

5-7 of October 2022

Nicosia-Cyprus

Main elements of IGET background document *“European sustainable tourism and circular economy”*

Giovanni Finocchiaro ISPRA on behalf of IGET EPA Network

Side event “EUROPEAN SUSTAINABLE TOURISM AND CIRCULAR ECONOMY: Shifting tourism towards circular economy models.

6th October 2022

IGET contribution to the UNECE *Ninth Environment for Europe Ministerial Conference*

IGET's *background document* to favour a “circular economy approach” aims

- at reducing economic losses in the value chain;
- at avoiding overcrowding and reducing environmental pressures;
- and at showing how a circular economy model can be used and applied to the tourism sector.

Document structure

IGET

Rethinking Tourism Post Covid-19 crisis

Sustainable Tourism
Definition

Circular Economy
Definition

Sustainable Tourism & Circular Economy

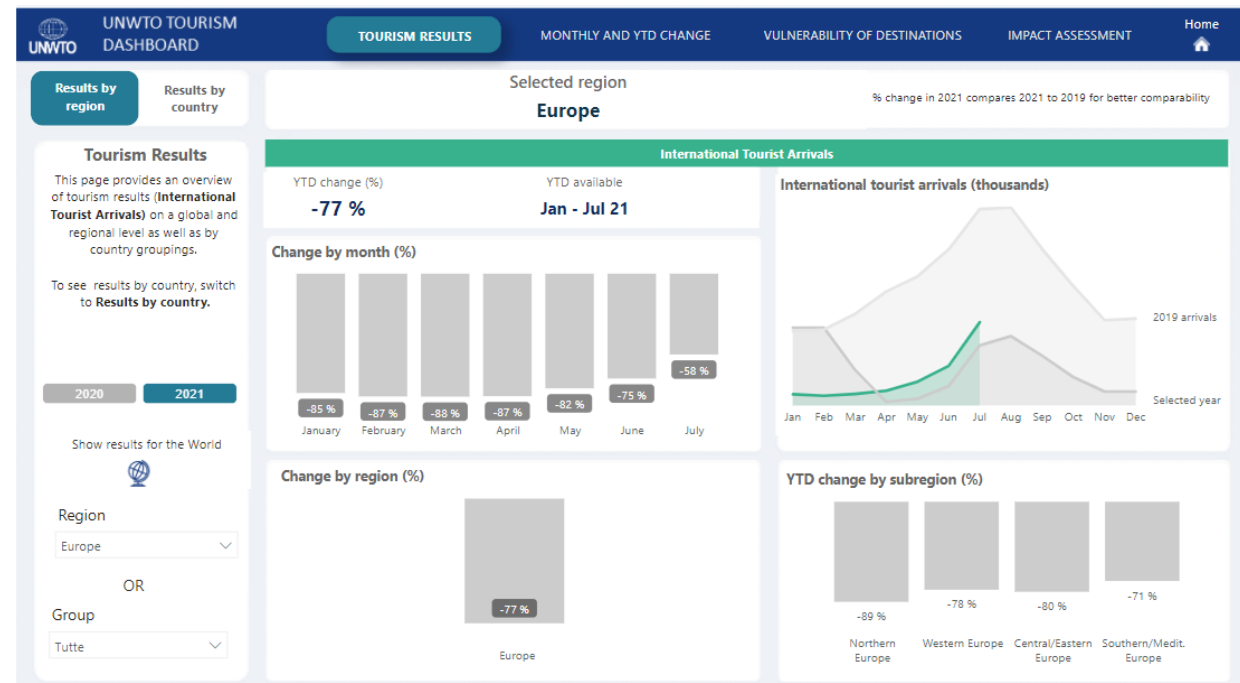
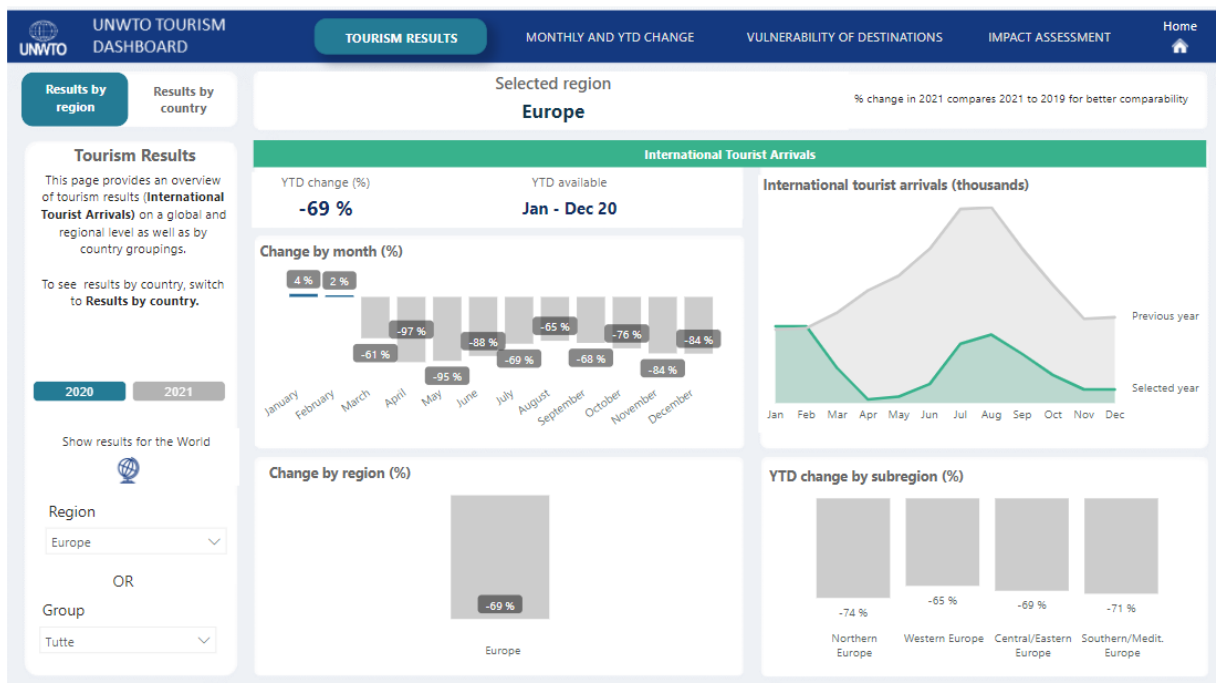
Measure the circularity of the tourism sector

Recommendations and
possible contributions of IGET

IGET *background document* “European sustainable tourism and circular economy”

Context - Pandemic years

Tourism, a sector in crisis



The crisis is an opportunity to rethink the sector.

In this scenario, the environment could be one of the main pillars on which to base the rebirth.

IGET background document "European sustainable tourism and circular economy"

Sustainable Tourism at EU level

[UN Environment Program](#) and [UN World Tourism Organization](#) (UNWTO) definition:

- *“tourism that takes full account of its current and future economic, social and environmental impacts, addressing the needs of visitors, the industry, the environment and host communities”.*
- Sustainable tourism also refers to *“the environmental, economic, and socio-cultural aspects of tourism development, and a suitable balance must be established between these three dimensions to guarantee its long-term sustainability”.*

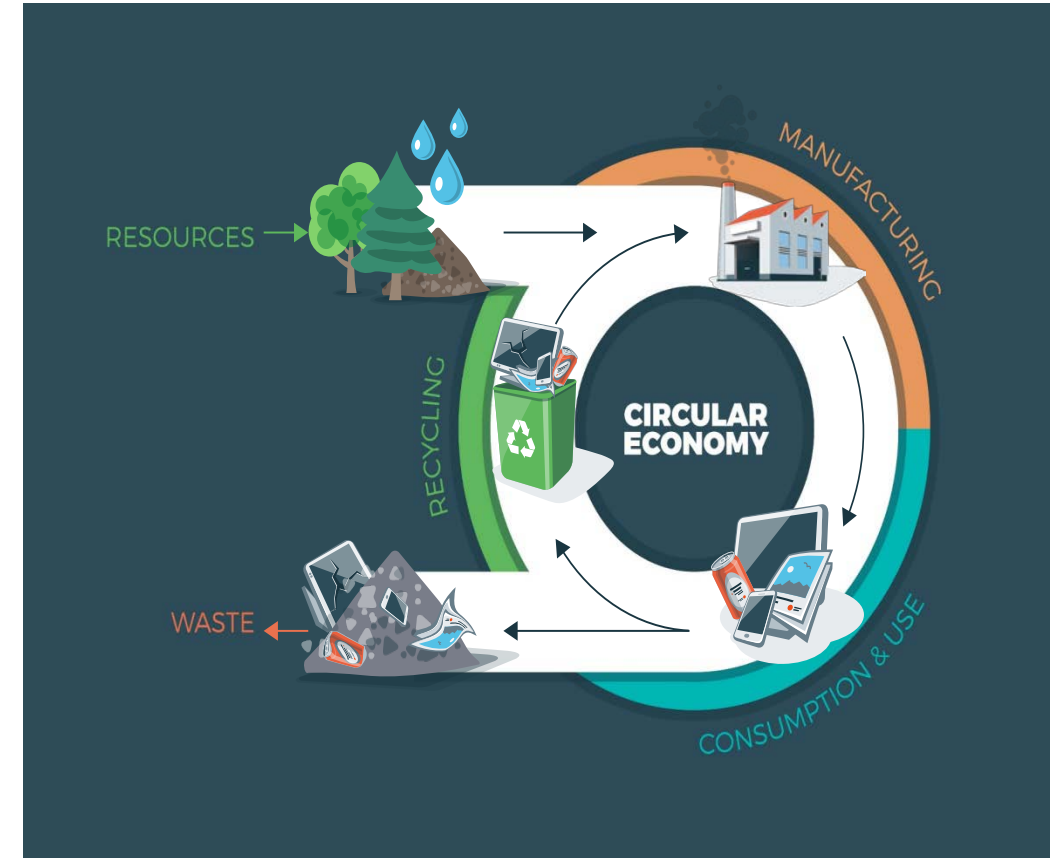
Circular Economy at EU level



THE BELLAGIO PROCESS

The definition of circular economy adopted by the EPA Network in the Bellagio Declaration is the following:

A Circular Economy (CE) is an economy where there is full recirculation of resources and nothing wasted and where the value of products, materials and resources is maintained in the economy for as long as possible. All outputs from one process is input for another. A move towards CE entails reducing the intake of finite virgin material, designing out waste and pollution, developing systems and infrastructure that enable products and materials recirculation, and sourcing renewable materials in a way that also regenerates natural systems the economy depends on.



How Sustainable Tourism and Circular Economy can be mainstreamed (1/8)

the main environmental impacts of tourism linked to the circular economy

Energy use and climate change

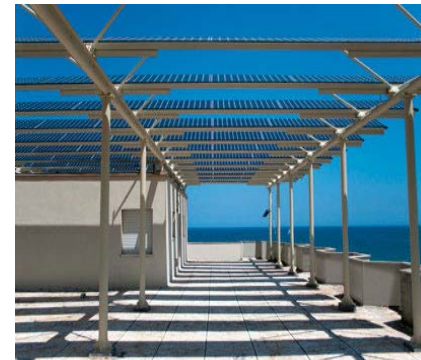
Tourism generates emissions of greenhouse gases. A UNWTO study reveals that tourism directly contributes to 5% of global CO₂ emissions and between 50% and 60% indirectly.

The transport and accommodation sectors have the highest energy demand, accounting for 94% and 3.5% of tourism energy use respectively.

IGET believes that:

there is a need for a system model for the adoption of renewable energy technologies in the accommodation sector, so that visitors' preferences will focus on renewable energy options.

In order to engage more economic and social sectors in the use of renewable energy, it would be essential to create legislation that encourages their take up in each socioeconomic area of the country.



How Sustainable Tourism and Circular Economy can be mainstreamed (2/8)

the main environmental impacts of tourism linked to the circular economy

Waste

The generation of solid waste linked to the tourism sector and the need for its appropriate management, is another significant environmental issue

The waste generated by the tourism sector can stress waste management infrastructure, particularly during the high season, and in areas where facilities are still underdeveloped.

IGET believes that it is important that the tourism industry continues to improve and adapt its operations towards waste prevention. It is also important that the requirements of the Waste Framework Directive are applied correctly, including preparation for re-use, separate collection with recycling and the elimination of single use plastics are the next preferable steps.

Food waste is another relevant waste-related impact of tourism.



How Sustainable Tourism and Circular Economy can be mainstreamed (3/8)

the main environmental impacts of tourism linked to the circular economy

Water resources (shortage)

Strong evidence exists that tourists use considerably more water resources than at home and/or than inhabitants do. Many summer tourism destinations, particularly those which are naturally arid, may experience water shortages.



IGET believes that to make water usage circular, all demand must be covered by renewable water sources, which means no fossil sources (groundwater, ice) should be used. A more complex approach is also needed since a real transition to a circular model can only be achieved by seeing water in an integrated approach as mean of transport, a source of energy and a service.

How Sustainable Tourism and Circular Economy can be mainstreamed (4/8)

the main environmental impacts of tourism linked to the circular economy

Resource use and overconsumption

The use of resources in the construction and maintenance of tourism facilities (e.g. accommodations) can be high and resource use in this area can be focused in promoting a Circular Economy approach.

IGET believes that using (the share of) ‘green’ procurement mechanisms, circular building material flows, life-cycle assessments, re-manufacturing furniture, leasing contracts for high-end appliances and using easy-to-repair materials, circularity within tourism facilities **can be increased**.



How Sustainable Tourism and Circular Economy can be mainstreamed (5/8)

Finally...

Given the complexity of the tourism ecosystem, addressing individual components will likely be more feasible, but a value chain approach will be more rewarding in the long run.

Although the transition towards a more environmentally friendly and circular tourism sector is difficult to carry out, some national and European institutions have already begun to work in this direction.

In the document are cited some national attempt to this direction...



Project “Reduce food waste, cook for your guests”



Effectiveness of the “Ecological Beach” Model in Italy



How Sustainable Tourism and Circular Economy can be mainstreamed (6/8)

Some relevant European / international institutional initiatives

- ✓ EU Ecolabel for Tourist Accommodation;



- ✓ EMAS (Environment Management and Audit Scheme);



- ✓ EC “Transition Pathway for Tourism”



- ✓ One Planet Network “Glasgow Declaration on Climate Action for Tourism;



- ✓ One Planet Network “Global Tourism Plastics Initiative”.



How Sustainable Tourism and Circular Economy can be mainstreamed (7/8)

Proposal by IGET

European Environmental Protection Agencies (EPAs) can play an influential role to encourage, support and incentivise tourism businesses to pursue sound environmental management and adopt green business models.

How Sustainable Tourism and Circular Economy can be mainstreamed (8/8)

Proposal by IGET

Governments, at all levels, can play a valuable role in conjunction with industry bodies in promoting sound environmental practice in individual tourism businesses. Actions may include:

- ✓ promoting sustainable tourism certification, based on internationally recognised environmental standards (i.e. EU Ecolabel, EMAS);
- ✓ providing guidance and supporting skills training in environmental management;
- ✓ establishing economic incentives and financial assistance linked to good practice;
- ✓ strengthening and more effectively applying, regulation, where required;
- ✓ highlighting good practice case studies in marketing and award schemes.

How can we measure the circularity of the Tourism sector (1/4)



Tourism & Environment

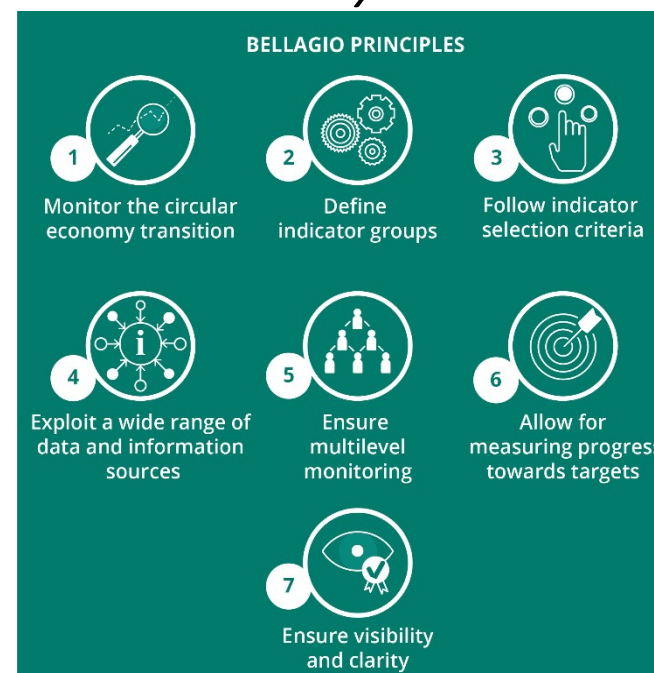
Tourism & Circular Economy

How can we measure the circularity of the Tourism sector (2/4) *Framework*

*Eurostat - Circular Economy
Monitoring Framework*



*EPA Network – Bellagio
Declaration and 7 principles for
monitoring the transition to a
Circular Economy*



IGET background document “European sustainable tourism and circular economy”

How can we measure the circularity of the Tourism sector (3/4)

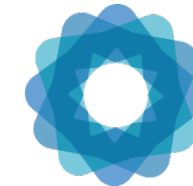
The main experiences

- ✓ Statistical Framework for Measuring the Sustainability for Tourism (SF-MST)



- ✓ Tourism Satellite Account (TSA)

- ✓ System of Environmental-Economic Accounting (SEEA)



System of
Environmental
Economic
Accounting

How can we measure the circularity of the Tourism sector (4/4)

In Europe, in the tourism sector to date, there are no consolidated experiences of measurement but only sporadic attempts and often limited to specific projects in the field of circular economy.



European Union Network
for the Implementation
and Enforcement of Environmental Law

IMPEL WINE
Water
Circularity
Index



How can we measure the circularity of the Tourism sector (4/4)

Proposal by IGET

IGET believe that together with these initiatives, based essentially on accounting tools to monitor the economic and environmental aspect of tourism, you could use also environmental data derived from environmental monitoring activities or environmental statistics to elaborate specific indicators.

IGET Conclusions

- ✓ At medium to long-term investments in the tourism sector are needed for establishing a program that focuses on innovation and the environment, prioritizing an integrated sustainable management and protection of the natural heritage, applying a circular approach in resource use.
- ✓ It is also necessary to develop a series of common environmental indicators, at EU level, to allow the monitoring of environmental impacts associated with tourism, with a view to the implementation of a circular approach to tourism within each Member State.
- ✓ It is recommended to have a “data” governance approach that considers the environmental aspects of tourism and uses all available relevant tools in an integrated way.

When considering sustainable tourism developments, the challenge of incorporating environmental knowledge, should be also taken into account at the same level as other variables.

Thanks!

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