



Future of Tourism Coalition Reset Tourism Webinar Series: Measuring Tourism's Impacts and Success

We will discuss new, simple, measures of success that go beyond visitor numbers and overall spend, recognising the true value of tourism - both its costs and benefits – and understanding how it will contribute to a destination's health and community wellbeing.

Key takeaways:

- Being the Future of Tourism Coalition' core objective to support a tourism industry which focuses on the destination needs, facing how tourism has impacted destinations and how this impact can be measured is key.
- Building back better? Better needs to be redefined and include how to avoid mistakes of the past: seasonality, economic leakage, low margins, overcrowding, overconsumption, overdependence, fragile environments, exclusion and inequality, future crises, and climate emergency.
- Measuring what matters to your destination and implementing new tools to measure impact based on criteria and indicators is key to develop a unique but effective monitoring and management system.
- Reset tourism with new measures of success requires new governance and business models which are based on the community needs. This new structure would allow data sharing and co management agenda based relevant KPIs.

Keynote - Measurement that Matters

- New measures of success are needed, traditional KPI are easy to calculate but insufficient for specific destinations and businesses with unique contexts and requirements.
- Universal set of common KPI for the tourism industry to allow us to understand and address high priority issues; there will make results more transparent about positive and negative impact.
- Better balance is required to tackle the bigger issues. The total impact of tourism must include a clear measure of the impact of visitors on communities, natural and built assets; the distribution of tourism benefits equity; and a clear understanding of risk exposure and impact and role in addressing the tourism role in the climate and ecological crisis.
- Cost of growth has been ignored and considered as externalities in various economic models. These can be considered as the invisible burden of the tourism

industry growth as its impact is not measured. To manage this invisible burden a holistic accounting of the impacts and specific costs is required in addition to an asset management approach.

- Asset management approach focuses on a shared common pool of resources available in the destination to ensure their sustainable management focusing on carrying capacity, protection, long term threats and risk and opportunities of innovation.
- Impact and risk mapping can help destinations to set, track and manage tourism pressure based on their unique goals and different possible scenarios,
- Resident sentiment and well-being can help red-flag issues and its measurement can be used as an early warning tool.
- Optimizing added value tourism by maximizing positive benefits by understanding what value is for each destination and how to increase their own valuable tourism. Quality tourism must include benefits for the local communities and shared based on the principles of diversity equity and inclusion.

Keynote - Measuring Sustainability: why, what and how

- Over the last 20 years perception on what Sustainable tourism is has changed due to the awareness and implications of multiple global crises.
- Economic success factors of the tourism industry are well measured and promoted as benefits, while impacts and risks require to be closely monitored and managed. Success social factors are based on a limited amount of evidence and the impacts and risks are mainly related to issues of equity, inclusion, over tourism and recently Covid. Measuring social factors can be very complicated. Environmental impact and risks factors in relation to the climate emergency and air pollution measures as urgently required.
- KPIs related to issues that can be managed with clear targets. Destinations can use Indicators, indexes, ratings to monitor economic inequality, social diversity and equity, waste and plastic use, renewable energy use and natural forest growth.
- National government should take the lead on measuring and solving main issues. A good analysis is to compare countries indicators and indexes related to this global issue. Comparing destination results with their country index can show how destinations are in relation to their countries based on unique practices.
- Indicators and indexes are less suitable to compare different destinations, but they are needed for destinations to monitor performance over time, including setting targets and reviewing progress.
- Criteria represents commitments and actions, destination provides information to support each criterion, the auditor and certifier will assess the report and identify the destination's performance and recommend actions to improve performance.
- Certification transparency can be improved using score cards, destination results show what they need to improve. Other tools include projections of climate emergency risks and the use of spatial data can help identify threats and help identify relevance and urgency.

Panel Discussion Highlights

Representing Colombia, Julián Guerrero-Orozco, Vice Minister of Tourism shared the initiatives their government has put in place to develop a Sustainable Tourism Policy based on based practices around the world. This policy had the objective to strengthen sustainability in the tourism value chain, improve competitiveness and responsible use of natural resources and create added value.

Representing Visit Flanders, Bart Neuts, Research Expert, shared the relevance of measuring value in relationship to quality rather than volume and financial results to measure success. Visit Flanders balance internal indicators related to the Tourism Industry and indicators related to the general Quality of Life to develop Strategy and Action Plans.

Representing Visit Greenland Idrissia EY Thestrup, Senior Manager, Destination Development & Marketing, shared how their Tourism Strategy includes strategies to develop tourism to the benefit of their local community including those non-related to the tourism industry.

Representing National Blacks in Travel & Tourism Collaborative Stephanie Jones, Founder & CEO, shared the relevance of diversity and equality in all sectors of the Tourism Industry. When measuring impact of DEI (Diversity, equity and inclusion) initiatives it is important to consider authenticity, internationality, strategy and equitable

Reflections Panel Discussion

- Mikey Sedowky, General Manager Global PR and Communications Intrepid Travel
In order for destinations to improve the impact of their tourism strategy it is important to focus on what do you compete on, what do you claim, what do you practice and what do you exclude. When destinations have a clear version, measuring becomes more approachable and accessible.
- Masaru Takayama, Founding Chair, Asian Ecotourism Network
It is important how tourism affects communities in terms of happiness? Happiness or sentiment index related to specific strategies and its result indicators may be a good practice to define which strategies may need to change. It is important to understand how the Tourism Industry is perceived in destinations where the concept of sustainable tourism is new, it is important to understand each destination's reasons for measuring.

Reflections on discussion

Tourism must face the big issues in order to redefine what success is and take on the leadership role in addressing these issues and being part of the solution.