

Ten Principles for Sustainable Destinations: Charting a new path forward for travel and tourism

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Executive summary

The travel and tourism sector can be an effective vehicle to achieve biodiversity and heritage conservation, targeted climate action and the fulfilment of the Sustainable Development Goals.

The World Economic Forum's Global Future Council on Sustainable Tourism has developed the following principles to guide businesses, governments, destinations, travellers and resident communities to better design and manage tourism destinations and practices for many years to come. Over the past 50 years, international arrivals have grown from 200 million to close to 1.6 billion. This tremendous growth in international connectivity and travel has had countless economic and societal benefits worldwide, not least the contribution of 10% of global GDP in recent years and as the generator of 1 in every 10 jobs.

The entire world felt the impact of the global shutdown in air travel and related tourism services in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Those destinations that depend heavily on international tourism for economic prosperity and development have suffered the most.

While recovery is underway, many stakeholders paused to reconsider how the aviation, travel and tourism sector can emerge together from the major shutdowns in a better position to advance a more resilient, sustainable and equitable sector, one that puts people and planet at its core and prevents patterns such as overcrowding, resident dissatisfaction, and resource degradation and depletion from being the regular spill over effects of rapid tourism development.

The experts of the Global Future Council on Sustainable Tourism sought to combat several trends in travel and tourism management and design:

- Overcrowding, mismanaged growth, the degradation of natural and cultural assets and the unequal distribution of benefits to local economies and across value chains are in many instances harming the tourism sector and its potential benefits.
- Travel and tourism investments and behaviours have not adequately accounted for the value

of the natural environment on land and in the oceans. Acknowledging and quantifying the inherent tourism and economic value of protected areas and natural assets are crucial to preserving the long-term value of tourism for travellers and businesses alike.

- The urgency of climate action can no longer be ignored and the tourism industry has seen increased awareness and action in the face of this urgent need. Actions and investments are required to avoid further significant disruptions in the travel and tourism sector as it can be particularly vulnerable to climate impacts.

The principles contained herein are interconnected by design and usefully aligned to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The intent of the council in articulating these ten principles is to demonstrate that with adequate governance and considerate redesign, instead of being at great risk from future shocks such as loss of biodiversity, community dissatisfaction and climate impact, tourism can be an effective vehicle for biodiversity and heritage conservation, targeted climate action and the fulfilling of many of the SDGs.

Furthermore, given the diversity of stakeholders required to achieve such bold change, the principles endeavour to provide a shared vocabulary that drives aligned action between businesses, governments and travellers alike. Each principle showcases best-in-class innovations and resources, sharing valuable examples where cities, regions or countries have already adopted practices that preserve the local heritage and natural resources, incentivize responsible behaviours from businesses and travellers, foster equitable local economic development, monitor progress and impact scientifically, and calibrate services and governance practices to ensure the resilience and longevity of the people, places and processes that will preserve these destinations for decades to come.

Introduction

Sustainable destinations are vital to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

1.6 billion
international tourist arrivals in 2019

The travel industry has had an unprecedented journey over the last few decades. From the 1970s to 2019, international tourist arrivals grew from 200 million to 1.6 billion. As a result, many places struggled with overtourism and the resulting resident dissatisfaction. Other places struggled to attract tourism and capture that capital for local conservation and communities. In 2020, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, tourism came to an unprecedented stop globally. The sector was one of the hardest hit by pandemic-related border closures and public health measures, which left tourism businesses and tourism-driven economies permanently changed.

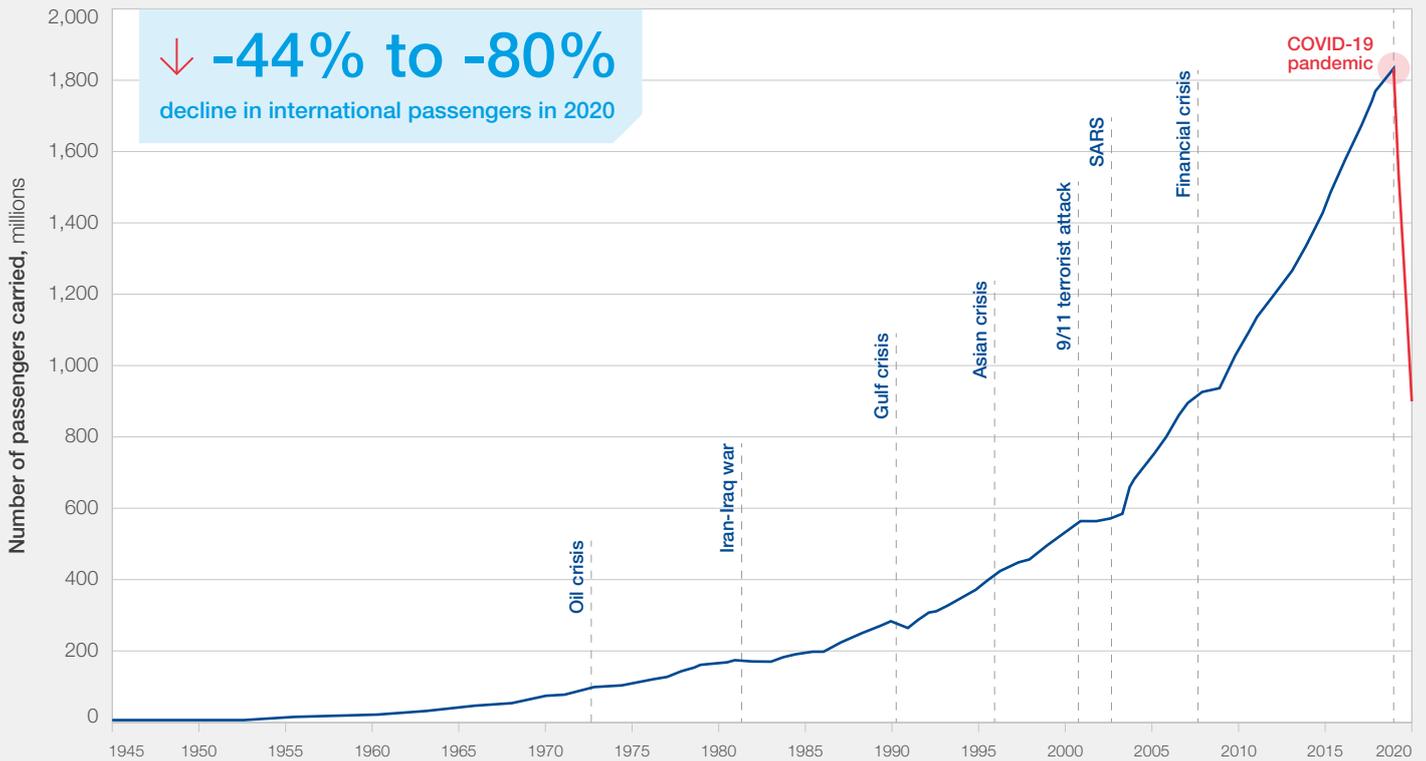
While there are positive signs of recovery, business and leisure travellers alike have become more discerning and more cautious about the impact of further COVID-19 developments or related travel disruptions and increasingly considerate of the impact of their travel choices on climate, the environment and communities. As governments and businesses cautiously reconsider investment strategies, risk mitigation and how to manage continued demand volatility, there is no better time for destinations to

inventory their assets and make plans to restore and shape the conditions and management of places for the long run. Tourism's astounding growth in the past 50 years has contributed substantially to global job creation and economic development; but as with many sectors, it has not been without impact on the global climate crisis, biodiversity and traditional ways of preserving environments held by communities worldwide. With adequate governance and considerate redesign, tourism can instead be an effective vehicle for biodiversity conservation and climate action and help fulfil the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The World Economic Forum's Global Future Council on Sustainable Tourism has collectively developed these Ten Principles for Sustainable Destinations to guide policy-makers, businesses and destination management companies to enable positive planning and behaviour change to restore destinations and optimize their offerings for a sustainable future. The principles are usefully aligned with the SDGs so that they can be integrated meaningfully into existing or complementary initiatives or planning processes that seek to achieve the Global Goals.



FIGURE 1 | World international passenger traffic evolution, 1945-2020



Source: The World Bank, based on International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) Air Transport Reporting Form A and Form A-S plus ICAO estimates, <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/IS.AIR.PSGR>.

Thoughtful and inclusive destination management can shape the sustainable future of tourism

🗨️ **Destinations draw on a bundle of demand drivers, resources and assets like nature, culture, existing capital and infrastructure to attract travellers. Yet they often don't reinvest effectively into those assets as part of the overall business model.**

Destinations are the nuclei of tourism – the landing pad supplied by a place for the traveller to experience and consume. According to the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), “the main destination of a tourism trip is defined as the place visited that is central to the decision to take the trip”¹ and is closely associated with the purpose of the trip. Therefore, destination management greatly influences forms of tourism, tourism demand and its impact. The sustainable management of destinations is at the core of a sustainable future for the sector. It is the responsibility of the place as well as the value chain of the stakeholders supporting the travel experience of that place. Travellers should also be part of these stakeholders since their behaviour has an enormous effect on destinations and their sustainable development. Traditionally governments or tourism bodies have spent far more on destination marketing than on destination management and this must change.

Destinations draw on a bundle of demand drivers, resources and assets like nature, culture, existing capital and infrastructure to attract travellers. Yet they often don't reinvest effectively into those assets as part of the overall business model for a

destination. If not managed well, those assets can be overexploited and destroyed. Different actors participate, knowingly and often unknowingly, positively and negatively, in shaping a destination's development path through their decisions and behaviour. Destination development impacts the social, natural and economic environment.

All destinations are managed – implicitly and explicitly. Too often, there is a decentralized non-coordinated approach when actors like tourists demand activities of independent companies that offer services without considering positive or negative externalities on the destination (the proverbial tail wagging the dog.) Ideally, there is explicit management involving an inclusive destination development plan with a purpose, vision and strategy – with coordinated mechanisms that align the behaviour of actors, control the use of resources and coordinate the visitor flow and experience. The 10 principles presented in this paper provide guidance, best practices and possible tools for stakeholders to collaboratively and effectively reconsider how they manage a destination, deliberately and proactively designing for the resilience and sustainability of the place, the people and the products it includes.

FIGURE 2 | Sustainable destinations



FIGURE 3 | Ten principles and their relationship to the Sustainable Development Goals



Source: Based on the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, <https://sdgs.un.org/goals>

“ Done well, destination management both protects a place and the businesses that rely on the travel industry. Done poorly, it erodes a place, its businesses and everyone’s experience.”

Done well, destination management both protects a place and the businesses that rely on the travel industry. Done poorly, it erodes a place, its businesses and everyone’s – including residents’ – experience. The pre-pandemic global travel boom until 2019 showed the possible impacts the challenges of insufficient destination management might have, with consequences like overtourism and the degradation of assets as more visible effects. The impacts of poor destination management can include overexploitation of cultural and natural resources; negative economic impacts on communities like inflation, price bubbles created by tourists’ higher purchasing power, and loss of livelihoods; the overuse of infrastructure leading to dangerous local conditions; a lack of connecting visitor revenue with local communities for long-term

job creation and sustainable livelihoods; backlash and anger where resources are skewed towards visitors versus locals; or feelings of a lack of control as local communities bear the costs of not being included in destination design and management.

The uncertainties of the pandemic through 2021 and the beginning of 2022 have given destinations a once-in-a-lifetime moment to reset their trajectory for a sustainable future. This pause in business as usual since COVID-19 has allowed destinations some time to do the inclusive conceptual work, allocate resources and adjust business models before travellers return in full. These 10 principles are set out to guide decision-makers in their pursuit to “build back better”.





Certify and monitor scientifically

Sustainable destinations implement standards, certifications and a balanced set of evidence-based metrics to enable the transition to a more sustainable, inclusive and resilient sector.

Principle definition

Tourism businesses use numerous key results to measure and set targets for their operations, management and finance. Destinations routinely establish and monitor performance indicators such as investment, room supply, international and domestic air capacity, visitor numbers and expenditure. Sustainable destinations complement these traditional operational and economic indicators with scientific and evidence-based measurements of indicators and key results that

demonstrate the contribution of tourism activities to people, planet and prosperity. These include social and cultural indicators, environmental indicators and additional economic indicators as they relate to local livelihoods, alleviating poverty, sustaining the value of cultural and natural assets, and building the prosperity of the local community more broadly. Finally, sustainable destinations employ standards and certifications to incentivize the adoption of sustainability practices and the measurement thereof.

The need

Tourism businesses continually update short-, medium- and long-term objectives and performance indicators to survive and prosper. They are also increasingly adopting environmental, social and corporate governance frameworks for their operations. Standards and certifications provide guiding principles that define the implementation of sustainable tourism at industry and destination levels. Consistency is required to achieve a common understanding of sustainability that governments, businesses and travellers can relate to. For the tourism sector to prosper and survive

in the rapidly evolving global green economy, all its components will need to set sustainability objectives and – importantly – put in place processes to measure these objectives through adequate indicators. In sum, sustainable destinations must ensure measurements are scientific and leverage certifications to manage and shape the sector's transformation and adapt to challenges such as climate change, biodiversity loss, resource depletion, over-tourism, pandemics, digital disruption, growing inequality, remote destination poverty and rapidly changing consumer demand.

The reset path

The COVID-19 pandemic has reinforced the importance of good science to global survival. It also provides an unprecedented market and systemic reset for visitors, businesses, destinations and nation-states to work together to enhance the well-being of local people, protect the planet and build more resilient and prosperous destinations going forward. The path of change responds to the UNWTO's call to rebuild tourism sustainably.

In this setting, standards, certifications and scientific measurements provide a methodology to verify and report changes to achieve sustainability goals.

Setting ambitious yet achievable goals and targets, and establishing indicators for these that are continually measured and monitored, will be the key to success.

Behaviour change

Destinations

Many international and national organizations have developed sets of sustainable tourism indicators focused on tourism's positive and negative impacts on communities and the environment at a destination, broadening traditional economic measures. Destinations have a primary role in promoting the broader adoption of standards and certification, incentivizing an industry that is ready to drive change. In this reset, integrating standards and certifications used by the financial sector will also be needed to drive sustainable investment and address cross-border issues.

Destinations differ; although some indicators will apply universally, some will be specific to individual destinations – ski tourism differs from coastal and marine tourism or city events. Hence, most indicator systems recommend core and supplementary ones and are based on an initial participatory strategic planning exercise to identify the destination's sustainability needs and objectives. Similarly, standards and certifications need to have a dynamic development-oriented component that aligns with development goals, paying respect to the different contexts and positions on the destination/industry development path and therefore allowing for diversity in the contexts of how the standards are fulfilled.

Case studies and best practices

The Global Sustainable Tourism Criteria (GSTC) for Industry and Destinations serve as a global standard, the minimum baseline to which all standards should adhere. To navigate certifications, the [Global Sustainable Tourism Council](#) has aligned with Assurance Services International to verify certifications in the marketplace to meet International Organization for Standardization (ISO) requirements for certification bodies.

[Ecotourism Australia](#)'s eco-certification certifies tourism enterprises working in natural and protected areas with strong interpretation values and a commitment to nature conservation. It also helps local communities gain eco-certification if they measure and achieve results in areas such as responsible marketing, contribution to conservation, working with local communities and cultural respect and sensitivity.

The [Travelyst coalition](#) has developed a framework of unified standards across enterprises to enable tourism operators to be recognized as meeting sustainability criteria built on existing standards mechanisms like

Travellers

Recognizing the value travellers are now putting on sustainable experiences, certifying institutions can act as third-party verifiers to ensure the adoption of standards and certifications that are easy to understand and that travellers can embrace. By making purchasing decisions based on standards and certifications, travellers can demand change in the industry.

Enterprises

Businesses large and small are increasingly taking their corporate social responsibilities (CSR) seriously. Many because of a moral purpose and perhaps many more responding to investors, consumers, employees, governments and civil society in the communities where they operate – conveying a social license to the business to operate in their destination. In tourism, such CSR actions tend to focus on increasing local community benefit, supporting local cultural practices and reducing impacts on climate, biodiversity, water and waste, among others. Businesses committed to fostering sustainable destinations integrate the relevant sustainability and resilience targets and measurements into their core business model, going beyond mere CSR expectations.

GSTC. Thus far, Google and Booking.com have implemented the first version of the framework as it relates to accommodation, supporting customers to make more sustainable choices.

The [UNESCO Sustainable Travel Pledge](#), launched with Expedia and piloted in Thailand, incentivizes the use of concrete measures to promote sustainable tourism practices and heritage conservation. Signatories must share what sustainability practices they already have in place and their 12-month plans, providing quantifiable information on their initiatives.

There are no clear standards for financing tourism. However, the Inter-American Development Bank's Private Sector Division has developed a set of criteria to evaluate sustainable tourism investment. The Asian Development Bank and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development have recently developed criteria focusing on coastal and ocean tourism investments, although they are not yet published.

“ **Businesses committed to fostering sustainable destinations integrate relevant sustainability and resilience targets and measurements into their core business model.** ”

TABLE 1 | Principle 1: Certify and monitor scientifically

Tools	Resources	Research
<p>The Global Sustainable Tourism Council manages the Global Sustainable Tourism Criteria, which need to be followed to be internationally recognized for following sustainable tourism practices.</p> <p>The ISEAL Code of Good Practice, published in 2014 by the ISEAL Alliance, provides guidance on setting social and environmental standards that meet international guidelines.</p> <p>The Handbook for Sustainable Tourism Practitioners – The Essential Toolbox, edited by Anna Spenceley, addresses certification audit support, certification bodies, certification governance, and certification processes, programmes, requirements, schemes and systems.</p> <p>Griffith University and the University of Surrey developed the Global Sustainable Tourism Dashboard to provide broader insight into how the sector is contributing to key sustainability goals on indicators including poverty alleviation, protected areas, gender equality and carbon emissions.</p> <p>The European Commission has developed the European Tourism Indicator System toolkit for sustainable development management, including a management tool, a monitoring system and a set of case studies.</p> <p>The Global Destination Sustainability Index benchmarks and incentivizes the improved sustainability performance of a destination as aligned to the SDGs.</p>	<p>The Science Based Targets initiative provides a pathway for corporations to reduce their GHG emissions. Its Business Ambition for 1.5°C campaign calls on companies to commit to science-based emissions targets according to guidance for different sectors.</p> <p>Overtourism: Lessons for a Better Future, edited by Martha Honey and Kelsey Frenkie, includes a section on standards and certifications in the Destination Governance chapter</p> <p>The European Commission published a regulation in 2020 providing for a Taxonomy for Sustainable Activities that classifies environmentally sustainable activities across economic sectors and defines minimum standards to qualify as “green”. Purely voluntary, the standards aim to orient the financial markets to support more sustainable investments.</p> <p>The Sustainable Tourism in Africa: Standards as Essential Catalysts note is a useful compendium of how standards can help improve environmental and social issues associated with tourism and catalyse tourism activities to generate benefits for destinations.</p> <p>The World Economic Forum’s Travel and Tourism Development Index 2021 benchmarks 117 countries on 112 indicators depicting their performance in sustainable and resilient tourism.</p> <p>The UNWTO has established a Working Group of Experts on Measuring Sustainable Tourism that is working to develop a Statistical Framework to measure the sustainability of tourism, resulting in a draft for consultation.</p> <p>The World Travel and Tourism Council and SUNx have launched the Malta Climate Friendly Travel Registry metrics, which allow travel and tourism organizations to transparently and progressively declare the advancement of their carbon reduction ambitions through to 2050.</p>	<p>Black, R. & Crabtree, A. (Eds.), 2007, Quality assurance and certification in ecotourism. This is a useful compendium of tools and case studies on the role of certifications, codes of conduct and indicators in ecotourism.</p> <p>Kotsovos, D., 2016, Towards sustainable tourism indicators: Linking the Canadian Tourism Satellite Account 2012 with the Canadian System of Environmental-Economic Accounts, prepared for the 14th OECD Global Forum on Tourism Statistics.</p> <p>Whittlesea, E., Becken, S., Jago, L., & Pham, T., 2019, A New Indicator Framework for Australia’s Visitor Economy, Griffith University.</p>



Cultivate the workforce

Sustainable destinations nurture and retain a motivated and trained workforce to deliver services at the quality and efficiency required while ensuring workers share the values and purpose associated with pursuing sustainable and resilient destinations.

Principle definition

As a service industry geared towards customer enjoyment and satisfaction, the tourism sector must always ensure a level of service quality that meets high expectations. This need is reinforced by the sustainability drive, which can only be delivered

with staff that harbour both a sense of purpose and proven skills. It is therefore critical for sustainable destinations to cultivate their workforce through engagement, empowerment, training and attractive employment terms and conditions.

The need

The COVID-19 pandemic has significantly impacted employment in the travel and tourism sector. According to the International Labour Organization (ILO), the sector comprised globally some 334 million jobs pre-COVID-19, 30% of which were part of microenterprises (less than 10 staff), 54% held by women (vs 39% in global employment) and with most staff under 35 years of age.² The pandemic triggered economic collapse for the sector, with a fall of 74% in international arrivals, a multitude of businesses failing and job losses representing 18.5% of the sector, some 62 million jobs.³ The period following the bulk of COVID-19 lockdowns is also affected by the so-called “great resignation” phenomenon, which is hitting the tourism sector

hard as many staff have either switched to other sectors (due to faster reopening, better work conditions, new aspirations, etc.) or stopped working altogether. An analysis by the World Travel & Tourism Council focussing on six major country destinations suggests shortages ranging from 9% to 18% compared to labour demand in the second half of 2021.⁴ And day-to-day empirical evidence allows everyone to observe flights cancelled for lack of ground handling personnel and restaurants and hotels only partially open due to staff shortages.

Cultivating the workforce is therefore a fundamental enabling factor for the sector to thrive and meet sustainability principles.

The reset path

Even before the COVID-19 pandemic, several systemic issues affected the tourism sector’s attractiveness to workers. These include excessively long working hours, antisocial shifts, low wages, high turnover, limited or a lack of social protections, the extent of job informality, and gender discrimination. The World Travel & Tourism Council projects an 18% rise in jobs as the tourism sector reopens fast in 2022, taking the global tally close to pre-pandemic levels. These legacy

factors represent a drag on the sector’s ability to fully recover, attract back the labour required and grow further in the future. They also magnify the sustainability challenges facing tourism as the availability and engagement of the workforce is crucial to implementing the necessary changes in this people-facing business. Therefore, reform and behaviour change must address these challenges immediately to alleviate constraints and pave the way for a more sustainable future.

334
million
jobs in the travel
and tourism sector
globally pre-
COVID-19

“ Employees are increasingly seeking control over their work-life balance and greater job security and social protections in the face of job losses.

Behaviour change

Enterprises

Employees are increasingly seeking control over their work-life balance, which can be challenging to achieve in shift or service work, as well as greater job security and social protections in the face of job losses. Businesses should go beyond remote working as the only vehicle for creating workplace flexibility and consider innovative options like cross-training teams, empowering employees to make appropriate schedule changes or shift swaps, compressing work weeks or creating pooled paid time off banks. Ensuring decent work conditions and fair wages should be foundational to fostering a productive workforce and retaining staff during more uncertain periods. Employees are also simultaneously looking for shared values and a sense of purpose from their organizations, especially with new generations joining the workforce. It will become a differentiating factor for workplaces and employers to have practices that

emulate values of equity, inclusiveness, stewardship of the planet and people and climate alignment.

Governments

As the sector transforms, policy-makers can play a substantial role in upskilling and reskilling talent for the travel and tourism industry. Government schemes can support the identification and development of emerging and in-demand skills and support the diversification of training that supports a more flexible and adaptable workforce.

Effective policies can also incentivize and promote lifelong learning and apprentice-based training for individuals in the sector, building a talent pipeline. Most importantly, policy-makers have a leading role in ensuring labour conditions and workers' rights are well protected, rolling out social security efforts and decent work conditions across the sector.

Case studies and best practices

- The 2022 ILO report on the [Future of Work in the Tourism Sector](#) outlines a comprehensive action plan to foster the tourism sector's inclusive, safe, fair, resilient and sustainable recovery based on four pillars:
 1. **Job creation engine:** leverage women, youth and migrant populations for job creation; transition from job informality; develop green jobs linked to the circular economy, eco-tourism and conservation; develop skills and lifelong learning through technical and vocational education and training, notably with respect to digitalization.
 2. **Social protection and work conditions:** roll out social security across the sector; improve occupational health and safety; regulate working hours and patterns; give due consideration to work-life balance.
 3. **Social dialogue:** recognize the role of freedom of association and collective bargaining; promote good workplace management and labour relations.
 4. **ILO standards:** guarantee rights at work in line with international standards, notably equality, non-discrimination and child labour.
- SkillsFuture Singapore (SSG), Workforce Singapore (WSG) and the Singapore Tourism Board (STB) have developed the [Skills Framework for Tourism](#) to proactively prepare the country's workforce for expected travel demand by enabling the mastery of existing and emerging skills and promoting lifelong learning.

TABLE 2

Principle 2: Cultivate workforce

Tools

The 2021 World Travel & Tourism Council [Staff Shortages](#) report covers reskilling and retaining talent and includes case studies.

The International Labour Organization's 2022 report on [The future of work in the tourism sector](#) provides a comprehensive analysis of issues in the sector post-COVID-19 and outlines an action plan to make it more attractive.

The Harvard Business School [Hidden Workers: Untapped Talent](#) report, updated in 2021, is not specific to tourism but outlines the global discrepancy between staff shortages and global underemployment.

The 2021 Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) report on [Preparing the Tourism Workforce for the Digital Future](#) focuses on digitalization, a key development factor for tourism.



Prioritize communities

Sustainable destinations prioritize and engage communities in planning and stewarding a tourism destination.

Principle definition

The well-being of residents and local or indigenous communities is indisputably one of the main tourism assets of any destination and thus contributes greatly to the integrity of a destination and impacts tourism services and experiences. Inclusive, transparent tourism destination management planning processes prioritizing continuous community engagement lay a foundation to establish

shared values, a sense of purpose, a social license and legitimacy. In turn, this creates destination plans and implementation strategies that improve resident well-being in all its forms, promote the resiliency of a destination and better distribute the economic benefits of tourism activity across the value chain. It also elevates the quality of the traveller's experience and, ultimately, the destination's brand.

The need

One of the fastest-growing financial and job creation sectors before the COVID-19 pandemic, tourism positively and negatively impacted local communities. Its growth exposed foundational destination management weaknesses on many levels, with outcomes such as economic inequality, financial leakage, housing unaffordability, resident and employee dissatisfaction, and the degradation of the community's social fabric having a disproportionate impact on residents

and local communities. In too many cases, economic development and revenue generation in destinations is concentrated with larger businesses and attractions. However, a move to a more inclusive community-prioritizing tourism approach empowers local communities and should support the development of local attractions, skills and small and medium-sized enterprises, with the aim of enabling the more equitable distribution of the benefits of tourism in the destination.

The reset path

The pandemic presents an unprecedented market and occasion to create recovery strategies that emphasize the social and cultural well-being of communities as equal to driving the economic, infrastructure and biodiversity benefits of tourism.

There is no singular roadmap for the creation of inclusive, sustainable destination management and implementation strategies in a multi-sector, multi-layered environment with different governance models, conflicting agendas, shared values and economic environments.

The UNWTO, World Travel & Tourism Council, Future of Tourism Coalition, Destination Stewardship

Center and other organizations have advanced COVID-19 recovery strategies that prioritize community engagement and social inclusion.⁵

For example, the UNWTO advocates three social inclusion priorities in its [Recommendations for the Transition to a Green Travel and Tourism Economy](#):

1. Support and involve vulnerable groups
2. Focus on the needs of micro-, small, and medium-sized enterprises
3. Repurpose tourism as a supporter of the community.

“ A more inclusive community-prioritizing tourism approach empowers local communities and should support the development of local attractions, skills and small and medium-sized enterprises.



Behaviour change

Government

It is in the best interest of government leaders to create and support an inclusive destination planning framework and management practices that delicately incorporate and balance the community's well-being alongside and equal to the protection of its natural and cultural resources, the financial health of direct and indirect travel service suppliers, and the traveller's experience. All are the destination's tourism assets.

Community and industry

It is in the best interests of communities and the travel industry to advocate for and participate in a holistic destination management planning process and provide continuous, constructive feedback for destination leaders and managers. Businesses should invest in environmental, social and governance policies and practices that guide their internal procedures and influence suppliers through practices such as sustainable sourcing. Additionally, communities and the travel industry are uniquely positioned to market and offer sustainable experiences and educate travellers on minimum impact travel practices before, during and after their trips.

Concrete steps

- Establish, strengthen and codify tourism planning and investment laws and regulations to incentivize stakeholders to foster community well-being and inclusion
- Build a network of community and industry leaders to engage stakeholders and implement the destination's vision and goals
- Endorse the Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC) Destination Standard as its 38 destination criteria and indicators contribute to the 7 SDGs and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development
- Establish resident satisfaction key performance indicators (KPIs)/metrics to establish and measure community well-being
- Create an inclusive community-driven destination management planning process, starting with positions of alignment and removing participation/engagement barriers
- Allocate resources for capacity building and technical assistance
- Create a platform for frequent stakeholder consultation and social safeguards to manage risk and improve outcomes.

Case studies and best practices

The 2022 [Destination Stewardship Report](#) from the Destination Stewardship Center and GSTC Center provides GSTC-certified destination profiles highlighting planning and implementation best practices.

The Hawaii Tourism Authority's [Hawai'i Island Destination Management Action Plan 2021–2023](#) is a community-based tourism management plan with a resident sentiment assessment, situational analysis, vision and detailed action plan.

The George Town (Penang, Malaysia) heritage management committee (GTWHI) has launched

the Life after Covid19 programme to provide digital marketing support for local businesses that are more than 10 years old, one-off financial reimbursement for the repair of heritage premises and support for cultural heritage practitioners by producing videos that showcase their skills, knowledge and crafts.

The Bhutan Tourism Council and Gross National Happiness Centre provide a [Gross National Happiness Index](#) to measure the population's well-being and a [screening tool](#) to evaluate and monitor development projects and policies.

TABLE 3 Principle 3: Prioritize communities

Tools	Resources
<p>The Global Sustainable Tourism Council Destination Criteria and Indicators provide criteria, indicators and KPIs for community and social well-being as signposts to measure and validate progress.</p> <p>The UNESCO World Heritage Sustainable Tourism Toolkit includes a guide for engaging local communities and businesses to understand and access the mutual benefits of more sustainable destinations.</p> <p>The Guideline for Organizing Workshops to Green the Tourism Value Chain published by GIZ (German Cooperation – Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit) in 2015 is an excellent resource for designing and conducting multistakeholder, inclusive, tourism development and management planning workshops.</p>	<p>The World Bank's Environmental & Social Framework makes important advances in areas such as transparency, non-discrimination, public participation and accountability – as well as biodiversity conservation and indigenous peoples.</p> <p>The IFC's Stakeholder Engagement: A Good Practice Handbook for Companies Doing Business in Emerging Markets specifically targets engagement with stakeholder groups that are external to a business's core operations, such as NGOs, local authorities and affected communities.</p> <p>The IFC's Environmental and Social Performance Standards help identify risks and avoid, mitigate and manage them to do business more sustainably. The sustainability criteria include risk management, labour, resource efficiency, community, land resettlement, biodiversity, indigenous people and cultural heritage.</p> <p>The World Wildlife Foundation developed an Environmental and Social Safeguards Framework based on the principles and guidance contained in the IFC and World Bank standards and framework and that applies to all investment policy financing projects.</p>





Align visitors

Sustainable destinations adequately manage visitors in line with their carrying capacity and enable visitors to choose and act sustainably through marketing, education, management and monitoring.

“ Destination managers and businesses should create mechanisms to measure, support, monitor and reward sustainable visitor behaviour, acting swiftly when safety and sustainability are endangered.

Principle definition

Visitors are the centre of the tourism experience. They have the power to encourage travel to be a force for good while minimizing their impact on the destinations in which they are guests. Through visitor engagement strategies, resource consumption and waste can be reduced considerably and the tourism experience can become an enabler of education for sustainability and contribute to positive effects in the local community. Sustainable destinations enable visitors to make sustainable choices through adequate marketing and education and by

generating awareness of possible adverse impacts. Destination managers also create mechanisms to measure, support, monitor and reward sustainable visitor behaviour, acting swiftly when safety and sustainability are endangered. These mechanisms can be best achieved through collaborations with industry partners, which align their marketing and actions accordingly. The adequate planning and management of visitors should avoid congestion, consider the carrying capacity at the destination and actively seek to promote strategies to spread out visitors to loosen seasonality patterns.

The need

Before COVID-19, destinations had started to take more proactive approaches to visitor management in response to the adverse effects produced by overcrowding and overtourism. This includes managing visitor flows by spreading them across time, reducing seasonality and space to avoid congestion. Destinations also need to educate visitors on how to reduce environmental and social impacts at the destination level and highlight ways they can produce positive impacts by supporting local conservation efforts that benefit both people and nature. Visitors, in turn, represent a standalone force since they can proactively make decisions

to choose experiences, products and sites based on sustainability criteria and stay engaged after they leave. The need for innovative approaches to manage and educate visitors comes from the unique character of the tourism experience, in which positive outcomes can truly be achieved only if visitors contribute to sustainability goals. This can occur when visitors align themselves with sustainable development by choosing sustainable services and reducing the impact of their consumption. Meanwhile, destination managers and industry should strive to offer and promote ways visitors can contribute to sustainability.

The reset path

The COVID-19 pandemic has increased visitors' awareness of the need to travel more sustainably. Meanwhile, it has exposed those destinations that rely heavily on tourism while at the same time providing a much-needed break to oceans and natural reservoirs. To ensure visitors actively contribute to sustainability goals, destinations should make sure to create guidelines and marketing strategies to inform and educate them about environmental and cultural sensitivities. Destinations should be able to monitor visitors' behaviour,

understand tourism dynamics and develop innovative ways of rewarding positive actions for the environment and society or to step in to prevent adverse impacts. Visitors can also seek information proactively before travelling to a destination and choose to support more sustainable tourism activities that contribute to conservation, poverty reduction or resilience. Widespread and growing awareness among the wider travel community creates a unique opportunity to find ways to engage visitors and make them contribute positively to sustainable changes.

“ Traveller behaviour is essential to driving sustainability and imparting change. Travellers should signal to their tourism providers that sustainability matters.

Behaviour change

Destination management

Destination managers need to produce comprehensive strategic planning based on their carrying capacity and have mechanisms in place to understand their visitors' behaviour and preferences. This aims to define possible corrective or reward mechanisms and implement comprehensive monitoring and marketing strategies for visitors before, during and after their stay. This can help understand their needs and provide important feedback on how to improve services at the destination and industry levels.

Industry

Hotels and other tourism product or service providers should find ways to minimize their environmental and social impacts, inform and market their environmentally and socially responsible strategies, and engage or even reward

visitors for contributing to them. For visitors seeking to travel more sustainably, it is important to have adequate information to choose responsibly. Ways to disclose sustainable practices are emerging via major providers of intermediate booking services.

Visitors

Travellers need to be aware of the sustainability challenges facing destinations and that their behaviour is essential to driving sustainability and imparting change. Travellers should signal to their tourism providers that sustainability matters and ask questions about the sustainable and culturally relevant activities in the places they visit. They can proactively seek information before they travel, choose the sustainable consumption of tourism products and services and, if they wish, partake in making a change through activities and by maintaining a connection after they leave.

Case studies and best practices

[GreenStep Sustainable Tourism](#) is a coalition that provides assessments, programmes and certifications to help tourism destinations and businesses measure and improve their sustainability performance and create awareness among visitors. They adopt a scorecard to analyse tourism business based on GSTC tourism criteria and subscribe to a joint pledge to be more sustainable.

Several initiatives have been established to inform travellers of sustainable choices.

- [Booking.com](#) has started to integrate sustainability information into their platforms.
- [Book Different](#) is one of the largest online travel agents providing responsible tourism options based on verified sustainability indicators using the GSTC index.
- [Goodwings](#) allows travellers to automatically offset their carbon emissions when they book.
- [Regenerative Travel](#) is a coalition that informs travellers of their impact and provides sustainable travel options to positively contribute to a destination's environment and society.

There are also initiatives that reward or engage travellers in sustainable actions. For instance:

- To celebrate World Water Day on 22 March, [Hostelling International USA \(HI USA\)](#), a national non-profit with more than 50 hostels nationwide, has announced [The Million Gallon Challenge](#) to enlist guests to help them save 1 million gallons of water over the next year.
- [Visit Scotland](#) has developed an [Action Plan for Visitor Management](#) based on three main pillars:
 1. Education and marketing – to promote sustainable tourism and responsible behaviour
 2. Operational – to coordinate visitors on the ground
 3. Coordination – to facilitate coordinated strategy implementation and monitoring.

TABLE 4 | Principle 4: Align visitors

Tools	Resources	Research
<p>UNESCO's Geopark Management Toolkit has a section dedicated to visitor management and engagement through marketing, education programmes, interpretation and collaborations with industry and community.</p> <p>The Green Tourism Toolkit created by the Thanet District Council Tourism Team in the United Kingdom shows businesses how they can start to take small, simple steps towards sustainability and provides best practices examples. It also shows how consumers are considering sustainability in their travel choices, providing tips on how tourism businesses can showcase their best practices. Links to training opportunities for businesses and their staff also feature, along with signposting to further information sources.</p> <p>Tools from other organizations include National Geographic's 6 Ways to Be a more Sustainable Traveler and the Sustainable Travel Group's Top 10 Tips for Sustainable Travel.</p>	<p>Transforming Travel: Realising the potential of sustainable tourism, by Jeremy Smith and published by CAB International, provides case studies of hotels that rewards the environmental behaviour of visitors.</p>	<p>Shackley, M. (Ed.), 1988, Visitor Management: Case Studies from World Heritage Sites, 1st ed. This publication provides research, best practices and useful case studies on visitor management.</p> <p>IUCN, 2018, Tourism and visitor management in protected areas: Guidelines for sustainability, Leung, Spenceley, Hvenegaard & Buckley (Eds.), Best Practice Protected Area Guidelines Series No. 27. This publication provides important guidelines for nature-based tourism destinations.</p>





Protect heritage

Sustainable destinations protect the culture and heritage of tourism destinations in a thoughtful way that ensures the preservation of their historic, cultural and natural heritage.

Principle definition

The protection of heritage within sustainable tourism needs the early involvement of local people. They should be key decision-makers in creating a structure to protect their identity and the identity of place in a way that is authentic, non-intrusive

and ensures longevity. By ensuring that tourism initiatives are led locally and involve key community stakeholders, destinations can allow visitors to enjoy and learn about local practices while avoiding the erosion of cultural and natural heritage.

The need

Cultural and natural heritage may be a critical sustainable livelihood resource for the local population. The observation of and involvement in local cultural practices and traditions, be they artistic, linguistic, tangible goods or other unique experiences, is often one of the biggest appeals of a destination to non-local visitors.

Rapid tourism growth has created, at times, excessive demand for these experiences, leading

to strains on communities and the dilution or loss of traditional practices and livelihoods to meet the needs of foreign visitors. Avoiding the over-commercialization of traditional cultural practices is essential to preserving a destination's heritage. Tourism should always benefit local communities, allowing them to enjoy the economic, ecological and social benefits of sustainable tourism while avoiding any loss or negative impact on the authenticity of these practices.

The reset path

The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the fragility of many communities, especially those dependent on tourism. It has also allowed for a period of reflection regarding sustainable tourism practices and how to better protect destinations, many of which have felt the impacts of over-tourism and seen the dilution or even loss of local culture in attempts to appeal to mass tourism in recent years.

The renewed appetite and demand for travel and tourism that is now being seen as the world starts to move past the pandemic alongside increasing global conversations about the importance of locally led solutions for communities present a window to

implement new ideas that help strengthen and protect destinations – both economically and culturally.

The opportunity to involve key local stakeholders in the decision-making processes for tourism will help ensure local communities benefit economically and when it comes to protecting their heritage.

The [UNWTO](#), [World Travel & Tourism Council](#), [Future of Tourism Coalition](#) and [Destination Stewardship Center](#) have created recovery strategies with community engagement and social inclusion as a central pillar of their Build Back Better strategies.⁶

“ Culture and traditions can include traditional environmental knowledge, which can be embedded in the management of the destination as a whole and even translated into certain business practices.

Behaviour change

Governments

Local and national authorities should facilitate tangible and intangible heritage protection and enlist the broader network of businesses that profit from tourism. Governments should create the appropriate platforms for frequent stakeholder consultation and design all-encompassing strategies to generate conservation plans where all tourism stakeholders, including visitors, are aware of the importance of heritage conservation and actively seek to contribute to it.

Destinations

Destination managers should engage with conservation managers. Too often, tourism managers are focused more on promotion than on management. Additionally, they should build a network of community and industry leaders to engage stakeholders and implement the destination’s vision and goals. Attention should

be paid to assessing the carrying capacity of a destination according to measurements that account for both the preservation of tangible heritage assets, whether biodiversity, cultural landscapes or historical ensembles, and for intangible heritage, including culture and traditional businesses.

Sector-wide

To truly protect heritage, stakeholders must recognize that there are both technological and traditional tools for heritage preservation. Culture and traditions can include traditional environmental knowledge, which can be embedded in the management of the destination as a whole and even translated into certain business practices. This traditional environmental knowledge inventory can be crucial to sustaining climate resilience and promoting a conservation plan that preserves both nature and culture. Similarly, it is valuable to create locally led documentation of traditional cultural practices where appropriate.

Case studies and best practices

An article on “[The structural relationship between tourist satisfaction and sustainable heritage tourism development in Tigray, Ethiopia](#)” details a survey aiming to demonstrate the relationship between tourist satisfaction and sustainable heritage tourism development. The results show that socio-cultural sustainability was the strongest predictor of tourist satisfaction.

An article on the Kabaka heritage trail in Uganda (“[Bridging community livelihoods and cultural conservation through tourism](#)”) demonstrates how stakeholders are bridging community livelihoods and cultural conservation through tourism. In recognizing the fragility of local businesses built around cultural heritage and their exposure to

monetary risk when tourism dips, it explores the ability of cultural conservation to enhance community livelihoods.

A case study on “[Locally situated rights and the ‘doing’ of responsibility for heritage conservation and tourism development at the cultural landscape of Honghe Hani Rice Terraces, China](#)” shows that villagers in China play the greatest role in sustaining cultural landscapes for current and future generations. It also demonstrates the challenges that arise when local communities assume responsibility for maintaining the cultural landscape without being able to acquire appropriate compensation and share in the economic benefits of related tourism activity.

TABLE 5

Principle 5: Protect heritage

Tools	Resources	Research
The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) World Heritage Committee’s Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention provides clear criteria and guidelines for establishing a site or property as a World Heritage site.	The UNESCO World Heritage and Sustainable Tourism Programme has established a new approach where tourism and heritage management are integrated at the destination level, ensuring natural and cultural assets are valued and protected. The approach focuses on dialogue and stakeholder engagement. To support this approach, the UNESCO World Heritage Sustainable Tourism Toolkit features “how-to” guides. UNESCO’s Cutting Edge Bringing cultural tourism back in the game provides perspectives on promoting and growing cultural tourism in light of the COVID-19 pandemic, with guidelines on how to leverage cultural tourism for economic development. The European Commission sets out its policy and definitions for cultural heritage and its policy on sustainability and preservation of cultural heritage.	Jelincic, D. & Tišma, S., 2020, Ensuring sustainability of cultural heritage through effective public policies , Urbani Izziv. 31. 78-87, DOI: 10.5379/urbani-izziv-en-2020-31-02-002. This article presents a range of indicators that can be used to practise cultural sustainability: environmental, socio-cultural and economic challenges and actions.



Protect nature

Sustainable destinations recognize that nature underpins healthy societies and economies and encourage stakeholders to prioritize nature conservation, management and restoration.

Principle definition

Nature and biodiversity – the rich diversity of life on Earth – are essential to humanity's survival. It contributes to potable water, breathable oxygen and edible food. During the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, people worldwide reported that being in nature was important to their well-being. Nature and biodiversity tourism drives essential revenue for conservation efforts globally and in many places contributes to local livelihoods

and alleviating poverty. Destinations where nature and biodiversity are prioritized and accounted for are simply more pleasing to visitors than places that are polluted and degraded. Where there has been too much human density or lack of destination management, nature and biodiversity are severely eroded, which makes the place more expensive to manage over time and much less desirable as a destination.

The need

According to [WWF's Living Planet report](#), the population sizes of mammals, birds, fish, amphibians and reptiles have seen an alarming average drop of 68% since 1970. That correlates with human population growth, urbanization and the explosion in international tourism in the last five decades. Restoring nature and biodiversity is also half the climate solution. Even if carbon emissions are halted today, it is necessary to restore forests, peatlands, wetlands and coastlines to absorb the emissions already in the atmosphere. Because the most vulnerable populations suffer when nature and biodiversity are eroded, restoring them is an important solution to growing equity issues as well.

There are two world-enhancing opportunities to protect nature and biodiversity: in places where humans no longer live, national parks and community conservancies – to manage them well and expand them; and everywhere else – to incorporate nature and biodiversity in operations to ensure their restoration and no further erosion. When nature and biodiversity are incorporated as business partners in travel and tourism, they provide cost-effective solutions and a great return on investment for enjoyment and longer term prosperity.

The reset path

Support for nature and biodiversity is growing. More people know it is necessary to keep half of nature intact for humanity to have enough to survive, yet only 7% of the ocean and 17% of land are protected. But as of the end of 2021, 77 countries supported having 30% of land and ocean protected globally by 2030. Businesses are looking closely at their supply chains and beginning to set climate, nature and biodiversity targets. And the investor community is trying to drive more disclosure so that businesses can account for nature and biodiversity in their operations. This ambition is also being matched in the travel sector spanning government, business and travellers: they want to set standards, not just to do less harm but do good. The key to achieving this will be to set ambitious yet achievable

goals and targets and establish indicators that are continually measured and monitored.

While protecting nature and biodiversity might have previously been seen as the role of governments and conservation NGOs, valuing them is increasingly a priority for businesses and travellers. Businesses are learning to account for climate and nature in their operations for smarter supply chain management through collaborations like the Capitals Coalition, Science-Based Network, Project Drawdown and Regeneration. Travellers are choosing destinations based on sustainability criteria and the desire to know how to travel with a limited footprint and give back to local community efforts, including conservation.

-68%

average drop in
animal population
sizes since 1970

“ Sustainable destinations ensure the tourism business model supports and reinvests back into nature and biodiversity conservation instead of eroding it.

Behaviour change

Sustainable destinations ensure the tourism business model supports and reinvests back into nature and biodiversity conservation instead of eroding it. Destination managers, tour operators, local businesses and visitors all share the responsibility for protecting them through a regenerative model by ensuring adequate governance using science-based measurements and adopting nature-based solutions and traditional environmental knowledge and technologies to build climate change resilience. Stakeholders should apply the principles of conservation, restoration and regeneration, taking into consideration the carrying capacity of a certain habitat, and develop mechanisms to allow tourism to fund protected area management, promote visitor interpretation and education of nature and conservation mechanisms that reinforce the connection between wildlife, tourism, conservation and local livelihoods, ensuring that nature tourism enhances the economic value of natural areas and resources.

Case studies and best practices

In 2019, the United Nations named Costa Rica [Champion of the Earth](#) for its direct role in protecting nature and fighting climate change. A 2021 article details how the country made this possible.⁷ Through a combination of protected areas, ecosystem services programmes, and ecotourism, Costa Rica successfully restored its forest cover from 26% in 1983 to over 52% in 2021⁸ — proving that reversing deforestation is possible with the right approach. The country’s sustainable tourism model allows it to seek and attract niche groups of travellers that recognize the unique differences and quality of experiences. Targeting traveller demand that adapts to the conditions the country has on offer drives its success.

Raja Ampat Marine Park Authority in Indonesia works in collaboration with local communities, government and the tourism industry to manage the marine park’s natural resources and maintain the quality of the marine environment while supporting

Destinations

The governance and management of biodiversity, nature and protected areas require destinations to apply protected area co-planning and natural resource co-management concepts while focusing on fair benefit sharing among users, with business plans linked to conservation outcomes. Stakeholders should be engaged to agree on the necessary trade-offs to ensure tourism is sustainable in protected areas in perpetuity, which includes establishing community-based natural resource management systems.

Governments

National and local authorities should ensure that nature and biodiversity are included in planning and development considerations and develop protected area financing plans and ecotourism-based business plans and guidelines. Governments should establish visitor management plans and develop guidelines and standards for tourism concession management that support an overall protection plan.

a sustainable tourism industry. Given that the success of these endeavours is largely dependent upon responsible behaviour from individual tourists and tourism operators within the Marine Park, the authority has published a [clear code of conduct for responsible tourism](#).

With over 150,000 visitors to an extremely fragile ecosystem, the [Galapagos Islands in Ecuador](#) have been at the forefront of sustainable destination management with varying degrees of success. Some things they have done well include managing tourism numbers at different sites by setting carrying capacity limits, restricting the number of visitors, planning boat routes to reduce congestion, requiring boat licenses and not allowing tourists to explore the islands without a guide. Stakeholders have also worked to provide educational opportunities for visitors and local inhabitants, promoting the island’s biodiversity and cultural history.

TABLE 6 | Principle 6: Protect nature

Tools	Resources	Research
<p>The European Union Business and Biodiversity Platform published a sectoral guidance document on Tourism Sector and Biodiversity Conservation: Best Practice Benchmarking in 2010.</p> <p>The UNWTO provides destinations with guidance on protected areas and ecotourism as part of its sustainable development framework.</p> <p>WTTC has a wealth of resources for industry in its Sustainable Growth pillar, including for climate and environment action, rethinking single-use plastics and products in travel and tourism, destination stewardship, biodiversity and illegal wildlife trade, sustainability leadership and sustainability reporting.</p> <p>The Global Sustainable Tourism Council criteria cover destinations, operators and travellers that includes protecting nature in its framework.</p>	<p>The World Economic Forum's New Nature Economy Report Series demonstrates the relevance of nature loss and protection to boardroom discussions, providing pathways for businesses to be part of the transition to a nature-positive economy.</p> <p>The World Economic Forum's Dynamic Briefing on Biodiversity maps the linkages between biodiversity, technology, economic development and environmental challenges.</p> <p>The UNWTO's One Planet Sustainable Tourism Programme published the One Planet Vision for a Responsible Recovery of the Tourism Sector report in 2020. The report includes recommendations for the responsible recovery of the planet through biodiversity conservation and climate action.</p> <p>Together with the G20 tourism working group under Italy's presidency in 2021, the UNWTO developed Recommendations for the Transition to a Green Travel and Tourism Economy.</p>	<p>Naidoo, Gerkey, Hole, Pfaff et al., 2019, Evaluating the impacts of protected areas on human well-being across the developing world, <i>Science Advances</i> 5, no. 4, eaav3006.</p> <p>Waldron, Adams, Allan et al., 2020, <i>Protecting 30% of the planet for nature: costs, benefits and economic implications</i>, Campaign for Nature. This report demonstrates why the benefits of investing in nature far outweigh the costs.</p> <p>Dasgupta, P., 2021, <i>The Economics of Biodiversity: The Dasgupta Review</i>, London: HM Treasury. This independent review sets out how stakeholders should account for nature in economics and decision-making, calling for a shift in how economic success is measured to protect the natural world.</p>





Produce and consume responsibly

Sustainable destinations design and implement strategies to promote responsible consumption and production by all stakeholders and establish mechanisms to promote circular economy pathways in tourism.

Principle definition

Sustainable destinations create a circular tourism economy and collaborate with travel industry stakeholders to develop an integrated plan for sustainable consumption and production (SCP). They adopt science-based environmental management systems to monitor the environmental, social and economic impact of their consumption

and waste using energy, biodiversity, water, waste and livelihood indicators. Sustainable destinations also develop life-cycle assessments, create economic and social incentives to invest in integrated systems and practices, educate the tourism supply chain, and regulate efficiency for direct and indirect tourism providers and visitors to ensure compliance.

The need

Pre-COVID-19, the travel industry was one of the fastest-growing industries in the world, contributing as much as 10% to global GDP. The sheer size and breadth of the industry's resource consumption and waste production present an opportunity to create and implement collaborative, scalable

solutions that bridge the tourism industry and visitors to incentivize and invest in SCP, waste reduction and circular economy strategies. In this context, destinations must create programmes and safeguards with a focus on climate, biodiversity and social inclusion.

The reset path

The growing environmental awareness of both government and consumers, mounting global efforts to reduce climate change and the increasing availability of resources, toolkits and roadmaps to ensure SCP in tourism provide crucial drivers to enable tourism industry stakeholders to implement solutions to change. These can start from country- or region-wide circular economy strategies to redesign travel- and tourism-related industries and can be translated into actionable

and measurable efforts to reduce waste and ensure the efficient use of resources by implementing sound environmental management systems across the industry. Marketing strategies are also essential to engaging visitors and propelling the behaviour changes needed to allow a more sustainable tourism experience that can enhance the destination's image and minimize negative impacts from pollution and resource exploitation on local communities.

Behaviour change

Policy-makers need to design sustainable tourism supply chains at national and local levels. A more proactive approach to SCP entails creating cross-departmental sharing and monitoring of data on resource use for optimization and efficiency, as well as creating public-private partnership agreements to support circular economy frameworks.

Tourism businesses can take a more proactive approach to adopting environmental management

practices and can create mechanisms to engage visitors, generating awareness of sustainable choices and consumption patterns.

Visitor behaviour change can start before the travel experience by being aware of environmental sensitivities and selecting sustainable options for travel to and from and at the destination. Also, the traveller's support for and participation in reducing electricity, water and waste can positively affect destinations and their communities.

Case studies and best practices

To become the world's greenest airport, the Hong Kong Airport has implemented one of the world's most advanced waste and resource use programmes. It includes eco-efficient smart lighting systems, the composting of food waste and the addition of water fountains to promote sustainable behaviour in travellers.

The Hotel Penaga in George Town, Penang, Malaysia, is a perfect example of [blending advanced technologies in traditional buildings through a sensible renovation project](#). Occupying a three-row, double-storey building with terraced houses and shophouses from the 1920s, this hotel is Malaysia's first heritage restoration project to receive the Green Building Index Gold Rating. This rating system includes factors such as living conditions and safety for on-site workers and the extensive use of second-hand materials in the renovation, blended with technology such as solar panels and saltwater pools to reduce chlorine.

The [Circular Economy in travel and tourism: A conceptual framework for a sustainable, resilient and future proof industry transition](#) report by the CE360 Alliance offers a case study on the creation of value and competitive advantage for hotel operators. It is based on interviews with hotel chain operators in Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden. The research shows the understanding of the circular economy primarily as a waste management framework and confirms the applicability of the circular economy to hotel operators to generate value creation through operating expenditure reductions for procurement and to gain a competitive advantage with customers and end-consumers through circular or sustainability market segmentation. The case study also provides critical recommendations for hotel operators to implement a circular economy framework.

“ Sustainable destination stakeholders adopt science-based environmental management systems to monitor the environmental, social and economic impact of their consumption and waste.



TABLE 7 | Principle 7: Produce and consume responsibly

Tools	Resources	Research
<p>The EU has produced a guide on Best Environmental Management Practices in the Tourism Sector through a plan-do-check-act approach.</p> <p>The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) has produced the Environmental Action Pack for Hotels: Practical Steps to Benefit your Business and the Environment.</p> <p>The International Tourism Platform's Environmental Management for Hotels guide includes chapters on water, waste, purchasing and food.</p> <p>The World Wildlife Fund, together with the American Hotel and Lodging Association, produced an easy-to-use toolkit on Fighting Food Waste in Hotels, also available on hotelkitchen.org.</p> <p>The EU Eco-Management and Audit Scheme (EMAS) is a scheme for both small and large businesses that has also been tailored for the tourism sector through the UNWTO.</p>	<p>WWF has published guidance for hotels on how to Stop the flood of plastic: Effective measures to avoid single-use plastics and packaging in hotels.</p> <p>UNEP's Building circularity platform provides tools to design circular patterns of production and consumption.</p> <p>WWF's Moving from a Linear to a Circular Economy white paper provides a brief and informative 5-point roadmap to material circularity to provide direction for governments and destination managers.</p> <p>The U.S. Plastics Pact Roadmap to 2025 provides a pathway to establishing a circular economy. The roadmap is strengthened by the use of WWF's ReSource Footprint Tracker accounting framework to measure and report progress.</p> <p>The UNWTO's One Planet Sustainable Tourism Programme has established the Kasane Call to Action on Sustainable Tourism to advance sustainable consumption and production in the industry through recommended stakeholder actions.</p>	<p>Einarsson, S. & Sorin, F., Circular Economy in travel and tourism: A conceptual framework for a sustainable, resilient and future proof industry transition, CE360 Alliance, 2020.</p> <p>Tritto, A., 2020, Environmental management practices in hotels at world heritage sites, <i>Journal of Sustainable Tourism</i>, 28:11, 1911-1931, DOI: 10.1080/09669582.2020.1771566. This paper expands the concept of environmental management practices to heritage hotels.</p> <p>Garcia, C., Deyà-Tortella, B., Lorenzo-Lacruz, J. et al., 2022, Zero tourism due to COVID-19: an opportunity to assess water consumption associated to tourism, <i>Journal of Sustainable Tourism</i>, DOI: 10.1080/09669582.2022.2079652. This paper shows how policy-makers can better optimize water usage based on Covid19 data.</p> <p>Candia, S. & Pirlone, F., 2022, Tourism Environmental Impacts Assessment to Guide Public Authorities towards Sustainable Choices for the Post-COVID Era, <i>Sustainability</i> 14, no. 1: 18, DOI: https://doi.org/10.3390/su14010018. This paper proposes a new way to assess tourism products using the life cycle assessment methodology, which is applied to a typical case study for the Mediterranean area – Cinque Terre National Park in the Liguria Region (Italy).</p> <p>Camillis, C., Peeters, P., Petti, L. & Raggi, A., 2012, Tourism Life Cycle Assessment (LCA): Proposal of a New Methodological Framework for Sustainable Consumption and Production, DOI: https://doi.org/10.5772/23550. This paper proposes a life cycle assessment approach for tourism.</p> <p>World Tourism Organization and United Nations Environment Programme, 2019, <i>Baseline Report on the Integration of Sustainable Consumption and Production Patterns into Tourism Policies</i>, UNWTO, Madrid, DOI: https://doi.org/10.18111/9789284420605.</p>



Calibrate infrastructure

Strategic planning and investment in sustainable infrastructure are fundamental enabling factors for the balanced and inclusive development of sustainable destinations.

Principle definition

Investment in infrastructure for sustainable tourism involves the provision of essential energy, transportation and environmental utilities required for the development of tourism activities in a way that balances the interests of and burden for local peoples, safeguards the environment, ensures climate resilience, promotes inclusive opportunities for all stakeholders and guarantees economic effectiveness and affordability over the asset's life

cycle. This is achieved through the provision of transport links, power generation and other built infrastructure to support tourism activities, as well as natural infrastructure in the form of natural assets that can be managed to sustain natural and cultural tourism assets, and through soft infrastructure, such as capacity building programmes, training skills and sensibilization campaigns directed at supporting the tourism experience.

The need

A combination of permanent factors – the environment and climate change – and special circumstances resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic drive the need for a new approach. On the permanent side, the growing footprint of tourism activities, their impact on the natural environment and the consequences of rising temperatures and sea levels require investment in protection, resilience and adaptation to mitigate

externalities and guarantee the long-term future of the natural, built and soft infrastructure that enables the sustainability of tourism. Also, the pandemic has been putting pressure on some business models, notably mass tourism and transportation, while requiring even more engagement in quality local employment, outreach to visitors, and the empowerment and inclusion of local communities to mitigate social stability concerns.

The reset path

The widespread and growing awareness of global environmental issues and the build back better strategies of public and private sector decision-makers are creating a once-in-a-century opportunity for infrastructure investments to support tourism designed and managed in novel ways with sustainability at its heart. Massive pandemic recovery programmes being rolled out worldwide, such as the Next Generation EU €806.9 billion Recovery Plan for Europe or the \$1 trillion bipartisan infrastructure plan in the US, should allow the front-loading of infrastructure investments designed to enhance sustainability and mitigate climate change. The fast-expanding private market for green finance,

structured around ESG-conscious bank lending (implementing the Equator Principles), green, social and sustainability bonds (whose cumulative issuance exceeded \$1.7 trillion at year-end 2020) or impact-investing equity funds targeting the UN SDGs can further leverage these programmes.

While these programmes may not target tourism directly, they may have considerable spillover effects on the tourism industry. Considering this, it is important for governments to create intra-departmental linkages and cooperation so that initiatives entailing energy efficiency, transport or education can be better connected to tourism.

“ Stakeholders must invest in protection, resilience and adaptation to mitigate externalities and guarantee the long-term future of the natural, built and soft infrastructure that enables the sustainability of tourism.

Behaviour change

No progress on sustainability in the tourism sector can be realistically achieved without the full engagement of industry stakeholders, whether service providers or sector workers, and the conscious cooperation of travellers and visitors. A stakeholder participation programme could be articulated at each responsible destination combining targeted actions, information and awareness campaigns and dialogue facilitation across the two groups.

Industry

In the infrastructure arena, service providers, both public and private, carry the primary responsibility to integrate sustainability principles into their policies and practices. This could entail the selection, sourcing and procurement of sustainable materials and products (such as wood instead of concrete, metal or plastic where possible); the switch to more sustainable energy usage (for instance, LED public lighting instead of sodium bulbs); the reliance on more sustainable transportation (for example, electric vehicles where available or EURO-6 vehicle emissions standards elsewhere). Beyond hardware, service providers also need to adjust their human resources practices, for example, by prioritizing the

recruitment (with occupational training as required) of local people vs seasonal foreign workers; arranging staff training programmes to include environmental and social considerations (such as waste management, site preservation, women's rights, anti-harassment).

Visitors

Travellers need to be conscious of the sustainability challenges facing destinations and their cooperation is critical to ensuring goals are met. Actions from governments and relevant stakeholders for sensibilization could involve environmental awareness-raising marketing campaigns pre-travel (underpinning the destination's attractiveness with such sustainability efforts); targeted engagement on-site (for example, through a destination package that could cover critical environmental behaviour disseminated through service providers and high-visibility signposting on location); and dialogue between local and visiting stakeholders through surveys and focus groups to collect feedback and adjust the action plan. As is customary in awareness campaigns, certain groups (such as women or children) could be specifically targeted for their ability to influence the wider stakeholder population.

Case studies and best practices

New tourism infrastructure development should take into consideration the carrying capacity of a place and be considered after relevant environmental impact assessments (EIA), social impact assessments (SIA) and health impact assessments (HIA) have been carried out. The [International Finance Corporation's Sustainability Framework and performance standards](#) and the [European Union's specific directives on environmental assessments](#) are important reference points for hard infrastructure development. New infrastructure should also benefit the local community, for example through reskilling mechanisms. The net-zero transition could be an opportunity to build new infrastructure that can positively affect the environment and local communities.

In Albania, an integrated tourism development programme combines infrastructure investments (in road, water, sanitation), heritage protection (site restoration and development) and capacity building for stakeholders. It is financed by a €40 million EU grant, a €60 million European Bank for

Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) loan and a €10 million technical assistance and training package to boost economic opportunities and women's empowerment.⁹

In Switzerland, an investment in alpine transportation at the Jungfrau Top-of-Europe mountain resort was initiated based on a participative decision process involving roundtables and community votes. The local train and lift company drove the CHF400 million project to build the Eiger Express terminals and gondolas and ensured sustainability was embedded in the design with community involvement.¹⁰

In China, a seawall regeneration project is planned to employ nature-based solutions to improve coastal protection. It will both mitigate the impact of climate change and increase ecotourism in the Shenzhen area. Nature-based solutions are considered highly effective at providing coastal defence and, as a result, may mitigate the future costs required to repair damage to infrastructure such as that caused by typhoons.¹¹

TABLE 8 | Principle 8: Calibrate infrastructure

Tools	Resources
<p>The United Nations Economic Commission for Europe published the People-first Infrastructure Evaluation and Rating System (PIERS), which aims to assess the contribution of infrastructure projects to the 17 SDGs. It is primarily intended for public authorities (e.g. public-private partnership units) but can also be used by private parties.</p> <p>Global Infrastructure Basel worked with multilateral development banks to design the voluntary Standard for Sustainable & Resilient Infrastructure (SuRe), integrating key criteria for sustainability and resilience into infrastructure development, targeted at private sponsors and financiers.</p> <p>The European Commission published a regulation in 2020 providing a Taxonomy for Sustainable Activities that classifies environmentally sustainable activities across economic sectors and defines minimum standards to qualify as “green”. Purely voluntary, the standards aim to orient the financial markets to support more sustainable investments.</p> <p>GIZ, in cooperation with UNEP and the Sustainable Infrastructure Partnership (SIP), developed the Sustainable Infrastructure Tool Navigator to help users identify the most relevant tools for their needs and goals across sectors and infrastructure life cycle phases.</p> <p>The G20 Global Infrastructure Hub offers its Innovative Funding & Financing Tool, which includes a review of emerging financing models for infrastructure projects, a fast-developing area of expertise.</p>	<p>The OECD’s 2015 review of Infrastructure Financing Instruments and Incentives outlines the financing options available for infrastructure projects, with a focus on incentivizing embedding sustainability into infrastructure designs.</p> <p>The International Capital Markets Association’s Principles of Sustainable Finance (green, social & sustainability-linked bonds) is a leading framework globally for the issuance of sustainable bonds mapped to the SDGs.</p> <p>The World Wildlife Fund, in cooperation with GIZ, released the Visioning Future: Improving Infrastructure Planning to Harness Nature’s Benefits in a Warming World report to improve infrastructure planning to harness nature’s benefits in a warming world. It seeks to integrate natural capital and ecosystem services, climate risks and resilience and sustainable development to support socio-ecological system scale planning.</p>





Govern effectively

Inclusive governance and effective regulations are essential factors to guide, enable and incentivize tourism sector players and users to implement business practices and behaviours promoting sustainability.

Principle definition

For destinations to be sustainable, effective governance is critical to ensure decision-makers adopt the right regulations and destination managers and users implement them on the ground. It requires a combination of (a) identifying or, if necessary, establishing the governing entities at the state, regional or destination level with responsibility

for policy-making and the coordination of tourism-related activities, (b) sound policy-making informed by international best practices, (c) engagement with local stakeholders to ensure top-down regulations are understood and bottom-up initiatives are valued and supported, and (d) capacity building at all levels to guarantee adequate implementation.

The need

Effective governance is at the crossroads of many other principles: it enables the implementation of standards (environmental, social, etc.); it transposes best practice guidelines (such as the SDGs) into operational directives; it connects policy requirements, the offerings of sector players and users' needs; it feeds stakeholders' views back into decision-making processes; it delivers according to plan. As such, it must be robust, forward-looking, interactive, flexible and capable. Effective governance is even more critical to sustaining responsible destinations when crises hit as a result of natural disasters or public health, humanitarian or political insecurities or disruptions.

Success factors include:

- The ability to create a legal and governance system that makes tourism a strategic priority, mitigates corruption risks and transcends political cycles through institutionalization

- A constant tracking of sustainability data compared to sustainability developments in the international arena for benchmarking purposes
- Competent administrators able to turn general principles into a specific rule book tailored to the destination and to monitor its implementation by stakeholders (and take corrective action when necessary)
- A two-way consultation process with stakeholders that seeks feedback on proposed regulations and embraces constructive private initiatives
- Capacity building through training and technical assistance to foster operational delivery.

The reset path

Tourism is one of the sectors most affected by international disruptions. It has been severely hit by the COVID-19 pandemic, with a collapse in traveller and visitor numbers pushing weaker players out of business and putting pressure on the dominant mass-market business model. Reconstruction will be a unique opportunity to revisit the paradigm upon which

tourism has been developed across destinations. This could involve a combination of policy measures targeting a more balanced, SDG-conscious supply side and marketing strategies promoting a different demand-side mix, namely more regulated volumes for higher quality destinations resulting in the same operating income at lesser impact.

Behaviour change

While governance and regulation have traditionally been top-down processes, the magnitude of changes in the business model required by the transition to sustainable tourism requires a participative governance framework with:

1. Greater stakeholder engagement in top-down policy-making: While central and local governments retain the primary competencies to define rules and regulations, decision-making should be subject to a comprehensive

stakeholder engagement process ensuring business adhesion and social cohesion behind the shifts being engineered for the sector.

2. Greater reliance on local initiative and innovation: Recognizing that SMEs and individuals primarily drive the tourism sector at the destination, a specific focus is needed on better education and training for traditional and new professions, as well as mechanisms to foster people's and community's participation.

Case studies and best practices

In 2018 the European Parliament's Committee on Culture and Education (CULT) commissioned a research report on [best practices in sustainable management and safeguarding of cultural heritage](#) in the EU. The study provides an overview of the benefits of cultural heritage conservation. It describes good practices for the sustainable management and safeguarding of tangible cultural heritage, in particular showing a shift away from preservation and protection from a supply-side planning approach towards a demand-driven heritage-led development approach that provides interconnected benefits promoting things such as urban liveability and regional development. While the scope of this study is limited to EU destinations, its findings are broadly relevant. It considers integrated factors such as job creation, economic growth, investments, social resilience, attracting talent, small-scale innovation and participatory planning.

As part of the [Abdali Urban Regeneration Project](#), Jordan's Amman municipality decided to link the development of the Abdali shopping mall with the establishment of a recruitment and training centre intended to enhance the employability of youth. The training centre was designed to provide skills for young people in the retail, hospitality and tourism sectors, filling positions required by businesses in the Abdali region, notably restaurants and hotel chains. EBRD financed the Abdali mall project with an \$80 million loan in 2016 and mobilized technical assistance funded by grants from the United Kingdom to prioritize access to education and skills development for disadvantaged groups in the area through the training centre. Some 1,700 young people have graduated from the centre since 2016. This represents an excellent example of how effective governance can leverage investment projects to promote sustainability.

“ Decision-making should be subject to a comprehensive stakeholder engagement process ensuring business adhesion and social cohesion behind the shifts being engineered for the sector.

TABLE 9 Principle 9: Govern effectively

Tools	Resources	Research
<p>The European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) rolled out the Green Cities programme in 2016 to assist municipalities in assessing, planning and implementing investments and policies for a more sustainable future. The programme includes the Effective policy instruments for Green Cities online policy-making and governance tool that aims to support decision-makers in addressing urban challenges with evidence-based policies. It showcases over 35 policy options across sectors (including transport, land use, energy, water and waste, as well as finance, digitalization and others) to enhance sustainability and contextualizes these measures through practical examples from more than 50 case studies across the world.</p> <p>The 2021 WTTC Towards Destination Stewardship report provides a set of scenarios and a governance diagnostics framework for destination stewardship.</p>	<p>The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) and World Commission on Protected Areas (WCPA) have published best practice guidelines for protected area managers. The series includes a 2013 guide on the Governance of Protected Areas that elaborates on understanding governance (which type of governance, how to guarantee quality governance) and proposes a path to effectively assess, evaluate and plan for action.</p>	<p>Scott, N. and Marzano, G., 2015, Governance of tourism in OECD countries, <i>Tourism Recreation Research</i>, 40:2, 181-193, DOI: 10.1080/02508281.2015.1041746. This paper examines the key challenges for governance and identifies seven areas of good practice.</p>



Embed resilience

Sustainable destinations embed resilience as a critical component of their tourism agenda.

Governments, tourism enterprises and communities do so to prepare for the inevitable short-term shocks and long-term health, political and environmental stressors, including pandemics, conflicts, extreme weather events and climate change.

Principle definition

The Rockefeller Foundation defines resilience as the “capacity of individuals, communities and systems to survive, adapt, and grow in the face of stress and shocks and even transform when conditions require it. Building resilience is about making people, communities and systems better prepared to withstand catastrophic events, both natural and manmade, and able to bounce back

more quickly and emerge stronger from the shocks and stresses.”¹² Sustainable destinations go beyond traditional risk identification and mitigation activities that respond to individual crises in a preventative or recovery capacity. Instead, they seek to strengthen the entire interdependent system to build resilience to multiple possible future disasters, economically, socially and environmentally.

The need

Tourism as a sector plays a vital role in sustainable development. Destinations themselves contribute to growth and employment in other sectors domestically through backward linkages, contribute to job creation and poverty alleviation¹³ and, as witnessed in more recent examples, can be a valuable vehicle through which to contribute to sustainability efforts through nature-based planning and solutions.

To retain and maximize these benefits, it is important to understand the possible vulnerabilities in the system and ensure the long-term future resilience of the tourism sector and destinations to a range of crises. The interconnectedness of destinations back and forward in the value chain, especially with natural and environmental systems, has led practitioners to consider destinations as “coupled human-environment systems”, thus leveraging a framework used by disaster and sustainability sciences to integrate vulnerability, resilience and adaptation concepts into vulnerability analysis and longer-term planning.¹⁴

Political turmoil and conflicts (such as the Russia-Ukraine war), economic crises, natural disasters (such as earthquakes, tsunamis), anthropogenic effects (for instance, overcrowding), health crises (like COVID-19, Ebola), and climate change (such as sea- or snow-level rise or fall, increased temperatures, storm surges, bushfires) have, and will continue to have, severe impacts on visitors, businesses and destinations overall. The COVID-19 pandemic has exposed tourism’s vulnerability globally – as do more lower level destination-specific issues such as seasonality, overcrowding, technology disruption and resource depletion (freshwater scarcity, biodiversity loss, etc.). Rapidly changing consumer sentiment on such topics will force change. Sustainable destinations must assess their vulnerability to such risks and disasters and make plans for resilience that involve tourism businesses and local communities as stakeholders to build their long-term resilience to adapt and prosper.

“ Destinations need to develop systematic approaches that consider foundational elements such as socio-economic conditions, safety nets, and better distribution of economic benefits from tourism.

The reset path

The COVID-19 pandemic has starkly reinforced the importance of building the resilience of the tourism system, its destinations, its businesses, its workers and its visitors and communities to future crises and disasters. The pandemic has provided an unprecedented market and systemic moment for all tourism stakeholders to work together to better understand each destination's vulnerability to all potential shocks and stressors. Destinations need to develop appropriate and systematic approaches to resilience that start at the national level and connect to sub-national and local-level legislation until reaching destination-level and local stakeholders. These approaches should

consider the foundational elements of a resilient ecosystem, such as socio-economic conditions and safety nets, better distribution of economic benefits across the value chain and environmental and asset protections. In anticipation of major crises such as climate change or pandemics, the approach should also include formulating appropriate adaptation strategies, disaster management planning and ex-ante mitigation measures that include the systematic allocation of contingency funding to tackle emergencies and develop community awareness and preparedness to enhance their resilience to survive and ultimately grow and prosper.

Behaviour change

Resilient destinations need to develop systematic planning across sectors and from national- to local-level community engagement to be able to prepare, mitigate and tackle external shocks.

Industry

Organizational resilience can be measured by two dimensions: planned resilience and adaptive resilience. Tourism organizations and business should work to adjust operations, management, financial resources, marketing strategies and human resources management to sustain business under dramatically changing conditions. They should address and adjust the following factors accordingly:

- Economic capital, availability of resources and financial strength
- Human capital, including skills, leadership, communication
- Knowledge, risk management planning and awareness
- Past experiences from crises
- Innovation and creativity
- Employment flexibility
- Social capital and social networks, connectedness
- Collaboration, partnerships with other organizations
- Strong leadership and culture

Destinations

Most of the research into and practice for destination resilience has been to understand and build resilience to risks from climate change. This has primarily been connected to advances in

disaster and sustainability sciences that explicitly integrate concepts of vulnerability, resilience and adaptation in an interrelated and holistic manner. Destinations should seek to adopt a similar approach to all manner of possible shocks when considering their planning. A useful framework that has been used to build the resilience of destinations to climate change, bushfires and pandemics considers four components:¹⁵

1. Shocks and stressors (to what is the destination vulnerable)
2. Tourism system exposure (who or what is vulnerable)
3. Sensitivity, vulnerability, resilience (how sensitive or how vulnerable and resilient is each component of the tourism system)
4. Adaptation strategies where adaptive responses fall under six categories: behavioural, social and economic; technical and structural; business management and financial; communications and collaboration; policy, planning and governance; and research, education and training.

Community

Populations and communities that are dependent on the tourism sector for their livelihoods are some of the most vulnerable to external shocks, as has been witnessed during the COVID-19 pandemic. The workforce and local communities are more conscious of the impact of potential crises and should be enlisted as active change agents in valuing and thus pursuing a more resilient sector. Activities to support this may include building awareness of risks, building capacity and coordination among stakeholders across the value chain to improve the resilience of those dependent on tourism, and earmarking contingent funding to expedite adaptation or recovery efforts that would mitigate the loss of assets or livelihoods.



Case studies and best practices

In cooperation with UNESCO Apia, UNESCO Jakarta selected the George Town World Heritage Site (Penang, Malaysia) as a pilot site for the [Capacity Building for Disaster Risk Reduction of Heritage Cities in Southeast Asia and Small Island Developing States in the Pacific](#) project. It sought to enhance the capacity and awareness of stakeholders in heritage cities to improve management plans, including disaster risk reduction strategies, through workshops, activities and toolkits. The aim was to better enhance the community's awareness and preparation to prevent events such as floods and fires.

In response to COVID-19, WWF has secured funding from the Global Environment Facility to develop the [African Nature-Based Tourism Collaborative Platform](#). It includes national community-based natural resource management (CBNRM) networks in most focal countries, a data clearinghouse, and non-governmental organizations and donors as partners. The aim is to mobilize funding to support communities and SMEs with COVID-19 emergency relief efforts. Key locations include Botswana, Kenya, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, Rwanda, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

Rwanda has developed a comprehensive national strategy for climate resilient green growth. The government issued a Vision 2050 document detailing how it aims to become a climate-neutral,

prosperous, high-income country by 2050. It is currently updating its Green Growth and Climate Resilience Strategy, adopted in 2011, that aims to provide a pathway to this goal. Rwanda was the first African country to submit its revised nationally determined contribution (NDC) under the Paris Agreement. As a low-income country primarily dependent on agriculture, it is highly vulnerable to climate change impacts. Hence, the government is working with the [NDC Partnership's Economic Advisory Initiative](#) to engage several stakeholders to overcome challenges such as limited capacity and financing through strategic investment in national institutions, systems and capacities and broadening the resource base. In 2021, Rwanda's [First Biennial Update Report](#), under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, showed the country's commitment to tackling climate change through a whole-of-government approach. Akagera National Park, managed by African Parks, and Volcanoes National Park, managed by the government, are particularly impressive as holistic models to protect nature with conservation ethics, community involvement and outreach programmes.

The World Bank and the United States [Federal Emergency Management Agency](#) have stressed the importance of employing nature-based solutions to prevent disasters.¹⁶ Examples include using floodplain expansions, wetlands protection, and coral reef restoration.

“ The workforce and local communities are more conscious of the impact of potential crises and should be enlisted as active change agents in valuing and thus pursuing a more resilient sector.

TABLE 10 | Principle 10: Embed resilience

Tools	Resources	Research
<p>The UNEP Disaster risk management for coastal tourism destinations responding to climate change: A practical guide for decision makers is a toolkit for community-led destination resilience.</p> <p>The US Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has developed several resources and examples to improve national preparedness, risk management, community and individual awareness and engagement, with several tools for practitioners available on its website.</p> <p>The One Planet Network holds resilience-building workshops targeted at the private sector.</p> <p>The Pacific Asia Travel Association (PATA) has released the How to Develop a Risk Management Strategy for a Tourism Destination Participant's Workbook.</p> <p>WWF has developed a Rising to Resilience: A Practical Guide for Business & Nature for businesses to build up resilience to climate change. It includes a companion guide focused on water stewardship.</p> <p>The 2021 Handbook for Sustainable Tourism Practitioners, edited by Anna Spenceley, offers tools and guidance to undertake feasibility assessments for new tourism ventures and ascertains their impact over time.</p>	<p>The World Bank, Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery (GFDRR), Program for Forests (PROFOR) and the World Resources Institute (WRI) Nature-Based Solutions for Disaster Risk Management booklet outlines practical nature-based solutions for the main climate hazards and recommendations for financing and policy.</p> <p>WRI, the World Bank and GFDRR provide PowerPoint decks covering an overview of nature-based solutions and how to use nature-based solutions for coastal risk management, river flood control and urban disaster risk management.</p> <p>The Global Program on Nature-Based Solutions for Climate Resilience has built naturebasedsolutions.org, a website with a global inventory of NBS projects and implementation guidance.</p>	<p>Birkmann, 2013, <i>Measuring Vulnerability to Natural Hazards: Towards Disaster Resilient Societies</i> (Second ed.), Tokyo: United Nations University Press.</p> <p>Hall, Prayag & Amor, 2018, <i>Tourism and Resilience: Individual, Organisational and Destination Perspectives</i>, Channel View: Bristol.</p> <p>Prayag, Spector, Orchiston & Chowdhury, 2020, Psychological resilience, organizational resilience and life satisfaction in tourism firms: Insights from the Canterbury earthquakes, <i>Current Issues in Tourism</i>, 23(10), 1216-1233.</p> <p>Pyke, Lindsay-Smith, Gamage, Sheikh, Nguyen & De Lacy, 2021, Destination resilience to multiple crises: Insights from Victoria, Australia during bushfire and the COVID-19 pandemic, <i>Asia Pacific Journal of Tourism Research</i>. 26(11).</p> <p>Ritchie & Jiang, 2019, A review of research on tourism risk, crisis and disaster management: Launching the annals of tourism research curated collection on tourism risk, crisis and disaster management, <i>Annals of Tourism Research</i>, 79, 102812.</p> <p>Scott, Hall & Gosling, 2012, <i>Tourism and Climate Change: Impacts, Adaptation and Mitigation</i>, Routledge: London.</p>

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