United Nations Statistical Commission  
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Item 3 (f) of the provisional agenda  
Items for discussion and decision: environmental-economic accounting


Statement provided by:  
Statistics Austria

Statement: “Measuring the Sustainability of Tourism” (see section VI. A)

- Statistics Austria supports UNWTO’s work related to „Measuring the Sustainability of Tourism“ (MST), supported by the Committee of Experts on Environmental-Economic Accounting. It is highly recommended to continue the work, since
  - the initiative - started in 2015 – is relevant in COVID-19 crises more than ever since the virus has been shown how important sustainability is;
  - by definition, tourism is embedded in our economies and in our societies, and it relies on our environment which can be protected or degraded by tourism;
  - in particular, in these times, where tourism is one of the industries suffering most of the pandemic’s impacts, the initiative related to „Measuring the Sustainability of Tourism“ in all its dimensions (economical, ecological and social) and having reliable data is crucial for better designing and monitoring evidence-based tourism recovery plans and policies in the short-, medium- and long-term.

- Furthermore, Statistics Austria welcomes the development of a „Statistical Framework for Measuring the Sustainability of Tourism“ (SF-MST) since the provision of comparable and consistent data for the users is a prerequisite in the statistical community which is supported by such a framework usable by countries and which should permit greater international comparability related to the produced figures. Due to the multidisciplinarity of tourism, different concepts from different topics have to be considered, which needs some methodological guidance in particular.

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