

FORUM: United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO)

QUESTION OF: Discussing the effects of tourism on Small Island Developing States

SUBMITTED BY: Italy

CO-SUBMITTED BY: Costa Rica, Lebanon, Mozambique, Republic of Congo, Russian Federation, Switzerland,

THE WORLD TOURISM ORGANIZATION,

Acknowledging the economic importance of tourism for SIDSs as a key source of income, employment, and foreign exchange, while recognizing the environmental, social, and economic challenges associated with unsustainable tourism practices,

Recognizing the unique vulnerabilities of SIDS, including limited land resources, fragile ecosystems, and their disproportionate exposure to climate change,

Emphasizing the importance of international cooperation and partnerships in fostering sustainable tourism practices that protect natural and cultural heritage,

Keeping in mind that the tourism industry can easily be negatively affected by changing world dynamics,

Further Recognizing that disregarding an issue such as over-tourism can cause destruction of natural habitats and put pressure on delicate ecosystems, endangering biodiversity and local maintenance, especially in coastal and marine environments,

Noting with deep concern lots of SIDS face challenges because of their small population, limited *resources*, and their susceptibility to the impacts of climate change,

1. Suggests that the UN funds the provision of subsidies to citizens who are selected by criteria determined by the UN out of SIDS in times when tourism is limited, such as during pandemics, where these subsidies will be limited to people who work in the tourism sectors, with the selected citizens will having to visit a UN officiated bank in order to get the funds in order to:
 - a) ensure that all individuals of such States will have the necessary income to be able to:
 - i. ensure that citizens can cover their daily needs,
 - ii. keep citizens spending on goods, in order to support local businesses and maintain the economy through other sectors,
 - c) prevent closure of businesses in the tourism industry by helping owners pay staff and bills,
 - d) further ensure that businesses will be able to quickly start operations again after tourism resumes helping owners get a stable income almost instantly;

2. Recommends the adoption of measures by the SIDS governments in collaboration with the UN, to strengthen trade relations while investing in local businesses and diversifying SIDS economies beyond tourism, by implementing measures including:
 - a) implementing tax incentives for non-tourism industries to promote their growth and encourage investment in sectors such as:
 - i. Agriculture,
 - ii. technology,
 - iii. renewable energy,
 - iv. Manufacturing,
 - b) developing trade partnerships and agreements with other nations to enhance access to global markets and ensure fair trade opportunities for SIDS businesses' something that will create job opportunities and help SIDS be less dependent on tourism and its economic benefits,
 - c) promoting innovation and research to identify and capitalize on new economic opportunities, thereby reducing reliance on tourism and fostering long-term resilience,
 - d) make easier for SIDS businesses to offer competitive prices, which could attract more foreign audiences, contributing to strengthening the economy through sectors other than tourism;

3. Calls Upon the private sector and civil society to actively participate in fostering eco-tourism and innovative solutions by:
 - a) investing in sustainable tourism ventures that prioritize environmental preservation and cultural sensitivity,
 - b) developing mechanisms that reduce the ecological footprint of tourism, such as:
 - i. water recycling systems,
 - ii. alternatives to plastic,
 - c) collaborating with local governments to promote responsible tourist behavior by educating the public through ways such as but not limited to:
 - i. hosting awareness campaigns,
 - ii. hosting events that highlight local traditions, fostering mutual respect;

4. Suggests the creation of an international organ called the Economic Development Council for Small Island Developing States (EDCSIDS), where the EDCSIDS will come into play in areas such as:
 - a) providing vocational training programs for locals who want to professionalize in areas other than tourism, which would:
 - i. help develop job opportunities in areas other than tourism,
 - ii. prevent the SIDS from relying on a single industry, therefore making the SIDS resilient to the shifting world dynamics,
 - b) the decision-making process for tourism projects, where the following will be done to achieve success in the equal decision making:
 - i. a number of representatives from the local communities will be selected by the UN in order to participate in the council,

- ii. the representatives will be reelected each year in order to ensure the maximum amount of involvement from many parts of the community,
 - iii. the council will gather with UN representatives whenever needed, and will discuss the concerns about the tourism industry in the area;
- 5. Recommends the establishment of a global fund dedicated to supporting sustainable tourism in SIDS, through:
 - a) encouraging financial aid from developed countries,
 - b) the involvement of key stakeholders including bodies of the United Nations such as UNDP and UNEP, as well as non-governmental organisations, and development banks;
- 6. Urges Member States and international organizations to provide technical and financial assistance to SIDS for:
 - a) Developing sustainable tourism policies and planning frameworks for reducing pollution, sustaining the unique environments,
 - b) Conducting environmental impact assessments for major tourism projects through:
 - i. Conducting surveys to establish the current environmental conditions, including biodiversity, water resources and air quality,
 - ii. Identifying potential impacts such as habitat destruction, pollution, and resource depletion;
- 7. Encourages Small Island Developing States to adopt and implement comprehensive tourism strategies that prioritize sustainability, including:
 - a) Establishing and enforcing regulations to limit over-tourism and ensure sustainable visitor numbers through ways, such as but not limited to:
 - i. daily or seasonal limits on the number of visitors to popular destinations, such as beaches, historic sites, and natural parks,
 - ii. implementing reservation systems to control access during peak hours,
 - b) Promoting community-based tourism initiatives that empower local populations and reduce dependency on external operators,
 - c) Supporting the development of eco-friendly tourism infrastructure, such as renewable energy-powered resorts and low-impact transportation systems.