



High Level Discussion on Measuring the Sustainability of Tourism

Side Event to the United Nations Statistical
Commission 52nd session

March 12, 9:00 – 11:00 New York time
Open meeting





Tourism is an essential pillar of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. It is imperative that we rebuild the tourism sector to ensure tourism regains its position as a provider of decent jobs, stable incomes and the protection of our cultural and natural heritage.

António Guterres, United Nations Secretary General

Tourism is a social, cultural and economic phenomenon related to the movement of people. Tourism has an impact on the economy, the natural and built environment, the local population at the places visited and on the visitors themselves¹.

However, existing statistical standards for measuring tourism focus primarily on measuring tourism flows and their economic contribution. Policy to make tourism more sustainable, and to fulfill tourism's potential to contribute to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, is hampered by a lack of statistics on the sustainability of tourism. If sustainability in tourism is a priority, we must make measuring it a priority also.

The World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), in collaboration with the United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD), is accompanying leading countries and institutions in the development of a [Statistical Framework for Measuring the Sustainability of Tourism](#). Such a tool is as important as ever in the aftermath of the global health and economic crisis, as the tourism sector looks to restart in a more sustainable manner.

In this event, high level officials from National Statistical Offices in different countries will discuss the need for the measurement of the sustainability of tourism in all its dimensions—economic, social and environmental—and present their experiences in Measuring the Sustainability of Tourism. This event complements the [background document](#) on Measuring the Sustainability of Tourism that is presented to the current session of the United Nations Statistical Commission.

Please register for the event [here](#)

¹ According to the internationally agreed definition of tourism included in the International Recommendations for Tourism Statistics 2008 (IRTS 2008).

Moderator:



Mr. Bert Kroese, Deputy Director General, Statistics Netherlands

Bert Kroese joined Statistics Netherlands in 1996. He was appointed Deputy Director General and CIO in 2013. He graduated in mathematical statistics from the University of Groningen, going on to receive his PhD in the same discipline. Among other positions he is presently Chair of the United Nations Committee of Experts on Environmental-Economic Accounting (UNCEEA) and member of the strategy team of the Dutch National AI Coalition. See Bert Kroese-LinkedIn

Different perspectives: policy, private sector, statistical:



Mr. Tobias Thomas, Director General, Statistics Austria

Tobias Thomas is Director General of Statistics Austria. In addition, he is adjunct Professor of Economics at Heinrich Heine University Düsseldorf as well as CMDS Fellow at the Central European University (CEU) in Budapest. Furthermore, Thomas is vice president of the Austrian Statistical Society (ÖSG) and member of the standing field committee for Economic Systems and Institutional Economics of the German Economic Association, one of the largest professional economics associations in Europe. In addition, he is scientific expert at the Austrian Pension Commission which analyses the financial sustainability of the national pension system.



Mr. Julio López Astor, Assistant Director General, Sub-directorate General for Tourism Knowledge and Research, Ministry of Industry, Commerce and Tourism, Spain

Mr. López Astor graduated in Law from the Autonomous University of Madrid and spent 2 years as an officer in the legal corps in the Spanish Navy. In 1990 he joined the Civil Service and since 1992 has been working for the Secretariat of State for Tourism and Spain's NTO, Turespaña, where he has served as director in several Tourist Offices of Spain abroad (Frankfurt am Main, Zurich, Chicago and Miami) as well as in the headquarters as Deputy General Director for Quality and Innovation, for Marketing and Advertising, for Strategy and for Knowledge and Tourism Studies. In 2006 Mr. López Astor obtained an MBA with a focus on Marketing Management and Finance at the Kellogg Graduate School of Management at Northwestern University in Evanston, IL.



Mr. Pedro Moreira, Advisor to the Minister, Ministry of Tourism and Transport, Cabo Verde

BS in Business Management, Mr. Moreira was member of the Parliament and Government of Cabo Verde in the 1990's and has been a senior international consultant in business management for more than 20 years. Since 2016 he is Special Advisor to the Minister of Economy and Employment and, since 2018, to the Minister of Tourism and Transport, especially in the areas of Policy Development and Regulation and International Relations and Development. Mr. Moreira is Cabo Verde's focal point to the UNWTO and ICAO.



Tim Fairhurst, Secretary General, European Tourism Association (ETOA)

Tim manages ETOA's lobbying activities at EU, national and local levels, ensuring its non-commercial activity, from expert seminars to market research, matches member needs and policy priorities. He heads ETOA's office in Brussels, liaising closely with industry partners, working groups and country representatives in destination.

Pioneering country work in Measuring the Sustainability of Tourism:



Ms. Carol Coy, Director General, Statistical Institute of Jamaica

Carol Coy is the Director General of the Statistical Institute of Jamaica (STATIN), Jamaica's National Statistics Office. Appointed to this post in April 1, 2013, Ms Coy is the chief statistician in Jamaica, with responsibility for the strategic development of STATIN and the development of Jamaica's National Statistics System. She is tasked with safeguarding the production and publication of high quality official statistics on Jamaica that are responsive to the needs of policy-makers and other stakeholders.

Prior to assuming this role, Ms Coy served as Deputy Director General of STATIN, providing leadership and oversight the technical divisions of the Institute. She is also an experienced National Accountant, and for over three decades has been instrumental in the development and maintenance of the national accounts estimates for the Jamaican economy. Ms Coy has contributed much to the field of National Accounts locally, regionally and internationally serving for over thirteen years as STATIN's Director of National Accounts.

She is currently a member of the United Nations Statistics Division's Advisory Expert Group on National Accounts and the Caribbean Community's (CARICOM) Advisory Group on Statistics.



Mr. Julio Santaella, President, National Institute for Statistics and Geography of Mexico

Since January 2016, Julio A. Santaella is the President of the National Institute of Statistics and Geography of México. From 2001 to 2015, served at the Bank of Mexico as the Executive Coordinator of the Mexican Petroleum Fund, Manager of Information and Analysis, Director of the Central Bank Operations Support, Researcher for the General Direction of Economic Research, as well as for the Central Bank Governing Board. From 1992 to 1997 he served as an economist of the Research Department and the European Department of the International Monetary Fund.

In the academic field, he has been a researcher and teacher at the Technologic Autonomous Institute of Mexico (ITAM, 1985-1986, 1997-2003), Coordinator of the Applied Economics Center, Chairman of the Economics Department and Deputy Director of the Economic Research and Analysis Center.

He received his Bachelor's Degree in Economics from the ITAM, and holds a Master's degree and PhD. in Economics from the University of California (UCLA).



Ms. Vivian Ilarina, Assistant National Statistician of the Macroeconomic Accounts Service, Sectoral Statistics Office, Philippine Statistics Authority

Ms. Vivian R. Ilarina is currently the Assistant National Statistician of the Macroeconomic Accounts Service (MAS) under the Sectoral Statistics Office of the Philippine Statistics Authority. Her field of expertise is mainly the development and compilation of national accounts and environmental accounts including satellite accounts and economic indicators.

Ms. Ilarina serves as resource person and lecturer on national accounts, environmental accounts and economic statistics in study visits of ASEAN and other countries as part of the Philippine Cooperation and Technical Assistance on the compilation of National Accounts. She also serves as lecturer on other official statistics in the United Nations Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific or UNSIAP in Chiba, Japan.



Mr. Peter Laimer, Vice Director for Spatial Statistics of Statistics Austria and Chair of the Working Group of Experts on Measuring the Sustainability of Tourism.

After finishing two University Courses related to Export and Tourism at the University of Economics Vienna 1990 and the study in Geography at the University of Vienna in June 1992, Mr. Laimer started working at Statistics Austria in May 1993 and since 1998 he is responsible for the official “Tourism and Travel Statistics“. Mr. Laimer has ample consulting experience, working with Eurostat on methodological issues and training (e.g. co-author of the European Implementation Manual on TSA, trainer for the Eurostat ESTP course on TSA) and with UNWTO on technical assistance projects in countries.

Since 2016 Mr. Laimer is co-Chair of the UNWTO Committee on Statistics and leading the Working Group of Experts on Measuring the Sustainability of Tourism.

Towards a Statistical Framework for Measuring the Sustainability of Tourism:



Mr. Hernán Epstein, Chief of Statistics, World Tourism Organization (UNWTO)

Hernán Epstein is the Chief of the Department of Statistics at UNWTO. He holds a Bachelor in Economics from Universidad de San Andrés (Argentina), and a MSc in Statistics from the University of British Columbia. Mr Epstein has over 10 years of experience working on statistics at the national and international levels. He has previously worked in Statistics Canada, UN-ECLAC and UNODC.



Alessandra Priante, Regional Director for Europe, World Tourism Organization (UNWTO)

Alessandra Priante is the Director for Europe at UNWTO, the UN agency that promotes sustainable, responsible and universally accessible tourism. She was previously the Chief of multilateral relations and tourism policy in Italy for the Ministries where tourism was positioned (Ministry of Culture and subsequently the Ministry of Agricultural, Food, Forestry policies)

She is a first-degree business graduate at Bocconi University, and holds an Executive MBA at Luiss Guido Carli University. She merged her experience in corporate finance and M&A operations with her cultural expertise, joining since 2002 the Ministry of Culture, with the task of restructuring public finances for the culture sector. As an expert of the Middle East area, she was appointed from 2010 to 2015 the Diplomatic Cultural Representative for the Gulf Area.

Alessandra knows 6 languages and is an author of numerous sector publications. She is also an adjoint Professor at Luiss Business School and teaches culture and tourism management at other major universities in Italy and abroad.



Please register for the event [here](#)