



UNWTO Commission for the Middle East

Forty-fourth meeting
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Provisional agenda item 5(c)

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5. Report of the UNWTO Committees

c) Committee on Statistics and Tourism Satellite Account

I. Background and composition

1. The fundamental function of the Committee is to contribute to the fulfilment of Article 13, paragraph 3 of the Agreement signed between the United Nations and UNWTO¹, which states: "The United Nations recognizes UNWTO as the appropriate organization to collect, to analyse, to publish, to standardize and to improve the statistics of tourism, and to promote the integration of these statistics within the sphere of the United Nations system".
2. As part of its mandate to advise and guide the Secretariat, the Committee on Statistics and Tourism Satellite Account conducted two meetings since its last report to the Executive Council.
3. Regarding the composition of the Committee, the members of the Committee for the period 2015-2019, namely Austria, Brazil, Chile, France, Georgia, India, Mozambique, Peru, the Philippines, Saudi Arabia, South Africa and Spain, and the representative of the Associate Members, Macao, China, remain unchanged. The new Chair of the Affiliate Members, Instituto para la Calidad Turística Española (Institute for Spanish Tourism Quality, ICTE), joined the Committee in its capacity as representative of the Affiliate Members of UNWTO.

II. Meetings of the Committee

Special meeting of the Members of the Committee in the context of the 22nd session of the UNWTO General Assembly

4. The Committee conducted a special meeting in September 2017, in Chengdu, China, within the framework of the 22nd session of the UNWTO General Assembly.
5. The Chair of the Committee, Austria, provided on this occasion an overview of the milestones achieved in the course of the year, in particular the intervention of UNWTO at the United Nations Statistical Commission and the 6th International Conference on Tourism Statistics: Measuring

¹ Resolution A/RES/58/232 adopted by the United Nations (UN) General Assembly on 23 December 2003.



Sustainable Tourism organized by the Government of the Philippines and UNWTO on 21-23 June 2017 in Manila, the Philippines.

6. In March 2017, for the first time in ten years, UNWTO presented a report for decision to the United Nations Statistical Commission, the highest decision making body for international statistical activities. The report covered the progress achieved and proposed the development of a statistical framework for measuring sustainable tourism, a compilation guide for tourism satellite accounts and a technical note on linking the economic and environmental measurement of tourism. The work of the Committee received overwhelming appreciation by the United Nations Statistical Commission. Fourteen member states plus the whole African group of countries and the CARICOM voiced their support to the work of the UNWTO's Statistics Programme and the Committee on Statistics and TSA.

7. In June 2017, UNWTO and the Government of the Philippines organized the 6th International Conference on Tourism Statistics: Measuring Sustainable Tourism in Manila. The Minister of Tourism of the Philippines presented the findings of the Conference in the Committee meeting, as well as in the General Assembly.

8. The Secretariat provided an update on ongoing work and future plans of the Committee, namely on the Measuring Sustainable Tourism project including the development of the Statistical Framework for Measuring Sustainable Tourism, the SDG indicators as well as the Tourism Satellite Account Compilation Guide, the UNWTO international database and data dissemination, the ongoing regional capacity building programme in Northern and Western Africa², the Workshop on Measuring the Economic Impact of Tourism in Europe³ and technical assistance missions in countries.

Eighteenth meeting of the Committee on Statistics and Tourism Satellite Account

9. The eighteenth meeting of the Committee took place in Madrid on 27-28 February 2018, at UNWTO Headquarters, Spain.

10. This meeting was the largest Committee meeting to ever take place, gathering over 70 participants from 24 countries, including 10 out of the 12⁴ official members of the Committee and non-UNWTO-member States Canada and Sweden, as well as several UNWTO Affiliate Members, including the representative of the Affiliate Members and other representatives from academia, the private sector, tourism observatories and regional tourism administrations. The UN Statistics Division (UNSD), the International Labour Organization (ILO), the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), the World Trade Organization (WTO) and Eurostat also participated.

11. The meeting was opened by the UNWTO Secretary-General, the Co-Chairs Austria and Spain, and the Vice-Chair Georgia. All emphasized the unique and important role of the Committee in advancing the measurement of tourism in all its facets, through worldwide consensus building. The UNWTO Secretary-General pointed out the importance of statistics as a unique value proposition for Member States.

² The Programme is jointly organized by UNWTO and the Government of the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria and UNWTO for the period 2017-2019. For more information: <http://statistics.unwto.org/content/statistics-capacity-building-programmes>.

³ The workshop was jointly organized by UNWTO and the Directorate-General for Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs (DG GROW) of the European Commission, and in collaboration with Eurostat. For information: http://statistics.unwto.org/event/DG_Grow_WS.

⁴ Austria, Brazil, Chile, France, Georgia, India, Mozambique, Peru, the Philippines, Saudi Arabia, South Africa and Spain.

12. Austria presented a summary of the past milestones and work carried out by the Committee in the last two years, as well as the work ahead in the coming years. In his presentation, the Austrian representative highlighted UNWTO's role and responsibility in leading tourism statistics worldwide, and placed particular emphasis on UNWTO's mandate and role in the UN 2030 Agenda and the need to monitor tourism towards achieving the SDG through statistically based indicators as requested by the UN General Assembly.
13. The UNWTO Secretariat shared a brief note regarding the UNWTO report presented to the United Nations Statistical Commission and the subsequent discussion, the decisions taken in the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) resolutions, and the Lunchtime Seminar "Accounting and Statistics for Sustainable Tourism", organized in the framework of the United Nations Statistical Commission.
14. The Philippines provided an update on the monitoring of the SDGs in the country and highlighted the need to identify priorities within the Tier II and Tier III SDG indicators. Moreover, it invited UNWTO to provide support and technical assistance in this matter.
15. Austria announced the creation of a sub-group to the Working Group of Experts on Measuring Sustainable Tourism focusing on "Tourism SDG Indicators", and offered to lead this sub-group. The Committee agreed to this proposal and stressed the importance of considering not only the 3 indicators for which UNWTO is custodian agency, but also complementary indicators towards a more comprehensive monitoring of the role of tourism across the Goals.
16. Austria reaffirmed the importance of the Measuring Sustainable Tourism initiative calling it a feasible, operational and practical tool with mainly three pillars of work: (i) a statistical framework, (ii) an implementation strategy which covers pilot studies, compilation guidance, technical assistance and capacity building, and (iii) the data compilation into a global dataset including the SDG indicators.
17. In its presentation on "Measuring Sustainable Tourism – Why the interest in Canada?", Canada stressed the relevance of establishing a statistical framework, a common language that enables comparability of data across jurisdictions, credibility of data and comparability of sectors, and collaboration with users. This will help to improve policies and decision-making in tourism and sustainability.
18. The UNWTO's Chief of Communications presented the key elements for a communication strategy for the Measuring Sustainable Tourism initiative, and invited members of the Committee to join a sub-group to the Working Group of Experts on Measuring Sustainable Tourism focusing on Communication. A number of members noted the importance of effectively communicating in order to gain visibility and support for the Measuring Sustainable Initiative. Sweden expressed its interest to be part of the sub-group and announced its plan to complete a first phase of its MST Pilot Study in June 2018.
19. Italy, Mexico, the Philippines and Saudi Arabia showed the progress achieved in their ongoing pilot studies and highlighted the value of continuing to advance with the pilot studies and present findings to demonstrate the feasibility and usefulness of the Measuring Sustainable Tourism initiative.
20. A staged implementation strategy of the Measuring Sustainable Tourism initiative was presented by Canada and welcomed by the Committee members. Austria proposed the creation

of a sub-group on the “Implementation Strategy for MST”, and encouraged other interested countries to participate. The Committee agreed that this sub-group would be led by Canada.

21. In the discussion regarding the updated draft of the Statistical Framework for Measuring Sustainable Tourism, members expressed support for continuing to develop and build the statistical framework, however also recognized the challenges of integrating and consolidating a framework based on the three dimensions and at the different territorial levels. The ILO stated its support and willingness to cooperate in building the statistical framework. The UN Statistical Division suggested to increase the visibility of the process towards developing the statistical framework by setting up a smaller group of people to comment on and review the current draft of the Statistical Framework and also recommended to set up a timeline with all the steps until the target year, 2020. The Committee recalled that the statistical framework for Measuring Sustainable Tourism is a work in progress and encouraged countries and other participants to contribute with their comments and additional feedback on the draft of the Statistical Framework to the UNWTO Secretariat. The UNWTO Secretariat encouraged collaboration and engagement from Committee members to address the current challenges mentioned in the discussion, as well as to continue to work together in refining the statistical framework. Mexico presented the progress towards its System of Statistical and Geographical Information on Tourism, which the Committee commended as a world-class example recognizing the strategic nature of tourism statistics with strong institutional, legal and management underpinnings. A tentative timeline for developing the Statistical Framework has been presented by the UNWTO Secretariat and agreed upon by the Committee.

22. In a similar vein, the Regional Government of Andalusia presented the models of integrated tourism in the Mediterranean Plus (Mitomed+) project that supports the development of reliable data to improve sustainability in regions.

23. The Committee commemorated the 10-year anniversary of the Tourism Satellite Account: Recommended Methodological Framework 2008 as a UN statistical standard. The Committee stressed that the TSA and its implementation in countries, needs to be seen as an ongoing process. The members recognized the clear enthusiasm and interest of countries in advancing the TSA, and the fact that the TSA Recommended Methodological Framework allows a flexible and staged implementation, depending on the countries' priorities and possibilities. The Committee agreed to move forward with the proposal of estimating Tourism Direct GDP with limited data based on the TSA conceptual framing and using the most commonly available data, but not requiring full TSA compilation. The Committee recognized that this could represent an opportunity to increase worldwide coverage in the short term of a key SDG tourism indicator: Tourism Direct GDP. The Committee took note of the need to proceed with careful management of expectations and clear communication of this topic.

24. The Committee stressed the importance for international organizations to exchange data and better coordinate statistical activities in order to avoid duplication of work and ease the reporting burden of countries. The international organizations present, notably UNSD, ILO, OECD, WTO, Eurostat and UNWTO agreed to explore ways to work more closely together to achieve this.

25. The Committee welcomed the work of Eurostat on big data and supported the initiative to advance on a joint Eurostat/UNWTO publication to outline the potential of big data for tourism statistics in a worldwide context. Countries shared their experiences and main challenges with big data, while calling for more dissemination of case studies and best practices in the future.

Annex I: Special meeting of the Committee on Statistics and Tourism Satellite Account

Committee on Statistics and Tourism Satellite Account

Special meeting

Chengdu, 12 September 2017

Agenda

1. Welcome remarks

Mr. Márcio Favilla, Executive Director for Institutional Relations and Operational Programmes, UNWTO

2. Statement by the Chair of the Committee

Ms. Angelika Liedler, Head of Division for International Tourism Affairs, Federal Ministry of Science, Research and Economy, Austria

3. Manila Call for Action on Measuring Sustainable Tourism and other outcomes of the 6th UNWTO International Conference on Tourism Statistics

H.E. Wanda Tulfo-Teo, Secretary, Department of Tourism, Philippines

4. Overview of the past achievements, ongoing work and future plans of the Committee. This includes:

- a) Measuring Sustainable Tourism project, including SDG indicators
- b) Tourism Satellite Account Compilation Guide
- c) International database and dissemination
- d) Capacity building and technical assistance

Mr. John Kester, Director, Statistics, Trends and Policy Programme, UNWTO

Ms. Clara van der Pol, Programme Coordinator, Statistics, Trends and Policy Programme, UNWTO

Ms. Vanessa Satur, Programme Coordinator, Technical Cooperation, UNWTO

5. Closing remarks

Mr. Márcio Favilla, Executive Director for Institutional Relations and Operational Programmes, UNWTO

Ms. Angelika Liedler, Head of Division for International Tourism Affairs, Federal Ministry of Science, Research and Economy, Austria, Chair of the Committee

Annex II: Eighteenth meeting of the Committee on Statistics and Tourism Satellite Account

Committee on Statistics and Tourism Satellite Account

Eighteenth meeting

Madrid, 27-28 January 2018

Agenda

1. Welcome by Mr. Zurab Pololikashvili, UNWTO Secretary General

2. Statement by the Chairs

Co-Chair: *Mr. Peter Laimer*, Vice Director of the Directorate Spatial Statistics, Statistics Austria

Co-Chair: *Ms. Beatriz Marco*, Deputy Director General for Knowledge and Tourism Studies, Tourism Institute of Spain (Tourspain)

Vice Chair: *Mr. Giorgi Bregadze*, Head of Research and Planning Department, Georgian National Tourism Administration, Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development of Georgia

3. The increasing relevance of tourism statistics in the era of SDGs

Manila Call for Action on Measuring Sustainable Tourism ([doc](#)) ([ppt](#)) ([video](#)) and UNWTO General Assembly Resolutions ([doc](#)) – *Mr. Rolando Cañizal*, Undersecretary, Department of Tourism, the Philippines

How the Committee reinforces UNWTO's statistical mandate and responsibility as a UN Agency ([doc](#)) ([ppt](#)) – *Mr. Peter Laimer*, Vice Director of the Directorate Spatial Statistics, Statistics Austria and *Ms. Clara van der Pol*, Coordinator, Statistics, Trends and Policy Programme

UNWTO Report to the United Nations Statistical Commission ([doc](#)): TSA and MST as UNWTO's response to monitor tourism in the SDGs

Decisions ([doc](#)) taken note of in Economic and Social Council resolutions ([doc](#))

Lunchtime Seminar *Accounting and Statistics for Sustainable Tourism* ([link](#))

Monitoring of the SDGs in the Philippines ([ppt](#)) – *Ms. Vivian Ilarina*, Philippine Statistics Authority (former co-Chair of the IAEG-SDG)

4. Measuring Sustainable Tourism (MST): A statistical initiative to support the assessment and policy of sustainable tourism

Measuring Sustainable Tourism Initiative ([ppt](#)) – *Ms. Sandra Carvão*, Head of Communications, UNWTO

Measuring Sustainable Tourism – Why the interest in Canada? ([ppt](#)) – *Mr. Michel Dubreuil*, Destination Canada

MST Pilot Studies

Italy's MST Pilot Study ([ppt](#)) – Ms. *Angelica Tudini*, ISTAT, Italy

Cultural Tourism in Archaeological Zones ([ppt](#)) – Mr. *Raúl Figueroa*, Director of Satellite Accounts, INEGI, Mexico

Experimental Measurement of Sustainable Tourism Indicators Using the Input-Output Tables: the Philippine Experience ([ppt](#)) – Ms. *Vivian Ilarina*, Assistant National Statistician, Philippine Statistics Authority

Developing Environmental Measures for Tourism in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia ([ppt](#)) – Mr. *Abdulhakim Al-Babtain*, Director General for Tourism Information and Research Centre, Saudi Commission for Tourism and Antiquities

Updated draft of the Statistical Framework for Measuring Sustainable Tourism (SF-MST) ([doc](#)) ([ppt](#)) – Mr. *Carl Obst*, Consultant, UNWTO

Some applications and a quick evaluation of the Statistical Framework ([ppt](#)) – Mr. *Raúl Figueroa*, Director of Satellite Accounts, INEGI, Mexico

Other input and comments by the Committee

Measuring Sustainable Tourism: Let's get started with a Toolkit ([ppt](#)) – Ms. *Demi Kotsovos*, Chief Satellite Accounts and Special Studies, Statistics Canada

Process ahead ([ppt](#)) – Ms. *Clara van der Pol*, Coordinator, Statistics, Trends and Policy Programme, UNWTO

5. Tourism's role in the economy: reflecting on a decade of TSA

Compilation Guide for Tourism Satellite Accounts 2008 (outline [doc](#)) ([ppt](#)) – Mr. *Karoly Kovacs*, Chief Trade in Services, United Nations Statistics Division

Capacity Building in Tourism Statistics and TSA ([ppt](#)) – Mr. *John Kester*, Director, Statistics, Trends and Policy Programme, UNWTO and Technical Assistance in Statistics and the Tourism Satellite Account (TSA) ([ppt](#)) – Ms. *Vanessa Satur*, Programme Manager, Technical Cooperation, UNWTO

TSA in Egypt ([ppt](#)) – Ms. *Adla Ragab*, Vice Minister, Egypt

Wales Regional TSA 2013 ([ppt](#)) – Ms. *Chen Xu*, Cardiff Business School, UK

The TSA aggregate that is an indicator for SDG 8.9: how to proceed – Mr. *Peter Laimer*, Vice Director of the Directorate Spatial Statistics, Statistics Austria

Proposals for estimating Tourism Direct GDP with limited data ([doc](#)) ([ppt](#)) – Mr. *Carl Obst*, Consultant, UNWTO

6. Developing platforms for tourism statistics

Mexican System of Statistical and Geographical Information on Tourism ([ppt](#)) – Mr. *Ariel Juarez*, Director General of Information and Analysis, Secretary of Tourism, Mexico

Investing in the European Tourism of Tomorrow ([ppt](#)) – Ms. *Ana Moniche*, Junta de Andalucía and NECSTouR

7. Cooperation between international organizations

Data exchange between international organisations ([ppt](#)) – *Mr. August Götzfried*, Head of Unit, Business cycle, tourism and registers, Eurostat

Updates on OECD's Tourism Database and the Working Party on Tourism Statistics – *Ms. Jane Stacey*, Head of Tourism Unit, OECD

8. Looking at the potential of big data for tourism statistics

Eurostat/UNWTO joint overview paper on big data ([ppt](#)) – *Mr. August Götzfried*, Head of Unit Business cycle, tourism and registers, Eurostat and *Mr. John Kester*, Director, Statistics, Trends and Policy, UNWTO

Mobile Phone Data Use for Tourism Statistics in Indonesia and Estonia ([ppt](#)) – *Mr. Siim Esko*, International Director, Positium

9. Closing remarks by UNWTO Secretariat and Chair

Annex III: Composition of the Committee on Statistics and Tourism Satellite Account for the period 2015-2019

Chairman Austria (2016-2017), Spain* (2018-2019)

Vice-Chairmen Georgia

Members

- Austria
- Brazil*
- Chile
- France*
- Georgia
- India
- Mozambique
- Peru
- Philippines
- Saudi Arabia
- South Africa
- Spain*

Representative of the Associate Members

Macao, China (2019)

Representative of the Affiliate Members

Chairman of the Affiliate Members Board (2019)

Instituto de Calidad Turística Española (ICTE), Spain

* Ex officio Member