

Mat. Ariel Juárez Morales (Director General, Dirección General de Integración de Información Sectorial, Secretaría de Turismo, México)

In general, it is an excellent effort for the purpose of reflecting on and analysing the existing gaps between the available statistical information and the desirable information that could provide answers for the measurement of the sustainability of tourism destinations, countries and entities with respect to its three dimensions: economic, environmental and social.

However, today's data only respond to the statistical frameworks for which they were designed, and it is necessary to work on universally applicable concepts, scales and data collection processes of the 3 dimensions that allow comparability over time and between different countries, in order to generate capabilities to develop methodologies for estimating what part corresponds to tourism, for example, measuring the use of natural resources (water, energy, CO2 emissions) only by tourists.

The measurement of the social dimension is the most sensitive part given the dynamism of the same tourist populations in terms of mobility and migration. In turn, the effects can be measured in the long term, so it is not so evident which variables can be used to show the impact of tourism activities in order to implement monitoring. Additionally, measurements related to well-being are still in their very early stages and the results are very subjective, and difficult to standardize in order to achieve replicability and comparability, maintained over time.

Another great challenge is the geographic scope of the information since statistics are regularly produced at the national level. In the best cases they can reach administrative divisions down to the municipal level, but, as is known, they do not necessarily coincide with tourism flows and concentrations; so the indicators do not necessarily reflect the tourism reality.

In conclusion, the measurement of sustainability in tourism can contribute significantly to the Sustainability Goals, however, its complexity leads to an important challenge wherein the part corresponding to tourism must be approximated from the information available and the necessary breakdowns must be incorporated gradually in the information systems of each country in order to create primary information that contributes to the estimates made.

In Mexico we have formed a cross-cutting working group with the institutions in charge of the different variables that are related to the dimensions of sustainability. Initially, the ideal parameters to reflect sustainability were also defined and in a second step, work is being done on approaches to the available information in a given territory in order to identify the scope and information requirements necessary to establish a periodic and consistent measurement of sustainability.