



Original: English

## 16th Session

Agenda item: Preserving Biodiversity of Land and Protecting Natural Landscapes Through Sustainable Tourism Practices

*The United Nations World Tourism Organization,*

*Concerned* about significant decline in wet primary forests and its impact on ecosystems,

*Bearing in mind* of each Member States on the differences in local traditions, political climate, economic situation, etc,

*Alarmed* by the destruction of the environment or biodiversity by over tourism in major sightseeing areas,

*Considering* the habitat loss and biodiversity damage caused from buildings that have been built in a place where there is more chances of emitting,

*Taking into consideration* land conversion and its impact on biodiversity due to tourism expansion,

*Acknowledging* the risk of environmental degradation of natural sites and national parks resulting from unregulated tourist access,

*Considering* local people and tourists smuggling rare species, and damaging ecosystems and tourism resources,

*Recognizing* sustainable tourism as a vital tool for preserving biodiversity and conveying the value of nature to future generations through efforts such as educational programs related to sustainable tourism,

*Reaffirming* commitment to reducing deforestation under the Glasgow Declaration (2021) through cross-border biodiversity conservation efforts,

*Affirming* half of the world's GDP is moderately or highly dependent on a thriving natural environment which means preserving biodiversity is closely related to the economy,

*Recognizing* the impact of climate change on natural landscapes, especially in coastal areas, resulting in shoreline reduction due to coastal erosion estimated to average between 0.5

and 2 meters per year, and damage to coastlines expected to increase further as a result of climate change according to United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP),

*Reaffirming* the Convention on Biological Diversity (1992), it is concerning that over 80% of protected areas globally lack effective tourism management plans despite 60% of nature-based tourism occurring within or near these areas, which leads to unmanaged tourism practices that accelerate habitat loss and land degradation,

*Recognizing* strategies and policies to promote sustainable tourism that create jobs and promote local culture and products by 2030 that was asserted by the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) Target 8.9 the in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in 2015 and the importance of taking full account of the environment and host communities that was called for by General Assembly Resolution 70/193, 2017 in 2015,

1. *Recommends* UN Tourism to establish educational programs for sustainable tourism operators and policymakers to develop and implement comprehensive educational initiatives that target tourism operators and local communities to promote sustainable practices;
2. *Suggests* Member States promote sustainable tourism as a vital tool for preserving biodiversity and convey the value of nature to next generations through:
  - a. Creating physical learning spaces for local tourism sites to advance educational technology and student learning;
  - b. Focusing on tourism management and cultural preservation while integrating the SDGs;
  - c. Focusing on building and supporting tourism, hospitality, and creative industries in rural areas and regions outside major cities to address surging demand for local tourism during the COVID pandemic;
3. *Recommends* UN Tourism raise awareness of protected and high-density tourist areas in Member States and prevent biodiversity loss by:
  - a. Collaborating with the World Database on Protected Areas (WDPA) to collect data on protected areas;
  - b. Organizing data collected from WDPA into regional, national, and present damage levels;
  - c. Creating a world map of the data to upload on the UN Tourism website and update annually;

4. *Proposes* that all member states limit the number of tourists by setting up post on the entrances of national parks and other national sites by designating sites that are:
  - a. Susceptible to damage by high-density tourist areas, for example:
    - i. Sites with unstable rock and soil formation;
    - ii. Sites with a limited space;
    - iii. Sites that have a fragile ecosystem and limited natural resources that struggles to recover from changes;
    - iv. Sites that are remote and difficult to access;
  - b. Rich in biodiversity, especially endangered, vulnerable, and/or dangerous species;
  - c. Frequently visited by tourists;
  - d. Important culturally and/or pragmatically for the local population;
5. *Proposes* Member States who are aware about the destruction of biodiversity or landscape by overtourism to:
  - a. Hold an annual workshop for hotels and restaurants to emphasize environmental standards and issues by:
    - i. Suggesting employees to do self-evaluation such as trash problems, water usage or food loss problems;
    - ii. Encouraging restaurants to use local ingredients;
    - iii. Raising awareness of environmental problems in the industry;
  - b. Identify more sustainable routes for tours in minor sightseeing areas, to reduce over tourism in major sightseeing areas by:
    - i. Dispersing tourists across multiple routes to protect the nature and biodiversity;
    - ii. Lessening the burden on the environment;
    - iii. Increasing specialized interaction with nature, history, and the traditional culture of the region;
    - iv. Raising tourists' awareness of the importance of conserving the local nature, biodiversity, and traditional culture;

- c. Suggests tourists to use bicycles, public transportation or walking;
  - d. Incorporate volunteer activity to help maintain the landscape;
- 6. *Encourages* Member States to regard the protection of nature while developing tourism for their economy by:
  - a. Contemplating the protection of landscapes as a national priority of each Member State;
  - b. Recommending new type of tourism with drones ensuring minimal environmental impact;
- 7. *Recommends* Member States create monitoring systems to prevent poaching and smuggling of animals and collaborate with UNEP;
- 8. Requests technical assistance and support from developed Member States to help developing Member States to improve waste management by:
  - a. Build companies with advanced waste disposal and recycling technologies;
  - b. Show appeal to avoid products not made of eco-friendly materials in the tourism destination;
- 9. *Encourages* the development of sustainable, community-based ecotourism programs within biodiversity-rich regions and developing countries with a focus on:
  - a. Empowering local communities as primary stakeholders and direct beneficiaries of eco-tourism initiatives;
  - b. Implementing environmentally responsible guidelines for all tourism operators to mitigate negative ecological impacts;
  - c. Promoting conservation education for both local populations and international visitors;
- 10. *Suggests to* Member States to integrate sustainable tourism strategies into national development plans, in alignment with Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) 12, 13, 14, and 15 by:
  - a. Exchanging best practices on ecotourism management and biodiversity conservation through regional forums and partnerships;
  - b. Providing financial contributions to multilateral environmental funds aimed at preserving biodiversity within developing biodiversity-rich regions and developing countries;

11. *Reminds* Member States that all tourism-related infrastructure projects, particularly in sensitive ecosystems such as coastal mangroves, national parks, and marine reserves, be subject to mandatory Environmental Impact Assessments (EIAs) before approval, including:
  - a. Provisions for ongoing environmental monitoring post-construction;
  - b. Strict penalties for non-compliance with environmental standards;
12. *Suggests* the establishment of designated Protected Eco-Tourism Zones (PETZ) in cooperation with local governments and conservation organizations, where:
  - a. Only sustainable, low-impact tourism activities such as guided nature walks and scientific expeditions are permitted;
  - b. Revenue generated from tourism is reinvested directly into habitat protection, species conservation, and community development programs;
13. *Encourages* enhanced regional cooperation, particularly among Southern African Development Community (SADC) member states, for the creation of cross-border eco-tourism corridors by:
  - a. Facilitating coordinated efforts to preserve transboundary ecosystems;
  - b. Supporting the free and safe movement of migratory species;
  - c. Sharing technical expertise, resources, and monitoring data among Member States;
14. *Supports* the integration of Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK) from indigenous and local communities into national and regional sustainable tourism strategies, with emphasis on:
  - a. Protecting cultural and ecological heritage;
  - b. Promoting the inclusion of indigenous perspectives in decision-making processes related to biodiversity conservation;
  - c. Providing platforms for local communities to showcase sustainable practices and cultural traditions through tourism activities;
15. *Recognizes* the need for cooperation on safeguarding nature and promoting sustainable tourism through:
  - a. Measures to prevent overcrowding in tourist areas;

- b. The use of renewable energy sources;
  - c. Collaborative efforts among countries to address ocean wastes, coral reef damage, and other negative impact of overtourism;
16. *Recommends* Member States to work on restoration of coastal areas by:
- a. Replenishing sand in eroded areas;
  - b. Building breakwaters along the coastal line;
  - c. Installing waste management systems to avoid further erosion;
  - d. Planting mangroves and installing underwater reefs to recover biodiversity;
17. *Encourages* Member States to work on initiatives aimed on reforestation and ecosystem protection, such as:
- a. Restoring and reconnecting degraded forest corridors, and its biodiversity and ecosystem functions;
  - b. Implementing volunteer-based ecotourism programs that involve tree planting in damaged forests in Southeast Asia, Central Africa, and Latin America:
    - i. in order to enhance environmental awareness among tourists and efficiently expand forest cover;
    - ii. through partnerships between tourism operators, local communities, and international volunteers;
    - iii. with the aim of scaling such initiatives by 2040;
  - c. Educating tourists on the importance of forest conservation and supporting community-led environmental efforts, educational programs about basic etiquette to protect nature related to sustainable tourism operators, and policymakers;
18. *Recommends* Member States to work on improving the equal distribution of benefits from tourism by 2030 through:
- a. Analyzing key stakeholders and interests they will gain in potential areas of Community-based Natural Resource Management to indicate the benefit to local communities and key stakeholders;
  - b. Collaborating with the World Food Programme (WFP) to share technical expertise to increase, protect, and maintain the natural ecosystems of vulnerable local communities.