Blue Tourism
The Transition Towards Sustainable Coastal and Maritime Tourism in World Marine Regions
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The Transition Towards Sustainable Coastal and Maritime Tourism in World Marine Regions

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AFT / Aid for Trade</th>
<th>MSP / Marine Spatial Planning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CBD / Convention of Biological Diversity</td>
<td>MST / Measuring Sustainable Tourism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EBA / Ecosystem-based approach</td>
<td>NDC / Nationally Determined Contributions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECA / Emissions Control Areas</td>
<td>NGO / Non-governmental Organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EMS / Environmental Management Systems</td>
<td>NPA / Natural Protected Area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ESG / Environmental, Social and Governance</td>
<td>ODA / Official Development Assistance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EU / European Union</td>
<td>OPS / Onshore Power Supply</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FAO / Food and Agriculture Organisation</td>
<td>PPP / Public-Private Partnerships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GDP / Gross Domestic Product</td>
<td>PSSA / Particularly Sensitive Sea Area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GES / Good Environmental Status</td>
<td>SDG / Sustainable Development Goals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GHG / Greenhouse Gases</td>
<td>SEEA / System of Environmental-Economic Accounting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HFO / Heavy Fuel Oil</td>
<td>SIDS / Small Islands Developing States</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ICZM / Integrated Coastal Zone Management</td>
<td>TO / Tour Operator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IMO / International Maritime Organisation</td>
<td>TSA / Tourism Satellite Account</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ITA / International Tourist Arrival</td>
<td>UN / United Nations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LNG / Liquefied Natural Gas</td>
<td>UNWTO / United Nations World Tourism Organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LUP / Land Use Planning</td>
<td>VNR / Voluntary National Review</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MEET / Mediterranean Experience of Eco-Tourism</td>
<td>WTO / World Tourism Organisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MDB / Multilateral Development Bank</td>
<td>WTTC / World Travel and Tourism Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MGO / Marine Gas Oil</td>
<td>WWF / World Wildlife Fund</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MNC / Multinational Corporations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MPA / Marine Protected Area</td>
<td></td>
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CONCLUSIONS
Coastal and maritime tourism, hereafter referred to as blue tourism, has become a major economic sector for countries with accessible and attractive coastlines. For Small Islands Developing States (SIDS), it can directly account for up to 25% of national GDPs (or more than 50% with indirect contribution), with high visitor concentration in space and time, mainly in the coastlines. In addition, oceans and littorals are increasingly coveted spaces as strategic resources for states and private actors as they sustain a large part of the world population the global economy. More than 600 million people (around 10% of the world’s population) live in coastal areas that are less than 10 meters above sea level, and nearly 2.4 billion people (about 40% of the world’s population) live within 100 km (60 miles) of the coast, and they are thus depending on and vulnerable to ocean’s quality, stability and accessibility.

However, blue tourism activities — such as cruises, resorts and ecotourism — are producing critical environmental and social impacts on natural resources and local communities, through land use change, marine and air pollution, biodiversity alteration and material or ecosystem services consumption. Tourism is also highly dependent on the quality of natural ecosystems to attract visitors, but at the same time, it is strongly contributing to its depletion and fragilization, and it is putting at risk its sustainability. Therefore, coastal and maritime tourism, as part of the growing blue and green economy, is facing common challenges at local and global level related to the interlinkage of tourism with sustainability commitment such as the Paris Agreement or the Agenda 2030 and its Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), in particular SDG 14 on Ocean’s Conservation.

In this context, this report intends to understand and define better the environmental and social footprint of coastal and maritime tourism in major global marine regions such as the Mediterranean, the Caribbean, the North East Atlantic, the South Pacific Ocean, and the Western Indian Ocean. It aims to identify and disseminate field learnings and innovative practices to propose management, policy and governance recommendations for decision-makers, tourism industry and other relevant stakeholders, with the final goal to accelerate the transition of blue tourism towards environmental and social sustainability.
Global growth of international tourism

According to the UN World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), International Tourist Arrivals (ITA) are expected to increase worldwide by 65% from 2010 to reach 1.8 billion arrivals per year by 2030. The growth (2010-2030) will be faster for emerging and developing regions compared to developed regions. While Europe will remain the leading region with almost 780 million tourists by 2030, ITA will increase by 150% for Asia and the Pacific region — reaching up to 500 million tourists; it will grow by 47% in America with 220 million tourists and double in Africa and the Middle East reaching respectively 100 million and 200 millions by 2030.

Most of the tourism growth will happen in coastal areas, representing between 20% to 100% of tourism according to the size and geography of the country.

Heterogenous blue tourism activities

Coastal tourism refers to beach-based tourism and recreation activities, including swimming, sunbathing and surfing, alongside with other activities taking place on the coast and for which the proximity of the sea is advantageous, such as coastal walks or wildlife watching. Maritime tourism refers to predominantly water-based activities, such as sailing, yachting and cruising, and other nautical sports — often carried out in coastal waters. Three main types of Coastal and maritime tourism can be distinguished: beach resort tourism, cruise tourism — both components of the mass tourism market, as well as ecotourism. On the other hand, mass tourism is characterized by an expansion of the number of high-density hotels and resorts, with a concentration in retail, entertainment clusters and guided tours. On the other hand, ecotourism

2 Idem.
appears as a sustainable alternative of the traditional tourism practices in coastal and maritime areas. It is typically a small-scale and low-impact activity focusing on the promotion of local communities and the conservation of natural resources.

(Un-)Sustainability of coastal and maritime tourism

In spite of being economically profitable, this sector generates considerable environmental damages, and it is overly dependent on natural resources. To supply visitors with a variety of goods and services, the pressure on natural resources can become quickly unsustainable. For instance, the additional demand for water, energy or food — extremely scarce resources in many coastal areas — puts pressure on local territories and communities, leading to overfishing, water shortages, as well as expensive electricity and cooling/heating costs. In addition, coastal and maritime tourism causes marine and freshwater pollution through the discharge of sewage and the disposal of considerable quantities of solid waste. With the massification of tourism, the pressure on natural resources has increased exponentially. Furthermore, induced land-use change is causing both coastal artificialization as well as air and noise pollution derived from transport.

This situation impacts the welfare of inhabitants and local communities through the generation of negative externalities, often not compensated for. Moreover, mass tourism in and around coastal cities leads to a rise in the cost of living and a relatively lower purchasing power for the locals. This situation is exacerbated by the nature of maritime and coastal tourism based on seasonality, in particular in islands, contributing to job insecurity in tourism services, low wages and high workload affecting both the well-being and the disposal revenue and consumption of locals. Additionally, tourists expenses are not distributed equally between all tourism stakeholders.

Tourism as a source of development

According to the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC), the travel and tourism sector supports 1 in 10 jobs (319 million) worldwide and generates 10.4% of the world GDP. In 2018, this industry experienced a growth of 3.9% — compared to the global economy (3.2%) —, and one in every five new jobs were created by the industry over the last five years.

5 World Travel & Tourism Council, 2018
Specifically, over 350 million people annually travel to coral reefs. The coral reef tourism sector has an estimated annual value of $36 billion with over 70 countries and territories having “million dollar reefs” — reefs that generate over $1 million in tourism spending annually. In total, 600,000 people have been estimated to spend over US $30 million annually to watch sharks.

Governance of tourism as a complex system

Coastal and maritime tourism is based on a complex and multi-layered structure that funnels tourists and travellers around the world. The tourism industry is composed of and interacts with many different economic sectors, including transport, agriculture, construction or foods & drinks. It also depends on several functional services usually provided by local authorities, such as water, energy supply, and waste or sewage management. Despite the fact that most businesses are originally small, the structure of the tourism industry is becoming more vertical and horizontal, with a global consolidation among the main international tourism’s agents, namely airlines, hotel and resort chains, cruise ships, travel agencies, and tour operators; interacting constantly with the national and global policy makers.

The role of intergovernmental organizations (IOG) is essential for ocean governance, sustainable development (SDGs) and coastal and maritime tourism management. It involves development agencies, such as the World Bank, bilateral donors, UN agencies (UNEP, FAO, UNWTO, WTO, etc.), as well as regional actors (European Commission, Union for the Mediterranean, etc.). Non-governmental organizations (NGO), such as The Nature Conservancy, WWF or IUCN have also developed tourism programs promoting responsible tourism.
Global Coastal & Maritime Tourism (un)governance mechanisms

(connections are illustrative, non-exhaustive and aimed to stimulate reflections...)

Source: eco-union
SUSTAINABLE TOURISM FRAMEWORKS AND INSTRUMENTS
SUSTAINABLE TOURISM FRAMEWORKS AND INSTRUMENTS
Sustainable Tourism Frameworks and Instruments

Institutional Frameworks of Sustainable Tourism
Sustainable tourism has been embedded in many different international and regional frameworks.

- **Convention of Biological Diversity (2000):** The CBD Secretariat published a guideline on sustainable tourism, and several programmes on this matter have since then been developed.  

- **Regional Seas Programme (from 1974):** 18 regional conventions regulate land and sea-based sources of pollution, promote protected areas and advocate for coastal zones management. Though none originally refer to tourism, several have developed guidelines on sustainable tourism.

- **Paris Agreement (2017):** Tourism is as a significant source of GHG emissions (aviation, cruises, accommodation), although it is not directly covered by the Paris agreement as it excludes air and maritime transports.

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9 [http://www2.unwto.org/content/tourism-2030-agenda](http://www2.unwto.org/content/tourism-2030-agenda)
Financing Sustainable Tourism

The mainstreaming of sustainable tourism, and hence the possibility of tourism to abide by the SDGs and the Paris Agreement, requires strong political will, private sector commitment, and financial mechanisms making such a transformation possible. An increasing number of Multilateral Development Banks (MDBs) are recognising the role of tourism in achieving sustainable development by facilitating finance to sustainable tourism in developing countries. However, more resources are needed via Official Development Assistance (ODA) and Aid for Trade (AfT), to mainstream sustainable tourism. Nevertheless, scaling up investment in sustainable tourism requires innovative financing mechanisms through the market, such as green bonds or impact investment. In addition, the growth of sustainable tourism requires direct financing, blending of public and private finance, and economic incentives.

Planning, Management, and Monitoring Tools

Planning the use of marine space is still an underdeveloped task, which will require more effort to reach a similar level of maturity than planning of terrestrial surface.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Planning tool</th>
<th>Approach</th>
<th>Benefits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Marine Spatial Planning (MSP)  | Planning of human activities in marine areas through ecosystem-based, integrated, adaptive, strategic and participatory processes. | • Achieves Good Environmental Status (GES)  
• Improves climate resilience  
• Prevents overflow of tourism  
• Distributes environmental pressures |
| Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) | Integration of terrestrial and marine environments taking into account ecosystems, landscapes, human activities and their interaction | • Avoid conflicts between coastal users  
• Adds value to product with eco-labelling  
• Ameliorates environmental status  
• Encourages participation  
• Prevents overflow of tourism |
| Land-use planning              | Intends to manage land (including coastal zones) to optimise the social, environmental and economic outcomes through the practice of zoning | • Targets economic, social, and ecological objectives. |

→ Table: MSP, ICZM, and Land-Use Planning  
Source: eco-union

Policy tools are also essential to ensure long-standing sustainable management of tourism. Although their success in achieving sustainable tourism will greatly depend on the political will of the relevant authorities, access to finance, engagement of all stakeholders, as well as the availability and quality of data.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Policy Tool</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Green taxes</td>
<td>Green taxes are directed to penalize practices that are harmful to the environment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tourist tax</td>
<td>Levies on tourist establishments to restore negative impacts of the tourism activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carrying capacity</td>
<td>Establishing a physical limit to tourist activities and number of visitors to ensure long-term environmental/social sustainability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ecological footprint</td>
<td>Indicator that measures the biologically productive requirements to assimilate the consumption and waste produced in a destination by tourism activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life Cycle Assessment (LCA)</td>
<td>Integrated indicator measuring the environmental impact of each component of tourism (such as accommodation, transport, food...)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sustainable tourism indicators</td>
<td>Broad set of indicators developed by public or private bodies for measuring the state of sustainable tourism in a destination³⁴</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

→ Table: Policy Tools Supporting Sustainable Tourism
Source: eco-union

Ecolabels are useful to assess the production of a product, the offer of services or the design of a management system from an environmental point of view and are becoming widely implemented – yet at local scale – in the tourism industry³⁵.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ecolabel</th>
<th>Type of organization</th>
<th>Sector</th>
<th>Objective</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BIO Hotels</td>
<td>Industry association (Austria)</td>
<td>Organic and regional products in Hotels (Germany)</td>
<td>Environmental sustainability and CO₂ emissions reduction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biosphere Tourism</td>
<td>Non-profit (Spain)</td>
<td>Destinations and tourist routes; Accommodations; Tourists cities and centres; Parks; Tour operators</td>
<td>Promote sustainable development actions and programs in tourism destinations and companies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blue Flag</td>
<td>Non-profit (Netherlands)</td>
<td>Beaches and marinas</td>
<td>Environmental quality and sustainability of coastal areas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blue Angel</td>
<td>Governmental (Germany)</td>
<td>Tourism and other</td>
<td>Protection goals: health, climate, water, and resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Earth Check</td>
<td>Private-oriented (Australia)</td>
<td>Tourism</td>
<td>Scientific benchmarking certification and advisory for travel and tourism.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ecolabel</td>
<td>Governmental (EU &amp; France)</td>
<td>Tourism and other</td>
<td>Encourage businesses to market greener products and services and allow consumers to identify them</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Green Seal</td>
<td>Non-profit (USA)</td>
<td>Tourism and other</td>
<td>Life-cycle approach to ensure tangible reductions in the whole environmental footprint</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Green Key</td>
<td>Non-profit (Denmark)</td>
<td>Tourism businesses</td>
<td>Environmental Sustainability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rainforest Alliance</td>
<td>Non-profit (USA &amp; Netherlands)</td>
<td>Tourism and other sectors</td>
<td>Alliance of farmers, forest communities, companies, and consumers committed to creating a world where people and nature thrive in harmony</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

→ Table: Eco-labels for sustainable tourism
Source: eco-union based on Ecolabel Index³⁶

³⁶ http://www.ecolabelindex.com/ecolabels/?ct categoría tourism
Overview of marine regions strategies on sustainable tourism

From the analysis of the six marine regions (Mediterranean, Caribbean, Western Indian Ocean, North East Atlantic Ocean, South Pacific Ocean and Antarctic Ocean), it becomes clear that the coastal and maritime tourism is not yet fully considered as a strategic activity to integrate into regional governance frameworks and sustainable development strategies. Although tourism has a strong impact—and it is dependent—on the quality of the marine environment and natural ecosystems, very few regional sea conventions actively monitor or influence tourism to reduce its ecological footprint and guarantee its environmental sustainability.

Today, only the Mediterranean Sea, the world’s no.1 tourist destination, has developed a specific action plan, and a sustainable development strategy explicitly targeting tourism sector. The Caribbean, despite being a major mass-tourism hotspot with a high dependency on the

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17 UNEP/MAP (2016), Sustainable Consumption and Production Action Plan
18 UNEP/MAP (2016), Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development, 2016-2025
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Marine region</th>
<th>Sea extension (km²) / Coastline (km)</th>
<th>Regional sea convention</th>
<th>Signature date (enforced)</th>
<th>No. states (contracting parties)</th>
<th>Coastal population (estimation)</th>
<th>Tourism contribution to GDP (WTTC)</th>
<th>Regional tourism initiatives</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Caribbean Sea</td>
<td>2.7 million km²</td>
<td>Cartagena convention for the Protection and Development of the Marine Environment in the Wider Caribbean Region</td>
<td>1983 (1986)</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>41 million</td>
<td>7.1% (direct) - 21.6% (total)</td>
<td>No relevant initiatives identified</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Indian Ocean</td>
<td>30 million km² / 15.000 km</td>
<td>Nairobi Convention for the Protection, Management and Development of the Marine and Coastal Environment of the Western Indian Ocean Region</td>
<td>1985 (1996)</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>60 million</td>
<td>7.8% (direct) - 20.4% (total)</td>
<td>Mentioned in the Blue Economy and MSP initiatives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North East Atlantic Ocean</td>
<td>13.5 million km² / 20.585 km</td>
<td>OSPAR Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the North-East Atlantic</td>
<td>1992 (1998)</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>148 million</td>
<td>3.5% (direct) - 10.8% (total)</td>
<td>Reports on sustainable tourism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Pacific Ocean</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>Noumea Convention for the Protection of Natural Resources and Environment of the South Pacific Region</td>
<td>1986 (1990)</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>7.8% (direct) - 20.8% (total)</td>
<td>Guidelines on EIA of coastal tourism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Antarctic</td>
<td>22 million km² / 17.968 km</td>
<td>Convention for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources (CAMLR)</td>
<td>1980 (1982)</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>General guidelines and permits for tourism activity in the Antarctic Treaty</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

→ Table: Comparative Table of Regional Seas
Source: eco-union

Outcomes from resorts and cruises, has not yet launched any specific initiative to promote sustainable tourism. In the North East Atlantic Ocean, tourism is a relatively mature sector fairly managed through EU transversal policies such as MSP, blue economy strategies, MPAs and sustainable tourism initiatives. In the West Indian Ocean, there are currently no regional strategy or initiatives on coastal and maritime tourism, despite the development opportunity for emerging countries and the dependency of mature destinations.

In the South Pacific Ocean, the disparity of tourism development between the countries does not provide an easy framework for a coordinated regional initiative, despite the need to protect fragile and critical marine ecosystems, in particular for the critical SIDS. In the Antarctic, a treaty is currently limiting tourism development although it must be carefully enforced and monitored against growing market pressures.
Tourism and climate change

In general, the vulnerability and resilience of the tourism sector to climate change is not well addressed at the regional level, although marine regions are being the most sensitive areas impacted by the sea level rise, the temperature increase as well as climate events, in particular for the numerous SIDS states. Tourism is one of the most vulnerable economic sectors to climate variability as it is extremely dependent on and sensitive to climate and weather factors, which influence the decision-making process of tourists and the success of tourism businesses. Simultaneously, it is one of the largest activities that contributes to climate change as it is estimated that between 2009 and 2013 the overall carbon footprint of tourism increased from 3.9 to 4.5 GtCO₂e, representing 8% of global greenhouse gas emissions.

Tourism in the islands: a vulnerability hotspot

Due to its particular geographical situation and territorial resources, the islands are a top destination for coastal and maritime tourism for millions of tourists every year. Islands constitute an economic, social, cultural and strategic heritage that support 20% of the global biodiversity. They are also highly dependent on marine resources and blue economy activities, in particular in the tourism sector. The strong dependency on the ocean ecosystem services makes them much more vulnerable to a series of risks than other coastal territories with larger hinterlands areas.

- **Economic dependency**: In Cape Verde, the contribution of direct and indirect tourism to GDP is more than 50%. In Maldives, tourism represents up to 40% of the national GDP.
- **Carbon-intensive mobility**: Islands are heavily dependent on air transport, and therefore vulnerable to fluctuations in oil and airlines markets as well as to economic and trade agreements.

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21 Lenzien, M; Sun, Y. Y; Fatowaru, F; Ting, Y. P; Geschke, A. & Malik, A. (2018). "The carbon footprint of global tourism". In Nature Climate Change, vol. 8, pp. 522-528. Available at: https://www.nature.com/articles/s41558-018-0164-x
22 https://www.iucn.org/commissions/commission-ecosystem-management/our-work/cemsc-specialist-groups/island-ecosystems
24 UNWTO, 2017
• **Mass and cruise tourism**: Cruise tourism accounts for over 60% of the total ITA in twelve SIDS and can even reach up to almost 90% of the total arrivals\(^{25}\).

• **Foreign investments sensitivity**: The entry of large multinationals supported by foreign investments can potentially undermine the local economy and community, making them dependent on lending countries\(^{26}\).

• **Environmental and economic vulnerability**: Natural and climate events are more intense in islands, creating tourism vulnerability hotspots\(^{27}\).

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\(^{25}\) Ibid.

\(^{26}\) World Tourism Organization (2012): “Challenges and Opportunities for Tourism Development in Small Island Developing States”, UNWTO, Madrid

Hotels and resorts

The hotel and resort’s sector is probably the most globalized and territorialized business in the international tourism system. The global hotel industry has grown rapidly in the last quarter of the century, due to the consolidation of large accommodation corporations, which has allowed them to expand worldwide. The development of Tour Operators (TO) has led to the homologation and standardization of maritime and coastal destinations, as well as a strong dependency of these from the TOs, linking the success of a destination to its presence in the tourist packages. Their role in the supply chain provides TOs with a strong responsibility and a leading role in the sustainability of tourism.

Cruising

Cruising has been increasingly the centre of attention of policy makers, as the sector has grown at a record pace, with a more than 30-fold growth between 1990 and 2011. Worldwide, the ocean cruise industry has an annual passenger compound of annual growth rate of 6.6%
during the period 1990-2020\textsuperscript{29}. Today, it is one of the most dynamic segments of the tourist sector\textsuperscript{30}; it concentrated 25.8 million passengers in 2017 with a projected 27 million in 2018\textsuperscript{31}. The sector has proved its resilience to market threats, and sectoral growth is anticipated to continue. Indeed, passenger capacity is expected to increase by 110% annually until 2023 through the launch of 47 new ships\textsuperscript{32}.

Although a number of environmental schemes and certification are available for ships and ports, they are not specific to the cruise vessels or industry and remains therefore poorly used.

### Ecotourism

Ecotourism contributes to the nature conservation and local community living in areas with high valuable ecosystems. Moreover, ecotourism is a concept linked with nature tourism in natural protected areas (NPAs). It aims to creating a greener tourism industry as well as increasing the ecological and socio-cultural awareness and behaviour of tourists. Additionally, ecotourism often offers community-based tourism, seen as an organizational model where local communities control tourism activities and network by providing the basic services like accommodation, tourism operator and guiding\textsuperscript{33}. Finally, ecotourism has been used as a label for nature-based activities, referring to products, segments and operators\textsuperscript{34}. Many organizations are proclaiming their parks and programmes “eco-touristic” to answer the new trends of the touristic demand and popularity of ecotourism.

**Marine Protected Areas (MPAs)** refers to the protective management of certain natural areas aiming at keeping them in their natural state\textsuperscript{35}. MPAs often seek to both ensure the conservation of marine biodiversity and foster sustainable development\textsuperscript{36}, limiting the number of tourists that can access the area.

\begin{table}[h]
\centering
\begin{tabular}{|l|l|}
\hline
\textbf{Environmental impacts of cruises} & \hline
\textbf{Toxic antifouling paint} & \textbf{Invasive species} \\
\hline
\textbf{Heavy fuel oil} & \textbf{Ballast water} \\
\hline
\textbf{Bilge water} & \textbf{Cargo hold cleaning water} \\
\hline
\textbf{Grey Water} & \textbf{Sewage} \\
\hline
\end{tabular}
\caption{Environmental Impacts from Cruises Source: eco-union}
\end{table}
Mass Tourism - large numbers of people seeking replication of their own culture in institutionalised settings.

Wildlife Tourism - in semi-captivity or in the wild. Undertaken to view or interact with wildlife. May include elements of adventure tourism and ecotourism.

Natural Area Tourism - nature based tourism and ecotourism as well as part of wildlife and adventure tourism.

Adventure Tourism - emphasis on adventure activities; it may occur in a natural setting.

Ecotourism - nature based, educational and supports conservation.

Alternative Tourism - forms of tourism generally characterised by small scale sustainable activities.

Source: Tuğba Kiper, Hill & Gale, 2009

The Transition towards Sustainable Coastal and Maritime Tourism

Sustainable Coastal and Maritime Tourism

INVOLVE & EMPOWER LOCAL COMMUNITIES
Partner with local NGOs, schools and authorities to strengthen their role, skills and capacity to improve tourism footprint

MONITOR & REGULATE COASTAL & MARITIME ACTIVITIES
Collect, share and interpret data on environmental, economic and social tourism impacts

INSURE CLIMATE RESILIENCE
through technical assessment, capacity building and financing schemes (eco-tax)

ELIMINATE or RECYCLE WASTE
ban single-use plastics, implement comprehensive recycling schemes, eliminate food/energy/water waste

VALUE HISTORIC SITES, BIODIVERSITY & CULTURAL HERITAGE
by educating visitors, communities and industry

DEVELOP ECO-FRIENDLY INFRASTRUCTURES
to reduce energy, land and water use

PROTECT ENVIRONMENTALLY SENSITIVE ECOSYSTEMS
through Integrated Spatial Planning and Marine/Coastal Protected Areas, as well as Emissions controlled Areas

By analysing existing practices and institutional frameworks, key levers for a sustainable tourism industry have been identified, with recommendations for governments, public and private actors.

1. Global Actions for a Sustainable blue Tourism

1.1 Promote policy coherence, stakeholders collaboration and cooperation mechanisms

a. Ensure coherent, integrated and consistent policies at all political, geographic and sectoral levels, by designing and implementing sustainable tourism strategies and policies contributing to the global environmental commitments such as the Agenda 2030 - SDG 12 (Sustainable Consumption and Production), 13 (Climate Change) and 14 (Oceans’ Conservation); Paris Agreement or CBD.

39 http://www2.unwto.org/content/tourism-2030-agenda
b. Promote effective collaboration and innovative partnerships among all relevant stakeholders, by encouraging multi-stakeholders initiatives — such as Sustainable Ocean Labs⁴¹ — for all relevant public and private actors of the value chain, including IOGs, authorities, industry, NGOs or academia.

c. Foster policy dialogue and technical cooperation within and between marine regions, through the sharing of knowledge, expertise and resources from different marine regions, as well as transnational and inter-regional partnerships, networks and strategies, such as regional seas conventions⁴², or the PROG initiative⁴³.

### 1.2. Support an integrated maritime & coastal planning through an ecosystem-based approach

a. Implement transversal planning instruments, such as Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) and Marine Spatial Planning (MSP), in order to involve all levels of government, administrative and planning authorities in coastal management plans based on an ecosystem-based approach (EBA)⁴⁴.

b. Promote transboundary planning and international cooperation among different countries, including national and local institutions and stakeholders, by sharing information and a common vision, planning and actions to facilitate recreational, boating, yachting and cruise tourism.⁴⁵

c. Encourage inclusive planning and collaborative management with all stakeholders, involving local communities at all development stages and all spatial, administrative and political levels, so that they effectively benefit from its economic impact by maximizing the sustainable community development⁴⁶.

### 1.3. Develop comprehensive monitoring, evaluation and statistics schemes

a. Measure and monitor the impacts of maritime and coastal tourism to natural ecosystems through blue tourism observatories⁴⁷ in order to ensure that tourism is appropriately controlled on an administrative, political, and environmental level.

b. Promote quantitative instruments and assessment tools to evaluate the carrying capacity of destinations or territories through an adjustable territorial methodology of “acceptable limits”.

c. Integrate socio-economic and environmental statistics at a national and regional level based on the UNWTO statistics schemes — yet in development — to coordinate the tourism satellite accounts (TSA) with the System of Environmental-Economic Accounting (SEEA)⁴⁸.

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⁴⁰ World Tourism Organization (2013): “Sustainable Tourism Governance and Management in Coastal Areas of Africa”, 100 pp
⁴¹ http://www.sustainableoceanslab.org/
⁴³ https://www.prog-ocean.org/
⁴⁷ http://insto.unwto.org/about/
⁴⁸ https://seea.un.org/
1.4. Identify, support and disseminate sustainable practices, responsible businesses and green skills

a. Promote sustainable business practices by private and public actors through support mechanisms to CSR strategies, environmental management schemes and Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) reporting⁴⁹.

b. Strengthen the integration of local private actors from different economic sectors along the sustainable tourism value chain to reduce the economic ‘leakage’ and ensure that the added value is better retained at the local level⁵⁰.

c. Encourage high-quality education and vocational training interacting the principles of sustainability and inclusiveness to prepare and empower the blue tourism industry⁵¹.

1.5. Implement sectoral strategies and action plans to green and decarbonize the whole tourism industry

a. Develop sectoral actions plans to decarbonize the whole tourism industry by tracking and reducing the tourism carbon emissions on global, national, and sectoral levels, with specific targets for each sub-sector of tourism and the entire supply chain, in particular air and marine transport⁵².

b. Mainstream the use of eco-labels and environmental certifications in the whole tourism value chain through Environmental Management Systems (EMS), voluntary/mandatory environmental certifications and labelling approaches⁵³.

c. Engage with civil society by guaranteeing the active participation of local communities, NGOs, academia, travellers and other social actors at the monitoring and decision-making processes through education or participatory science (such as Reef Check ecodiver⁶¹ or Panete Mer Biolit⁶²).

1.6. Facilitate the financing of sustainable blue tourism activities, strategies and actors

a. Guarantee the alignment of development aid with the needs and priorities of blue tourism actors by capitalizing trade-related technical assistance frameworks (such as Aid for Trade⁴⁸) as well as supporting tourism projects most relevant to climate NDCs⁵⁹ and Agenda 2030 VNRs⁶⁰.

b. Design and implement environmental incentives and policies aiming at influencing the behaviour of tourism enterprises, travellers and investors, e.g. tradable rights for environmental compensation; water, carbon and financial incentives, tax deductions for eco-certification, eco-taxes⁶⁷.

c. Ensure sustainable, transparent and efficient Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) in the development of critical tourism facilities and services through environmentally-friendly designed, implemented and monitored collaboration schemes⁵⁸.

1.7 Involve, prepare and empower travellers, the industry and key stakeholders

a. Partner with the private sector by sensitizing tourism companies, hotels and resorts, cruises and tours operators to understand better and interiorize the benefits of resource-efficient allocation, branding and reputation improvement and the long-term security of green investment⁶⁶.

b. Educate travellers and tourists by increasing public awareness on the ecological, socio-economic and human health impacts of the tourism industry and travel and promoting more responsible and sustainable consumption patterns, through initiatives such as One Planet Network⁵⁰.

c. Engage with civil society by guaranteeing the active participation of local communities, NGOs, academia, travellers and other social actors at the monitoring and decision-making processes through education or participatory science (such as Reef Check ecodiver⁶¹ or Panete Mer Biolit⁶²).

2. Specific Recommendations for Hotels and Resorts

2.1. Mainstream sustainability certifications, eco-labelling and environmental initiatives

a. Identify, adapt and implement a shared and standardized certification system for hotels and resorts at the regional and national levels, as an integral part of

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⁵⁰ http://icc.unwto.org/content/guidebook-sustainable-tourism-development
⁵² Scott et al. (2016): “A report on the Paris Climate Change Agreement and its implications for tourism: why we will always have Paris”. In Journal of Sustainable Tourism, vol. 24, no. 7, pp. 933-948
⁵⁵ http://sdt.unwto.org/en/content/climate-change-tourism
⁵⁷ http://www.oecd.org/environment/tools-evaluation/
⁵⁹ https://www.thetravelfoundation.org.uk/project/international-climate-initiative/
⁶⁰ http://www.oneyouplanelternet.org/
⁶¹ https://reefcheck.org/tropical/overview
⁶² http://planetemero.org/actions/biolit
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sustainable tourism policies in coastal and maritime areas, such as SwitchMed eco-label guide63.

b. Ensure accessibility of certification schemes to all destinations and businesses in order to include small and medium-sized enterprises or emerging destinations, through simplified toolboxes, on-line self-assessment or incremental processes, such as the EMAS certification toolbox64.

c. Promote good practices of information sharing, capacity-building and awareness actions, with industry training and environmental awareness campaigns for hotel, staff and resort clients, such as the UN One Planet initiative65.

2.2 Implement comprehensive tourism planning, monitoring and management tools

a. Develop regional and national policies to redistribute tourism on a spatial and temporal scale, according to the tourism reception capacity of destinations, measured by recognized indicators, such as ecosystem resilience, natural resources availability, population density, carbon emissions, and transport system.

b. Integrate sustainable coastal, marine and urban planning tools (ICZM, MSP, LUP) to regulate the construction of tourist accommodation facilities and the development of recreational activities related to the first 500 meters from the sea line. The use of ecosystem-based approach (EBA) will help to have a more accurate and sensitive planning and management schemes.

c. Restrain or control the development of high-resources (water, land or energy) consuming facilities such as golf courses, swimming pools and gardens and other leisure spaces. The environmental impact assessments of such sensitive infrastructures should be carefully, professionally and transparently undertaken by independent third-parties.

64 https://www.ecolabeltoolbox.com/en/
65 http://sdt.unwto.org/about-oneplanet-stp
2.3 Increase investments in energy efficiency, water treatment and waste recycling schemes

a. Promote environmental management plans for the use of energy, water and food in hotels and resorts, with the aim of reducing environmental pressures and impacts on local resources and fragile ecosystem.

b. Accelerate the implementation of environmental technologies and resource-efficient solutions, prioritizing the local production of renewable energy (prosumerism is the self-consumption and production)66 and ambitious energy efficiency schemes on-site.

c. Eliminate the use of non-recycling items such as single-use plastics, plastic bags, water bottles, plastic straws and single-use amenities (cotton buds, shower and shampoo kits).

3. Specific Recommendations for Cruises and Ports

3.1. Provide sound regulation, technical support and financial incentives to green ports and cruises practices

a. Develop green tax schemes in ports and cruises such as environmental maluses/bonuses to incentivize, but also sanction companies in regard to their sustainability performances,67 through enhanced regional sea conventions or more stringent IMO regulation or CBD enforcement.

b. Support investment for Onshore Power Supply (OPS) and low-carbon fuel (LNG) for cruise companies against Heavy Fuel Oil (HFO) or Marine Gas Oil (MGO).68

c. Implement stringent environmental legislation controlling air pollution such as Emissions Control Areas (ECA) to improve the quality of fuel used, support cleaner technologies, and reduce exposure of coastal population to toxic emissions69.

3.2. Leverage zoning, integrated planning and risk mitigation in sensitive marine areas

a. Reduce and monitor cruise traffic in or near Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) through stringent legislation and appropriate zoning tools, such as ICZM and MSP, speed reduction or cetacean detection mechanisms70.

b. Identify, regulate and enforce Particularly Sensitive Sea Areas (PSSAs)71 protecting natural areas of high ecological value.

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66. [https://proseu.eu/]
68. [http://www.greencruiseport.eu/Home.html](http://www.greencruiseport.eu/Home.html)
cal or biological value, particularly vulnerable to cruise environmental impacts, through management measures based on areas to be avoided, compulsory pilotage or discharge prohibition.

3.3. Monitor, manage and regulate passengers and cruise flows

a. Redistribute cruises disembarkation away from the city centres and dense areas while providing appropriate low-carbon public transportation for passengers between terminals and touristic spots.

b. Develop a comprehensive database and planning of passengers and cruise flows to anticipate and, if needed, redistribute vessels disembarkation in advance, through sharing data between local governments, ports authorities and cruise operators.

3.4. Promote environmental conception, construction, operation and dismantling of cruise vessels

a. Implement eco-design tools such as Life Cycle Assessment (LCA) when designing and building new ships, to reduce the ecological footprint of the vessels, prioritize low-carbon materials and guarantee recycling of valuable materials, avoiding harmful and toxic components.72

b. Invest in resources-efficient technologies and environmental practices such as low-carbon engines, waste collection and recycling schemes, waste-water reuse, energy efficient lightings, heating and cooling systems through sectorial clusters73 or thematic partnerships.74

4. Specific Recommendations for Ecotourism

4.1. Develop integrated monitoring & planning, ecotourism strategies and networking platforms

a. Put in place integrated monitoring and planning tools to assess the impact of ecotourism activities and flows in natural ecosystems (MPAs, Carrying Capacity, etc.), and creating buffer zones around sensitive natural areas.75

b. Design medium and long-term ecotourism development strategies to support its growth, consolidation and sustainability at local, national and regional level, based on the need of the local communities, through participative workshops, capacity-building activities and inclusive processes.99

c. Create national and regional networks of ecotourism destinations to exchange best practices as well to disseminate innovative products and services, following the example of the Mediterranean MEET association77.

4.2. Maximise economic and social benefits for and by local communities

a. Support community-based businesses by setting up networks of local producers and promoting green and social entrepreneurship in the community.88

b. Develop strategic local economic sectors interlinked with the tourism industry, such as food specialities, cultural services and handicrafts; and promote local purchasing of goods and services through sustainable procurement schemes.

c. Reinvest generated revenues by eco-tourism activities in the protection of the region’s natural ecosystem and local biodiversity through eco-tax or equivalent revenue schemes.79

4.3. Disseminate sustainable practices and environmental initiatives

a. Enhance sustainability certifications and eco-labels for eco-tourism facilities related to noise, water and waste management as well as the involvement of local community and protection of natural ecosystems, such as Australian ecotourism80 or Rainforest Alliance81.

b. Educate, prepare and empower eco-tourism staff, visitors and local population about the value of historical, cultural and natural heritage.82

73 http://www.clusterbie.it/
74 https://elomeep.imo.org/
75 https://sdt.unwto.org/content/ecotourism-and-protected-areas
77 https://www.meetnetwork.org/
78 https://sdt.unwto.org/content/ecotourism-and-protected-areas
79 http://icr.unwto.org/content/guidebook-sustainable-tourism-development
81 https://www.rainforest-alliance.org/latest?keyword=tourism
82 https://www.ltandc.org/
4.4. Monitor ecotourism through data collection and participatory science

a. Develop and implement integrated indicators to measure ecotourism development, such as level of conservation of natural resources and biodiversity; satisfaction of local populations; participation of local communities; etc.

b. Promote scientific research on local ecosystems to better identify and protect endangered habitats and species, through innovative educational schemes such as participatory science programs.
Conclusions

The emerging destinations are becoming emergency territories due to its rising vulnerability to environmental risks, in particular, climate change, dependency to natural resources, quality of ecosystems, putting in danger coastal territories and local communities and requesting urgent policy answers. It is also necessary to take into account the long-term trends in tourism production and consumption patterns to anticipate growth scenarios and increase resilience to natural, social and economic shocks for local communities and socio-economic structures, and last but not least, improvement of data collection and monitoring tools, both globally and locally, is strongly needed to allow a full vision of the reality of maritime and coastal tourism. The use of participatory tools such as citizen science are therefore very useful to collect data at a very low cost while involving local communities and educate visitors and industry. Governance mechanisms among and within tourism sectors should be improved to allow a proper planning, monitoring and regulation, and ensure the contribution of tourism towards the Agenda 2030, in particular, to SDG12 (SCP) and 14 (Ocean’s Conservation). Innovative practices, present in many territories at a local level, should be scaled up at the national, regional and global level in order to mainstream sustainable tourism. Sharing, replicating and disseminating good practices — through adequate financial schemes — is therefore critical.
eco-union (Technical Coordinator)
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