

Indicator 8.9.2

Proportion of jobs in sustainable tourism industries out of total tourism jobs

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Background

- Before the IAEG-SDG's 4th Meeting, indicator 8.9.2 was "**Jobs in tourism: Number of jobs in tourism industries (as a percentage of total jobs and growth rate of jobs, by sex)**". TIER II because of existing definitions and methodological background (i.e. TSA:RMF 2008), and was well accepted by UNWTO Committee, even though collection and coverage can be improved.
- At 4th IAEG-SDG meeting indicator 8.9.2 was changed to "**Proportion of jobs in sustainable industries out of total tourism jobs**".
- In Dec 2016 the UNWTO Committee Chair contacted the IAEG-SDG Co-Chairs **to gain an understanding of the change:**
 - The response indicated that the change was made within the IAEG-SDG itself rather than via consultation and reflected a general desire for the indicator to be more sympathetic to the generic sustainability ambitions described in the target.
 - It was accepted that this indicator did not currently exist and hence would be a Tier III indicator but suggested that tourism statistics experts might be able to establish in short-term a measurement alternative building on the policy definition of sustainable tourism.



Defining Sustainable Tourism

In 2015, UNWTO with support of UNSD launched a project towards a **Statistical Framework for Measuring Sustainable Tourism (MST)** and a multidisciplinary Working Group of Experts to lead it. Progress has been presented and supported at relevant fora: UNCEEA, UNWTO Committee, UN Statistical Commission.



Its research and discussions found that:

- Broad coverage is needed of economic, environmental and social factors
- Development of the framework should build on existing statistical standards
- Development of an integrated statistical framework should focus initially on linking economic (incl. employment) and environmental dimensions
- Sub-national spatial scales are fundamental
- Several indicators needed to assess sustainability instead of a single or composite indicator

The originally proposed indicators for target 8.9 were in line with this:

- Covered **economic** (Tourism GDP), **social** (Employment in tourism industries) and **environmental** (Energy use in tourism industries) dimensions
- **Based on statistical standards:** TSA:RMF, IRTS, SEEA-CF
- **Data exists** in a large number of countries
- **in line with indicators currently used in policy context**



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Indicator 8.9.2(new) - Some Concerns

- Since **tourism is defined from the demand side** the rationale for focusing on “sustainable industries” is not clear.
- There is **no general statistical definition of “sustainable industries”** that could be applied to tourism and no intention to do so in the short-term.
- There is **no statistical definition of “tourism jobs”**. TSA:RMF 2008: “the measurement of employment is limited to employment in the tourism industries and the variables used to express this volume are the number of jobs and hours worked” (para 4.64).
- Conceptually, just because a “tourism job” is in a “**sustainable industry**” it doesn’t mean that the “**tourism job**” itself would be sustainable.
- The new indicator is **not based in any existing or related statistical frameworks** or statistical infrastructures, even though the UNWTO Committee understands that a guiding principle in designing the SDG indicator framework was precisely to have a statistically based indicator set.



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Conclusions and Proposed Next Steps

- UNWTO Committee **welcomes work of IAEG-SDG**, looks forward to working together in further developing tourism relevant SDG indicators
- Much work has taken place since 2015 as part of project towards a **Statistical Framework for Measuring Sustainable Tourism (MST)**, led by the **Working Group of Experts**, and will continue now that UNSC 48th session supported it.
- A **pragmatic stance** should be adopted in selection of indicators. **There is sufficient information** and agreement to identify a limited number of relevant indicators on sustainable tourism (as proposed in late 2015 - early 2016).
- At an informal meeting with IAEG-SDG Co-Chairs in the margins of the UNSC 48th session, the **open issues related to 8.9.2 and 12.b** were conveyed, stressing that further consideration and refinements are needed.
- Proposed to deal with this in the framework of **2020 “comprehensive review”**, and work towards this will be undertaken **as part of ongoing MST project** as agreed by UNSC 48th session, to ensure that monitoring of progress towards the SDGs can proceed **as meaningfully and as practically as possible** for the member states and UNWTO as Custodian Agency. (See [Summary Statement from UNWTO Committee to IAEG-SDG 5th Meeting](#))
- **International Conference on Tourism Statistics: Measuring Sustainable Tourism** (21-24 June 2017 - Manila, The Philippines) session on SDG tourism indicators.



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