



International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development, 2017: The Way Forward – Our Journey to 2030

Closing Ceremony of the International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development,
2017

19 December 2017, Geneva

BACKGROUND

The 2030 Agenda - a universal plan of action for people, planet and prosperity

In 2015, the United Nations General Assembly adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its set of 17 SDGs, which outline a universal, integrated and transformative vision for a better world until 2030. Building on the historic Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), the SDGs - together with its 169 associated targets - lay out a new plan of action for people, planet and prosperity. It entails that the three dimensions of sustainable development - economic, social and environmental - are managed in an integrated and balanced manner.

Recognition of the role of Tourism for Development - UN resolutions

The United Nations designated 2017 as the International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development. In the context of the universal 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the International Year aims to support a change in policies, business practices and consumer behaviour towards a more sustainable tourism sector that can contribute to all the 17 SDGs.

At the outset of the International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development 2017, it is important to consider the extent to which tourism has been recognised as a force for development at an international and national level. A challenge for the Year is to build on and strengthen this recognition and convert it into more substantial and coordinated support for action.

Four UN Resolutions since 2012, including Resolution 70/193 which adopted 2017 as the International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development, have given specific and powerful recognition to the role of tourism in contributing to job creation, income generation, education, poverty reduction and the three dimensions of sustainable development, by building on its linkages with other sectors. They are:

- Resolution 66/288 – The outcome document of the UN Conference on Sustainable Development Rio+20, titled The future we want (27th July 2012), provides a roadmap for the next decade and the foundation for the 2030 Agenda.

- Resolution 69/233 on the Promotion of sustainable tourism, including ecotourism, for poverty eradication and environment protection (19th December 2014)
- Resolution 70/1 on Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (25th September 2015). The main text refers to a determination to promote sustainable tourism (article 33), while tourism is referred to explicitly in three of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals .

IY2017 - Tourism: a key sector for achieving the SDGs

Tourism can be a powerful vehicle to promote and reach the milestones of the ambitious agenda, given that it is one of the major sectors in international trade and a main job and wealth creator for many countries. In fact, tourism explicitly features as a target in Goals 8, 12 and 14 on inclusive and sustainable economic growth, sustainable consumption and production (SCP), and the sustainable use of oceans and marine resources, respectively. Yet, given the sheer size and the crosscutting nature of the sector, it has the potential to contribute - directly and indirectly - to all 17 SDGs.

Specific references to tourism in the Sustainable Development Goals

Goal 8 – Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all

Target 8.9: By 2030, devise and implement policies to promote sustainable tourism that creates jobs and promotes local culture and products.

Goal 12 – Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns

Target 12.b: Develop and implement tools to monitor sustainable development impacts for sustainable tourism which creates jobs, promotes local culture and products.

Goal 14 – Conserve and sustainable use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development

Target 14.7: By 2030 increase the economic benefits to SIDS and LDCs from the sustainable use of marine resources including through sustainable management of fisheries, aquaculture and tourism.

IY2017 CLOSING CEREMONY IN GENEVA 19 December 2017

OBJECTIVE

The aim of the IY2017 Closing Ceremony is to bring the International community to commit for realizing the universal 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development through tourism, at the national and global level.

The IY2017 Closing is not only the end of the IY, but most importantly the initiatives and actions initiated in 2017 will provide a roadmap for the global community at large to embrace sustainable practices and maximize the engagement in the global development agenda.

The Event will take stock of achievements and progress in advocacy for tourism, and most importantly provide the global community a path towards the future with the introduction to a Tourism and SDGs Platform. The Platform will provide from 2018 to 2030, a space for sharing and co-creation so as the sector can embrace the 2030 Agenda and contribute to prosper and sustainable future for people and the planet.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES AND REFERENCES

“Tourism and the Sustainable Development Goals: Journey to 2030”

This publication will serve as a guidance document showing how the tourism sector can contribute towards the implementation and achievement of the 17 SDGs. In particular, it should inspire governments, policymakers and tourism companies to incorporate relevant aspects of the SDGs into policy and financing frameworks as well as business operations, respectively. The content of the publication serves as a basis to create an interactive web platform with the aim to share good practices, spark innovative ideas and set recommendations for action, as well as to monitor progress and results. Both the publication and the platform shall provide a roadmap and co-creation space for the tourism sector and the SDGs process until 2030. The Platform will integrate the findings of the Report, as well as 2017 substantive activities.

A framework of key themes for the International Year

The International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development is focussing on five key themes:

1 Sustainable economic growth

Creating the right environment for resilient and sustainable economic growth in all parts of the world, supported by: investment in infrastructure and facilities, excellent connectivity and innovative business models that deliver quality products in line with market trends.

2 Employment, Social inclusion and poverty reduction

Ensuring an equitable distribution of income and benefits from tourism, creating decent jobs, reducing poverty, providing opportunities for women and young people, respecting and supporting the interests of local and indigenous communities, and encouraging inclusive access to tourism experiences for all.

3 Resource efficiency, environmental protection and climate change

Helping the tourism sector transition to more sustainable consumption and production patterns by: creating opportunities in the green economy; mitigating and adapting to climate change; supporting and gaining from the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity and natural areas.

4 Cultural values, diversity and heritage

Developing supportive partnerships between tourism and cultural interests, conserving tangible and intangible heritage and cultural values and pursuing creative opportunities to bring social, education and economic benefits to visitors and host communities through cultural experiences and exchanges.

5 Mutual understanding, peace and security

Recognising the transformative role of tourism as an agent for change, using awareness and interaction resulting from tourism to strengthen peace, understanding and reconciliation, while linking tourism development opportunities to the improvement of security in destinations and helping post-conflict areas to rebuild and expand their tourism economy.