

BIOSPHERE – BARCELONA

BARCELONA DECLARATION

BUILDING SUSTAINABLE TOURISM IN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE NEW URBAN AGENDA

We, the participants of the International Conference on "Sustainable Tourism for Development in the framework of the New Urban Agenda", held in Barcelona, from 17-19 May 2017, on the occasion of the International Year of Sustainable Tourism,

Recognizing that sustainability is not an option but an irrevocable mandate for cities and recognizing cities' potential in the future through sustainable tourism to contribute to human and social welfare and the diversity of cultural expressions, tangible and intangible heritage, as well as to the conservation of environmental resources.

Considering sustainable tourism as a driver for development, green job creation and the generation of rewarding experiences for both visitors and residents;

Concerned by negative impacts of tourism development on our cities, such as those related to its social and economic integration, ranging from the use of public space, mobility, soaring housing prices, access to public goods and services, and to the excessive consumption of resources, or its effects on the environmental wellbeing of the region, including its repercussions on

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biodiversity, ecosystems, natural resources, climate, health and heritage;

Recalling the principles of the Global Code of Ethics for Tourism adopted by UNWTO and endorsed by the UN General Assembly and the recommendations and guidelines provided by several multilateral environmental and cultural agreements and conventions, such as the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the World Heritage Convention, the Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), and UN resolutions related to the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat);

Confident that tourism in cities must significantly reduce their ecological footprint and opt for responsible production and consumption patterns, and that it could become an engine of innovation for green, circular, climate-friendly economies, by implementing strategies for energy sustainability and resilience in order to address the impacts of climate change;

Convinced that tourism must play a leading role to foster the conservation of the urban legacy for present and future generations, as well as the driving force for safeguarding of tangible and intangible cultural heritage, the arts and cultural and creative industries in the cities;

Recognizing the ideals, principles, commitments and appeals for action of the New Urban Agenda, expressed in

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the 2016 Quito Declaration on Sustainable Cities and Human Settlements.

Aware of the urgent need to actively contribute to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the new framework of the United Nations on sustainable development, and to commit to the achievement of the goals set, made explicit in each one of its objectives;

Taking into account the approach, guidelines and calls for action expressed in the World Charter for Sustainable Tourism +20, adopted in 2015 in the city of Vitoria-Gasteiz, as well as all recommendations included in the Vision 2020 for Sustainable Tourism of Catalonia (2013);

We propose a comprehensive commitment for urban tourism and tourist cities, defining a new roadmap towards a future based on sustainable tourism, expressed by the following principles and guidelines for action:

Supporting the transition towards sustainable tourism

Working for a paradigm shift of urban tourism towards the adoption of new commitments and standards, orienting tourism policies and actions of cities towards sustainable development.

We recognize the need for integrated tourism management in close relation with other urban policies, aimed at ensuring the well-being of the urban destination, promoting tourism that favours a better visitor

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experience, ensuring the rights of residents and enhancing its social return.

We recognize that the necessary changes to ensure this transition require a new perspective shared by all stakeholders. This new perspective must clearly define the steps towards sustainable tourism destinations, as reflected in the Memorandum for Barcelona.

We recognize the need to generate innovative solutions for the sustainable management of urban tourism, aiming to reinforce our political and corporate commitments, while also ensuring transparency and accountability through status reports, explaining the progress and achievements met during the process.

Therefore, implementing sustainable tourism into the New Urban Agenda requires a long-term vision, shared by the public and private sector, as well as the civil society, and supported by policies and urban development processes.

Strengthening local governance and participation

We recognize the critical role that local administrations play in the leadership of tourism planning, as well as the need to adopt new governance models for sustainable tourism that ensure participation and the development of fair redistribution mechanisms. This requires involving all relevant stakeholders in a collaborative and transparent work, with a spirit of shared responsibility, in order to create better places to visit and live.

We understand that tourism governance in our cities must be developed through participatory processes, developing partnerships at the local level and ensuring that all

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stakeholders, including the citizen's voice, have the ability to decide how tourism can be managed and developed in their cities. All public and private stakeholders in sustainable urban destination share the responsibility of maintaining the destination as a good place to live and, consequently, attractive to visit, that integrates the local population, taking into account the resident, and making tourists more responsible.

Making our tourist cities healthier, more inclusive and sustainable

We propose taking responsibility to reduce any environmental impact of tourism, and accept the challenge of its social, economic and cultural integration. We understand that tourism in our cities must be:

Resource-efficient

We aim to achieve maximum efficiency in terms of use and provision of environmental, social and financial resources. We also seek to reduce dependency on non-renewable resources. Our goal is to transform our urban destinations into areas with efficient and productive tourism systems, making responsible use of its natural, cultural and human (historical and contemporary) environment.

Climate-friendly

We understand that urban tourism can lead the way in the practical adoption of the Paris Agreements, through our

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commitment to reducing greenhouse gas emissions, as well as recognizing the need to adopt a long-term vision towards 100% renewable energy, in key areas such as mobility and energy efficiency. Through our commitment, the final objective will be to contribute to building a CO₂-free future for urban destinations.

A model of responsible consumption

Promoting the development of urban, dynamic and inclusive economies, taking advantage of internal potential and competitive advantages based on the implementation of sustainable consumption and production patterns along the service and activity chain, as well as consolidating tourism models based on circular economy. A tourism industry that implements sustainable consumption and production practices may play an important role in accelerating a global transition towards sustainable development.

Engine for green economies

We will support local green economies through urban tourism's consumption and production channels, contributing to the creation of a common economic area where tourism becomes an effective vector of sustainable development in each city, with a strong involvement of the complementary tourist offer. We understand that tourism can that way promote quality economies, creating a responsible offer of local services and products in partnership with responsible clients.

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Creative and responsible towards heritage

We believe tourism must be an ally and guarantor to ensure the preservation of cultural heritage of cities, taking into account their role as a key tourist asset. We will address the challenge of promoting the creation, development and implementation of sustainable tourism services and products that promote a respectful use of heritage, and transmit the values of the destination and its identity through the tourist experience.

We also propose to foster cooperation between cities in order to turn creativity into an engine of sustainable urban development, social integration and cultural life.

Linked to local communities

We want tourism in our cities to use local goods and services so as to increase links to the local community and minimize economic leakages, identifying social, recognising social and economic cohesion as a fundamental principle of sustainable tourism development.

We believe it is essential to promote the largest social return possible of tourism, focusing on those elements that ensure a redistribution of wealth.

Competitive and innovative through promotion of decent work

We must ensure the development of sustainable and inclusive tourism economies, supporting competitiveness and innovation. This also involves the promotion of productive en green employment, decent work within the tourism sector, and equal access for all to the opportunities generated by tourism.

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We consider it essential the existence of adequate working conditions as a guarantee for quality, sustainable and responsible tourism.

Consistent with destination identity

Contributing to the creation, development and implementation of sustainable tourism services and products that promote a respectful use of natural and cultural heritage, and transmit the values of the destination and its identity through the tourist experience.

We believe that sense of place lies at the heart of sustainable tourism and contributes to the identity, pride and connection to the destination; and at the same time, allows improving the visitors' experience. That is why we advocate to respect the socio-cultural authenticity of host communities, and preserve all values and traditions accumulated over time.

Committed to gender equality

Sustainable tourism must gender equality and the empowerment of women across all areas, with a special focus on promoting working conditions that do not discriminate against women.

Strengthen the innovation culture and intelligence applied to tourism

We consider that urban tourism can stimulate innovation, the use of new information and communication technologies

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(ICTs) and new business models. Innovation in tourism is an important driver for the development of new products, and to focus on niche markets, improve service quality and promote competitiveness. Innovation must create synergies between the city's activities and services in order to benefit both visitors and residents.

We stress the need the need to promote responsible public and business practices capable of implementing new methodologies and strategies within business and management models, based on creativity and talent, and aimed at generating new sustainable tourism products and urban services.

We must be able to develop new projects of sustainable urban regeneration associated to tourism that promote the permanence of the citizen uses, generators of spaces of coexistence, and that maintain the diversity of uses and avoid the effects of gentrification.

The management of city tourism can incorporate new technologies in a systematic way in order to generate information, knowledge and intelligence, to better understand the people who visit them, the dynamics of mobility and patterns of use of tourism resources, for better management of them and offer new services to visitors that increase their satisfaction and knowledge of the destination.

Promoting tourism for all

We aim to generate spaces of understanding through tourism in our cities, as well as create a sustainable tourism offer where visitors and residents live together in

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harmony, minimizing the negative impacts tourism may have and reinforcing positive links to local economies.

We recognize the role of tourism as a facilitator of dialogue among cultures, aiming at promoting tolerance, mutual understanding and respect.

We reaffirm the principle that whatever is good for the resident is also good for tourism. The tourist is a temporary citizen in our cities, subject to rights and obligations like the resident people.

We emphasize that accessibility is an essential requirement for cities to be enjoyed by everyone, allowing an autonomous participation of citizens. We consider that an accessible city meets the needs of use and consumption of space, services and urban goods of all people, ensuring equal conditions and opportunities to people with disabilities. Hence, ensuring accessibility is ensuring the universal right to visit.

Share to associate sustainability with competitiveness

We will promote cooperation initiatives between cities to encourage the exchange of experiences.

We propose to build a new alliance for sustainable tourism in our cities with the objective of sharing solutions, knowledge and good practices that consider sustainability and tourism competitiveness as an inseparable binomial.