

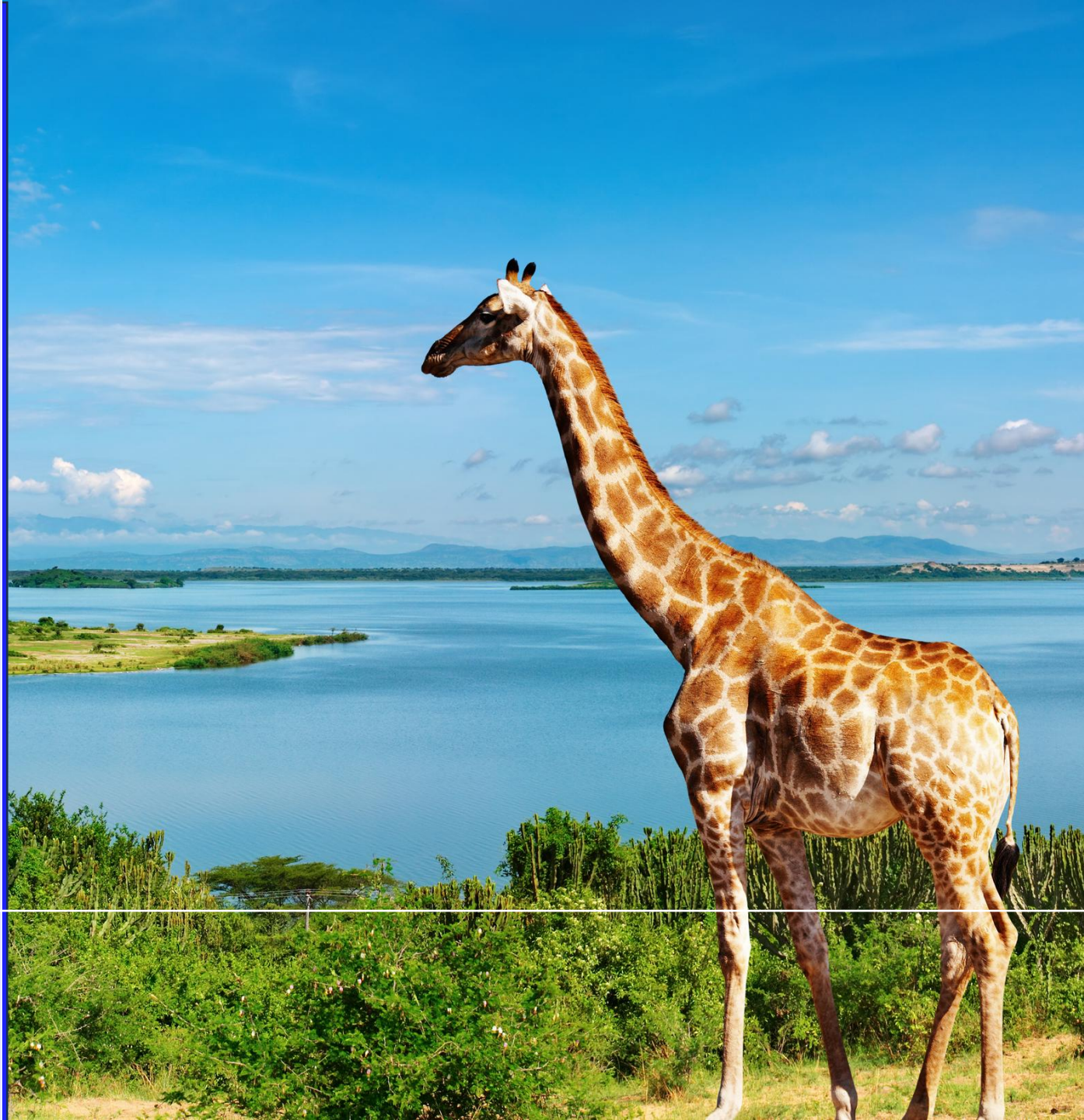
Recent Developments to the System of Tourism Statistics

First Webinar of the Tourism
Sprint of the United Nations
Network of Economic
Statisticians

24 September 2025, online



UN Tourism



Role of tourism in sustainable development



1.4 billion inbound tourist arrivals in 2024

3.4% of global GDP in 2023

5.6% total employed persons globally (2015–2023 avg)

based on data reported by 89 countries and comprising 68% of the world population





UN Tourism's UN mandate as a Specialized Agency

"to collect, to analyse, to publish, to standardize and to improve the statistics of tourism, and to promote the integration of these statistics within the sphere of the United Nations system"

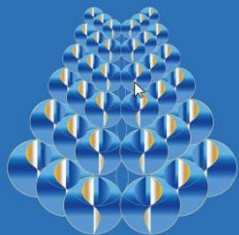
United Nations General Assembly Resolution A/RES/58/232

Expanding the scope of tourism statistics

UN international measurement standards

Basic tourism statistics

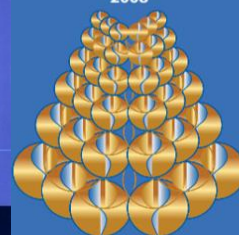
International Recommendations
for Tourism Statistics
2008



Visitor flows and characteristics
Tourism expenditure
Tourism industries

Economic contribution

Tourism Satellite Account:
Recommended Methodological
Framework
2008



Tourism Direct GDP
Value added of
tourism industries
Employment

System of
National
Accounts
2008



Sustainability

Statistical
Framework for
Measuring the
Sustainability of
Tourism (MST)

- Forthcoming -

System of
Environmental-Economic
Accounting 2012
Central Framework



Environmental: emissions, water, energy, waste, land, ecosystems
Social: employment, decent work, education and skills, culture, heritage, visitor and resident, perceptions, etc.
Economic: GDP, tourism establishments, seasonality, etc.

Measuring the Sustainability of Tourism: lines of work



Recognized by the UN
Statistical Commission

E/CN.3/2024/17 Report of the
World Tourism Organization on
tourism statistics (para. 9)

(a) Development of the technical content of the statistical framework for measuring the sustainability of tourism **ACHIEVED!**

(b) Engagement and consensus-building across statistical and tourism communities with a view to presenting the statistical framework to the Statistical Commission for its endorsement **ACHIEVED!**

(c) Support for piloting and implementing the statistical framework in Countries **ONGOING!**

(d) Development of a set of indicators derived from the statistical framework for international comparability purposes **ONGOING!**

(e) Setting up of a global data set and country data reporting processes **ONGOING!**

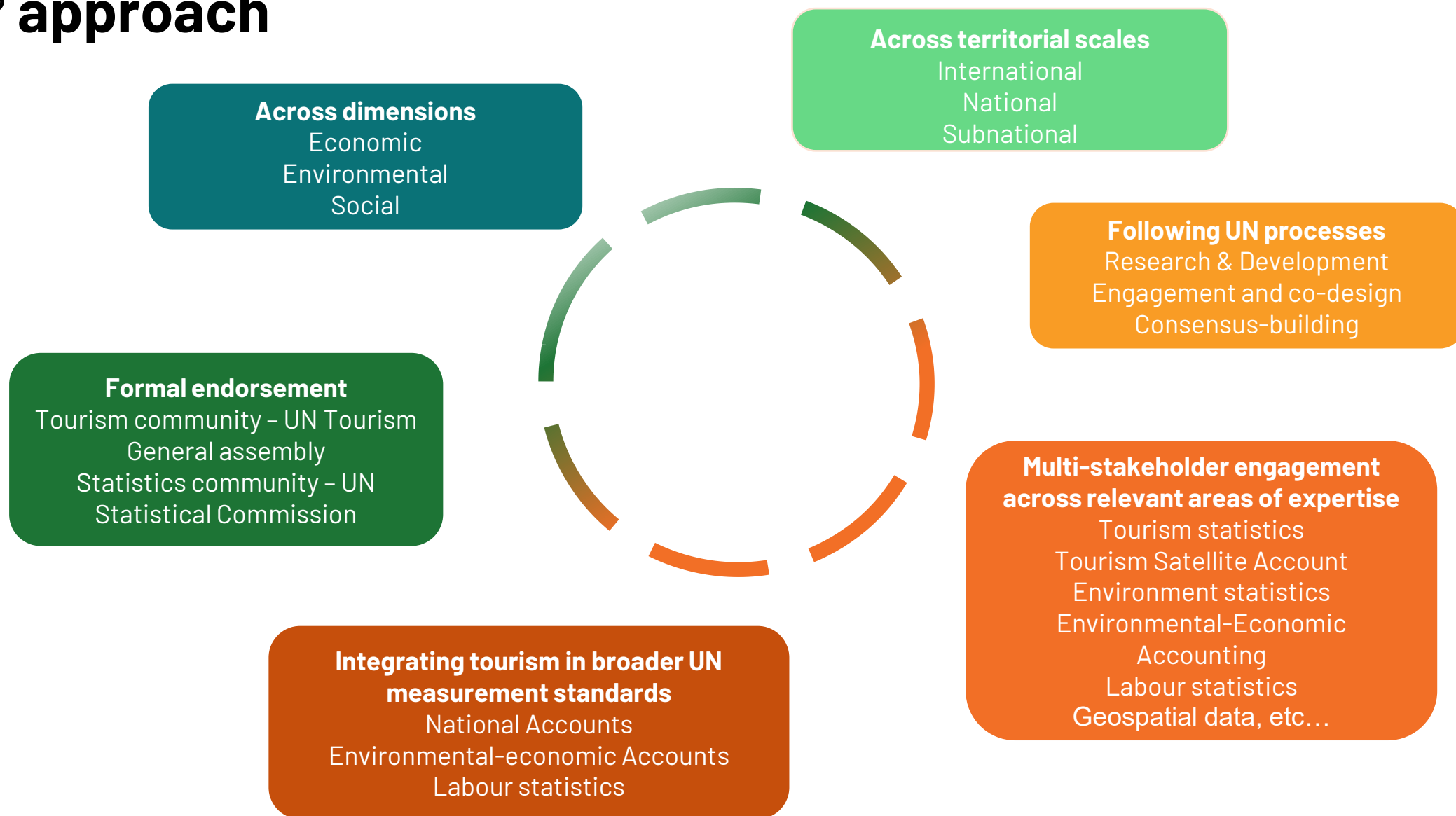


Under the mandate of the
Expert Group on MST



Agreed at the 6th
International Conference
on Tourism Statistics:
Measuring Sustainable
Tourism (June 2017, Manila,
Philippines)

Measuring the Sustainability of Tourism: a 360° approach



Measuring the Sustainability of Tourism: an example of multi-stakeholder engagement

(Selected entities)

Ministries and Destination

Management Organizations

Argentina
Cabo Verde
Canada
Chile
Costa Rica
Croatia
Denmark
Ecuador
Egypt
Georgia
Greece
Israel
Jamaica
Malaysia
Mexico
Mozambique
Peru
Philippines
Portugal
Samoa
Saudi Arabia
Seychelles
Spain
Sri Lanka
Sweden
Switzerland
Thailand
United States of America

National Statistical Offices

Australia
Austria
Cabo Verde
Canada
Costa Rica
Fiji
Finland
France
Germany
Indonesia
Ireland
Italy
Malaysia
Mexico
Netherlands
New Zealand
Philippines
Slovenia
South Africa
Spain
Sweden
Switzerland

International Organizations

Caribbean Development Bank
European Commission
ILO
Eurostat
OECD
UNCTAD
UNESCAP
UNSD
WTO
Pacific Tourism Organization
European Travel Commission

Others

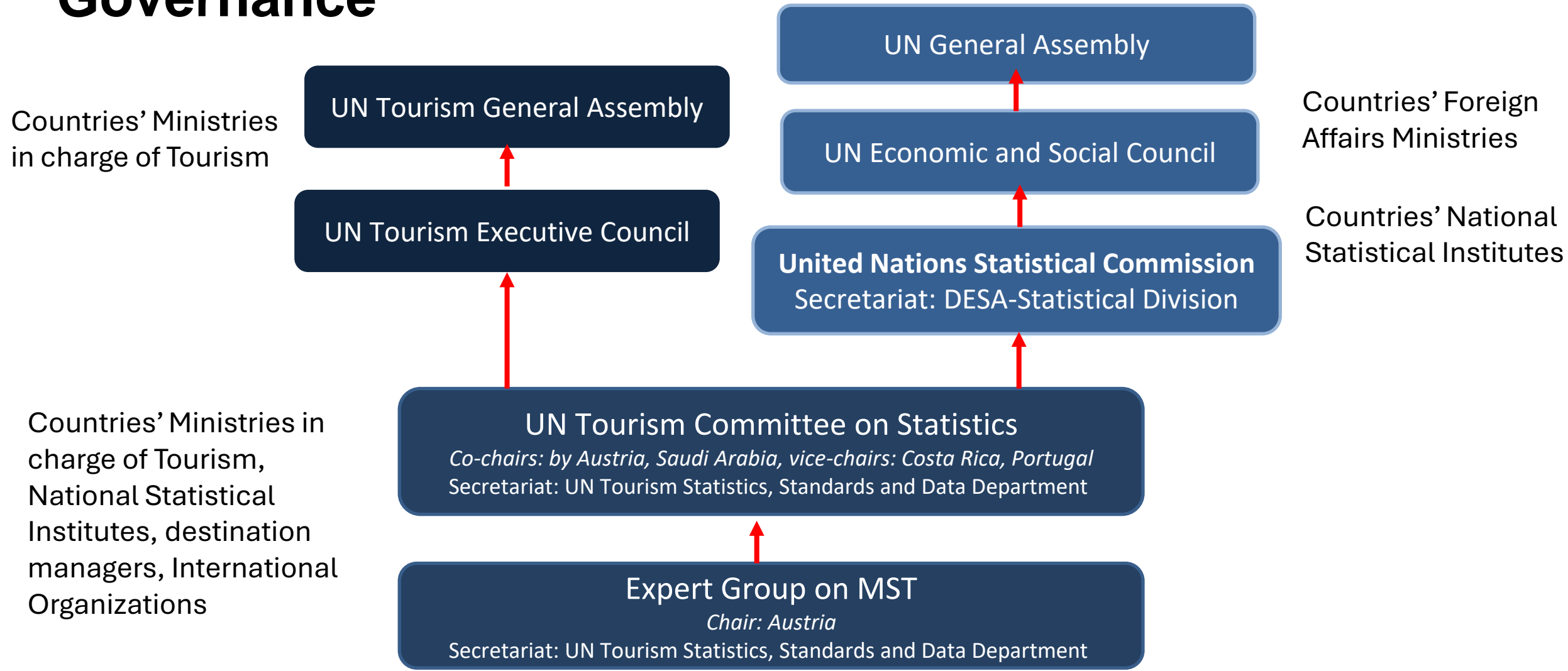
Auckland University of Technology
Cairo University
Cardiff Business School
Harvard University
Leuphana University Lüneburg
Minia University
MODUL University Vienna
Universidad de La Laguna
University of Piraeus

Ministries of environment

Regional Government of Andalucía, Spain

European Trade Association for Tour Operators (ETOA)

Measuring the Sustainability of Tourism: Governance



Statistical Framework for Measuring the Sustainability of Tourism



Internationally agreed reference for measuring the **economic, social and environmental** aspects of tourism



Adopted by all **193 UN Member States**
+ UN System
+ over 50 International Organizations



Recognized in several global, regional and national policy instruments

Download the framework:



Led by UN Tourism Committee on Statistics

Co-chaired by Austria and Spain, vice-chairs: Saudi Arabia and Seychelles

Developed by Expert Group on MST + Editorial Board

Chaired by Austria and the Philippines + Chaired by Canada

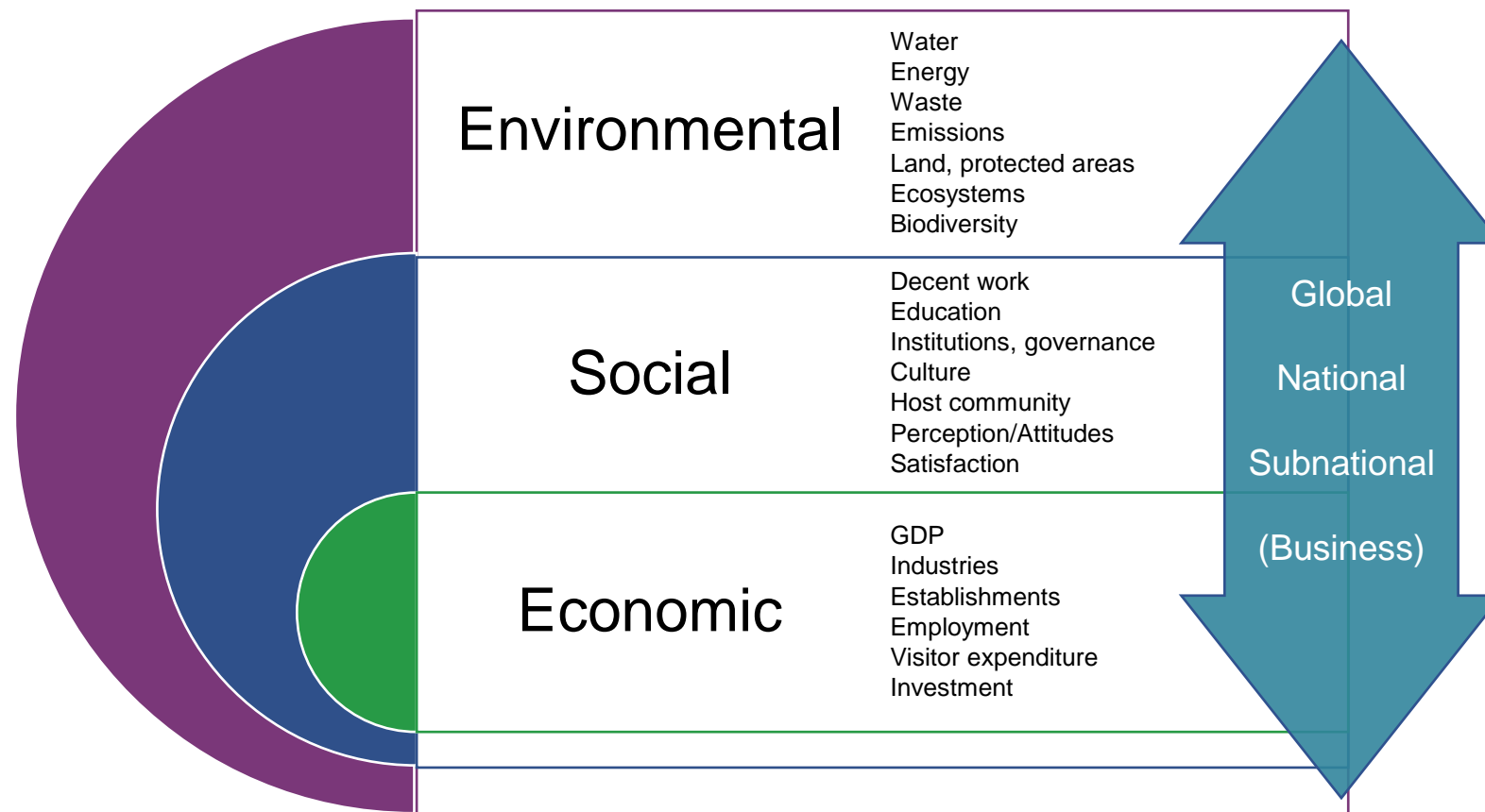
Endorsed at the 55th session of the UN Statistical Commission, supporting interventions:

- 34 countries,
- 3 regional joint statements: Africa (voiced by Benin), European Statistical System incl. European Union and its Member States and EFTA countries (voiced by Finland), Gulf Cooperation Council (voiced by Saudi Arabia)
- ILO and the grouping of 40+ international organizations (incl. UN System)

UN Tourism Committee on Statistics and Expert Group on MST congratulated for pioneering work. Recognized by UN Chief Executives Board as beyond GDP example



Statistical Framework for Measuring the Sustainability of Tourism: Overview



Download the framework:

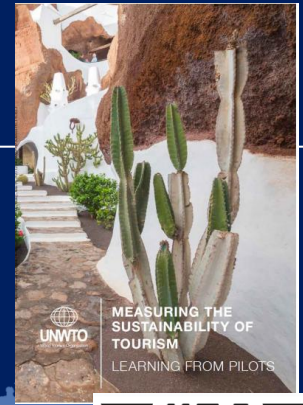
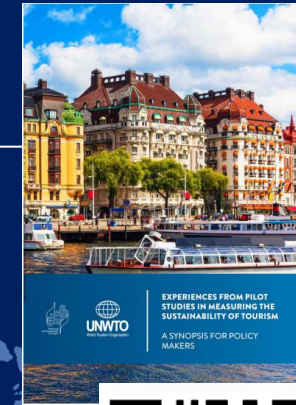
Measuring the Sustainability of Tourism: Pilots

14 with a subnational focus

(some of them combined with national level)

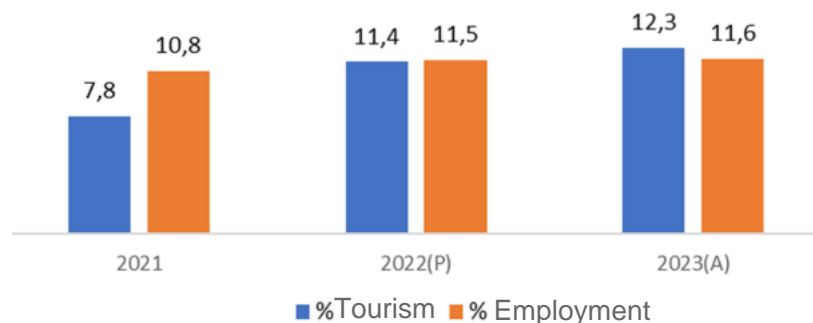
17 with a national focus

Austria, Canada, Costa Rica, Croatia, Denmark, Egypt, Fiji, Finland, Germany, Indonesia, Italy, Kyrgyzstan, Mexico, the Kingdom of the Netherlands, New Zealand, Peru, the Philippines, Samoa, Saudi Arabia, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, Uganda, Viet Nam + the subnational regions of Wales (UK) and the Canary Islands (Spain) and the region of the Pacific

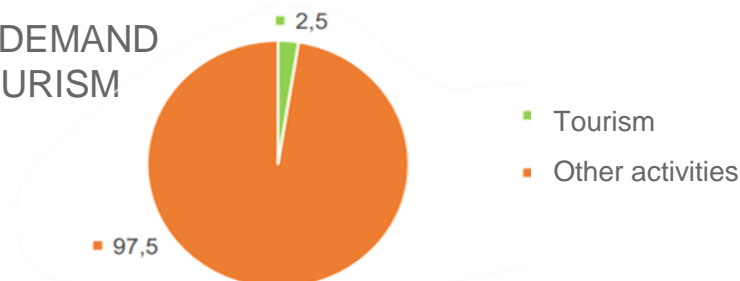


Actionable data at national and subnational levels: Spain

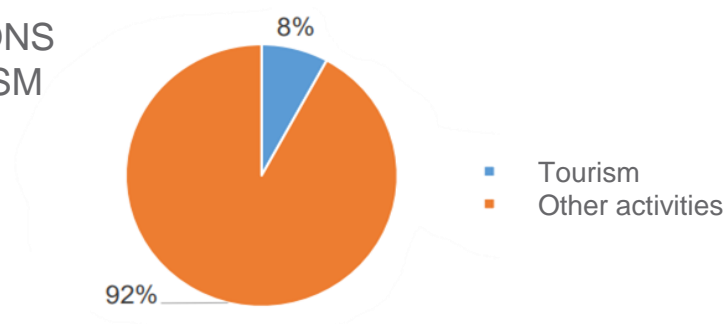
TOURISM SHARE OF GDP AND EMPLOYMENT



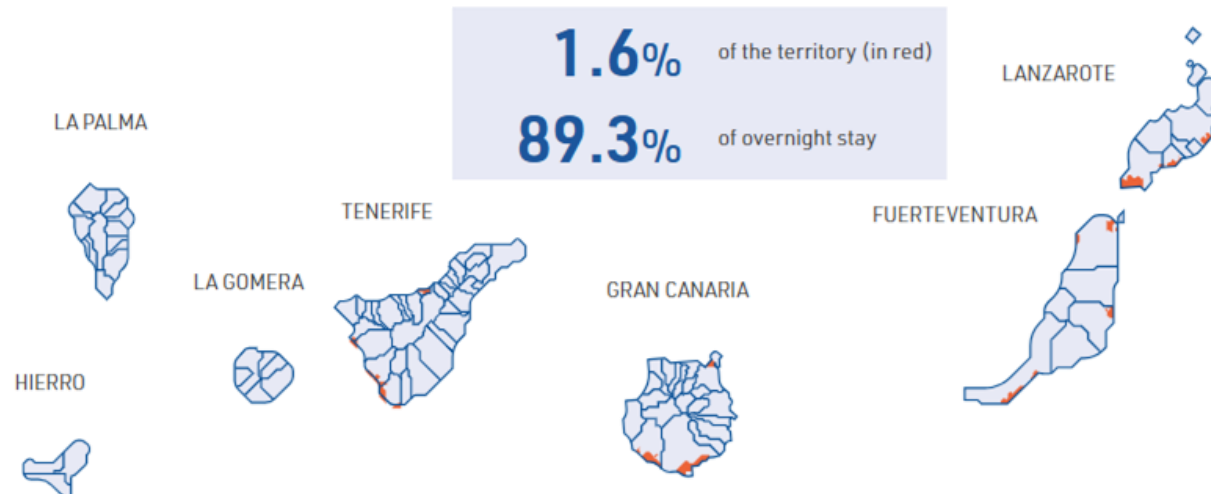
ENERGY DEMAND FROM TOURISM (%) 2022



GHG EMISSIONS FROM TOURISM (%) 2023



Map of tourism micro-destinations on the Canary Islands, Spain



Source: Institute of Statistics of the Canary Islands.

ISTAC publishes the annual *Survey of Tourism Data* at the micro-destination scale from 2009 onwards for **16 different indicators** related to the tourism supply side.

- Better understanding of visitor flows at the territorial level enabling more **strategic infrastructure investment and zoning decisions**.
- Development of a **tool for targeted marketing and policy design**, grounded in robust data.
- Enhanced **ability to match infrastructure development with actual tourism demand**.

MST in international & regional policy instruments

G20 Declarations under the Presidencies of Saudi Arabia (2020), India (2023) and Brazil (2024)

Sustainable Tourism Policy Framework for the Pacific, which includes a **statistical strategy based on SF-MST** (2021)

European Parliament Resolution establishing the EU Strategy for Sustainable Tourism (2021)

Palma Declaration **“The path towards social sustainability of tourism in the EU”** adopted by EU Member States (2023)



Pacific Tourism Statistics Strategy 2021-2030



Goal 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth

Goal 12: Responsible Consumption and Production



UN Tourism



MST in the Sustainable Development Goals

TARGET 8.9



“By 2030, devise and implement policies to promote sustainable tourism that creates jobs and promotes local culture and products”

- **Indicator 8.9.1:** Tourism Direct GDP as a proportion of total GDP and in growth rate
- **Indicator 8.9.2:** Employed persons in the tourism industries (**NEW since March 2025**)

TARGET 12.B



“Develop and implement tools to monitor sustainable development impacts for sustainable tourism that creates jobs and promotes local culture and products.”

- **Indicator 12.b.1:** Implementation of standard accounting tools to monitor the economic and environmental aspects of tourism sustainability

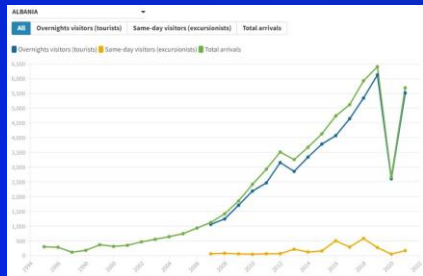
UN Tourism Statistics Database



Most comprehensive database available on tourism.

Comprises both UN Tourism member and non-member states.

Countries report data through official questionnaires/channels and UN Tourism collects, validates and disseminates



Basic stats

- Inbound tourism
- Outbound tourism
- Domestic tourism
- Accommodation



Complementary macroeconomic indicators:

- Inbound/domestic/outbound tourism expenditure over GDP
- Inbound expenditure over exports of goods and services
- Outbound tourism expenditure over imports of goods and services



Official SDG tourism indicators and related

- Tourism Direct GDP (indicator 8.9.1)
- Employed persons in the tourism industries (indicator 8.9.2)
- Implementation of standard accounting tools to monitor the economic and environmental aspects of tourism sustainability (indicator 12.b.1)



Employment stats

In partnership with ILO, disaggregation of employed persons (SDG 8.9.2) by:

- tourism industry
- status (employees/self-employed)
- sex (male/female)

UN Tourism Statistics Database website

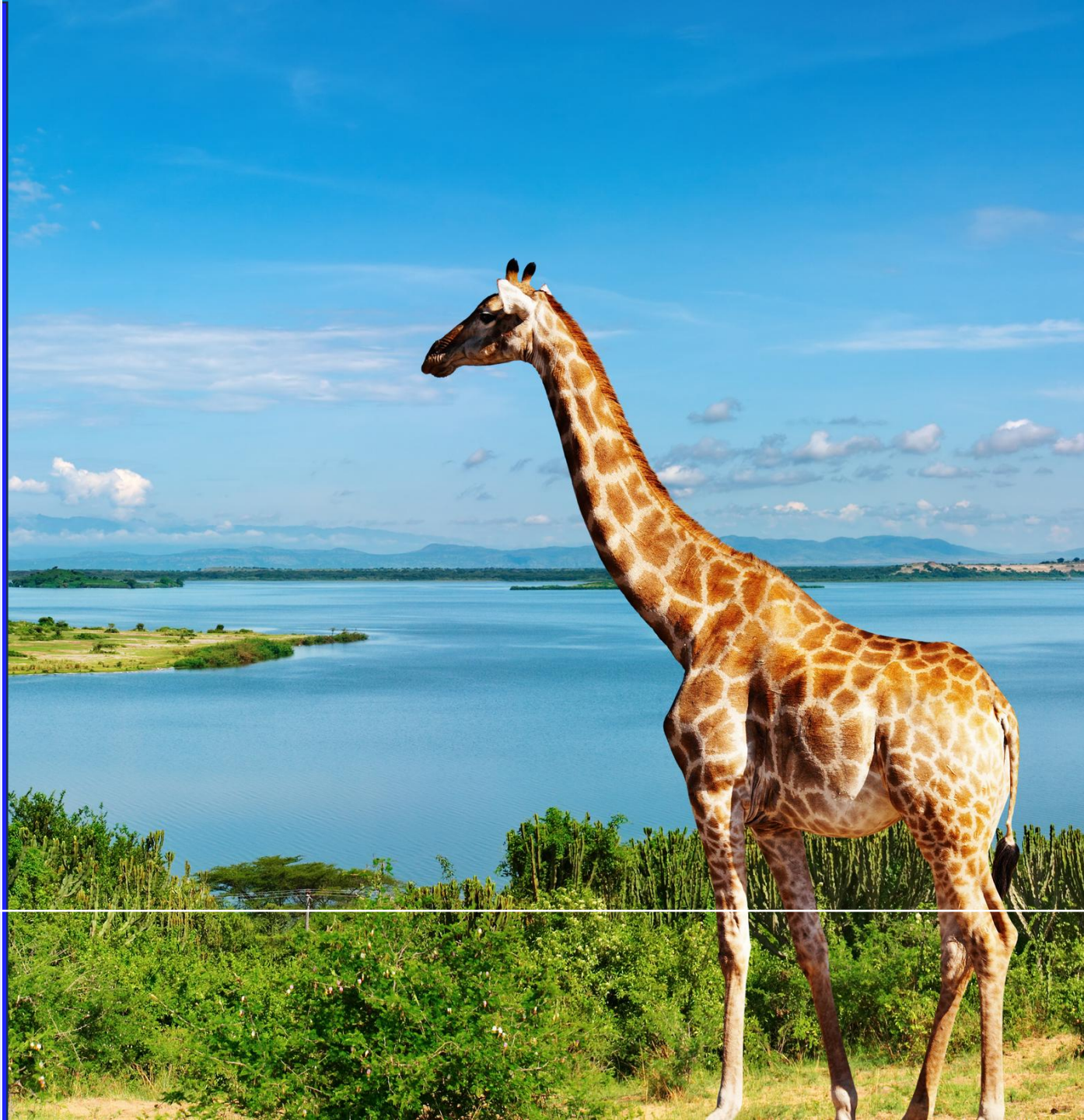
<https://www.unwto.org/tourism-statistics/tourism-statistics-database>

THANK YOU!

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Statistics, Standards and Data
Department
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Thank you



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