



**United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development
(HABITAT III)**

Quito, Ecuador, from 17 – 20 October 2016

**UNWTO SIDE EVENT
SUSTAINABLE TOURISM ON THE NEW URBAN AGENDA**

Sunday, 16 October 2016 | 11h30-13h00 | Room A | One UN Pavillion

Supported by:



CELTH Center for Expertise – Leisure, Tourism & Hospitality

TARGETED PARTICIPANTS:

- Local authorities, municipalities and international and/ or regional associations/networks of local authorities
- Public authorities in charge of transport and technical and social infrastructure
- Academic institutions, scientists and experts related to city tourism research
- Urban planners, architects
- International official development assistance agencies and NGOs

PRELIMINARY PROGRAMME:

Welcome remarks

- **H.E. Fernando Alvarado Espinel**, Minister, Ministry of Tourism of Ecuador de Turismo

Opening remarks

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

Keynote presentation

- **Dr. Ko Koens**, Assistant Professor, NHTV Breda University of Applied Sciences, Netherlands

Panel discussion

- **Moderator: Mr. Alejandro Varela**, Deputy Director, Regional Programme for the Americas
- **Mr. Francesco Bandarin**, Assistant Director-General for Culture, UNESCO
- **Mr. Elkin Velasquez**, Director, Regional Office Latin America and the Caribbean (ROLAC), UN-HABITAT
- **Mr. Daniel AVECILLA**, President, Association of Municipalities of Ecuador
- **Mr. Sergio Escobar**, Executive Director, Agency for Cooperation and Investment of Medellin and the Metropolitan Area, Colombia

CONTENT:

- **BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE**
- **TOURISM FOR DEVELOPMENT-KEY ISSUES**
- **KEY DRIVERS FOR ACTION**

BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE:

- In 2015, a record 1.186 billion people travelled to an international destination during the year – 50 million (4.4%) more than in 2014. Despite a slow and uneven economic recovery, rising geopolitical challenges and health scares, international tourism grew above average for the sixth consecutive year.
- UNWTO's long-term forecasts show that by the year 2030, international tourists will reach 1.8 billion. With such progress, tourism has become one of the leading sectors of the global economy representing 10% of the world's GDP, 7% of total exports, and providing one in every 11 jobs.
- The nature of cities is heavily impacted by the *paradigm changes* in the production and consumption patterns and the mobility of capital, people and goods. In recent decades, "global" and "local" are connected in such a way that cities have not only become a **dynamic vector for development and growth** but also as the **locus for change**. At the beginning of the 19th century, only 2 per cent of the world's population was urban. Now, cities accommodate more than 50% of the world population and generate more than 60% of global GDP. It is estimated that 600 cities will generate nearly 65 %of the world economic growth by 2025.(UNHABITAT)
- The social infrastructure and job opportunities in cities are important pull factors for rural dwellers and accelerate the **swelling migration into cities**. Simultaneously many cities struggle to maintain and extend their infrastructure to cater for the new city dwellers' demands and informal settlements emerge. These growing urban areas constitute a **big challenge for city administrations and urban planners** since they often lack of social and technical infrastructure as well as of a regulated and formal labour market and opportunities for social advancements.
- The UN system, through its joint statement to the HABITAT III conference has recently adopted a list of guiding principles for sustainable urbanization which also includes policies and strategies which facilitate economic growth, structural economic transformation and job creation.
- Tourism along with the other sectors currently constitutes a central component in the **economy, social life and the geography** of many cities in the world. Research indicates that the volume of tourism demand for city destinations has increased by approximately 50 % worldwide in the last decade.

- **Tourism in cities** is considered as an **economic activity** with a high potential to stimulate local economic growth because of its complementarity with other economic activities, its contribution to GDP, job creation, foreign exchange and services exports. Tourism is a powerful engine for the local economic and social development of cities through improving infrastructure, creating a skilled labour force, stimulating local business entrepreneurship, developing public-private partnerships and attracting other industries and services.

“TOURISM FOR DEVELOPMENT” KEY ISSUES:

2017 has been announced the “**International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development**” by the UN General Assembly held in 2015.

The UN General Assembly recognized the role of sustainable tourism in general, as a positive instrument towards the eradication of poverty, the protection of the environment, the improvement of quality of life and the economic empowerment of woman and youth. It also underlined the contribution of tourism to the three dimensions of sustainable development, mainly in developing countries.

UNWTO defines sustainable tourism as *“tourism that takes full account of impacts, addressing the needs of visitors, the industry, the environment and host communities”*.

This also applies to tourism in urban destinations and is particularly elaborated by referring to the need to:

- Make optimal use of the natural, cultural and man-made environment (historic and contemporary),
- Respect the social and cultural authenticity of host communities, conserve the historical layering of values and diverse traditions,
- Ensure viable and long-term strategies and operations, providing socio-economic benefits to the local community and a positive impact on the city itself.

A framework of key themes for sustainable tourism in urban areas:

1. Sustainable economic growth:

Tourism in cities helps to create the right environment for resilient and sustainable economic growth. It also creates **spatial dynamics** for transforming the urban landscape through the rejuvenation of public space, public infrastructure and connectivity, development of local amenities and recreational facilities. The regeneration process not only builds a **quality visitor experience** but also safeguards and enhances the **quality of life for the local community** by providing economic, social, cultural and environmental benefits. Tourism in cities also

stimulates innovation, use of information /communication technologies and new business models. **Innovation in tourism** is an important vehicle for developing new products, addressing niche markets, upgrading the quality of services and hence enhancing competitiveness. Innovation must synergize with the activities and services of the city to be able to provide benefits to both the visitors and the local citizens. Within this context, **urban land-use plans, urban development policies** and strategies must give full consideration to the needs of a sustainable tourism development including the spatial distribution of tourism attractions, promotion of accessibility and the conservation of natural and cultural heritage.

A city's competitiveness in general depends foremost on the strengths of its economic sectors. Tourism also consolidates the international reputation of the cities and **contributes to its economic positioning and competitiveness** at global level.

2. Social inclusiveness, employment and poverty reduction:

Tourism ensures creating **skilled labour** and **decent jobs**; reduces **poverty** and provides equitable opportunities to the majority of the demographic segments, especially to women and youth. As a labour focused service industry, the interface between employees and visitors is very important and in itself provides valuable **non-economic mutual benefits**.

Tourism in cities has proven potential to benefit local communities by augmenting or diversifying their income. It is particularly well placed to support economic activity at a very local level if inclusiveness and poverty reduction are being taken as general principles and aims and tourism planning is being considered an important part in a holistic approach to improve the situation in neighborhoods and deprived areas. It can play a powerful role in enabling the poor to get engaged in the **supply of goods and services** to tourism enterprises, to **formalize economic activities in the shadow economy** and foster the development of small/micro or community-based tourism enterprises. Taxes and charges on tourists or enterprises are another source of income that can be reinvested and benefit the local community. Investments in training and capacity building and vocational training in tourism is crucial in enhancing skills and general knowledge and foster employment and entrepreneurship. It later provides trained personnel which allows the integration in other sectors of the economy and hence its diversification.

3. Urban culture and heritage:

"Culture" is defined by UNESCO as the *"set of distinctive spiritual, material, intellectual and emotional features of a society or a social group that encompasses art and literature, lifestyles, ways of living together, value systems, traditions and beliefs."* According to UNESCO, urban culture covers these notions within an urban setting, from both a functional and anthropological perspective.

There is a **strong synergy between tourism and culture** since both sectors benefit from each other. Culture plays a fundamental role in urban economies and in the meantime, it also **represents** the majority of the **tourism experience** in urban destinations. UNESCO explains that "Culture" is now recognized as a key resource

and asset for a sustainable urban development. Historical urban landscape and tangible and intangible cultural urban heritage are the main attractions for city visitors.

The **development of sustainable cultural tourism** in cities can be a catalyst for revenue generation for innovative practices in heritage conservation and management. Given the adverse environmental, cultural and social impacts often associated with global tourism in general and city tourism in particular, the responsibility of the stakeholders in minimizing its negative impacts while maximizing its contribution to the local economic development becomes more relevant.

4. Mutual understanding , cross cultural behavior, safety and security:

Tourism is not only an economic activity. The argument behind the overall economic impact, it is the movement and exchange of people and interaction among visitors and local hosts. Hence it is a facilitator for dialogue across cultures to foster tolerance, respect and mutual understanding.

Nonetheless, “**Cross-Cultural Behavior**” is becoming an issue in the tourism sector when the cultural differences between the host destination and the visitors may cause a negative impact on both parties. The tourist and the host meet in the urban area at a cross-cultural setting. The inter-cultural contact all through the tourism value chain must result in mutual appreciation, understanding, respect and tolerance by developing positive attitudes and reducing ethnic prejudices, stereotypes and tension.

Tourism has long been associated with creating crime and disorder that affects both residents and tourists alike. Hence, **safety and security** are both issues relevant for the local population as well as for a city’s visitors. The perception of security and safety is mostly a subjective and personal matter with different factors involved. The individual perception of safety and security influences how visitors see the city and its neighborhoods and determines to some extent the decision on where to go. Simultaneously the individual perception of tourism among the local community defines to what extent local residents may experience massive influxes of tourists as a harm and risk to social cohesion, a threat to traditional values and their quality of life. Security and tourism policies therefor have to be synchronized and coordinated and shall be part of an overall development strategy instead of being implemented separately. Consequently the success of such initiatives depends on various administrations working jointly together at the local level, but at the same time the involvement of local residents is crucial. The participation of citizens in the tourism strategy and public-private partnerships does provide the opportunity to mitigate negative impacts and strengthen social cohesion by creating or fostering an identity and responsibility among the residents of a given neighborhood. Raising awareness of the possible impacts tourism can have in urban areas can also be a successful strategy to avoid making visitors responsible for any nuisance related to tourism and at the same time promotes responsible behavior among visitors when visiting cities.

Tourism and the 17 Sustainable Development Goals:

1. End poverty in all its forms everywhere

As one of the largest and fastest growing economic sectors in the world, tourism is well-positioned to foster economic growth and development at all levels and provide income through job creation. Sustainable tourism development, and its impact at community level, can be linked with national poverty reduction goals, those related to promoting entrepreneurship and small businesses, and empowering less favored groups, particularly youth and women.

2. End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture

Tourism can spur agricultural productivity by promoting the production, use and sale of local produce in tourist destinations and its full integration in the tourism value chain. In addition, agro-tourism, a growing tourism segment, can complement traditional agricultural activities. The resulting rise of income in local communities can lead to a more resilient agriculture while enhancing the value of the tourism experience.

3. Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages

Tourism's contribution to economic growth and development can also have a knock-on effect on health and well-being. Foreign earnings and tax income from tourism can be reinvested in health care and services, which should aim to improve maternal health, reduce child mortality and prevent diseases, among others.

4. Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all

A well-trained and skillful workforce is crucial for tourism to prosper. The sector can provide incentives to invest in education and vocational training and assist labor mobility through cross-border agreements on qualifications, standards and certifications. In particular youth, women, senior citizens, indigenous peoples and those with special needs should benefit through educational means, where tourism has the potential to promote inclusiveness, the values of a culture of tolerance, peace and non-violence, and all aspects of global exchange and citizenship.

5. Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls

Tourism can empower women in multiple ways, particularly through the provision of jobs and through income-generating opportunities in small and larger-scale tourism and hospitality related enterprises. As one of the sectors with the highest share of women employed and entrepreneurs, tourism can be a tool for women to unlock their potential, helping them to become fully engaged and lead in every aspect of society.

6. Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all

Tourism can play a critical role in achieving water access and security, as well as hygiene and sanitation for all. The efficient use of water in the tourism sector, coupled with appropriate safety measures, wastewater management, pollution control and technology efficiency can be key to safeguarding our most precious resource.

7. Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all

As a sector that requires substantial energy input, tourism can accelerate the shift toward renewable energy and increase its share in the global energy mix. Consequently, by promoting sound and long-term investments in sustainable energy sources, tourism can help to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, mitigate climate change and contribute to innovative and new energy solutions in urban, regional and remote areas.

8. Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all

Tourism is one of the driving forces of global economic growth and currently provides for 1 in 11 jobs worldwide. By giving access to decent work opportunities in the tourism sector, society –particularly youth and women – can benefit from increased skills and professional development. The sector’s contribution to job creation is recognized in Target 8.9 “By 2030, devise and implement policies to promote sustainable tourism that creates jobs and promotes local culture and products”.

9. Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation

Tourism development relies on good public and privately supplied infrastructure and an innovative environment. The sector can also incentivize national governments to upgrade their infrastructure and retrofit their industries, making them more sustainable, resource-efficient and clean, as a means to attract tourists and other sources of foreign investment. This should also facilitate further sustainable industrialization, necessary for economic growth, development and innovation.

10. Reduce inequality within and among countries

Tourism can be a powerful tool for community development and reducing inequalities if it engages local populations and all key stakeholders in its development. Tourism can contribute to urban renewal and rural development and reduce regional imbalances by giving communities the opportunity to prosper in their place of origin. Tourism is also an effective means for developing countries to take part in the global economy. In 2014, Least Developed Countries (LDCs) received US\$ 16.4 billion in exports from international tourism, up from US\$ 2.6 billion in 2000, making the sector

an important pillar of their economies (7% of total exports) and helping some to graduate from the LDC status.

11. Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable

A city that is not good for its citizens is not good for tourists. Sustainable tourism has the potential to advance urban infrastructure and universal accessibility, promote regeneration of areas in decay and preserve cultural and natural heritage, assets on which tourism depends. Greater investment in green infrastructure (more efficient transport facilities, reduced air pollution, conservation of heritage sites and open spaces, etc.) should result in smarter and greener cities from which not only residents, but also tourists, can benefit.

12. Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns

A tourism sector that adopts sustainable consumption and production (SCP) practices can play a significant role in accelerating the global shift towards sustainability. To do so, as set in Target 12.b of Goal 12, it is imperative to “Develop and implement tools to monitor sustainable development impacts for sustainable tourism which creates jobs, promotes local culture and products”. The Sustainable Tourism Programme (STP) of the 10-Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production Patterns (10YFP) aims at developing such SCP practices, including resource efficient initiatives that result in enhanced economic, social and environmental outcomes.

13. Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts

Tourism contributes to and is affected by climate change. It is, therefore, in the sector’s own interest to play a leading role in the global response to climate change. By lowering energy consumption and shifting to renewable energy sources, especially in the transport and accommodation sector, tourism can help tackle one of the most pressing challenges of our time.

14. Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development

Coastal and maritime tourism, tourism’s biggest segments, particularly for Small Island Developing States’ (SIDS), rely on healthy marine ecosystems. Tourism development must be a part of Integrated Coastal Zone Management in order to help conserve and preserve fragile marine ecosystems and serve as a vehicle to promote a blue economy, in line with Target 14.7: “by 2030 increase the economic benefits to SIDS and LDCs from the sustainable use of marine resources, including through sustainable management of fisheries, aquaculture and tourism”.

15. Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss

Majestic landscapes, pristine forests, rich biodiversity, and natural heritage sites are often main reasons why tourists visit a destination. Sustainable tourism can play a major role, not only in conserving and preserving biodiversity, but also in respecting terrestrial ecosystems, owing to its efforts towards the reduction of waste and consumption, the conservation of native flora and fauna, and its awareness-raising activities.

16. Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels

As tourism revolves around billions of encounters between people of diverse cultural backgrounds, the sector can foster multicultural and inter-faith tolerance and understanding, laying the foundation for more peaceful societies. Sustainable tourism, which benefits and engages local communities, can also provide a source of livelihood, strengthen cultural identities and spur entrepreneurial activities, thereby helping to prevent violence and conflict to take root and consolidate peace in post-conflict societies.

17. Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development

Due to its cross-sectorial nature tourism has the ability to strengthen private/public partnerships and engage multiple stakeholders – international, national, regional and local – to work together to achieve the SDGs and other common goals. Indeed, public/public cooperation and public/private partnerships are a necessary and core foundation for tourism development, as is an increased awareness in the role of tourism in the delivery on the post-2015 Development Agenda.

KEY DRIVERS FOR ACTION

- Placing sustainable tourism on the new urban agenda needs a long term vision, shared among the public, private and civil society and must be supported by the urban development policies and processes.
- In city destinations, tourism growth as well as the visitor experience must be inclusive, inspirational, safe and accessible to all. CITIES MUST BE LIVABLE, LOVABLE AND PROFITABLE.
- Cities must be prepared to adopt to the fast paradigm change and to the new dynamics of the relevant use of IT and develop the necessary mechanisms and support systems to encourage innovation with the objective of enhancing competitiveness and improving the quality of life of the citizens.
- Sustainable cultural tourism should also be fostered to the benefit of local communities and individuals to encourage the renewal and revival of cultural heritage.

- Local citizens and stakeholders must be involved and engaged in the tourism development process and should equally benefit from the positive economic and social impact of tourism while minimizing the negative environmental, social and cross-cultural practices consequences of the sector.
- Tourism governance and management structures must improve transparency, knowledge and professionalism and prioritize the quality of life, safety and security for the local citizens equally with the visitors.