s and was made possible by the development of means of transport and communication, the regulation of working hours that ensured more free time for workers in developed countries, and an increase in purchasing power and, therefore, in spending. As a result, more people began to travel and move around, eventually leading to the emergence of the phenomenon known as "mass tourism".

Given the significant weight that this area represented in the world's economy and due to the growing demand for tourism in international dimensions, global institutions began to consider tourism as a beneficial resource and a business that deserved investment. However, at first, they did not find the potential problems and conflicts that could arise as a result of the sector's development.

During the following decades, not only did the benefits linked to the evolution of the tourism industry begin to be taken into consideration, but also the costs derived from its activity. Due to the interdisciplinary nature of the sector, it became clear that its impacts did affect not only the economy of the regions but also many other activities related directly or indirectly to it. Tourism then began to be valued as an ambivalent asset: on the one hand, as a phenomenon with the capacity to contribute to the socio-economic development of countries, and on the other, as a possible cause of the loss of local identity and environmental degradation.

In 1987, the Brundtland Commission created the document "Our Common Future", which defined sustainable development as "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs". This definition, which primarily highlights an intergenerational pact, is still the most widely and globally accepted nowadays.

In 1992, the Earth Summit was held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, a decisive event regarding international negotiations on environmental issues and the sustainability of the planet. The fundamental goals of the Summit were to achieve a fair balance between the economic, social and ecological needs of present and future generations, as well as to establish the foundation for a global partnership between developed and developing countries, and governments and sectors of civil society, based on an understanding of everyday needs and interests. During this Summit, Agenda 21 was developed, a project which gathered the issues to be addressed at a global, national and local level to achieve more balanced and sustainable development.

During the same year, the UN General Assembly established the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD). Its mission was to ensure effective follow-up to the Conference held in Rio de Janeiro. The commission, whose last meeting was held in 2013, represented a high-level forum for sustainable development within the UN system through which dialogue was encouraged and facilitated between policymakers in the fields of environment and development from different nations, and between these and civil society.

It was in 1995, at the World Conference on “Sustainable Tourism: Towards a New Tourism Culture”, held in Lanzarote, that tourism began to be decisively connected to the concept of sustainability. During the conference, the need to develop a tourism industry capable of satisfying the economic expectations and environmental demands of the moment was recognised, which would be not only respectful of the socio-economic and physical structure of each destination but also the receiving communities and populations. It also considered the priority of protecting and strengthening human dignity, both local communities and tourists. As a result, the "Sustainable Tourism Charter" was drafted, a document that described a sustainable tourism development model: tourism capable of meeting the needs of tourists and host regions, providing and increasing opportunities for the future. All resources should be managed in a way that the economic, social and environmental needs can be met while maintaining the cultural integrity, essential ecological processes, biological diversity and life systems of the area in question.

In 2015, after a process of reviewing the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), which were adopted in 2000 and consisted of eight human development goals, a new global agenda was born which contained the SDGs. The purpose of these new goals was to be a guide for intensifying countries' efforts to combat poverty in all its forms, reduce inequality and combat environmental degradation. The 2030 Agenda is developed on the fulfilment of these goals, which defines itself as "ambitious and transformative" since it proposes the total and uncompromisingly achievement of the 17 SDGs and the 169 targets that form them by 2030.

In 2015, twenty years after the Conference held in Lanzarote, the “World Summit on Sustainable Tourism: 20th Anniversary of the World Charter on Sustainable Tourism” was organised on the initiative of the Responsible Tourism Institute (RTI), and with the support of the Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC), the Basque Tourism Agency (Basquetour), the United Nations Environment

Programme (UNEP) and the United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP21). Among its tasks was the readjustment of the commitment assumed in Lanzarote, creating two decades later a new Charter of Sustainable Tourism +20. This document was presented as the great international reference to bring together the main actors of sustainable tourism in the search for a new impetus to advance towards the global tourism goals set through the SDGs.

The year 2017 was designated by the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) as the International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development. This temporary scenario became a unique opportunity to raise the awareness of decision-makers in public and private sectors regarding the contribution of sustainable tourism to development while mobilising all stakeholders to ensure that they work together to make tourism a catalyst for change. The hashtag created for this celebration was #travelenjoyrespect, which summarised perfectly and synthetically, the true meaning of responsible travel: travel, enjoy and respect.

It was in the framework of 2017 when several memorandums and agreements were adopted at International Conferences sponsored by UNESCO. These conferences were "Sustainable Tourism in the framework of the New Urban Agenda" (Barcelona, 18 and 19 May), "Sustainability and competitiveness in tourist destinations" (Arona, 15 and 16 June), "Sustainability: A key factor of competitiveness in the tourism industry" (Lanzarote, 19 and 20 October), "Sustainable Tourism in Inland Destinations" (Valladolid, 23 and 24 November), and "Sustainable Cultural Destinations without Borders" (Idanha-a-Velha, 15-17 November 2018). These meetings redefined the methodologies, approaches and criteria that have to be considered to achieve sustainable development throughout the tourism value chain.

Today, tourism is still recognised as one of the most powerful engines of the contemporary economy. It has positioned itself as one of the main economic activities, generating a large number of jobs (currently, one out of every eleven people works in the tourism sector). The demand for travel continues to rise (in 2017 alone, international tourists spent 1.332 billion dollars worldwide), which is why the tourism sector currently represents more than 10% of the world's GDP.

In this sense, tourism developed sustainably, represents a support to the economic growth of a destination. Furthermore, by providing employment, tourism can contribute to aspects such as poverty reduction or social inclusion. As a reflection of this influence on the social issues of the regions, the tourism sector has a significant presence of women among the entrepreneurs, whose numbers almost double those of other economic areas. The commitment adopted by this sector in the fight for efficient use of resources and environmental protection deserves special attention.

Due to the constant flow of people it generates, tourism, faced from a sustainable perspective, promotes principles such as the protection of identity and cultural diversity, breaks down barriers, offers opportunities for intercultural encounters and revitalises traditional activities and customs.

Aware of this opportunity, it is necessary to develop internationally valid indicators and standards that can control and channel the power of the tourism phenomenon. Thus, making it a responsible activity,

and pursuing the development of the sector in terms of sustainability, to ensure its long-term survival. The definition of a system of indicators allows monitoring the progress that the various tourist destinations or facilities can make, so that their activity can evolve in a way that adapts and takes into account the principles of sustainability.

4. Tourism Stakeholders

As previously mentioned, today the tourism industry represents an important driver of change through which to induce and encourage the implementation of sustainable models at different scales and through the multiple services that make up today's global tourism offer. To guarantee the successful implementation of this model, the active participation of all the agents involved in the sector, both at public and private level, must be ensured.

The networking of these agents should be of vital importance for the creation of collaborative working synergies, which promote the exchange of knowledge and experience regarding the motivations and effects of this industry in all possible dimensions and its consequences on the tourists, host destinations and companies in the sector. These synergies must be under the integral perspective of the SDGs for their application at a global level.

In line with this strategy, tourist destinations must work on the integration of SDGs to achieve their inclusion in the public policies of the administrations responsible for the geographical and tourist management of the territories. These destinations must join forces to strengthen the principles of sustainability and its variables in the socio-economic, environmental and cultural framework of their area. They should also participate in decision-making regarding global tourism development through collaboration with international organisations such as UNESCO or the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), among others.

We cannot understand the sustainable development of tourist destinations without the absolute involvement and integration of the companies and entities that make up the sector. These are a link or connection between tourism management bodies and tourists, who are increasingly demanding authentic and sustainable products, services and experiences, based on the protection of the social, cultural and natural heritage of these host regions.

As in any other sector, consumer confidence is the key to success. Visitors' demands and preferences directly influence new industry trends which, in turn, shape today's tourism model. In this sense, it is crucial to involve tourists in the commitment to sustainability and bet on those products and/or services that are responsible for the environment and local populations; thanks to whose activity generates real assets and fairer economic flows with the communities. Considering the influence of the tourist profile on the industry, we must develop tools to raise awareness and directly engage visitors to learn, value and enjoy sustainable experiences while adopting more responsible behaviours and measures towards the destinations and their inhabitants.

In an industry where administrations, businesses and tourists play such a decisive role, it is essential to take care of and unify the language and communications that are transmitted concerning sustainability, so that everyone can understand the importance of applying the sustainable development approach in the different areas of tourism. For this reason, a global message must be

created to bring the culture of sustainability closer to the public, tourists, administrations and businesses, and act as a call for their participation, at all levels, for the common good.

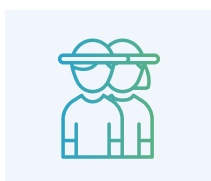
5. Analysis of the relations between tourism and the 17 Sustainable Development Goals

One of the most common questions asked is whether the tourism development model that is currently taking place in the world is actively contributing to the achievement of the Goals set by the 2030 Agenda. Research has been carried out to answer this question, by which, through a series of analyses of the correlations between different variables and indicators, we can solve this fundamental question. The results obtained show trends that are undoubtedly very interesting for identifying future lines of action.

As a reference for the degree of compliance with the 17 SDGs, data has been collected from the world ranking by country, from the SDG Index & Dashboards 2018, an annual report prepared by the Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN). This study collects information from 83 global indicators in 157 countries, plus 16 additional indicators for OECD countries. The report is available at <https://www.sdgindex.org/reports/sdg-index-and-dashboards-2018/>

According to the degree of compliance with the SDGs, the report evaluates each country, providing an overall and specific score for each Goal. Specifically, Spain obtains a total score of 7.68 out of 10, with scores close to nine on SDG 3 (Health) and SDG 6 (Water). At the same time, it barely reaches five on SDG 14 (Marine Ecosystems) or surpasses it by a minimal margin on SDG 9 (Innovation and Infrastructure).

Three indicators have been taken as a reference to establish a quantitative assessment of the degree of tourism development in each country:



The number of tourists a country receives concerning its population. For the elaboration of this indicator, data from the World Tourism Organization (2018) and the United Nations (2017) have been taken as a reference.



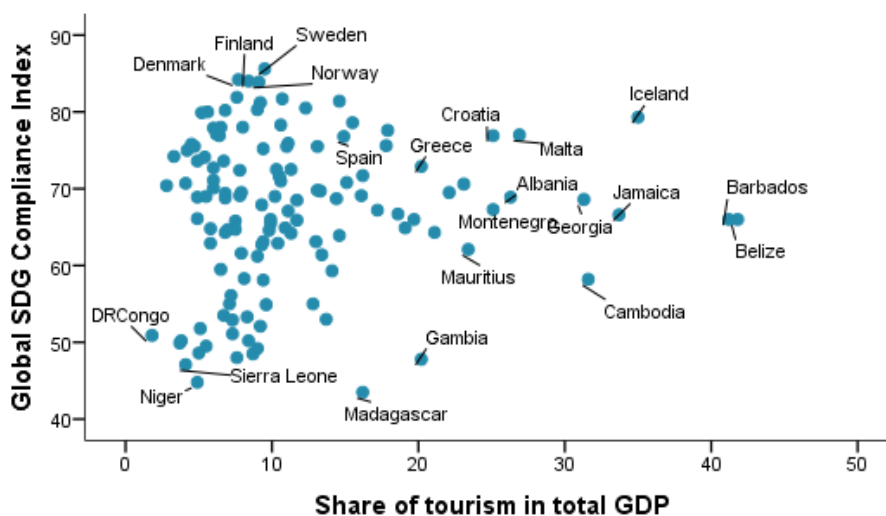
The percentage that tourism contributes to the wealth of a country measured to the GDP, according to data published by the World Travel & Tourism Council, (2018)

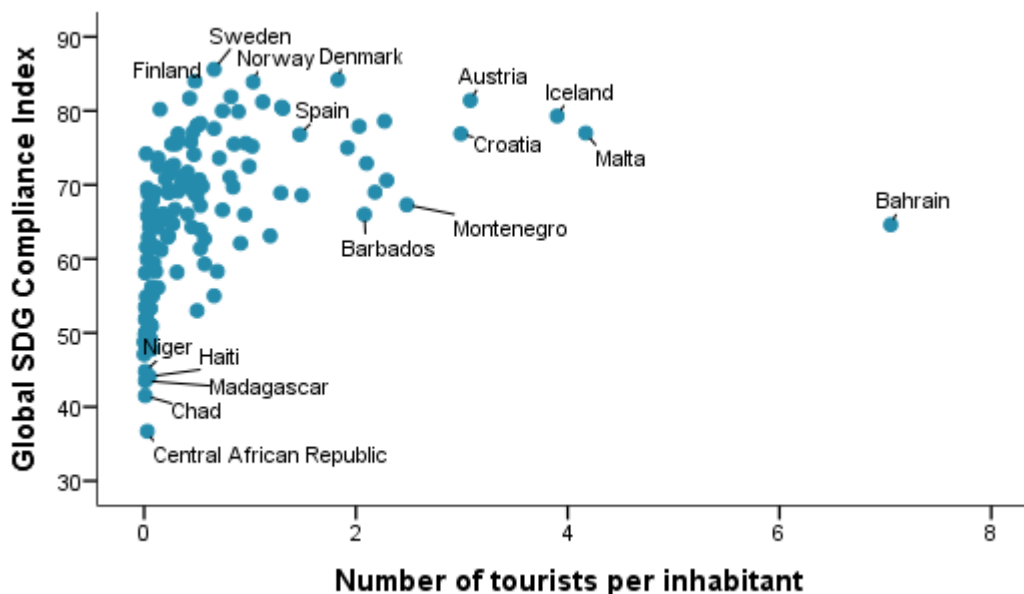


Tourism sustainability index. This index, published by the World Economic Forum (2017), is composed of ten indicators that show the degree of commitment of each country to the following environmental dimensions:

1. The strictness of environmental legislation
2. Environmental compliance
3. Sustainability of travel and tourism industry development projects
4. The concentration of suspended particles
5. Number of ratified international treaties related to environmental protection
6. Water stress
7. The number of endangered species
8. Change in the percentage of forest coverage
9. Percentage of wastewater treated
10. Pressure on fisheries resources

The following graph shows an analysis made between the variables mentioned above:



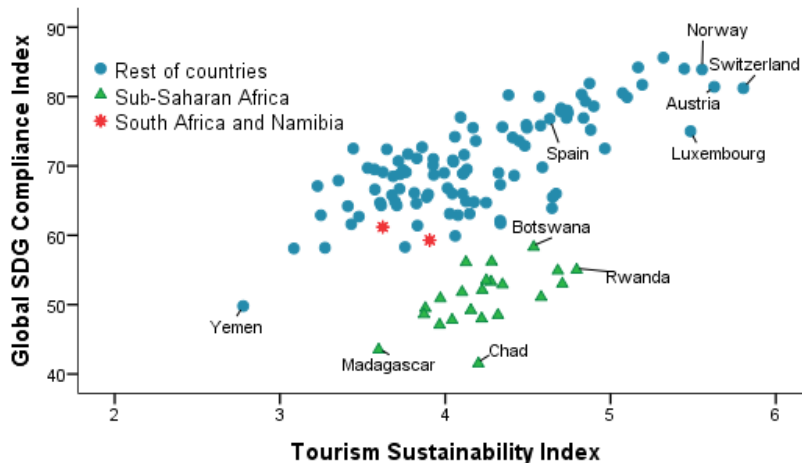


Graph 1. Representation of the relationship between the degree of compliance with SDGs by country and the number of tourists they receive, and the revenue generated to GDP.

It is worth noting that there is no significant correlation between the percentage of GDP from tourism and the degree of compliance with the SDGs in different countries. Likewise, it is also noteworthy that the countries that stand out for having a high percentage of income from tourism do not stand out, either positively or negatively, in the degree of compliance with SDGs. In the graph, countries whose contribution of tourism to GDP is above 20% such as Belize, Barbados, Jamaica, Georgia or Cambodia appear with average SDGs scores. Only Iceland reports high values in both variables.

The second part of the graph shows a significant correlation between the degree of compliance with the SDGs and the number of tourists each country receives. As the per capita share of tourists in the country increases, so does compliance with SDGs. Countries such as Malta, Iceland, Croatia, and Austria with high tourist numbers also have high SDGs scores. Bahrain is an exception to this trend, as the degree of SDGs involvement is far below what we can expect for the high number of tourists it receives, compared to the size of its population. Spain is in an intermediate position.

From these initial results, it seems that the current model of tourism development that is taking place in most regions is not serving as leverage for countries to achieve the goals of the 2030 Agenda faster. The increase in income generated by tourism concerning that of other productive sectors also does not seem to be contributing directly to producing changes that will allow countries to move towards sustainability.



Graph 2. Representation of the relationship between the degree of SDGs compliance by country and their tourism sustainability index.

The analysis shown in graph 2 provides a more significant correlation between the tourism sustainability index and the scores obtained by each country in the SDGs compliance index. It reveals that the countries that are paying the most attention to developing tourism that is most committed to sustainability are also those that have high scores on the degree of progress in achieving the SDGs. Switzerland, Austria and Norway stand out with high scores on both variables so that a commitment to a more sustainable tourism model appears to be related to high scores on SDGs. It is interesting to note that Sub-Saharan African countries, with ever-lower levels of SDG compliance, maintain the same trend as the rest of the countries in the relation of the two indexes. South Africa and Namibia are an exception, as is their level of development in comparison with surrounding regions.

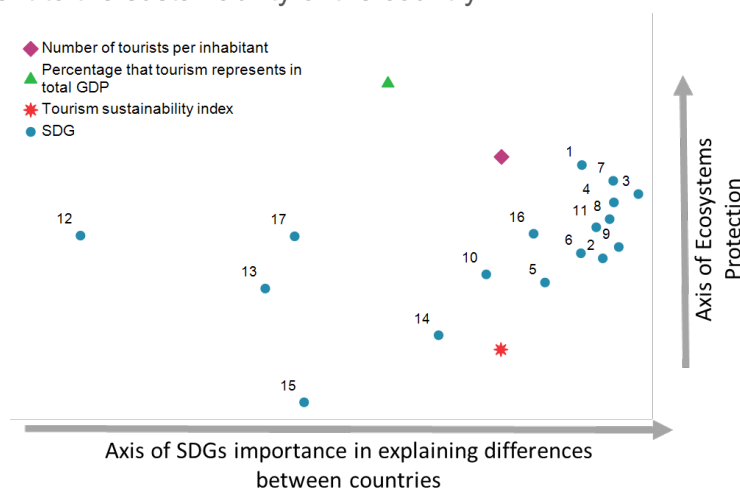
To jointly study the three dimensions that explain the tourism model of each country, as well as the scores obtained by each one of them for the 17 SDGs, a more detailed statistical analysis has been carried out. This analysis provides the main factors that best explain the differences between the countries. In this case, we do not consider the overall score obtained by country, but rather the more disaggregated data for each of the 17 SDGs in the SDSN 2017 report.

The main factor identified is linked to the relative importance of the 17 SDGs in explaining differences between countries in the degree of achievement of the goal of global sustainability. Graph 3 shows that on this axis, Goal 12 (Responsible consumption) has the lowest influence. Although with less impact, something similar happens with goals 13 (climate change), 17 (partnerships) and 15 (terrestrial ecosystems). These four goals are considered to be the most complex dimensions and therefore, where we can observe the least differences between countries. They are goals that provide information that is differentiated from the rest and will have a significant capacity for diagnosis and differentiation between countries.

The remaining goals and dimensions associated with the tourism model are very closely related and grouped in one pole of the graph. For example, high scores on SDG 1, poverty reduction, are

associated with high scores on other SDGs such as SDG 3, health quality, SDG 4, quality education, or SDG 7, renewable and clean energy. 11 of the 17 SDGs would be in this closely related block of goals. From this, it seems that many SDG indicators have positive and influential relationships and therefore tend to influence overall sustainability in a very similar way. When a country has proper management and performance in one of them, it also tends to perform well in the rest.

As shown in graph 1, the indicators of the number of tourists per inhabitant and the tourism sustainability index have an intermediate relationship with the degree of compliance with the SDGs. In contrast, tourism revenues are in a position that indicates their scarce contribution for a more significant commitment to the sustainability of the country.

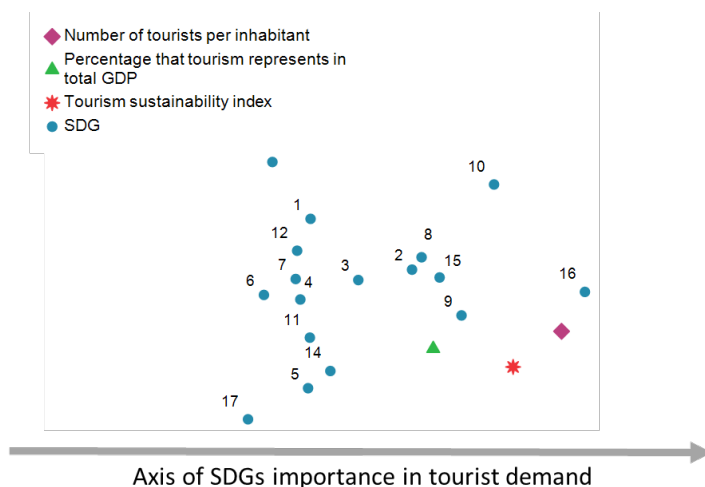


Graph 3. Representation of the first and second axis of the factor analysis which shows trends in the relationships between SDGs and the degree of compliance and ecosystem conservation.

The second identified factor, also shown in graph 3, is related to the protection of ecosystems. The data show that countries with a high percentage of tourism-generated income in GDP tend to be the furthest away from compliance with SDGs 15, 14 and 13 related to the conservation of terrestrial and marine ecosystems, and climate change. The number of tourists per inhabitant, which is very close to that of tourism revenues, also has a similar negative effect on the protection of terrestrial ecosystems (SDG 15). The more tourism development takes place, the more the biodiversity of both terrestrial and marine ecosystems is affected and suffers significant setbacks. Therefore, it seems that the current model of tourism development that exists in many countries is not actively contributing to achieving development models that are closer to the goals set out in the 2030 Agenda and, in particular, are affecting the biodiversity of their ecosystems.

Graph 4 shows that there is a close correlation between high levels in the proportion of tourists and income from tourism, and the score on SDG 16, 10 and 9. These goals define countries with strong institutions, high levels of security and justice, fewer social and economic inequalities, excellent infrastructure and a clear commitment to innovation and technology. This result is very relevant since it indicates the SDGs that we could consider as the main drivers or references of tourism demand

and those that have contributed most to its growth. A country becomes a focus of tourist attraction if it is committed, among other aspects, to safety, equality and the development of quality infrastructure.



Graph 4. Representation of the third axis of the factor analysis showing the degree of involvement of the different SDGs with the country's tourism demand.

As conclusions of this investigation, we can summarise that:

- ✓ The current model of tourism development based on increasing the number of tourists and the income generated by them is not contributing or serving as an incentive to encourage processes of change that will allow countries to move towards sustainability and the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.
- ✓ The data also highlights the unsustainability of the current tourism model, which indicates that, with greater tourism development, the biodiversity of forest, land and marine ecosystems is affected and suffers significant setbacks.
- ✓ On the contrary, those countries that are making efforts to develop environmental sustainability policies for their territory show a higher degree of compliance with the SDGs. In this sense, the SDGs that contribute most to the sustainability of tourism destinations are the Goals of responsible consumption (SDG 12), climate action (SDG 13), conservation of terrestrial ecosystems (SDG 15) and partnerships to implement the 2030 Agenda (SDG 17).
- ✓ It is also interesting to note that a country that opts for the development of measures to improve security (SDG 16), equality (SDG 10) and infrastructure (SDG 9) is directly involved in attracting a higher number of tourists and, therefore, an increase in the income generated by this activity.

6. How tourism can contribute to SDG

Tourism-related concepts such as rest or pleasure, are the current typologies most closely linked to the traditional conception of tourism. In this sense, the resources that position a destination have to be managed under the framework of the 2030 Agenda and its 17 SDGs to adapt them to new trends and needs raised by the current tourism market and demands.

The inclusion of sustainable principles in destinations should be approached as a transversal and integrating process involving their citizens, companies and services, as well as the destinations' governing bodies. Its scope should be extended to the mechanisms of promotion and communication with tourists. The strategy to integrate sustainable development into the actions and policies of the destination starts with the generation of collaborative synergies between local businesses that favour the development of sustainable experiences and products. It will allow positioning the region and its companies in the tourism market responsibly.

The challenge of maintaining and improving the resident's life quality and optimising the tourist experience of the visitors must join the advancement on the path of sustainability by sharing responsibility among all the tourist actors and agents of the destination. To this end, it is essential to ensure that the destination's tourism governance includes all stakeholders, especially at the local level, and that the role and responsibilities of each are clearly defined. Sustainable destinations must constitute areas of plurality open to innovation through which they can promote the empowerment of citizens and the commitment of local businesses and services in line with SDGs.

Sustainable tourism is not a static state, but a path of continuous improvement along which the ambitious and transformative goals of the 2030 Agenda must be advanced and, where possible, surpassed. For this, we must generate tools and processes to smooth the transition towards sustainability in all the destination's areas of action. The possibility of having indicators and specific goals allows for a parameter of measurement and verification over time, necessary for decision-makers and public policy planning.

In this way, the interrelationship between actors, criteria, processes and methodologies is developed below:

I. Commitment to sustainability

Different approaches have tried to define the relationship between SDGs and tourism. Initially, only those goals directly related to the sector were considered essential, such as employment, sustainable production and consumption, conservation of marine and terrestrial ecosystems, among others. However, as a result of more careful analysis, greater transversality is evident, and the influence of the sector on the fulfilment of all the SDGs is beginning to be considered.

Tourism, although in a differentiated manner and various contexts, can be a powerful driver for the fulfilment of most goals, especially in those territories that have committed to the development of this sector. In any case, given the ambitions and the transformative vision of the 2030 Agenda, also for its application in the tourism context and the monitoring of the sector's influence on the fulfilment of the goals, an approach solidly based on the Theory of Change must be adopted. We must also pay great attention to initiatives that provide new methods and trends. In other words, by 2030 the sector must have transformed itself, in many cases radically, and become an actor and promoter of the fulfilment of all the SDGs to the extent required by the Agenda adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 2015. As for the other sectors of the world economy, reaching this horizon will not be an easy task, but if the objectives are to be met, this is the path to take. Therefore, the whole set of criteria and indicators that must be followed to highlight tourism's contribution to this vital process will have to be adapted to this approach, bearing in mind the relative difficulties.

Attempting to conceptualise the real influence of tourism on many of the goals that must be achieved is not an easy task. It is also not simple to find reliable indicators that faithfully represent the relative trends and the global databases; differentiating them from other sectors of development of a destination or a country. While for some goals the influence may be more tangible and measurable, for others, measuring the direct and indirect impact of a sector as cross-cutting as tourism is somewhat complicated and it may be necessary to resort to more qualitative indicators.

Destination tourism policies must reflect the degree of engagement with sustainability in the construction of new tourism models, involving all stakeholders in the sector, citizens and visitors, as well as other destinations around the world. These models must show a strong commitment to sustainable development and a willingness to change, making a public call for the cross-cutting and active collaboration of all local and global players.

Likewise, the implementation of a sustainable management process applied to a tourist destination must be accompanied by the dissemination and promotion, both internally and externally, of the principles governing sustainability in the field of tourism, based on the guidelines emanating from the

leading international declarations and conventions on sustainable development, such as the World Charter for Sustainable Tourism +20 and the SDGs, among others. Destinations also must clearly define the new direction of their tourism policies and establish the strategic roadmap to be followed to achieve the targets and goals set out in the 2030 Agenda.

Sustainable destinations must be characterised by a stable political and technical structure, whose total involvement in the development of a sustainable tourism system results in the creation of collaborative synergies and spaces for participation and association at all levels. It will ensure the achievement of the SDGs both locally and internationally. Thus, the first steps towards the sustainability of tourist destinations must be coordinated through the strategic planning of the interventions of the actors involved, clarifying in each case the degree of engagement that each must assume and defining the procedures and stages chronologically that they must follow during the process.

To strengthen and make visible the sustainable commitment in a destination by ensuring the implementation of the new comprehensive sustainability strategy, implies having, in the first instance, a precise diagnosis of the starting situation, the unsustainability gaps to be covered, the obstacles and the real potential opportunities for improvement. An initial "photograph" of the tourist destinations should be taken, reflecting on the initial state of compliance with the SDGs. Through this analysis, a global vision will be generated, built from the detailed study and measurement of the various variables that affect sustainability in the tourism territory, according to the 17 SDGs.

To establish a reliable baseline diagnosis and to be able to monitor progress in meeting the SDGs, the measurement of variables affecting the various sustainability factors requires the adoption of an appropriate system of indicators. Thus, the primary objective of this document is to lay the groundwork for the development of a global set of sustainable tourism indicators, useful in measuring progress in compliance with the SDGs, which each destination should use as a minimum level of monitoring, adapting it to its characteristics and needs.

Of no less importance is that, following an initial analysis of the global data banks and with the required level of reliability, there do not seem to be many of the data surveys necessary for this type of monitoring. This aspect will have to be meticulously deepened and make the collection of information and reference data of the pillars of change until 2030.

Likewise, we must consider that the word "tourism" encompasses a great variety of functional and philosophical interactions between an infinitely varied visiting population (with their respective cultures and societies), a collection of local communities (with their own administrative, political, socio-economic and cultural characteristics) a global and regional market of supply and, a very varied natural environment. Therefore, we must evaluate tourism and its influence on the SDGs from the perspective of their different stakeholders: residents, visitors, the administration of the destinations and the companies that integrate and operate in them. We must also take into account all the

innumerable interactions that derive from such complexity, including the physical and natural environment in which it takes place.

Finally, addressing the assessment of tourism's influence on SDGs compliance means analysing the past, managing the present, and planning for the future, so that the sector's role in a transformational context is understood, its current effect under the SDGs can be monitored, and its transformation towards the 2030 vision can be planned.

II. Sustainability goals and targets.

After a detailed analysis of the initial state of the destination, we can propose a new strategy. It will incorporate all the measures to be adopted, aimed at correcting deficiencies and possible deviations towards unsustainability, as well as the various actions for continuous improvement.

Positioning a destination in the sustainable category in the tourism market is only possible once it has considered its options and opportunities, and also assessed its potential weaknesses and risks. The right combination of resources, support services and high-quality products must be present or developed over time. It is recommended that the strategic planning to be developed, once the analysis of the starting point of the destination has been carried out, addresses the fundamental challenges related to environmental and social sustainability, the identification and proposal of strategic decisions, and a set of tourism policies to be followed in the critical areas of the destination.

Finally, the sustainable strategy of the destination, developed in a horizontal and participatory manner, will be adapted to the characteristics and needs of the territory and will have to be implemented by all the public and private tourism actors and the civil society of the destination to be monitored by the governance bodies. This strategy will always contain objectives that are measurable, achievable, ambitious and transformative in terms of sustainability. It will follow the outline of criteria, and global goals set out in the United Nations the 2030 Agenda, seeking to achieve the goals that are estimated to be reached in a staggered manner for this time horizon.

The evolution of the strategy, as well as its degree of compliance, should be assessed periodically, providing measurable evidence regarding the actions taken and the application of the proposed tourism sustainability policies. Additionally, the results achieved, or the unsustainability gaps, will be analysed with the help of the established indicators, both qualitative and quantitative.

III. Governance and participation.

The introduction of the sustainability approach in the tourism products and services of a destination must be constituted as a process of strengthening and transformation through which the territory, involving its host community, consolidates the development of new economic, socio-cultural and environmental policies beneficial to all, including the visitors.

The sustainable governance of destinations, beyond the competencies of governments and administrations, has become one of the main challenges of today's tourism industry. It is, therefore, essential to involve all the tourism agents or forces that interact with the destination. It is also necessary to have a joint project, with a shared vision that defines its management and adequate administration.

Tourism governance of destinations involves its local administrations, businesses and services, and civil society. To this end, an optimal governance system will have adequate coordination and management tools, procedures and a balanced representation of all stakeholders. A Sustainable Tourism Round Table or sustainable governance body of the destination or country must be created to ensure the leadership of its sustainability policies in a cross-cutting and participatory manner. It should be understood as a participatory instrument made up of representatives of the public administration, the private tourism sector, civil society and academic institutions.

- **PUBLIC SECTOR**

Governing bodies play a decisive role in the development of tourism policies and the definition of their performance frameworks, eventually also being service providers or tourism business actors. Given the complexity of the areas affected by the development of tourism activity, public action should be of a transversal and interdepartmental nature, adapting the different competencies and regulatory and legal frameworks to the objectives pursued, with adequate and correctly articulated representation in the management body.

- **PRIVATE SECTOR**

The destination's tourism companies and services can and should be part of the sustainability actions that constitute an integral part of its tourism policy. For this reason, the sector must develop a series of participatory and methodological tools, such as the commitment of companies and services to the destination's sustainability as a necessary step to support this process. It includes the coordination of initiatives, awareness, information and training.

- CIVIL SOCIETY

Civil society, through its representative structures, has the right and the duty to actively participate in the governance of the destination in a responsible, constructive and objective way. It must contribute its points of view and defend its positions, from a perspective of awareness, regarding the importance of tourism activity and its sustainability in terms of employment, wealth creation, positioning of the destination and reception capacity of people and projects.

- KNOWLEDGE CENTRES

For effective tourism governance of the destination, it is necessary to have a system of tourism knowledge and intelligence that allows decision-making processes to be developed based on objective and verifiable information. This information should be generated from the public and private spheres, with the participation of academic institutions and opinion centres.

Another primary role of the management body is to serve as a tool and motor for the identification, promotion and creation of sustainable tourism products and experiences, and their subsequent marketing.

The implementation of a reliable system for collecting the data needed to monitor progress towards SDGs compliance is equally important. As previously stated, this document's objective is to lay the groundwork for the development of an indicators system common to all countries and tourist destinations in the world. Its purpose is also to activate a convergence process in the collection of data at an international level so that it can adequately conform to the monitoring progress of SDGs compliance and allow to join efforts in this regard.

IV. Criteria and goals.

The criteria and goals, staggered to the 2030 horizon, to be drawn up in the strategic planning and definition of the sustainable tourism policies will be structured to comply with the SDGs. Their translation into the tourism field is described below:

Society and Culture Area (Goals 1, 3, 4, 5, 11 y 16):



GOAL 1: END POVERTY IN ALL ITS FORMS EVERYWHERE.

As one of the most important and fastest-growing economic sector in the world, tourism is well placed on fostering economic growth and development at all levels, as well as to provide income through employment creation.

Tourism, especially in developing countries, has become the most viable and sustainable option for economic development. In some cases, it represents the main source of hard currency inflows. Part of this revenue is invested in different groups of society. Hence, if tourism management mainly focuses on the eradication of poverty, it can directly benefit the most vulnerable groups.

However, the generally high purchasing power of tourists raises the poverty perception threshold for residents and, the abuse of interim employment does not contribute to the improvement of local social protection systems. It can generate ephemeral benefits and increase the risk of socio-economic disruption.

All actions of a sustainable destination must promote an inclusive development of tourism and enhance its capacity to mobilise resources for poverty eradication, social protection, equitable distribution of the benefits of tourism, and empowerment of disadvantaged groups, women and youth in particular.

The policies for contributing to the fulfilment of the SDG 1 must be aligned with the following targets:

1.1. Promote the collaboration between the administration and the destination's tourism entities and companies in campaigns and initiatives for social purposes.



1.2. Develop measures to maximise the economic benefits of tourism for the local community and create stable links with the local economy of the destination and other economic activities in its surroundings. (Targets 1.3, 1.4 and 1.b)



1.3. Develop international cooperation projects, solidarity projects, humanitarian action projects or assistance projects on sustainable tourism. (Targets 1.a)



GOAL 3: ENSURE HEALTHY LIVES AND PROMOTE WELL-BEING FOR ALL AT ALL AGES

The contribution of tourism to economic growth and development can also have a side effect on health and well-being.



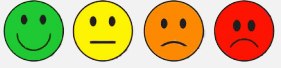
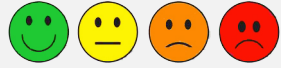

Tourism may have an important effect on the health and well-being of people due to its role as a transmitter of ideas and customs. The reinforcement of healthy practices in local environments will create channels of understanding between cultures, thus contributing to the pooling of good practices.

Generally, tourism development involves the establishment of health and public health structures in the destinations, which are indispensable for the tourists and from which the local communities also benefit, with an increase in the prevention and treatment of the main pathologies of the place. However, competition may arise between tourists and residents for health services in which the former, given their purchasing power, get the better of the latter.

Likewise, tourism can cause changes in the availability and safety of resources, such as water and food, and in lifestyles, such as alcohol and drug consumption, sexual promiscuity and eating habits, among others. These changes can be hazardous for the health and well-being of residents, as well as for the tourists.

Sustainable tourism actions should promote healthy tourism and prevent any health risk, as well as ensure the well-being of the local community and tourists.

The policies for contributing to the fulfilment of the SDG 3 must be aligned with the following targets:

<p>3.1. Develop an efficient security system to prevent, control, publicly report and respond to potential hazards threatening the health and physical integrity of residents and visitors. (Targets 3.3 and 3.d)</p>	
<p>3.2. Ensure the development, promotion and prioritisation of health and tourism activities and products. (Target 3.d)</p>	
<p>3.3. Enhance the ability to make a significant contribution to the improvement of healthcare at the destination. (Targets 3.7 and 3.8)</p>	
<p>3.4. Improve the ability to identify, prevent, plan and respond to environmental risks, as well as real and potential emergencies which threaten the health and physical integrity of residents and visitors. (Target 3.d)</p>	
<p>3.5. Develop an efficient system to prevent drug use and reduce alcohol consumption (Targets 3.3 and 3.5)</p>	



GOAL 4: ENSURE INCLUSIVE AND EQUITABLE QUALITY EDUCATION AND PROMOTE LIFELONG LEARNING

The development of sustainable tourism requires the professionalisation of its tourism stakeholders. Tourism can provide incentives to invest in the education and vocational training of citizens, promoting the professional mobility of people through cross-border agreements in terms of job training

(especially for young people, women, the elderly, indigenous communities and groups of special needs), and transmitting the values of tolerance and peace. Sustainable destinations must ensure the presence of quality and comprehensive tourism training, as well as ensure that younger and older people acquire enough technical and professional skills to access decent employment.

The education level in tourism development manifest the diversification of supply and thus, the competitiveness of the destination. In the same way, quality and sustainability are measures of the implementation of elaborated practices that require planners and operators with higher levels of knowledge.

The goal is to improve critical technical skills and ensure continuous training for the development of the highest tourism potential. The sector would then offer its most enormous contribution to equity regarding the access to resources, the full development of the capacities and aspirations of the inhabitants, economic growth and the competitiveness of the destination and its sustainability.

The vast majority of the barriers or obstacles encountered in the development of sustainable tourism are found precisely in the low levels of knowledge throughout the value chain.

On the other hand, the intentionality and the major cultural exchange that sustainable tourism requires make education, training and capacity building one of the fundamental pillars for the development of the destination under this scope. Tourism education at all levels offers excellent opportunities to deal with the positive and negative effects of tourism development, to recognise the relative impacts on the host society and their own lives; and to develop the necessary skills to deal with them in the best possible way.

A quality education system in tourism terms involves the public and private sectors in a coordinated manner to create management profiles, both of companies and administrations, to achieve the sustainability of tourism development and to inform the decision-making process.

In other words, a system that contributes to the creation of experts and specialists' groups in all the sectors that tourism sustainability requires and, that acts at all levels of development, from the simple worker to the manager of the destination as a whole.

Sustainable tourism must ensure the existence of inclusive and quality tourism training, implemented in a coordinated manner between the public and private sectors and based on real needs, at all levels, to provide the necessary sustainability, as well as ensure that younger and older people acquire enough technical and professional skills to access decent employment.

The policies for contributing to the fulfilment of the SDG 4 must be aligned with the following targets:

<p>4.1. Have a quality and inclusive training capacity adapted to the real needs of the destination, as well as specific training in terms of tourism sustainability. (Targets 4.4 and 4.7)</p>	
<p>4.2. Develop educational and outreach activities on tourism and sustainable development. (Target 4.7)</p>	
<p>4.3. Collaboration with entities, institutions or educational and training centres for the development of initiatives and projects related to sustainability in the tourism sector, at all levels. (Target 4.7)</p>	



GOAL 5: ACHIEVE GENDER EQUALITY AND EMPOWER ALL WOMEN AND GIRLS

Tourism has become a powerful tool for women empowerment, particularly through the creation of jobs and income-generating opportunities in small and large businesses related to tourism and visitor reception. Today it is one of the sectors with the highest percentage of women employed and entrepreneurs.

However, the pure and simple actions of adding women to working groups for the sole purpose of improving statistics, without an analysis of the power relations between men and women in all sectors and levels related to tourism development, must be abandoned.

The 2010 Global Report on Women in Tourism concludes that women's work is concentrated at the lowest levels, lowest paid and most precarious activities in the entire tourism industry. Reversing this situation must be a major goal.

The objectives of equality and women empowerment must be clear and well specified, including the number and type of actions, specific objectives, expected results and monitoring systems. Field experts must be included to develop the best and most appropriate initiatives.

Thus, gender equality must be an indispensable prerogative to achieve the sustainability of tourism. The presence of tools promoting gender equality is, therefore, mandatory. All actions of a sustainable destination must reinforce women leadership and participation in the decision-making process at all management levels, and in the provision of tourist experiences.

The policies for contributing to the fulfilment of the SDG 5 must be aligned with the following targets:

<p>5.1. Generate equality plans and policies promoted by public entities and the main stakeholders in the tourism sector. (Target 5.c)</p>	
<p>5.2. Promote working conditions that ensure gender equality conditions that boost female empowerment. (Target 5.1, 5.5 and 5.a)</p>	
<p>5.3. Establish specific programmes for the development and empowerment of women and their inclusion at all levels and in all sectors related both directly and indirectly to tourism, based on specific and comprehensive diagnoses of actions and appropriate monitoring systems. (Targets 5.5, 5.a, 5.b and 5.c)</p>	



GOAL 11: MAKE CITIES AND HUMAN SETTLEMENTS INCLUSIVE, SAFE, RESILIENT AND SUSTAINABLE.

Tourism can have a dual impact on the sustainability of cities and communities. On the one hand, the motivational element of tourism can lead governing bodies to invest in structures and infrastructure. While on the other hand, the increase in the fluctuating population can exacerbate the problems that populated cities have to face.

The SDG 11's targets can be associated with tourism development: accommodation and essential services, mobility, participatory planning, natural and cultural heritage, resilience to change, environmental impacts and access to public space. In any case, we must avoid mass tourism to prevent harmful effects such as gentrification, mobility due to the concentration of tourist destinations, price increases in rent and services, among others. Tourism must contribute to make human settlements inclusive, creative, safe, resilient and sustainable. A destination that is not good for its citizens is not good for tourists.

The objective of sustainable tourism must be the preservation of a destination's history, cultural and natural heritage, for they are fundamental assets that reinforce the attractiveness of holiday tourism.

Sustainable tourism must assess any security problem related to tourism and address them in all their specific manifestations, whether it is a problem from the same sector, the same social environment, the natural environment and the tourist or visitor.

The policies for contributing to the fulfilment of the SDG 11 must be aligned with the following targets:

11.1. Develop strategic territorial planning in favour of the sustainability of the tourism model, its territorial, urban, social and environmental integration. It must also include the protection of the natural and cultural heritage of the destination, paying special attention to intangible heritage, for it is extremely vulnerable. (Targets 11.3, 11.4, 11.6 and 11.a)



11.2. Create tourism activities and products based on cultural and natural heritage and respecting the authenticity and integrity criteria of assets. (Target 11.4)



11.3. Transfer local knowledge associated with traditions and intangible cultural heritage through initiatives and projects related to tourism. Experience is, therefore, effectively transferred and integrated into the tourism activities. (Target 11.4)



11.4. Avoid Overtourism and take care of ensuring that the adoption of tourism development does not have a negative impact on the basic aspects of people's lives, such as the cost of housing and rent, population movement and access to public and heritage areas, among others. (Targets 11.1, 11.4, 11.6, 11.7 and 11.b)



11.5 Develop programmes for sustainable mobility and universal accessibility, both for sites and assets of tourist interest and the most important locations and structures in tourist cities and communities. (Targets 11.2 and 11.3)





GOAL 16: PROMOTE FAIR, PEACEFUL AND INCLUSIVE SOCIETIES

The interests of governments and large companies dominate tourism and, such a context can leave behind the rights of the populations concerned, in the name of economic growth and job creation. Adequate transparency, participation and monitoring mechanisms must be put in place, and economic actors must take responsibility for their own social, cultural, environmental and economic impacts.

It revolves around the multiple encounters between people from different cultural contexts. The industry, therefore, becomes a stage for activities with tremendous potential to promote tolerance and multicultural understanding, and which lays the foundations for more peaceful societies

Understanding tourism as a right, equity criteria must also be extended to tourists, promoting actions such as inclusive tourism. All sustainable tourism actions must be set in a participatory, inclusive and sustainable governance model. They must encourage a culture of peace and intercultural dialogue in destinations.

The policies for contributing to the fulfilment of the SDG 16 must be aligned with the following targets:

16.1. Have a governance system that includes all stakeholders, especially at a local level, which promotes public-private partnerships, and where the role and responsibilities of each one of those stakeholders are clearly defined, including a citizen participation system. (Targets 16.6, 16.7 and 16.12)

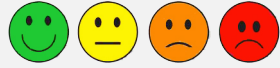


16.2. Have an adequate indicator system which enables the evaluation and monitoring of the continuous improvement and tourist impacts of its components' sustainability, as well as the level of satisfaction of tourists and residents. (Targets and 16.12)



16.3. Have mechanisms to control, measure and publicly report data on the satisfaction of the resident and visiting population regarding the tourist activity. (Targets 16.7 and 16.10)



<p>16.4. Provide visitors with updated, clear, accurate information on spaces, itineraries, establishments, services and infrastructures of tourist interest. (Target 16.6)</p>	
<p>16.5. Develop a tourism strategy through which accept the implementation of sustainable commitments. Such an approach must be publicly available in common languages among tourists. (Targets 16.7, 16.10 and 16.12)</p>	
<p>16.6. Have consolidated practices or policies to prevent any type of exploitation within the tourism industry of the destination. (Targets 16.1, 16.2 and 16.12)</p>	

Environment and climate change (Goals 6, 7,12, 13, 14 y 15):



GOAL 6: ENSURE AVAILABILITY AND SUSTAINABLE MANAGEMENT OF WATER AND SANITATION FOR ALL

Tourism can play a decisive role in achieving responsible access to water sources and respecting the water cycle. The efficient and appropriate use of water within the tourism industry may be a key element to protect one of our most precious resources.

Sustainable tourism can be a driving force in the implementation and adoption of new good practices in water use and wastewater sanitation, but, at the same time and in any case, it competes with local communities for the availability of the resource. It can be a determining factor in its pollution. Thus, with its capacity to attract resources and knowledge, the tourism sector must be part of the solution and not part of the problem.

Large tourism companies can, through increased resources, have access to much higher levels of water than small ones and the general population, also impoverishing the water tables and reducing the availability for the host and surrounding communities.

Moreover, among the elements of service quality, many times the indiscriminate use of the resource is offered (showers, jacuzzi, golf courses, swimming pools, among others), which prevents the local

population from accessing it safely or regularly. This situation can increase resentment towards tourism development and reduce its sustainability.

The tourism industry must improve its water management, for it is a scarce resource in many parts of the world. Tourism is a water-intensive industry, so it is responsible for not using more water than strictly necessary, through efficient management that ensures residents are not deprived of this fundamental right.

All actions of a sustainable destination must ensure the sustainability of all water collection, supply, sanitation, and treatment processes, also ensuring its quality.

No less important is the influence that climate change has on water availability. Fulfilling the goal involves reducing water consumption and pollution, and at the same time increasing its availability in scarcity periods.

The policies for contributing to the fulfilment of the SDG 6 must be aligned with the following targets:

6.1. Carry out regular safety and quality analysis and controls of all water sources located within the tourist areas of the destination, including considerations related to climate change and its consequences on the availability of the resource, especially during periods of greatest tourist influx. (Targets 6.1, 6.2 and 6.3)



6.2. Develop programmes and initiatives for efficient use of water within the tourism industry, to calculate and decrease the water footprint. (Targets 6.4 and 6.b)



6.3. Develop awareness campaigns, guides, and training and information resources on water saving for tourists, visitors and the tourism industry of the destination. (Targets 6.4 and 6.b)



6.4 Adopt policies for the elimination of water pollution and untreated and uncontrolled discharges, as well as for the prevention of hazardous chemical or biological discharges. (Targets 6.2, 6.3, 6.6 and 6.b)



6.5 Encourage the collection and safe use of rainwater, recycling and safe reuse of water resources and the protection of water-related ecosystems for tourism use, as well as forests, rivers, wetlands and aquifers. (Targets 6.3, 6.4, 6.5, 6.6 and 6.b)



GOAL 7: ENSURE ACCESS TO AFFORDABLE, RELIABLE, SUSTAINABLE AND MODERN ENERGY FOR ALL

As an industry requiring an important energy consumption, tourism may accelerate the transition towards sustainable energy, and increase its share in the world's energy matrix. By promoting reliable solutions and investments with a long-term vision of sustainable energy, tourism may help reduce greenhouse gases, mitigate climate change, and implement new and innovative energy solutions in destinations.

Tourism may significantly contribute to ensuring and promoting universal access to clean energy, and intelligent and modern services, improving efficiency and substantially increasing the use of renewable sources.

The implementation of new solutions based on the self-production and consumption of sustainable energy has become a key element in improving the competitiveness of tourism. It also provides new opportunities for a green economy at the local and global level.

Therefore, sustainable tourism can provide solutions and new good practices for sustainable energy production and consumption, including architectural solutions with bioclimatic elements.


The policies for contributing to the fulfilment of the SDG 7 must be aligned with the following targets:

7.1. Develop programmes and initiatives for the efficient use of energy in the tourism sector. (Target 7.3)



7.2. Commit to the use of renewable energy sources within the destination and the industry, including self-production, procurement of green energy, passive systems in construction, as well as



<p>proactive regulatory frameworks and incentives. (Targets 7.1, 7.2 and 7.3)</p>	
<p>7.3. Develop awareness campaigns, guides, and training and information resources on energy saving for tourists, visitors and the tourism industry. (Target 7.3)</p>	



GOAL 12: ENSURE SUSTAINABLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION PATTERNS

Tourism is a mass consumer sector, so it is not surprising that this SDG is closely linked to it and explicitly mentions it as one of its objectives. As stated in target 12.b, it is essential to "develop and apply tools for monitoring impacts on sustainable development to achieve sustainable tourism that creates jobs and promotes local culture and products".

Sustainable tourism must promote a change in values: from tourism based on consumption to satisfy needs, to experiential tourism in which enjoyment relies on relationships and intangible products. Likewise, tourism service enterprises should cooperate with local producers to strengthen local and sustainable production of goods and services and decent work, as well as the transversal distribution of the benefits throughout the destination.

In this regard, tourism operators must demand adequate working conditions, climate actions, responsible use of resources and respect for communities and rights, in all links of the production chain. They must also maintain an integral vision of the destination and the impacts of tourism, such as water scarcity, limited access to drinking water or access to sanitation by the local population. The operators should avoid impacts on ecosystems, local social structure and cultural heritage.


SDG 12 seeks to ensure both sustainable consumption and production patterns. It has implications for the sending countries and the tourists themselves, so sustainability audits will need to be conducted on both sides of the chain. Thus, the administrations of both sending and receiving regions will have to implement systems to promote tourism sustainability for operators and tourists. This requires the collaboration between the regions so that the awareness initiatives aimed at tourists and operators in the former find an adequate counterpart in the latter, i.e. find the products and services that meet the sustainability expectations generated in the regions of origin.

The policies implemented in the destination should have zero tolerance towards unsustainable tourism activities. This position requires clear policies and regulations that include all aspects of

sustainability and transparency, as well as the use and management of key, scarce and vulnerable resources; and the promotion of sustainability certifications for its companies.

A tourism industry that implements sustainable consumption and production practices may play an important role in accelerating a global change towards sustainability. To do so, it should develop circular economy initiatives for efficient use of resources, leading to better results, not only economically, but also socially and environmentally. All actions ensure the implementation of sustainable consumption and production patterns along the service and activity chain.

The policies for contributing to the fulfilment of the SDG 12 must be aligned with the following targets:

<p>12.1. Have a purchasing policy and commercial culture that prioritises the consumption of local, sustainable products and services in all its operations. (Targets 12.1, 12.2, 12.4, 12.6, 12.7 and 12.b)</p>	
<p>12.2. Ensure the separate collection and maximum recycling of waste generated by the tourism activity, as well as its proper disposal. (Targets 12.1 and 12.5)</p>	
<p>12.3. Minimise external inputs and waste generation, thus reducing the destination's dependency generated by tourism and increasing local consumption. (Targets 12.3, 12.5 and 12.7)</p>	
<p>12.4. Develop responsible consumption criteria along the supply chain, at a public and private level. (Targets 12.1, 12.2, 12.6 and 12.7)</p>	
<p>12.5. Promote close cooperation between sending and receiving destinations to ensure that the tourism demand and supply meet sustainability criteria. (Targets 12.a and 12.b)</p>	
<p>12.6. Engage tour operators in offering sustainable products while requiring strong sustainability parameters in the host communities. (Targets 12.6 and 12.7)</p>	



GOAL 13: ADOPT URGENT MEASURES TO FIGHT CLIMATE CHANGE AND ITS EFFECTS

The tourism sector is strongly involved in the fulfilment of this SDG, due to the production of greenhouse gases and the impacts that climate change has on tourism assets.

The myth of the "industry without chimneys" needs to be thoroughly revised, as does the fact that tourism creates jobs, which should not be radically put before considerations such as the generated impacts and consumed resources. It is important because the effects of climate change on destinations commonly revert on the weakest sections of the population, undermining compliance with many other SDGs.

Tourism is highly dependent on energy consumption and in particular on energy from fossil sources. Means of air and land transportation, as well as accommodations, place tourism as an industry directly responsible for 14% of global emissions. Moreover, consumption at the destination contributes indirectly to raising this percentage even further (livestock, fishing, imports, among others).

Thus, tourism both contributes to and is affected by climate change. It is in the sector's interest to play a leading role in the global response to climate change. Destinations should be seen as a stage in the fight against climate change. This approach requires sharing assets, mobilising resources and innovation capacity of the industry. It is also essential to create frameworks favourable to low-carbon initiatives for climate-compatible urban tourism in key areas such as sustainable mobility, energy efficiency and renewable energies.

The policies for contributing to the fulfilment of the SDG 13 must be aligned with the following targets:

13.1. Elaborate programmes and initiatives aimed at the reduction and/or compensation of the destination's carbon footprint. (Targets 13.2 and 13.a)



13.2. Promote sustainable mobility to and from the destination, including public transportation and alternative zero- or low-emission mobility systems. (Targets 13.2 and 13.a)



13.3 Create programmes and initiatives to increase the resilience and adaptation of the tourism sector, destinations and host communities to climate change. (Targets 13.1 and 13.3)



SDG 14: CONSERVE AND SUSTAINABLY USE THE OCEANS, SEAS AND MARINE RESOURCES FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT.

A substantial part of the tourism sector depends on the health of marine ecosystems. Still, at the same time, its development affects the ecology of the coasts and the social, cultural and economic structures of coastal populations. It is, therefore, necessary to consider the urban occupation of coastal areas and its evolution to tourism development.

On the other hand, cruise ship tourism is considered to be one of the most paramount activities for the marine environment. In this sense, the number of tourists entering a country through this mean should be monitored, as well as the eventual sustainability certifications that the companies that offer cruise ship services have implemented.

Likewise, the activities and products offered in the marine environment, such as cetacean watching, motorised recreational activities or other water sports and activities, can generate substantial impacts on the delicate balances of the coastal and deep-sea environments.





No less significant is the effect that tourism development has on the pollution of the marine environment, through the production and dumping of garbage and pollutants by structures located near the coasts and by vessels operating in the seas.

Tourism development in seaside destinations must be part of the comprehensive management of coastal areas to help protect and preserve fragile marine ecosystems. It shall also operate as the vehicle for promoting a blue economy.

A sustainable seaside destination must implement strategies and measures for the preservation and restoration of aquatic ecosystems and their biodiversity from the eventual impacts of tourism.

In target 14.7., the SDG mentions explicitly that the tourism sector is a potential pillar of economic benefit for small island developing states and least developed countries from the sustainable use of marine resources, "in particular through the sustainable management of fisheries, aquaculture and tourism".

The policies for contributing to the fulfilment of the SDG 14 must be aligned with the following targets:

<p>14.1. Establish criteria, regulations and initiatives for controlling the state and quality of all bodies of water, and the development of tools for preventing the pollution of water flows, lakes, wetlands, coastal waters and seas. (Targets 14.2 and 14.4)</p>	
<p>14.2. Ensure the sustainable use of marine and aquatic resources in terms of their exploitation for tourism, as well as their enjoyment in different activities. (Targets 14.1 and 14.4)</p>	
<p>14.3. Have a set of information and aware-rising resources to raise awareness and respect towards aquatic ecosystems aimed at residents and visitors. (Target 14.1)</p>	
<p>14.4. Develop sustainable tourist activities and services that encourage the respectful use of beaches and coastal environments and convey the values of the destination and its identity through the tourist experience. (Targets 14.1 and 14.2)</p>	



GOAL 15: SUSTAINABLY MANAGE FORESTS, COMBAT DESERTIFICATION, AND HALT AND REVERSE LAND DEGRADATION AND HALT BIODIVERSITY LOSS.

Nature tourism is one of the tourism typologies that has experienced significant growth in recent years, reflecting the intimate connection between the sector and, biodiversity and natural heritage. However, tourism development produces negative impacts, such as habitat destruction and various kinds of pollution due to the fragmentation derived from the construction of infrastructures for its use.

As stated by the World Tourism Organization, “sustainable tourism may play a decisive role in the protection and preservation of biodiversity on-site, as well as in ensuring respect for terrestrial ecosystems, due to its efforts to reduce waste and consumption, preserve local fauna and flora, and to aware-rising campaigns.”

Sustainable destinations must implement strategies and measures in terms of the prevention of negative impacts, protection and restoration of landscapes, biodiversity and geodiversity within the

tourism industry. They should also promote new forms of territorial compensation based on flows of ecosystem values.

The policies for contributing to the fulfilment of the SDG 15 must be aligned with the following targets:

15.1. Have systems to evaluate the environmental impact of tourism on biodiversity, habitats and landscapes (including urban areas), and the capacity to anticipate environmental risks and correcting adverse effects. (Target 15.1)



15.2. Have an up-to-date, publicly available inventory of its natural resources (fauna, flora, among others), as well as an assessment of its tourism assets and attractions, including natural and sensitive sites, providing information on their fragility and levels of responsible use. (Targets 15.1 and 15.5)



15.3. Ensure the preservation of local flora and fauna, can regulate the introduction of invasive exotic species, and to control the commercialisation and exhibition of the destination's wildlife. (Targets 15.1 and 15.8)



15.4. Develop sustainable tourism activities and services that promote respectful use of natural heritage and transmit the values of the destination and its identity through the tourist experience. (Targets 15.1, 15.6 and 15.9)



15.5. Develop urgent measures to prevent the degradation of habitats, species and the ecosystems and landscapes by tourism development and keep an operational plan for the conservation and restoration of biodiversity. (Targets 15.1, 15.5 and 15.7)



Governance and economy area (Goals 2,8,9,10 y 17):



GOAL 2: END HUNGER, ACHIEVE FOOD SECURITY AND IMPROVED NUTRITION AND PROMOTE SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE.

Tourism should boost sustainable agricultural production, the use and sale of local products and their full integration into the tourism value chain, as well as promote increased productivity.

The destinations must actively avoid the dynamics of the tourism sector which involve the occupation of fertile land by the territorial development of tourism, the increase in the price of essential goods that cause farmers to prefer selling than to supply themselves, and the waste of food generated in the establishments.

In many cases, they must also consider the introduction of imported products that compete for price and/or conservation with those of local production, leading to a decline in the market for farmers, as well as in domestic output and sustainability. Likewise, the food approval that in many cases accompanies tourism development, in addition to cultural loss, leads to the abandonment of the production of goods or local varieties and breeds that are better adapted to the climatic conditions of the area. This situation can generate devastating consequences for the future of the domestic output, especially in times of climate change.

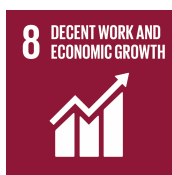
As has been mentioned, tourism has great potential for the integration of the most vulnerable population into the value chain, not only as employees but also as suppliers and clients. The destination must implement sustainable production technologies, facilitating the adoption of commitments by the primary sector, so that it bases its activities on responsible and optimal use of natural resources. While at the same time, configuring itself as the leading supplier of inputs for the tourism food and gastronomy sector. All actions of a sustainable destination must reinforce the supply of local products and the enhancement of traditional cuisine, as well as food safety, better nutrition, promotion of sustainable agriculture, and consolidation of responsible consumption models.

The policies for contributing to the fulfilment of the SDG 2 must be aligned with the following targets:

2.1. Develop actions for the promotion and support of the procurement of products from the local, sustainable agriculture and neighbouring territorial areas, by the tourism sector, including the gastronomic offer. by the tourism sector, including gastronomy. (Targets 2.3, 2.4 and 2.c)



<p>2.2. Develop a control system for food safety, hygiene and quality through adequate processes and improve food and nutritional habits of the local population. (Targets 2.1 and 2.2)</p>	
<p>2.3. Develop measures to avoid food waste at the destination through the promotion of good practices, and to create mechanisms and incentives for their adoption by the tourism sector.</p>	
<p>2.4. Planning of the territorial expansion of tourism development to ensure that it does not affect the fertile land around the towns where it is implemented. (Target 2.4)</p>	



GOAL 8: PROMOTE SUSTAINED, INCLUSIVE AND SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC GROWTH, FULL AND PRODUCTIVE EMPLOYMENT AND DECENT WORK FOR ALL.

Tourism can be a powerful tool for community progress and reduction of inequality if the local population and all key agents are involved in its development.

Decent work is defined as "productive work carried out in conditions of freedom, equity, security and dignity, in which rights are protected, and the workers receive adequate wages and social protection" (ILO, 1999).

The creation of decent and productive jobs is one of the fundamental cornerstones of tourism’s economic and sustainable growth. It is also one of the most significant challenges for the sector, and its aspirations to reach sustainability since it ensures the implementation of measures to diversify the work setting and generate new opportunities for decent employment. All actions of a sustainable destination must boost local economic growth and quality employment, as well as provide supporting tools for entrepreneurship in terms of sustainable tourism. The problem lies in the job quality created and the distribution of the wealth generated at a local level.

The policies for contributing to the fulfilment of the SDG 8 must be aligned with the following targets:

8.1. Develop legal frameworks or agreements to ensure the protection of labour rights, the safety of workers, and the fight against all forms of labour discrimination at the international level. (Targets 8.3, 8.5 and 8.8)



8.2. Generate provisions in terms of family-work balance within the tourism sector, and involvement of less favoured groups, including young people. (Targets 8.5 and 8.6)



8.3. Develop measures to create qualified local employment and promote entrepreneurship in sustainable tourism activities and services. (Targets 8.5 and 8.9)



8.4. Promote modernisation, diversification and technological innovation in the tourism sector, to increase productivity, especially in labour-intensive tasks, and to promote sustainable tourism, culture and the use of local products. (Targets 8.2 and 8.9)



GOAL 9: BUILD RESILIENT INFRASTRUCTURE, PROMOTE INCLUSIVE AND SUSTAINABLE INDUSTRIALIZATION AND FOSTER INNOVATION

Tourism development requires quality public and private infrastructures in an innovative environment. The industry must opt for a constructive model based on the principles of sustainable development, where the different groups and stakeholders of the market contribute to the establishment and application of a protection culture for the environment and the cultural identity applied to the building sector.

Sustainable tourism can contribute to the improvement of the destinations' infrastructures and universal access, as well as promote the regeneration of declining areas. Adequate investments in green infrastructure (more efficient means of transportation, less air pollution, preservation of heritage and open spaces, among others) shall lead to smarter, healthier and greener cities from which not only their inhabitants but also tourists could benefit.

Sustainable transports, communications, excursions, visits, businesses or good leisure possibilities are some of the requirements that a destination must also have to be considered sustainable.

Tourism must put at the service of the communities its capacity to attract resources for the development of structures and infrastructures at the service of tourists and residents. However, such projects must be planned and carried out with local welfare in mind. The access for local populations must be ensured and, the employment generated must be mainly local. These projects must also keep in mind the development of the local economy, among other factors.

The policies for contributing to the fulfilment of the SDG 9 must be aligned with the following targets:

9.1. Develop initiatives, projects and guidelines to consolidate and promote sustainable infrastructures for tourism, including areas such as planning of land and territory uses, construction, accommodation, communication, mobility, energy or water cycle. (Targets 9.1 and 9.2)



9.2. Ensure access to all facilities and attractions generated by tourism for the residents. (Target 9.1)



9.3. Develop initiatives and projects capable of mobilising the use of information technologies to create responsible tourism activities, as well as smart and sustainable management models in terms of resource usage. (Targets 9.4, 9.5 and 9.b)



9.4. Planning takes into account the resilience of infrastructure and structures for both tourism local use to avoid disturbances and disasters of various origin (natural, socio-economic, among others.) (Targets 9.1, 9.4 and 9.a)





SDG 10: REDUCE INEQUALITY WITHIN AND AMONG COUNTRIES

Goal 10 is one of the most revolutionary SDGs, as it requires strong actions to reduce income inequalities, discrimination and exclusion, and opportunities. In other words, a profound reform of global governance to reduce the differences in the political influence of individuals and collectives.

Tourism can be a powerful tool for community progress and reduction of inequality if the local population and all key agents are involved in its development. However, the few studies that exist on the subject outline a tendency to increase inequalities, especially in the long-term and in cases where international tourism is preeminence. Nonetheless, it seems that, if appropriate measures are not taken, tourism will continue this trend.

To reduce inequality in the country and at the destination, the goal must be to remove the barriers to integration of people, regardless of their gender, origin, disability, religion, economic situation or any other condition. Hence, tourism development must include equality criteria in all its forms, highlighting the implementation of policies aimed at the reduction of the inequalities detected. Destinations must promote new forms of tourism with a vision of social compensation, as well as ensure equal opportunities and the elimination of discriminatory elements in all areas of activity.

The policies for contributing to the fulfilment of the SDG 10 must be aligned with the following targets:

10.1. Develop policies for social integration aiming at the elimination of discriminatory elements, and ensuring equal opportunities for the entire population, paying special attention to the integration of the less favoured population of the destination. (Target 10.1, 10.2, 10.3 and 10.4)



10.2. Develop measures to ensure universal access at all levels of the value chain of tourism, including physical and digital environments, transport systems, and the whole range of facilities from the hospitality industry, service sector and tourism activities. (Targets 10.1, 10.2, 10.3 and 10.4)



10.3. Encourage and promote the income of local SMEs in all links of the tourism value chain and avoid the concentration of economic power in the hands of a few, to diversify the distribution of the benefits of tourism. (Targets 10.4 and 10.5)



GOAL 17: STRENGTHEN THE MEANS OF IMPLEMENTATION AND REVITALIZE THE GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

The UNWTO claims that due to its cross-sectoral nature, tourism can strengthen public-private partnerships and to involve multiple stakeholders - international, national, regional and local - to contribute to the SDGs and other common objectives.

Thus, to achieve the SDGs, it is essential to make progress in the development of regulatory frameworks for tourism enterprises, so that externalities are internalised; human rights (especially labour rights), are respected; natural resources are monitored, and their use is protected; relations between the financial and the real economy are established; and responsible trade is promoted, among others. It is important to complement the actions within the framework of legality with those of social and environmental responsibility.

As mentioned in the chapter on governance, tourism's active contribution to sustainable development necessarily presupposes the participation and collaboration of all private and public stakeholders involved in the destination's tourism activities. This cooperation must be based on efficient cooperation mechanisms at all levels, both locally and internationally.

The sustainable governance of a destination, beyond the competences of governments and administrations, is one of the major current challenges.

The creation of partnerships in favour of tourism sustainability between territories aimed at the revitalisation of the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development represents a guide for the development of this goal.

The policies for contributing to the fulfilment of the SDG 17 must be aligned with the following targets:

17.1. Be a part of global and regional networks, projects or partnerships for sustainable development in any of its aspects. (Targets 17.9, 17.14, 17.16 and 17.17)



17.2. Capacity to promote and facilitate the exchange of good practices and knowledge within the destination and through external experiences, encouraging the replication of successful cases in the local, sustainable tourism. (Targets 17.16, 17.17, 17.18 and 17.19)



17.3. Develop cooperation initiatives with academic institutions or other entities, whether public or private agreements, to promote innovation in the sustainable development of tourism in all areas, including the management and assessment of knowledge as a tourism resource. (Targets 17.9, 17.16, 17.17, 17.18 and 17.19)



7. Criteria system as a basis for the self-evaluation of tourism activity

The set of criteria described above can be used as a guide to analyse and reflect on the sustainability commitments of a tourism destination, entity or facility. The following sheet has been designed for them. It aims to identify their compliance degree regarding the criteria established for each of the SDGs, according to the traffic light colour code.

	Compliance with the requirement
	Partial compliance with the requirement
	Failure to comply with the requirement
	The requirement does not apply

A compliance assessment is adopted for each criterion. It is divided into four possible situations: Green indicates more than 75% of compliance with the requirement, while a red represents 25% or less. The yellow colour indicates intermediate positions and its partial fulfilment. The grey colour is used when an indicator does not apply for the tourism context analysed.

The objective of this sheet is to be able to present in a very synthetic and visual way the degree of engagement of a tourist destination or entity with the principles of sustainability included in the 17 SDGs and 169 targets of the 2030 Agenda.

The evaluation of the degree of sustainability commitment of a tourism product can be carried out through this autonomous process of self-evaluation with the participation of several actors involved. On occasions, the experts' presence is required to apply a methodology for the diagnosis and analysis of the proposed indicators. They will be able to provide a more technical and in-depth vision than that which can be carried out autonomously by the destination or tourism product. This analysis can serve to establish the degree of compliance with the Sustainable Development Goals and to obtain an internationally recognised certification that allows the most sensitive tourists to identify the destination or products that are distinguished by their degree of commitment to sustainability.

This paper provides as case studies the evaluation of the Historical Villages of Portugal and Ibaguè (Colombia), destinations that have chosen the path towards certification as a Sustainable Tourism Destination under the Biosphere Methodology created by the Responsible Tourism Institute (RTI). The sheets provided by each destination are not self-assessments, but the results from the evaluation process carried out within the framework of the external audit and the report that accompanies it. These are essential and indispensable conditions for obtaining the certification. Any destination can be involved and participate in the processes of analysis and certification. This system is a possible roadmap for those sector's stakeholders interested in aligning their destination with the SDGs.

We invite you to develop in-depth the application of the 17 SDGs to tourism in your territory. For this purpose, you may access the Biosphere Responsible Tourism website¹ and find out about the certification, available courses and other services offered, such as calculating and offsetting your carbon footprint or the Biosphere Sustainable Tourism strategic plan, among others. Besides, you will find information about the delegations worldwide and the entities that are certified. You will be able to have experts specialised in advancing towards sustainability throughout the tourism value chain.

¹ www.biospheretourism.com

DESTINATION:



















PROFILE DATA	
COUNTRY	
SURFACE	
POPULATION	
N° TOURISTS	

SDG	REQUIREMENTS	SDG	REQUIREMENTS
	1.1. Campaigns and initiatives with social aims 1.2. Benefits of tourism in the local economy 1.3. International cooperation and humanitarian action projects		10.1. Social integration and equal opportunities 10.2. Universal Accessibility 10.3. Diversification of benefit sharing
	2.1. Local sustainable agriculture 2.2. Food quality controls 2.3. Measures against food waste 2.4. Protection of fertile land		11.1. Sustainable territorial planning 11.2. Cultural and natural heritage 11.3. Traditions and intangible cultural heritage 11.4. Overtourism
	3.1. Prevention of environmental risks 3.2. Healthy tourism products and activities 3.3. Health care		12.1. Local purchase and consumption 12.2. Proximity consumption 12.3. Waste recycling 12.4. Collaboration between sending and receiving regions
	4.1. Inclusive and quality education 4.2. Education in tourism and sustainable development 4.3. Inter-institutional collaboration for sustainability		13.1. Carbon Footprint 13.2. Sustainable transport 13.3. Resilience of the tourism sector to climate change
	5.1. Gender equality policies and campaigns 5.2. Working conditions and women's empowerment		14.1. Quality of water bodies 14.2. Aquatic and marine resources 14.3. Awareness raising on aquatic ecosystems 14.4. Promotion of the respectful use of coasts and seas
	6.1. Water safety, quality and consumption controls 6.2. Water footprint 6.3. Water saving awareness campaigns 6.4. Prevention of water pollution 6.5. Recycling and reuse of water resources		15.1. Environmental impact of tourism activity 15.2. Natural resources conservation plan 15.3. Flora and fauna 15.4. Promoting the respectful use of natural heritage
	7.1. Efficient use of energy 7.2. Renewable energies 7.3. Energy saving campaigns		16.1. Citizen participation 16.2. Tourism impact assessment 16.3. Resident and visitor satisfaction 16.4. Information of tourist interest 16.5. Sustainable tourism strategy
	8.1. Labour rights, safety and discrimination 8.2. Work conciliation and youth employment 8.3. Local employment and entrepreneurship 8.4. Technological innovation in the tourism sector		16.6. Policies against exploitation in the tourism sector 17.1. Projects and partnerships for sustainable tourism 17.2. Exchange of good practices 17.3. Cooperation for innovation in sustainable development
	9.1. Sustainable infrastructures 9.2. Access to tourism infrastructure 9.3. Use of ICTs for sustainable tourism		

DESTINATION: Aldeas Históricas de Portugal

PROFILE DATA

COUNTRY	Portugal
SURFACE	1.357 km ²
POPULATION	102.146
N° TOURISTS	

SDG	REQUIREMENTS	SDG	REQUIREMENTS
	1.1. Campaigns and initiatives with social aims		10.1. Social integration and equal opportunities
	1.2. Benefits of tourism in the local economy		10.2. Universal Accessibility
	1.3. International cooperation and humanitarian action projects		10.3. Diversification of benefit sharing
	2.1. Local sustainable agriculture		11.1. Sustainable territorial planning
	2.2. Food quality controls		11.2. Cultural and natural heritage
	2.3. Measures against food waste		11.3. Traditions and intangible cultural heritage
	2.4. Protection of fertile land		11.4. Overtourism
	3.1. Prevention of environmental risks		12.1. Local purchase and consumption
	3.2. Healthy tourism products and activities		12.2. Proximity consumption
	3.3. Health care		12.3. Waste recycling
	4.1. Inclusive and quality education		12.4. Collaboration between sending and receiving regions
	4.2. Education in tourism and sustainable development		13.1. Carbon Footprint
	4.3. Inter-institutional collaboration for sustainability		13.2. Sustainable transport
	5.1. Gender equality policies and campaigns		13.3. Resilience of the tourism sector to climate change
	5.2. Working conditions and women's empowerment		14.1. Quality of water bodies
	6.1. Water safety, quality and consumption controls		14.2. Aquatic and marine resources
	6.2. Water footprint		14.3. Awareness raising on aquatic ecosystems
	6.3. Water saving awareness campaigns		14.4. Promotion of the respectful use of coasts and seas
	6.4. Prevention of water pollution		15.1. Environmental impact of tourism activity
	6.5. Recycling and reuse of water resources		15.2. Natural resources conservation plan
	7.1. Efficient use of energy		15.3. Flora and fauna
	7.2. Renewable energies		15.4. Promoting the respectful use of natural heritage
	7.3. Energy saving campaigns		16.1. Citizen participation
	8.1. Labour rights, safety and discrimination		16.2. Tourism impact assessment
	8.2. Work conciliation and youth employment		16.3. Resident and visitor satisfaction
	8.3. Local employment and entrepreneurship		16.4. Information of tourist interest
	8.4. Technological innovation in the tourism sector		16.5. Sustainable tourism strategy
	9.1. Sustainable infrastructures		16.6. Policies against exploitation in the tourism sector
	9.2. Access to tourism infrastructure		17.1. Projects and partnerships for sustainable tourism
	9.3. Use of ICTs for sustainable tourism		17.2. Exchange of good practices
			17.3. Cooperation for innovation in sustainable development

DESTINATION: Ibagué

PROFILE DATA

COUNTRY	Colombia
SURFACE	1.439 km ²
POPULATION	553.526
N° TOURISTS	

SDG	REQUIREMENTS	SDG	REQUIREMENTS
	1.1. Campaigns and initiatives with social aims		10.1. Social integration and equal opportunities
	1.2. Benefits of tourism in the local economy		10.2. Universal Accessibility
	1.3. International cooperation and humanitarian action projects		10.3. Diversification of benefit sharing
	2.1. Local sustainable agriculture		11.1. Sustainable territorial planning
	2.2 Food quality controls		11.2. Cultural and natural heritage
	2.3. Measures against food waste		11.3. Traditions and intangible cultural heritage
	2.4. Protection of fertile land		11.4. Overtourism
	3.1. Prevention of environmental risks		12.1. Local purchase and consumption
	3.2. Healthy tourism products and activities		12.2. Proximity consumption
	3.3. Health care		12.3. Waste recycling
	4.1. Inclusive and quality education		12.4. Collaboration between sending and receiving regions
	4.2. Education in tourism and sustainable development		13.1. Carbon Footprint
	4.3. Inter-institutional collaboration for sustainability		13.2. Sustainable transport
	5.1. Gender equality policies and campaigns		13.3. Resilience of the tourism sector to climate change
	5.2. Working conditions and women's empowerment		14.1. Quality of water bodies
	6.1 Water safety, quality and consumption controls		14.2. Aquatic and marine resources
	6.2. Water footprint		14.3. Awareness raising on aquatic ecosystems
	6.3. Water saving awareness campaigns		14.4. Promotion of the respectful use of coasts and seas
	6.4. Prevention of water pollution		15.1. Environmental impact of tourism activity
	6.5. Recycling and reuse of water resources		15.2. Natural resources conservation plan
	7.1. Efficient use of energy		15.3. Flora and fauna
	7.2. Renewable energies		15.4. Promoting the respectful use of natural heritage
	7.3. Energy saving campaigns		16.1. Citizen participation
	8.1. Labour rights, safety and discrimination		16.2. Tourism impact assessment
	8.2. Work conciliation and youth employment		16.3. Resident and visitor satisfaction
	8.3. Local employment and entrepreneurship		16.4. Information of tourist interest
	8.4. Technological innovation in the tourism sector		16.5. Sustainable tourism strategy
	9.1. Sustainable infrastructures		16.6. Policies against exploitation in the tourism sector
	9.2. Access to tourism infrastructure		17.1. Projects and partnerships for sustainable tourism
	9.3. Use of ICTs for sustainable tourism		17.2. Exchange of good practices
			17.3. Cooperation for innovation in sustainable development

8. Proposal for the certification of tourist territories and destinations. Case study: The Biosphere Methodology

Following those mentioned above, this chapter proposes an international methodology that encompasses an integral vision of the actors in tourism: public sector, private sector, civil society and knowledge centres. From the perspective of the 17 SDGs, the tourism sector can apply its goals and indicators in the process of continuous improvement and monitoring.

The Responsible Tourism Institute (RTI) is an independent international body created in 1995 to promote actions and programmes of sustainable development in tourist destinations and businesses, helping all actors involved in the tourism sector to develop a new way of travelling and discovering our Planet. To this end, the RTI developed a methodology to guide and help the tourism industry and governing bodies, align and integrate the 17 SDGs into their activities, as well as to contribute to their fulfilment. The Institute has designed an Integral Management System called the Biosphere Methodology, specific to the sector, which aims to increase the competitiveness and positioning of a destination, a company or a tourism product.² This system facilitates the adaptation of the SDGs to different contexts and realities, translated into concrete actions, and supported by qualitative or quantitative indicators that allow their monitoring and also their assessment by tourists. This methodology enables to associate tourism measurement standards with the fulfilment of the 2030 Agenda goals. It is the result of the work developed based on the four Memorandums adopted at the Conferences held in 2017. The follow-up and compliance with the proposed methodology lead to the certification of the destination as a Sustainable Tourism Destination, displayed through the “Biosphere” seal so that tourists and stakeholders can quickly identify it.

The methodology proposes the concept of the Sustainability Circle for the tourism sector. The circle represents the interrelation of the different actors and their participation and coordination in each link of the tourism chain: the governing body that manages the destination, the companies that offer experiences in the region, the media (ambassadors) and the tourists who, through the enjoyment and assessment of the sustainability of the tourism experience, close the circle.

It is not only about the bet carried out by the governing bodies that manage the destination. The companies committed and certified in these destinations, the so-called "Biosphere Ambassadors" and the responsible tourists are also entirely integrated within a system of responsible tourism.

² www.biospheretourism.com

Tourism can no longer be understood without its digital side. Consumers are increasingly powerful and empowered to make their travel arrangements rather than relying on standardised offers from tour operators. They generally consider the recommendations of experts in the sector when organising their trips. Thus, the figure of the "Biosphere Ambassador" serves to connect the tourist with the most experienced and knowledgeable travellers of the best destination-friendly offers, as well as to help the tourist understand from these experts what sustainable tourism is all about.

An example of the application of the methodology is the so-called "Biosphere Commitment for Sustainable Tourism", developed jointly by several entities in Barcelona (Provincial Council, City Council and Chamber of Commerce) and the RTI. It is adapted to the reality, and regional context of the destination and considers the particularities of the business network and its interest in initiating a process of continuous improvement.

Its dynamism and flexibility characterise this methodology since it is capable of adapting to the particularity of each territory; deciding and personalising the phases, requirements, fulfilments, and process, among others. It allows the area to achieve an increasing engagement of all its stakeholders through the creation of a tourism cluster aligned under its specifications and requirements and, in line with the Biosphere Methodology. Thus, the destination will have the power to decide how to validate this commitment, how long will it last as well as regulate and manage the companies that wish to commit to it. This method is supported by a technological gear that facilitates communication and management of the cluster, with real-time information.

Finally, the Biosphere Community of Destinations provides a meeting point that gathers all those destinations committed to sustainability, whether they have the seal or are in the process of obtaining it. The creation of this community responds to the following objectives:

- ✓ Promote tourism sustainability in the destinations.
- ✓ Encourage destinations that have not committed to sustainability to do so.
- ✓ Advance in the tourism promotion of the member destinations.
- ✓ Stimulate the exchange of practices, policies and communications about sustainable initiatives carried out by members and promote the exchange of projects and ideas.
- ✓ Encourage the development of projects in which the member destinations can participate.

Participate in the discussion and decision-making regarding the requirements, methodology and relations with tourism companies and services within the destinations.

9. The 2030 Agenda as a process driver for making world tourism increasingly sustainable

Assuming the transformative character of the 2030 Agenda and making it a reality in a sector as cross-cutting and diverse as tourism is a complex task that will require enormous efforts from its stakeholders. These will have to cooperate for the changes to be effective. Given the economic and social importance, as well as the impacts generated and the diversity of actors involved, the role that tourism plays in the scope of the 17 SDGs is of fundamental importance. The primary node of its contribution, whether positive or negative, must focus on placing the SDGs at the heart of the decision-making process of tourism development, both for future growth, and management and adjustment of what already exists.

Just as international policies and some national and sectoral examples have already done, tourism must also place the scope of the SDGs within its development horizon and make all policies and actions converge towards it. In other words, a new "culture of tourism" is needed. This culture must show an integrated vision of the long-term development and future capacity of human settlements and the role, more or less essential, played by the tourism sector (with its direct and indirect impacts and its typical multiplier effect).

Likewise, the required participation of the private sector and civil society in the process of transformation and fulfilment of the SDGs should make tourism a powerful driver for public-private-community integration of which the SDGs and the 2030 Agenda become carriers and promoters.

On the other hand, regarding the operability of tourism's contribution to achieving the SDGs, it is necessary to aim at a central positioning of data and evidence in the evaluation of tourism policies and their impact. The data available in tourism statistics is not sufficient and, in many cases, neither adequate nor disaggregated to reflect the complexity of tourism's contribution to the achievement of the SDGs.

Thus, the need to develop tourism policies based on reliable and adequate data must be combined with a new "culture of data collection and analysis" that will provide such information most effectively. Administrations should, therefore, activate a process of reorientation of the statistical system in the tourism sector to improve data collection and analysis. In this way, these will expressly serve the purpose of evaluating tourism's contribution to the SDGs and the 2030 Agenda.

Other traditional data collectors, such as universities or independent research institutes, among others, should also be involved in this work so that they can effectively contribute to this process and link the production of data to the matching of supply with demand for information in the field of tourism.

In this way, the analytical services of tourism at a national or regional level will be able to become producers of the necessary knowledge for the orientation of the decision-making process by making use of the diverse institutional, private and civil society sources, and coordinating the surveys by the different actors. This approach would help to move away from a mere function of information gathering.

No less important is the inclusion of mechanisms in the evaluation aimed at assessing the various paths that tourism destinations can take to improve their contribution to the scope of the SDGs and the 2030 Agenda. That is, not limiting the sustainability progress evaluation to the measurement of some, specific, purely quantitative indicators.

Different tourist destinations, as well as countries in which tourism is of greater or lesser importance, adopt very diverse systems and initiatives. To achieve higher levels of sustainability, these are based on their own socio-cultural, environmental and economic qualities and elements. In the future, it will not be possible to avoid considering these differences and diversities when assessing the path taken by tourist destinations towards 2030.

These indications, along with the need to evaluate all the targets of each SDG (not only those for which official and comparable data are available), add to the objective difficulty of including qualitative indicators in the process, since their mainly binary nature (yes or no, has - does not have) would undermine the assignment of defined colour-coded ranges. These scales would allow obtaining widespread reports that are more appropriate for the intended evaluation and the effective scope of the SDGs. Frequently, this type of indicator works best for the representation of the universe of roads that lead a sector like tourism, to compliance with the SDGs. The inclusion of qualitative indicators in global assessments should require a broad and detailed discussion.

Adopting different indicators according to the availability of local data leads to a decrease of comparability between different situations. Still, a system of answering questions that represent the targets that make up each SDGs can help overcome this limitation. These answers must be provided through the production of evidence (which must be quantifiable) since it calibrates and values the best local and innovative strategies that the various tourism realities put in place to comply with the 2030 Agenda.

The problem of identifying the compliance thresholds, to which associate the globally adopted colours remains, as well as the different influence that the various SDGs have on local aggregate sustainability. These are limitations that have already become apparent at higher level assessments and to which we propose to launch an international call for the definition of systems that will allow the creation of solutions.

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