

SUSTAINABLE
TOURISM



CHARTER FOR SUSTAINABLE TOURISM

We, the participants in the World Conference on Sustainable Tourism, meeting in Lanzarote, Canary Islands, Spain, on 27-28 April 1995,

Mindful that tourism is a worldwide phenomenon and also an important element of socioeconomic and political development in many countries, and that tourism touches the highest and deepest aspirations of all people.

Recognizing that tourism is an ambivalent phenomenon since it has the potential to contribute to socio-economic and cultural achievement and it can at the same time contribute to the depletion of the environment and the loss of local identity, it should be approached with a global methodology.

Mindful that the resources on which tourism is based are limited and that there is a growing demand for improved environmental quality.

Recognizing that tourism can afford the opportunity to travel and to get to know other cultures, and that the development of tourism can help promote closer ties and peace among peoples, creating a conscience that is respectful of the diversity of cultures and life styles.

Recalling the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations and the various United Nations declarations on tourism, the environment and the conservation of cultural heritage, including the United Nations Conference on Tourism and International Travel of 1963, as well as the international conventions that have a bearing on tourism, among them the Convention on Biodiversity, the World Heritage Convention, the Ramsar Convention, the CITES Convention, and the various regional conventions.

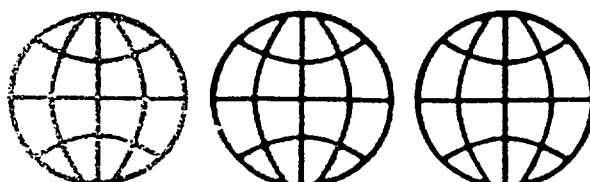
Guided by the principles set forth in the Rio Declaration on the Environment and Development and the recommendations that emanate from Agenda 21.

Recalling declarations in the matter of tourism, such as the Manila Declaration on World Tourism, the Hague Declaration and the Tourism Charter and Tourist Code, as well as the principles set out in the Declaration of the Human Rights of Future Generations.

Recognizing the objective of developing a tourism that meets economic expectations and environmental requirements and respects not only the social and physical structure of the location, but also the local population.

Mindful of the need to establish effective alliances among the principal actors in the field of tourism so as to build the hope of a tourism that is more responsible towards our common heritage.

APPEAL to the international community and in particular URGE governments, other public authorities, decisionmakers and professionals in the field of tourism, public and private associations and institutions whose activities are related to tourism and tourists themselves, to adopt the principles and objectives of the Declaration that follows:



1.

Tourism development shall be based on criteria of sustainability, which means that it must be ecologically bearable in the long term, economically viable, as well as ethically and socially equitable for the local communities.

Sustainable development is a guided process which envisages global management of resources so as to ensure their viability, thus enabling our natural and cultural capital to be preserved. As a powerful instrument of development, tourism can and should participate actively in the sustainable development strategy. A requirement of sound management of tourism is that the sustainability of the resources on which it depends must be guaranteed.

2.

The sustainable nature of tourism requires that it should integrate the natural, cultural and human environment; it must respect the fragile balances that characterise many tourist destinations, in particular many small islands and environmentally sensitive areas. Tourism should ensure an acceptable evolution as regards the influence of the activity on natural resources, biodiversity and the capacity for assimilation of any impacts and residues produced.

3.

Tourism must consider its effects on cultural heritage and traditional elements, activities and dynamics of each local community. Recognition of the traditional elements and activities of each local community and support for its identity, culture and interests must at all times play a central role in the formulation of tourism strategies, particularly in developing countries.

4.

The active contribution of tourism to sustainable development necessarily presupposes the solidarity, mutual respect, and participation of all the actors implicated in the process, especially those indigenous to the locality. Said solidarity, mutual respect and participation must be based on efficient cooperation mechanisms at all levels: local, national, regional and international.

5.

The conservation, protection and appreciation of the worth of our natural and cultural resources afford a privileged area for cooperation. This approach implies that all those responsible must take upon themselves a true challenge, that of cultural and professional innovation, and must also undertake a major effort to create integrated planning and management instruments. This approach must ensure that all responsible actors have instruments of cooperation and management integrated including technological innovations.

6.

In consultation with interested and affected parties, the preservation both of the quality of the tourist destination, and of the capacity to satisfy tourists, should be determined by local communities and should represent priority objectives in the formulation of tourism strategies and projects.

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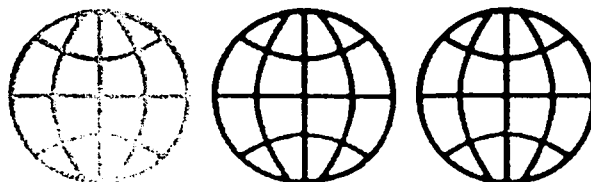
To be compatible with sustainable development, tourism must be based on the diversity of opportunities offered by its local economy. It should be fully integrated into and contribute positively to the local economic development.

8.

All options for tourism development must serve effectively to improve the quality of life of all people and must entail a positive effect and inter-relation as regards sociocultural identity.

9.

Governments and authorities shall promote actions for integrating the planning of tourism with environmental NGOs and local communities to achieve sustainable development.



10.

In recognition of the objective of economic and social cohesion among the peoples of the world as a fundamental principle of sustainable development, it is urgent that measures be developed to permit a more equitable distribution of the benefits and burdens of tourism. This implies a change of consumption patterns and the introduction of ecologically honest pricing. Governments and multilateral organizations are called upon to abandon subsidies that have negative effects on the environment, and they are furthermore called upon to explore the application of internationally harmonized economic instruments to ensure the sustainable use of all resources.

11.

Environmentally and culturally vulnerable spaces, both now and in the future, shall be given special priority in the matter of technical cooperation and financial aid for sustainable tourism development. Similarly, special treatment should be given to spaces that have been degraded by obsolete and high impact tourism models. Tourism should be spread over a greater part of the calendar year. There is also a need to explore further the usefulness of economic instruments at the regional/local levels, with a view to ensuring the sustainable use of all resources. The importance of legal instruments must be developed.

12.

The promotion of alternative forms of tourism that are compatible with the principles of sustainable development and the encouragement of diversification help guarantee medium- and long-term sustainability. In this respect, there is a need, for many small islands and environmentally sensitive areas in particular, to actively pursue and strengthen regional cooperation.

13.

Governments, authorities, and NGOs with responsibility for tourism and the environment shall promote and participate in the creation of open networks for information, research, dissemination and transfer of appropriate tourism and environmental knowledge on tourism and environmentally sustainable technologies.

14.

There is a need to support and promote feasibility studies, vigorously-applied, scientific field work, the implementation of tourism demonstration projects within the framework of sustainable development, the development of programmes in the field of international cooperation, and the introduction of environmental management systems.

15.

Authorities and associations with responsibility for tourism development, and environmental NGOs, shall draw up frameworks for sustainable tourism development and will establish programmes to support the implementation of such practices. They shall monitor achievements, report on results and exchange their experiences.

16.

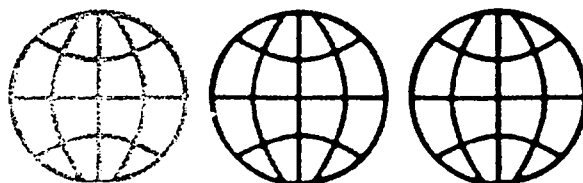
Attention should be given to the role and environmental effects of transportation in tourism, and economic instruments should be developed and implemented in order to reduce the use of non-renewable energy.

17.

The adoption of, adherence to, and implementation of codes of conduct conducive in the context of sustainable development by the principal actors, particularly industry members, involved in tourism are fundamental for tourism to be sustainable. Such codes constitute efficient instruments for the development of responsible tourist activities.

18.

All necessary measures should be implemented in order to sensitize and inform all the parties involved in the tourism industry, whether they be local, regional, national or international, about the content and the objectives of the Lanzarote Conference and, subject to the approval by all of the participants of the implementation of the measures contained in the Plan of Action.



The Sustainable Tourism Plan of Action is proposed as an Appendix to the present Declaration. The Plan of Action establishes concrete lines of action and recommends the adoption of specific measures to overcome obstacles and to promote the integration of tourism in the sustainable development strategy.

The participants and delegates of the Conference entrust the WCST Committee with the task of keeping alive the spirit and overseeing the application of both the Charter and Plan of Action, with guaranteeing the dissemination thereof, with promoting acceptance and discussion by the responsible bodies and agents, with promoting specific actions that are consistent with the declaration and also with facilitating and proposing coordination measures which will contribute to the consolidation of the objectives proposed.

