



## UNWTO Commission for Africa

Sixty-First meeting and “Tourism Statistics: A Catalyst for Development” Seminar  
Abuja, Nigeria  
Date: 4 – 6 June 2018

Concept note  
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### “Tourism Statistics: A Catalyst for Development” Seminar Abuja, Nigeria (Transcorp Hotel Hilton), 5<sup>th</sup> June 2018

## CONCEPT NOTE

### Background and objectives of the seminar

Tourism is increasingly being recognized as a transformative socio-economic sector that can contribute substantially to the diversification of national economies and the improvement of livelihoods in Africa. In 2017, Africa consolidated its 2016 rebound with international tourist arrivals (overnight visitors) in the region growing an estimated 8%. This strong momentum is expected to continue at a rate of 5% to 7%. Last year, 1.3 billion international tourists travelled around the world, out of which 62 million visited African destinations (5% of the world total). According to the UNWTO long term outlook Tourism towards 2030, this number is expected to more than double to reach 134 million by 2030. However, the share of Africa in worldwide tourism is still comparatively modest and does not fully reflect the huge potential of the tourism and travel industry of the continent.

In order to build a strong tourism sector, it is paramount to implement the adequate strategies and policies. This only can be done properly when the relevant information is available, i.e. there is a need to better measure, better plan and manage.

In the area of tourism, two UN international statistical standards have been developed and adopted by the UN that guide countries for the elaboration of tourism statistics:

- *International Recommendations for Tourism Statistics 2008*: for measuring physical and monetary flows of tourism
- *Tourism Satellite Account (TSA): Recommended Methodological Framework 2008*: for measuring tourism as an economic sector

Tourism does not only impact economies, but also the natural and built environment, the local population in the places visited and the visitors themselves. Tourism has significant potential to

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drive socioeconomic development and environmental conservation and is mentioned in 3 of the 17 SDGs, relating to sustainable economic growth and decent employment, sustainable production and consumption, and the conservation and sustainable use of oceans. Indeed, the SDGs embody a worldwide commitment towards sustainable development through more holistic, integrated approaches. Integrated policy requires integrated data.

A common and robust set of data is critical for governments and stakeholders to design, implement and monitor effective sustainable tourism policies. Indeed, evidence-based decision-making requires the development of a rigorous, statistical approach to the measurement of sustainable tourism. In recent years, the focus of UNWTO and the international community for the further development of tourism statistics has been on Measuring Sustainable Tourism (MST). The objective of MST is to expand the current measurement of tourism, which is mostly focused on economics, to include also environmental and social considerations. This is in part motivated by Member States requests and part by the need to be able to measure the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

In view of the above, the **“Tourism statistics: a catalyst for development” seminar** to be held on **5 June 2018 in Abuja, Nigeria** in the framework of the 61<sup>st</sup> UNWTO CAF Meeting aims to:

- Analyze the current challenges and opportunities for tourism statistics in Africa;
- Exchange national experiences and share case studies on tourism measurement;
- Build bridges among and foster partnership with key institutions and stakeholders and explore solutions for a more effective system of tourism statistics;
- Explore the new approach on Measuring Sustainable Tourism for African countries and its relevance for improved tourism data and policies;
- Mainstreaming statistical strategies in tourism development plans

**The following Themes will be addressed:**

- **Ministerial dialogue - *The importance of tourism statistics: “better measure to better manage”***

This interactive ministerial session will address the relevance of tourism statistics as a tool for developing effective strategies for sustainable tourism and its contribution to national economies. The session will address the need to build a sound system of tourism statistics and the engagement of national stakeholders and institutional partnerships required to reach this.

- **Session one: *Tourism statistics in practice, how to move ahead***

The two UN international statistical standards, the *International Recommendations for Tourism Statistics 2008* and the *Tourism Satellite Account (TSA): Recommended Methodological Framework 2008*, form the basis of the current system of tourism statistics. This session will take stock of the current state of tourism measurement in African countries and the implementation of

these standards. The different case studies that will be presented will give the opportunity to share experiences, challenges faced and lessons learned.

- ***Session two: Broadening the scope, Establishing a statistical tourism framework for Measuring Sustainable Tourism in Africa***

This session will address the relevance and potential of measuring sustainable tourism (MST) in African countries. The panellists will share their views on the MST framework approach that includes environmental, social and cultural components of the sector that aims at achieving the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the 2030 UN Agenda on Sustainable Development.

### **Target Audience**

- Ministers from the region and high-level authorities in charge of tourism, culture, environment, wildlife, economy, finance and other related sectors
- Representatives of National and Regional Statistics Offices and Central Banks
- Representatives of bodies indirectly involved in measurement of tourism, such as officers of immigration services
- Multi-sectorial stakeholders from the private sector involved in tourism and travel
- Hotel and Tourism Associations/Boards
- International and Regional Organizations
- Other stakeholders such as economists, academia, media

### **Format**

- The seminar aims to bring together a number of tourism ministers and private sector stakeholders to discuss challenges and opportunities in developing tourism statistics to advance Africa's data collection
- The seminar aims to be practical, informative, participative and interactive with a view of knowledge sharing and learning from each other.
- Case study presentations will be made to share national experiences from African countries.
- Discussion will be interactive allowing contributions from the audience after each session.

### **Expected results**

- Enhance awareness on the importance of tourism statistics as a tool for improved planning and management of the sector.
- Foster partnership between relevant institutions and relevant stakeholders.
- Promote the importance of Tourism statistics as a tool for improved measurement and management



- The Seminar will culminate with the “***Abuja Call for Action on the Development of Tourism Statistics in Africa***” that will provide guidelines and a source of reference for African countries in developing their tourism statistics system.