# Sustainable Tourism Future

The content of this course was developed by faculty from the following institutions:

**Understanding Tourism Challenges**

Understanding Tourism Challenges Module

Photo:  Elliot, S. (Hawaii)

# Focus

Tourism can be a force for good in world, advancing discovery and learning, protecting our environment from harm.

Yet climate change has led to safety concerns, water shortages tourism overcrowding, biodiversity loss, damage to attractions and destinations.

Focus: Tourism can be a force for good in world, advancing discovery and learning and protecting our environment from harm. Yet climate change has led to safety concerns and water shortages, and tourism overcrowding to biodiversity loss and damage to attractions and destinations.
Photo credit:

# Learning Outcomes

1. Use the contemporary tourism and hospitality landscape to assess its future economic, cultural and environmental vulnerabilities form the perspective of the tourist, industry and host stakeholder.

2. Apply critical thinking skills to anticipate future challenges facing tourism and hospitality stakeholders.

3. Apply design thinking to create sustainable, innovative and resilient tourism and hospitality solutions that will help manage current and future challenges.

# Module Objective

This module supports a deeper understanding of not just the positive but the negative impacts of tourism, of societal behaviours and distribution of wealth, and issues of inclusiveness, community empowerment and resource management.

## Pre-Module Readings

In preparation for this module, students should read the following information from the accompanying course notes booklet.

- United Nations World Tourism Organization (2019) International Tourism Highlights

- Frent, Cristi. (2016) An Overview of the Negative Impacts of Tourism. Revista de Turism - Studii si Cercetari in Turism. 2016, Issue 22, p32-37.

In preparation for this module, students should read the following information from the accompanying course notes booklet. Reading this information before they start the module will help set the context for what they are about to cover.

The UNWTO is the United Nations agency responsible for the promotion of responsible, sustainable and universally accessible tourism. With a priority to foster knowledge, education and capacity building, the UNWTO is a global resource for knowledge creation and exchange, from statistical data to trend analysis.

# Supplementary Material

Beyond the required readings, students may be interested in reading the following information from the accompanying course notes booklet.

- Harrison, David, and Sharpley, Richard (2017). Mass tourism in a small world. Cabi, Boston, MA.

- United Nations World Tourism Organization Best Tourism Villages video

- United Nations World Tourism Organization Tourism Data Dashboard https://www.unwto.org/unwto-tourism-dashboard

# Continuous growth of tourism

2009
Global
economic
crisis

2001
Sept. 11

2003
SARS

1,461
million

892
million

675
million

+64% since 2009

+117% since 2000

'95 '96 '97 '98 '99 '00 '01 '02 '03 '04 '05 '06 '07 '08 '09 '10 '11 '12 '13 '14 '15 '16 '17 '18 '19
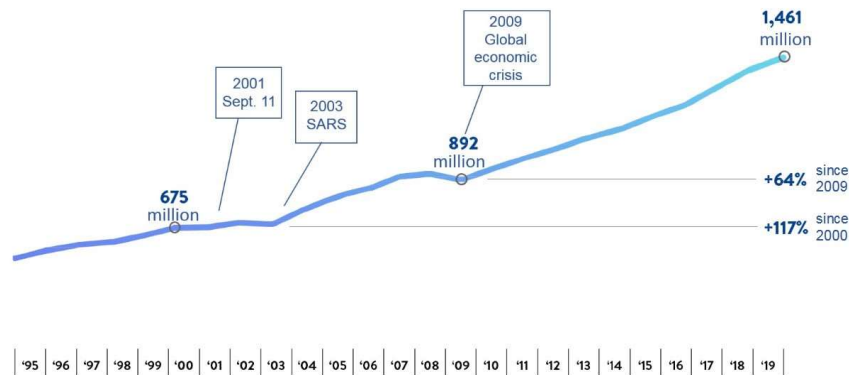
Source: UNWTO

**International Tourism Highlights 2019 Edition**

From 1995 to 2019, international travel volume increased to 1.461 million. While growth was interrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic, it will return.

International tourism continues to outpace the global economy, driven by a growing middle class in emerging economies, technological advances, affordable travel costs and fewer visa restrictions. Until the global COVID-19 pandemic hit in 2020, international tourism was growing by about 5% every year, reaching 1.4 billion international tourist arrivals in 2018, for a total international tourist expenditure of $1.7 trillion U.S.

A global force for economic growth and development, but not without consequence. Rather than continual growth in volume, many now call for a focus on value, not volume, to be sustainable.

Imbalanced flow of international travel

Europe accounts for half of the world's international arrivals, followed by Asia and the Pacific with 1 in 4 arrivals

Africa 5%
Middle East 4%
Americas 15%
Europe 51%
Arrivals
Asia and the Pacific 25%
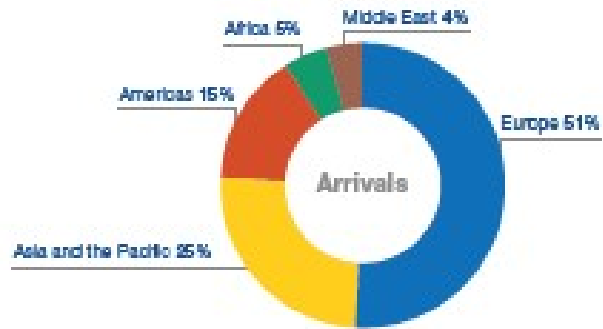
International tourist arrivals, 2018 (% share)

**International Tourism Highlights 2019 Edition**

While tourism may reach many parts of the globe, the flow of international tourists is not even. Over half of the world's international tourists arrive in Europe, and another quarter in Asia and the Pacific. These two regions account for three-quarters of all international arrivals, while the rest of the world shares the remaining quarter.

Concentration of travelers

The top 10 destinations receive 40% of worldwide arrivals

| million | Arrivals in top destinations | % change |
|---|---|---|
| 89 | France | 3 |
| 83 | Spain | 1 |
| 80 | United States of America | 4 |
| 63 | China | 4 |
| 62 | Italy | 7 |
| 46 | Turkey | 22 |
| 41 | Mexico | 5 |
| 39 | Germany | 4 |
| 38 | Thailand | 8 |
| 38 | United Kingdom | -4 |

Top ten destinations by international tourist arrivals, 2018
Source: World Tourism Organization (UNWTO).

International Tourism Highlights
2019 Edition

The flow of travel is even more concentrated when individual country destinations are considered. So while Europe is the top region, received over half of all international arrivals, there are 6 countries that receive almost half of the international arrivals to the region (France, Spain, Italy, Turkey, Germany and the UK receive 355M of the 714.5M arrivals to Europe.

Similarly, in the Asia and the Pacific region, just two countries, China and Thailand, receive 101M of the region's 350.25M international arrivals.

Globally, the top 10 country destinations receive 40% of international travelers.

Concentration of tourist receipts

**International Tourism Highlights 2019 Edition**

The top 10 tourism earners account for almost 50% of total tourism receipts

| USD billion | Top tourism earners | % change (real terms) |
|---|---|---|
| 214 | United States of America | 2 |
| 74 | Spain | 4 |
| 67 | France | 6 |
| 63 | Thailand | 5 |
| 52 | United Kingdom | 2 |
| 49 | Italy | 7 |
| 45 | Australia | 11 |
| 43 | Germany | 3 |
| 41 | Japan | 19 |
| 40 | China | 21 |

Top 10 destinations by international tourism receipts, 2018
Source: World Tourism Organization (UNWTO)

There is even greater concentration in terms of international tourism receipts (what tourists spend in a destination). The top 10 tourism earners account for 50% of total tourism receipts.

8 out of the 10 top destinations are featured in both rankings, with a difference in order. France is top by volume, whereas the USA is top by receipts. Australia and Japan make the list of top tourism earners but not the list by volume, whereas Turkey and Mexico make the list of top destinations by arrival volume, but not by receipts.

These differences indicate that on average, visitors to the USA spend more than visitors to France; and that visitors to Australia and Japan spend more on average than visitors to Mexico and Turkey. Australis has the second highest receipts per arrival, second only to Luxembourg, at $4900 US per international arrival.

## Tourist origins are also concentrated

China remains the world's largest spender, with one fifth of international tourism spending, followed by the United States

| USD billion | Top tourism spenders | % change (real terms) |
|---|---|---|
| 277 | China | 5 |
| 144 | United States of America | 7 |
| 94 | Germany | 1 |
| 76 | United Kingdom | 3 |
| 48 | France | 11 |
| 37 | Australia | 10 |
| 35 | Russian Federation | 11 |
| 33 | Canada | 4 |
| 32 | Korea (ROK) | 1 |
| 30 | Italy | 4 |

Top 10 countries by international tourism spending, 2018
Source: World Tourism Organization (UNWTO).

Globally, 4 of 5 tourists travel within their own region.

Europeans account for almost 1 in 2 trips in the world, a region with many popular destinations and a population with the means to travel,

However, China is the world's largest international tourism spender. Yet only 10% of China's 1.4 billion inhabitants travel internationally. By 2027, the number of passport holders is expected to reach 300 million, or 20% of the Chinese population.
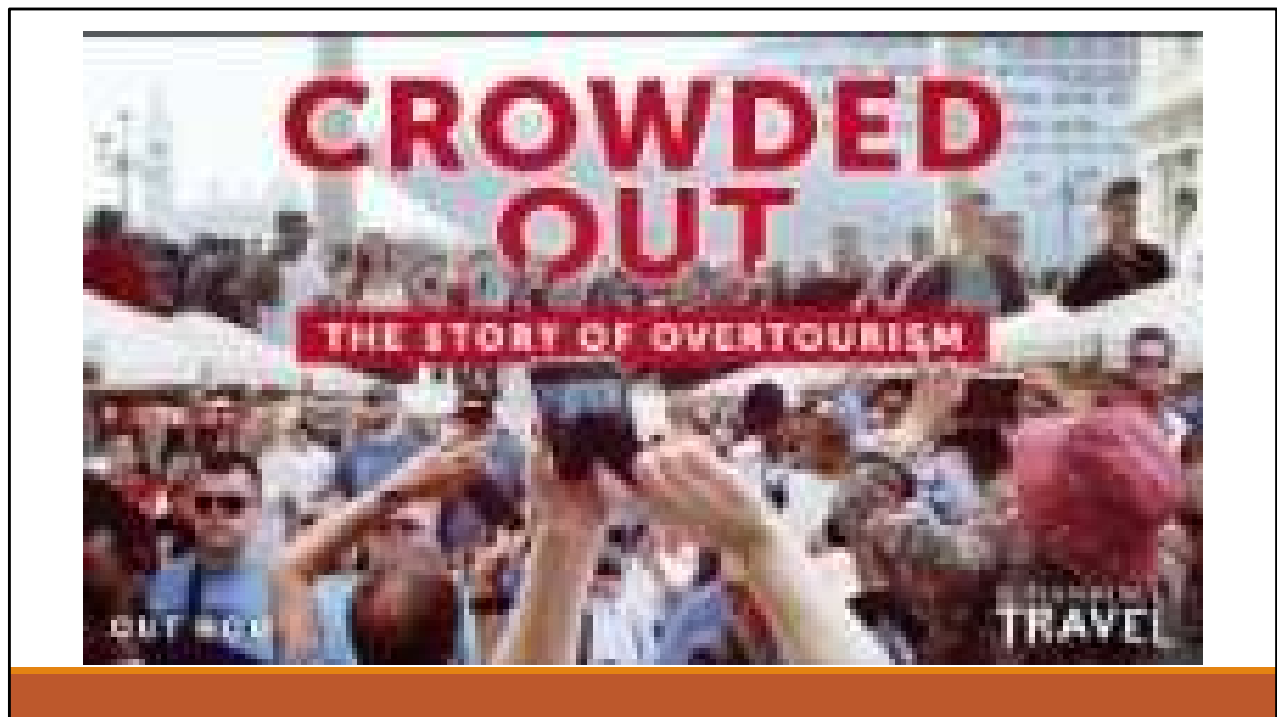
Video credit:  responsibletravel.com

This powerful, short documentary, Crowded Out, features interviews with local residents and global experts. It is a Story of Overtourism, with examples from Europe to Asia and points between (23 minutes long)
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U-52L7hYQiE

Overtourism occurs when there are too many visitors to a particular destination. When rent prices push out local tenants to make way for holiday rentals, when narrow roads become jammed with tourist vehicles, when tourists cannot view landmarks because of the crowds – these are all signs of overtourism.

And it is the backlash from local residents that has made overtourism news. Cities such as Barcelona, Venice and Dubrovnik, and places once thought of as remote such as Iceland and Skye have suffered firsthand, and the protests by local residents have spread.

There have been decades of virtually uncontrolled growth, and it has crossed a threshold: in many destinations, tourism now demonstrably can create more problems than benefits.

Learn more on Responsible Travel at: responsibletravel.com/copy/overtourism

# Learning Activity #1

| TOURISM POSITIVES | TOURISM NEGATIVES |
|---|---|
| 1. Job creation | 1. -- |
| 2. More money for the country | 2. -- |
| 3. Local traditions supported | 3. -- |
| 4. Protects nature, history, culture | 4. -- |
| 5. New infrastructure benefits locals | 5. -- |
| 6. Builds demand for local food, crafts | 6. -- |

For this learning activity, students should make a list of negatives associated with tourists visiting a destination.
From the video and your readings, consider each positive of tourism and then identify what the negative counter might be:

1. Jobs are seasonal, low paying
2. Leakage of money to multinationals
3. Place identify lost, locals exploited
4. Environmental damage, resource depletion
5. Overcrowding, congestion, crime
6. Price/real estate inflation, displaces locals

**Tourism Imagery versus Tourism Reality**

Image 1 credit:  Public Domain License to use Creative Commons Zero - CC0
https://www.peakpx.com/428309/great-wall-of-china

A typical "brochure" photo of The Great Wall of China you might find on a tourist website, promoting the destination experience.

Image 2 credit:  Elliot, S. CC-BY

An actual tourist experience on the Great Wall of China

**Tourism Imagery versus Tourism Reality**

Image 1 credit:  Wikimedia Commons, the free media repository
https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/f/fe/Mona_Lisa_installation_in_Louvre%2C_empty_room.JPG

A typical "brochure" photo of Leonardo da Vinci's famous Mona Lisa that you might find on a tourist website, promoting the cultural experience at the Louvre Museum, Paris.

Image 2 credit:  Elliot, S.

An actual visitor experience in the Louvre Museum, Paris, trying to see Leonardo da Vinci's Mona Lisa.
Note all the cameras trying to capture an image of the painting.

## Discussion Question #1

From what we learned in this module and from the associated readings, what do you see as the main contributing factors to the negative impacts of tourism?

Image credit: Elliot, S.

Tourists beyond the barrier to photograph Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe

Use this question to generate discussion and dialogue amongst the students. Encourage the students to use examples from their pre-class readings, as well as their own personal observations, as they formulate their responses.

# Global Pandemic Halted Growth

The impact of Covid-19 on the global economy; over $4 trillion lost in GDP, jobs lost, developing countries hard hit = how do we not just build back, but build forward!

# Emergent travel trends

### Travel 'to change'
- Live like a local, quest for authenticity and transformation

### Travel 'to show'
- 'Instagramable' moments, experiences and destinations

### Pursuit of a healthy life
- Walking, wellness and sports tourism

### Rise of the 'access' economy
- As more goods and services become affordable, convenient, available to rent not own

### Solo travel & multigenerational travel
- As a result of aging population and single households

### Rising awareness of sustainability
- Zero plastic and climate change

International Tourism Highlights 2019 Edition

# Learning Activity #2

**NEGATIVES FROM TOURISM**

1. .
2. .
3. .
4. .
5. .

**IMPROVEMENT STRATEGIES**

1. .
2. .
3. .
4. .
5. .

For this learning activity, students should make a list of 5 negative costs associated with tourists visiting a destination.

Then, think of 5 strategies to address and improve each of the negatives, and for tourism to build back better post-COVID-19

Eg. Economic leakage: Support local entrepreneurs and businesses, who hire locals, source goods and services locally, so that more tourism expenditures stay in the destination. .

## Discussion Question #2

What might the tourism sector do to minimize these negative impacts (economic, social and environmental)?



Image credit: cafebabel.com   Island of Mallorca, Spain

https://cafebabel.com/en/article/mass-tourism-in-mallorca-trouble-in-paradise-5ae00bf4f723b35a145e8195/

Trouble in Paradise, as you can see. People travel in other people's homes. The island is an extremely popular beach destination, with cheap flights from Europe to the international Palma de Mallorca Airport, one of the busiest in Spain, brining in millions of tourists each year.

Use this question to generate discussion and dialogue amongst the students.  Encourage the students to use examples from their pre-class readings, as well as their own personal observations, as they formulate their responses.

# Discussion Question #3

Can you provide an example of a tourism destination or development with positive impact?

Image credit: Elliot, S.

Finally, a sloth has been spotted in Manuel Antonio National Park, Costa Rica. Surrounded by so much beauty and nature, but the sloth is a main attraction!

Costa Rica, a pioneer of ecotourism, is the most visited country in Central America. Many tourists are drawn to its extensive series of national parks, protected by strict capacity limits. Costa Rica began reversing deforestation in the 1990s, and they are moving towards using only renewable energy.
In 2021 Costa Rica with Denmark launched the "Beyond Oil and Gas alliance" for stopping use fossil fuels.

Use this question to generate discussion and dialogue amongst the students. Encourage the students to use examples from their pre-class readings, as well as their own personal observations, as they formulate their responses.

# Key Takeaways

- Global travel patterns help to understand concentrations of tourists

- Must consider the positives and the negatives for a holistic understanding of tourism

- For tourism to be sustainable, must consider economic, social and environmental impacts at the destination itself

Image credit:  Elliot, S.

A closing image of hikers in Nepal, hosted in small villages by locals, and guided by local Sherpa. As an alternative form of tourism to the dangers of guiding tourists up Mount Everest, this is an example of social entrepreneurship – small scale enterprise with the aim of solving social problems and effecting social change. Tourism revenues are directed toward community need, from hydro electrical power to mobile health clinics.