Moroccan sustainable tourism charter
Tourism is a major contributor to the economic, social and human development...

Tourism is more than ever a catalyst for socio-economic development in Morocco and in the world. Its economic impacts (boosting productive fabrics, wealth creation, growth improvement, improving the balance of payment, etc.) and social ones (reduce unemployment, improve the purchasing power, poverty alleviation, etc.) are clearly evident.

Furthermore, and besides that it allows men and women from different cultures to meet, tourism also plays a significant role in the development of the intangible heritage, the encouragement of culture exchanges, the establishment of dialogue of peoples and respect of others, and the promotion of tolerance.

... but may have some negative impacts.

An irrational tourism development can have negative impacts on the natural and socio-cultural environment.

From an environmental perspective, and as any other economic activity, tourism can be a source of ecosystems destruction, of a poor natural resources management, landscape alteration, and can also disrupt host communities and alter heritage and cultural values. This would go against the positive contribution tourism is supposed to make, and lead, inter alia, to a reduction in the value added created by the sector and therefore in the income of local populations.

The alternative of Sustainable Tourism

At present, it is critical to integrate a sustainability process in tourism that “takes full account of its current and future economic, social and environmental impacts, addressing the needs of visitors, the industry, the environment and host communities.” (UNWTO). This is the only alternative to perpetuate tourism’s positive impacts, while anticipating, reducing, and compensating for its damages.

SUMMARY

- **Principle 1**: Environmental and biodiversity Protection
- **Principle 2**: Culture and heritage perpetuation
- **Principle 3**: Prioritise local development and respect of host communities
- **Principle 4**: Adopting the principles of equity, ethics, and social responsibility
Aware of this challenge, Morocco’s public and private stakeholders in the tourism value chain have given sustainability top priority. A proof of this is the tourism development strategy “Vision 2020,” which proposes to integrate sustainability in all the links of the tourism value chain by, inter alia, taking into account the impact of tourism projects on their different environments, the integration of sustainability criteria in reforms, standards, and regulations, the support and the strengthening of the capacity of tourism professionals, developed monitoring tools, and the adoption of an appropriate marketing and promotion strategy.

**Sustainable tourism is everyone’s responsibility**

Given that tourism is a cross-cutting sector, making it more sustainable requires bringing together and a mobilizing all tourism stakeholders (institutions, investors, professionals, tourists, civil society, and citizens), and combining their efforts. This is the objective of the present Charter that aims at setting out tourism stakeholders’ common principles in Morocco. While drawing it up, all international conventions and agreements that Morocco adopted as regards Sustainable Development and Human Rights have been taken into consideration.

“Working together for a tourism that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.”
The natural environment and the biodiversity of the fauna and the flora are one of the fundamentals of the tourism product. Their protection and promotion is more than ever the responsibility of all tourism stakeholders. The latter undertake to:

- a. Comply with the environmental regulations in force;
- b. Adopt, in all the aspects of producing and consuming tourism products and services, an approach that ensures the rationalization and exploitation of environmental resources, the protection of biodiversity, and the protection of endangered, vulnerable species;
- c. Promote and encourage the use of biological, natural, ecolabelled/certified materials and products that have less negative impacts on the environment;
- d. Reduce greenhouse gas emissions;
- e. Adopt appropriate patterns of production and consumption or some that have less negative impacts on the environment;
- f. Have an integrated environmental policy, imparted and shared with internal and external stakeholders;
- g. Take account of the impact of tourism activities on the environment and commit to minimising negative impacts on the latter;
- h. Take corrective actions in case of inevitable impact on the environment;
- i. Raise stakeholders’ awareness of the imperatives of environment friendliness, and encourage a responsible purchasing policy;
- j. Disseminate information about the actions taken to protect the environment and to rationalise the use of natural resources;
- k. Devote specific attention to protected areas, coastal areas, biological and ecological sites, and natural parks.
- Take account of tourism’s impact on the environment in public policies, tourism regulations, and support measures that are made available to the professionals;
- Raise tourism stakeholders’ awareness of the importance of respecting the environment, preserving biodiversity, and fighting against global warming;
- Comply with the environmental regulations in force;
- Make available to tourism professionals tools and support measures able to improve their respect for the environment and reduce tourism’s negative impact on the latter (eco-labels, awards, incentives, etc);
- Put in place indicators to monitor sustainability.

- Carry out, systematically, an environmental impact assessment before any new investment project;
- Favour, when carrying out investment projects, materials and products that have less environmental impact;
- Favour ecodesigns and reduce buildings’ ecological footprint;
- Adopt a strict management of waste resulting from carrying out tourism projects;
- Use labels and certifications as regards sustainable construction.
Have an environmental policy to preclude the impact of tourism enterprises on the environment, and to take corrective actions when needed;
- Opt for a responsible purchasing policy;
- Opt for products with low chemical content, particularly organic products and those with an eco-label;
- Rationalize the use of raw materials with a view to reducing waste quantity and complying with the environment in general;
- Use eco-labels and/or approaches related to an environmental management system;
- Favour collaboration with committed stakeholders, particularly those who signed the Moroccan Sustainable Tourism Charter, or have environmental labels and/or certifications as regards sustainable tourism;
- Prohibit the direct and indirect use of endangered species (flora and fauna) in the products offered to tourists (meals, excursions, furniture and objects of decoration, etc).

Demonstrate a friendly behaviour that aims at protecting the visited natural environment, and preserving it from any risk related to pollution in its various forms;
- Favour the use of environmentally friendly transport modes or with low environmental impact;
- Offset, if possible, carbon dioxide emissions resulting from mobility and the consumption of tourism products and services;
- Rationalize the use of water and energy during tourists’ stay;
- Favour the choice of tourism enterprises that are engaged in a sustainability approach, particularly those who signed the Moroccan Sustainable Tourism Charter, or have an environmental label/certification as regards complying with the principles of sustainable tourism.

Encourage the establishment of proactive approaches that raise awareness of the issues related to environment protection;
- Contribute actively to the ongoing improvement of sustainable tourism public policies;
- Put in place actions that aim at promoting the development of sustainable tourism in their region;
- Preserve Morocco’s environment and natural assets;
- Raise citizens’ awareness of the importance of ensuring the quality of environment;
- Encourage the adoption of eco friendly behaviours.

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- Raise citizens’ awareness of the importance of ensuring the quality of environment;
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Morocco’s cultural diversity and its rich tangible and intangible cultural heritage give the kingdom a competitive, undeniable advantage, and make it internationally renown.

In order to perpetuate these assets, tourism stakeholders undertake to:

a. Promote Moroccan cultural aspects, as well as those specific to the country’s different territories and regions;

b. Preserve and develop Morocco’s tangible and intangible cultural heritage;

c. Rehabilitate and protect derelict local architectural heritage;

d. Encourage Moroccan craftsmanship;

e. Promote and develop Moroccan art in its different forms;

f. Favour the use of local products;

g. Protect the traditions, languages, and dialects of the different local people;

h. Ensure the protection and promotion of the diversity of cultural expressions in accordance with the Convention on the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage 1972 and the Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions 2005 (UNESCO);

i. Carry out tourism activities in line and in accordance with the host regions’ specificities and traditions.
- Ensure the implementation of UNESCO’s conventions that are approved by Morocco;
- Encourage registering more sites with authentic and cultural values in UNESCO’s World Heritage lists;
- Promote cultural events in Morocco through the organization or the support of festivals, exhibitions, fairs and shows, etc.
- Protect and restore sites with cultural and/or spiritual value;
- Raise professionals and civil society’s awareness and build their capacities as regards heritage development and promotion;
- Promote Moroccan heritage and cultural diversity in various tourism events, while ensuring not to trivialise it;
- Develop and distribute communication tools that develop and promote heritage;
- Put in place indicators to monitor sustainability.

- Promote Moroccan architecture and craftsmanship by integrating them when developing tourism projects;
- Promote the use of Moroccan handicrafts when fitting out and decorating tourism projects;
- Raise the staffs’ awareness, during rehabilitation projects, of the importance of protecting Moroccan heritage and historical aspects;
- Support associations /NGOs working for the promotion of the region’s tangible and intangible heritage.
Use, to the extent possible, local products and Moroccan handicrafts; Raise visitors’ and the staffs’ awareness of the Moroccan history and its tangible and intangible heritage and the importance of preserving them; Promote built heritage and Moroccan cultural diversity; Contribute to the rehabilitation of the local architectural heritage; Ensure the compliance with historic sites carrying capacity.

- Respect local traditions and comply with the instructions when visiting monuments and cultural attractions;
- Favour the use/purchase of local handicrafts and local products;
- Protect the quality of historic monuments and architectural works that are visited.

Carry out individual or collective initiatives to protect the local and national tangible and intangible cultural heritage; Raise citizens’ awareness of the importance of protecting Morocco’s cultural and heritage aspects; Contribute to facilitate tourists’ access to the Moroccan culture; Implement educational and awareness-raising activities as regards complying with and protecting heritage for the youth.
Tourism is a powerhouse of Morocco’s economic development. Besides its contribution to the creation of the national value added and the balance of macro-economics indicators, tourism is mainly an important lever of local and regional prosperity. In order to achieve this objective, tourism stakeholders in Morocco undertake to:

a. Contribute to achieve the sustainable development goals (17 goals of the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development)*;
b. Preserve cultural and ethnic specificities of host communities, and to engage them in all decision-making that concern their area;
c. Maintain an ongoing dialogue and coordination with local populations and take account of their needs throughout the life cycle of tourism products.

*https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org
- Take into account each region's development imperatives and specificities when designing and implementing tourism public policies;
- Ensure an ongoing dialogue and a systematic involvement of regional stakeholders in all projects and activities that concern them;
- Produce regularly statistics and indicators on tourism's impact on local development;
- Ensure monitoring the objectives of sustainable development as regards tourism, and impart results with all relevant stakeholders.

- Take account of the impact of any tourism investment on local communities;
- Favour tourism investments that comply with local specificities in consultation with stakeholders;
- Favour the recruitment of local skills and offer them a career plan.
- Condemn and denounce immoral, unethical business practices;
- Promote local employment;
- Promote the local culture and heritage of regions where tourism projects are located;
- Promote the use and consumption of local products;
- Support initiatives and events that promote local development.

- Participate in the decision-making process as regards tourism development in their region;
- Contribute to enrich the debate and better orientate tourism strategies locally and regionally;
- Condemn and denounce immoral, unethical business practices.

- Promote the purchase and consumption of local products, particularly those of cooperatives;
- Respect and comply with the traditions, customs, and identities of local communities;
- Respect the values and cultural authenticity of host communities.
Inevitably, no sustainable tourism development can be achieved without federating efforts of all stakeholders. Also, it is important that the collaboration of tourism stakeholders is based on sharing and respecting values, rules, and principles that guarantee transparency, solidarity, equal opportunities, and mutual respect.

Thus, tourism stakeholders undertake to:

a. Ensure the liberty of tourist movements and avoid any discriminatory restrictions;
b. Facilitate access of tourism to all population groups, particularly youth, families, pensioners, low income earners, the disabled, senior citizens, and migrants and their families;
c. Take into account the specificities of the different types of disabilities, and institute actions and measures to facilitate the disabled’s access tourism;
d. Promote and implement gender equity in all tourism development and promotion forms;
e. Comply with the regulations in force;
f. Protect children from all forms of economic or sexual exploitation;
g. Adopt approaches that aim at taking account of tourism businesses’ social responsibility, and promote labels and awards;
h. Ensure full transparency of business relations, and ban all forms of corruption or unethical practices;
i. Ensure the good governance of the tourism sector, and establish representative systems, institutions, and processes to ensure that various tourism stakeholders are represented and involved in the sector’s decision making;
j. Ensure the protection of tourists and visitors and their belongings, and protect them from any danger or risk.
• Ensure an ongoing dialogue and a systematic involvement of regional stakeholders in all projects and activities that concern them;
• Institute control, monitoring, and repression mechanisms against human rights violations;
• Promote and enhance successful and best experiences as regards respecting equity and reducing inequalities through the development of a sustainable tourism economy;
• Take the necessary measures against any immoral, unethical practice.

• Condemn and denounce any immoral, unethical practice;
• Comply with the principles of transparency, ethics, and equity in their investments;
• Take into account the recommendations of the various stakeholders in their actions.
- Condemn and denounce any immoral, unethical practice;
- Promote the fair-treatment, the non-discrimination, and equal opportunities for workers;
- Prohibit, condemn, and denounce child labour;
- Ensure that employees have all of their rights (especially as regards health services and insurance);
- Promote professional diversity, particularly the one based on disability;
- Contribute to the redistribution of profits by ensuring a reinvestment cycle that guarantees permanent jobs;
- Provide and perpetuate transparent communication channels with the host communities;
- Raise tourists’ awareness of the sustainable tourism principles, particularly those related to equity and ethics.

- Join forces to adopt and promote a participatory approach, and enhance transparency in the field of tourism development.

- Condemn and denounce any immoral, unethical practice;
- Encourage local initiatives undertaken in order to develop a binding economic practice that empowers women.