



22nd session of the UNWTO General Assembly High-Level Segment and General Debate on Tourism and the Sustainable Development Goals: Journey to 2030

13-16 September 2017, Chengdu, China

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 Sustainable Development Goals (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 169 associated targets - lay out a new plan of action for people, planet and prosperity for all countries. It entails that the three dimensions of sustainable development - economic, social and environmental - are managed in an integrated and balanced manner.

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 the global economy, namely in international trade, and a major job and wealth creator for developed and developing countries.

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, tourism can strongly contribute - directly and indirectly - to all 17 SDGs.

Tourism and the Sustainable Development Goals: Journey to 2030

On the occasion of the International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development 2017 (IY2017), and given the impetus of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) and the



United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) are jointly producing a report on “Tourism and the Sustainable Development Goals: Journey to 2030”.

The report aims to provide a roadmap for the tourism sector and beyond (international community, development partners, etc.) on how to implement and achieve the universal development agenda and the SDGs through tourism.

“Tourism and the Sustainable Development Goals: Journey to 2030” will empower, influence and inspire governments, policymakers, companies and the tourism sector at large to intensify their engagement in the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda, by integrating relevant aspects of the 17 SDGs in the policy and financing frameworks as well as building new business models and demonstrating how tourism can effectively contribute to achieving the 17 SDGs.

HIGH-LEVEL SEGMENT AND GENERAL DEBATE

Objective

In the context of the 22nd session of the UNWTO General Assembly, the aim of the High-Level Segment and General Debate on Tourism and the Sustainable Development Goals: Journey to 2030 is to invite tourism ministers and heads of delegation to discuss how the tourism sector can benefit from and contribute to the achievement of the universal 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development at the national and global levels.

The discussion will be based on the initial findings of the *Tourism and SDGs Policy Brief* (to be circulated by 1 August 2017) stemming from the “Tourism and the Sustainable Development Goals: Journey to 2030” report and aims to shape a roadmap for tourism policymakers, the private sector, UNWTO and the sector at large to embrace sustainable practices and maximize the contribution of tourism to the global development agenda. In particular, it will spark innovative ideas and set recommendations for action towards 2030.

The General Debate will be preceded by a High-Level Segment Panel Discussion on the morning of 13 September 2017 (programme to be communicated).

For fruitful and lively participation in the General Debate, the Secretariat proposes that delegations focus their statements on the following issues:

1. How can tourism help in achieving the SDGs in your country?
2. What are the SDGs that tourism can best contribute to in your country?
3. How to make tourism an integral part of the national governance structure for the SDGs and effectively incorporate tourism in national development plans.
4. How can existing frameworks help us further integrate the SDGs in tourism planning?
5. How can policymakers incentivize the private sector to implement sustainable business practices and Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) strategies to achieve the SDGs? What public/private sector partnerships can be built in this area?

6. How to influence and garner further support from the donor community to channel more funds to the tourism sector, helping to unlock its potential to drive SDGs achievement.
7. How can tourism policymakers in developed countries help catalyze an increase of official development assistance (ODA) for tourism from their development cooperation departments to intensify aid and investment for tourism in developing countries?
8. What innovative financing mechanisms can complement traditional ODA and development cooperation to strengthen tourism's ability to reach the SDGs and its targets?

Procedure

Delegations wishing to take the floor during the General Debate are kindly requested to e-mail the Secretariat by 31 August (zyakovleva@unwto.org) indicating "General Debate" in the subject.

The Secretariat will place their names on a speakers' list so that the Debate may be organized as satisfactorily as possible. In view of time constraints, it is essential to limit the speaking time of each head of delegation to a maximum of three minutes.

Simultaneous interpretation will be available in Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish. Written statements delivered during the debate of the General Assembly will not be translated.