

Goal 12

Target number: 12.b

Indicator Number and Name: 12.b.1 Number of sustainable tourism strategies or policies and implemented action plans with agreed monitoring and evaluation tools

Agency: World Tourism Organization (UNWTO)

Has work for the development of this indicator begun?

Yes

Who are the entities, including national and international experts, directly involved and consulted in developing the methodology/and or data collection tools?

UNWTO, with the support of the UNSD, has set up the [Working Group of Experts on Measuring Sustainable Tourism](#) to advance Towards a Statistical Framework for Measuring Sustainable Tourism (MST). The Working Group of Experts reports to UNWTO's [Committee on Statistics and Tourism Satellite Account](#) and to the [UN Committee of Experts on Environmental-Economic Accounting \(UNCEEA\)](#).

The Working Group of Experts met on 20-21 Oct 2016 with more than 50 representatives from Member States' National Statistical Offices, National Tourism Administrations, and Ministries of Environment, as well as subnational administrations, the private sector, academia, civil society, tourism observatories and multilateral organizations (EEA, Eurostat, OECD, UNEP, UNSD, UNWTO, World Bank).

Before the formation of the Working Group of Experts, UNWTO's Committee on Statistics and Tourism Satellite Account (composed of 12 elected Member States and 1 representative each from UNWTO's Associate Members and Affiliate Members, and with the additional participation of 7 Member States as well as representatives from multilateral organizations—Eurostat, UNEP, UNSD and WTO—and private sector) produced a note that UNWTO submitted to the IAEG-SDGs on time for its 3rd meeting in Mexico City (available [here](#)). Here it was recommended that “For Target 12.b, the currently proposed indicator should be adapted to focus on measurement of the stage of implementation of the SEEA and TSA frameworks”.

What is the involvement of or how do you plan to involve National Statistical Systems in the development of the methodology?

The Working Group of Experts on Measuring Sustainable Tourism agreed that advancing Towards a Statistical Framework for Measuring Sustainable Tourism is a high priority.

It also highlighted the role of such a standards-based statistical framework to support the credibility, comparability and outreach of data and various measurement and monitoring programmes pertaining to sustainable tourism, including the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) indicators.

The Group agreed that the core rationale for developing a statistical framework is to support the measurement of sustainable tourism in its various dimensions (economic, environmental and social) and at the relevant spatial levels (global, national, sub-national) by providing a common language and organizing structure for exploiting the richness of data already available (from statistical frameworks and infrastructures, administrative sources, etc.) and for identifying additional data that may be needed.

A statistical framework for sustainable tourism is the natural evolution of and complement to the standing statistical standards on tourism statistics: the Tourism Satellite Account (TSA), based on the System of National Accounts (SNA), and the International Recommendations for Tourism Statistics (IRTS). The starting foundation towards such a framework involves bridging the economic and environmental dimensions of sustainable tourism through linking two UN standards: the TSA and the System of Environmental Economic Accounting (SEEA).

Please briefly describe the process of developing the methodology for the indicator

The Working Group of Experts on Measuring Sustainable Tourism has explicitly identified the need to link the work Towards a Statistical Framework for Measuring Sustainable Tourism to the work on SDG indicators. This relates to both to the indicators identified by the IAEG-SDGs for targets 8.9 (8.9.1 and 8.9.2), 12.b (12.b.1) and 14.7 (14.7.1) as well as to develop a “tourism theme” of complementary indicators monitoring elements not covered in the existing indicators for targets 8.9, 12.b and 14.7 and for monitoring the contribution of tourism in other targets where tourism is not explicitly mentioned but relevant.

The Working Group of Experts, with UNWTO as its secretariat, will work on a proposal to make the indicator 12.b.1 statistically operational and to allow for implementation in countries ensuring comparability and feasibility. This proposal will be rooted in the statistical framework for sustainable tourism under development. A proposal will as be made for data collection into an international database.

Please indicate new international standards that will need to be proposed and approved by an intergovernmental process (such as UNSC) for this methodology.

The Working Group of Experts on Measuring Sustainable Tourism agreed to advance Towards a Statistical Framework for Measuring Sustainable Tourism. A first version of the methodological document will become available in the first half of 2017.

When do you expect the methodological work on this indicator to be completed?

It is expected that in the course of 2017 a first version of the methodological document for a statistical framework for measuring sustainable tourism could be produced and some consultation rounds.

More specifically in relation to the indicator 12.b.1, if a focus on measurement of “agreed monitoring and evaluation tools” is accepted by the IAEG-SDGs (focusing) then an agreed compilation methodology could be ready in 2017 as the relevant conceptual methodological work is largely available (TSA:RFM 2008 and SEEA 2012), possibly in the first half and coinciding with UNWTO’s International Conference on Tourism Statistics on 21-23 June 2017 (Manila, The Philippines).

If this focus is not accepted, additional methodological work on defining “sustainable tourism strategies or policies and implemented action plans” will have to be carried, possibly stretching beyond June 2017.

Are data and metadata already being collected from the National Statistical System for one or more components of this indicator?

If the indicator is to focus on determining the presence of sustainable development policies and action plans then it would not be possible to collect the information via a National Statistical System but rather via regular liaison and engagement with tourism departments and similar agencies at national level. In addition to the draw-backs from not having a statistical basis or infrastructure, and to the difficulty and time consuming process of attempting to reach an internationally definition of “sustainable tourism strategies or policies and implemented action plans”, there are implementation

challenges—like the difficulty to avoid a bias in the responses as most respondents will be more inclined to give socially desirable answers (e.g. “yes” to the presence of such strategies/policies/plans) and the difficulty to verify responses as this information lies outside of the statistical system.

If the indicator is to focus on measurement of agreed monitoring and evaluation tools then connection to a National Statistical System will be present since it will reflect ongoing assessment of the extent to which statistical frameworks are being implemented at national level. This work is ongoing. The remaining questions are answered assuming that the indicator will focus on measurement of agreed monitoring and evaluation tools and thus be statistically based.

If yes, please describe:

Many countries presently compile Tourism Satellite Accounts (TSA) and SEEA based accounts.

How do you plan to collect the data?

Through an international questionnaire, possibly to become part of UNWTO’s current international questionnaire on tourism statistics that feeds its international dataset.

If the indicator involves multiple components from different data sources, please describe how each individual component of the indicator will be collected here.

With what frequency is data expected to be collected?

Annually

Is there a process of data validation by countries in place or planned for this indicator?

Yes

If yes, please briefly describe:

In line with UNWTO established procedure for data collection from countries.

(As of 3 March 2017)