
World Tourism Organization
General Assembly Nineteenth session Gyeongju, Republic of Korea, 8-14 October 2011

Report on the progress of the reform of the Organization (White Paper)
A reform process for a more relevant UNWTO

5. UNWTO MISSION AND RELEVANCE

24. Given the nature of the tourism sector, especially its disaggregated, multi-industry structure and the way it is generally handled by and within governments, the mission of the World Tourism Organization is double:

1. **To provide leadership to the sector**, including its public and private stakeholders, serving as a global tourism policy forum and a practical source of tourism knowledge and awareness raising. This leadership can be gained through the timely and continuous provision of accurate, solid, reliable and undisputable statistical data on tourism, suitably broken down, so as to serve Members and the industry as a whole; leadership can and should also be gained through the provision of well-conceived guidelines for tourism policy definition by governments, as well as visions on the future likely developments of tourism and the challenges it will have to face; and

2. **To provide services to its Members** in order to help them develop and manage tourism in the most sustainable and competitive manner. In this respect, the Organization will adopt the philosophy of "Members First" and the culture of "Member-care". Among the services that UNWTO should provide, is assistance to its governmental Members, States and Associates, (Ministries of Tourism, NTOs or NTAs), as well as to Affiliate Members, to raise the profile of tourism within governments, i.e. to give them "leadership tools".

6. LINES OF ACTION TO BE PURSUED WITHIN THE ORGANIZATION

32. As stated above, the wide range of impacts, positive and negative, that tourism has on societies and their development is now widely acknowledged. Foreseeing, quantifying and understanding the likely implications of the impacts of tourism on the national and local economies, on the natural and cultural environments, and on the social fabric of communities is an essential preoccupation and responsibility of governments. Tourism cannot be responsibly promoted and sustainably developed if governments ignore the outcomes that will likely result from it, or if they only know some of these potential and actual results and prefer to overlook those of a negative sign.

33. The World Tourism Organization should play a leading and at the same time truthful role in this respect. This should be done, firstly, through the development of methodologies, policy guidelines and analytical tools and techniques that allow governments to foresee, quantify and understand current and future tourism trends, development opportunities and likely impacts of all nature and sign. These should be the bases for formulating public policies in tourism.

34. Secondly, UNWTO should assist its Members by providing them with tourism policy guidelines, orientations and methodologies, as well as specific advice for the application of such guidelines and related methodologies to their particular situation and circumstances, at the regional and sub-regional levels, as well as at the national and local levels through its technical cooperation activities. All types of governmental members ought to be able to benefit from this
type of services, irrespective of whether they are developed, developing, transition or least
developed economies; the source of funding for the services to be provided will clearly be
different in each case, matter that is dealt with later in this document.

36. Three areas deserve special attention, especially because they have not been in the
mainstream of UNWTO activities so far, and because they are now widely demanded by Member
States; these are:

6. **Domestic tourism**, which has apparently been growing faster than international tourism
and in many developed countries it has greater significance for economic growth and job
creation than inbound tourism; it plays a particularly important role in times of crisis and
serves also to spread the benefits of tourism to rural or depressed areas in many countries.
This area of work should include the development of appropriate statistical and econometric
tools for its measurement in each and every country with similar methodologies so as to
make the results comparable; it should also include guidelines for the development,
marketing and promotion of social forms of domestic tourism;

7. **Employment in tourism**, given the high labour-intensive character of the tourism
industries and the priority granted by governments to employment creation. In these two
areas, the Secretariat has already started to design the corresponding preprogrammes for
possible implementation as from 2011. And finally:

8. **Governance in tourism**, including the different levels of public administration and their
relationships with the private sector and other stakeholders, at both the national and local
destination levels. This area should also include global tourism policy issues, institutional and
legislative aspects.

**7. HOW AND WHO SHOULD ESTABLISH THE PRIORITY AREAS OF WORK**

38. It is clear that, with the financial and human resources made available to the Secretariat at
the present time, it is impossible to tackle—in a serious, results-oriented manner— all these and
future areas at the same time and with the same depth. If a full, all-purpose agenda of work is
adopted, without any prioritisation, a dispersion of resources and efforts can occur and has
indeed occurred, with the result that quite often the outputs achieved are rather shallow, do not
make a difference to Members and are not sufficiently strong to provide the Organization with a
distinguishable seal of relevance. There is a need, therefore, to establish a balance between
needs and ambitions on the one hand, and resources availability on the other; this means
establishing priorities.

39. There have certainly been important, ground-breaking contributions of UNWTO to the
international community throughout its 35 years of life, such as the normalization of terms and
criteria for collecting tourism statistics, elaboration and approval of the Global Code of Ethics,
the Tourism Satellite Account, the sustainability guidelines and indicators, and a few others; but
they have been the exception rather than the rule.