

# GEMUN 2018

## United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation(UNESCO)

### Topic 1: Using governmental influence to guarantee awareness about world heritage sites in order to contain the effects that mass-tourism has on them

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#### I. DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS

**World heritage sites:** : is a landmark or area which is selected by UNESCO, in particular by World Heritage Convention, as having cultural, historical, scientific significance and is legally protected by international treaties. It has to be unique in some respect as a geographically and historically identifiable place having special culture or physical significance.

**Mass Tourism:** is a form of tourism that involves tens of thousands of people going to the same resort often at the same time of year. It is the most popular form of tourism as it is often the cheapest way to holiday, and is often sold as a package deal.

#### II. INTRODUCTION TO MASS TOURISM

In the tourism business, natural resources are intensively used and consumed, and tourism has major impacts on environment, ecosystems, economy, societies and culture. Tourism can contribute significantly to regional development, but, if it is not managed well, it can have devastating effects on nature and society. Tourism is dependent on national, regional and local resources of a country. Tourism is a service industry which means that it depends strongly on human resources at all levels (regional, national, international) and from many different service sectors.

Tourism can be a lucrative source, but it can also have major negative (but also positive) impacts, that vary according to the number and the nature of tourists as well as the characteristics of the site at which tourism activities take place.

1. Environmental impacts on ecosystems: They occur at the local, regional and global level. Climate change and the depletion of the ozone layer are two mayor effects of the increasing global traffic and industrial development, in which tourism plays an important role.
2. Negative socio-cultural impacts: Socio-cultural impacts of tourism are often hard to identify or to measure and a subject of personal value judgments. Tourism brings about changes in value systems and behavior of the people and cause changes in the structure of communities, family relationships, traditional life styles and morality. Obviously tourism may have impacts that are beneficial for one group of a society, but which are negative for another.
3. Negative socio-economic impacts: The tourism industry generates economic benefits to both host countries and tourists' home countries. Economic improvement is the primary motivation to promote a region as a tourism destination, because tourism can cause massive economic development. But it also has hidden costs with unfavorable economic effects. Rich countries usually profit more from tourism than poorer countries.
4. Positive socio-economic impacts: The main positive socio-economic impact of tourism is that it generates income for the host economy. Furthermore, tourism stimulates investment in the regions economy and infrastructure. Employment may be created directly in the tourism industry through hotels, restaurants, nightclubs, taxis, souvenir sales or indirectly through the supply of goods and services. Tourism development often implicates new infrastructures that could improve the quality of life for residents.
5. Positive impacts on natural environment: Tourism can foster environmental protection. Tourism can therefore raise the awareness of the local population concerning environmental problems and promote the improvement of conservation management.
6. Positive socio-cultural impacts: The tourists' demand for the original and authentic elements of the destination's culture can cause a reevaluation of local culture and tradition. leading to a renaissance of indigenous cultures and festivals that are getting forgotten due to modern development and adaptation to western lifestyles.

### **III. BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

Once a site is inscribed on the World Heritage List, the State Party's primary responsibility is to maintain the values for which the site was inscribed. Article 5 of the Convention calls for each State Party to ensure the protection, conservation and presentation of the cultural and natural heritage situated on its territory by taking appropriate legal actions. The Convention urges governments to "adopt a general policy which aims to give the cultural and natural heritage a function in the life of the community and to integrate the protection of that heritage into comprehensive planning programmes". Recommendations include taking into account local and national plans, forecasts of population growth or decline, economic factors and traffic projections, as well as taking preventive measures against disasters. The main responsibility for promotion of a country's tourism attractions lies with government-funded tourist organisations such as National Tourism Offices (NTOs). NTOs collaborate with hotels and air carriers to raise finance for destination promotion programmes. They devote much of their overseas efforts to establishing relationships with tour operators and travel agencies. NTOs support new developments or new

tours by providing introductions and influencing development plans affecting destinations, as well as legislative or financial policies. They provide support for familiarisation trips, hold promotional events and produce research data.

Tour operators (outbound providers), tour agencies, and ground operators (in-country or inbound providers) are on the front line of the industry. Tour operators are companies that sell tours to customers, either directly or indirectly through travel agents. Tour operators vary in size. Many of the smaller firms handle specialised markets such as eco-tourism and adventure travel. They provide travel agents with marketing support, for example by offering familiarisation visits for staff members. Tour operators often go to the same locations, and promotional materials and brochures tend to look alike. Tour companies try to differentiate their destinations with gradations of challenge or price, for example at ski resorts, where accommodations may be more or less luxurious and the skiing may be more or less difficult. Although Tour Operators respond for only about 12 % of global tourism flows (IFTO, 2002), they can help bridge low travel seasons by providing a steadier market, develop new destinations and can help define service and infrastructure needs at local level. In contrast, travel agencies handle a wide variety of travel packages available from tour operators.

#### **IV. MAJOR COUNTRIES INVOLVED**

##### **1 ITALY :**

Italy holds 51 of the world's 1,052 UNESCO-listed sites, the most of any country. With the likes of the Piazza del Duomo in Florence and the historic centres of Rome and Venice, Italy's UNESCO-listed sites are among the most visited in the world. The Dolomites mountain range is UNESCO-protected, as well as the city of Verona, the birthplace of two very famous star-crossed lovers. The active stratovolcano of Mount Etna is also a World Heritage site. The UNESCO-protected landscape of Piedmont, producing wines such as Barolo and Barbaresco, is an excellent spot for cycling. Its vineyard-carpeted hills, rustic food and unspoiled villages make it the perfect setting for a Sideways-style retreat. Other World Heritage sites worth visiting in Italy include the limestone dwellings of Alberobello and the prehistoric rock drawings of Valcamonica.

##### **2 SPAIN:**

The unique and strange work of Antoni Gaudí is likely to be a part of any visit to Barcelona. His work is UNESCO-listed because of his "exceptional and outstanding creative contribution to the architectural heritage of modern times". Spain has 45 World Heritage sites in total, including the famous pilgrimage site of Santiago de Compostela and the canyon-rich landscape of Mont Perdu in the Pyrénées. The desecrated mountaintops of Las Médulas, once pillaged for gold by the Roman Imperial authorities, are one of the country's lesser-known gems. Ibiza has also been granted UNESCO status, for the interaction between the marine and coastal ecosystems, rather than the famous club scene. The thick prairies of oceanic seagrass, a species unique to the Mediterranean basin, support a diversity of marine life.

##### **3 CHINA:**

Everyone knows about The Great Wall of China. Mercenary warrior Matt Damon was once imprisoned there. Some of China's 50 UNESCO-listed sites are less well-known, but equally worth

visiting. Honghe Hani Rice Terraces in Southern Yunnan, for example, span a mindblowing 16,603-hectares. Over 1,300 years, the Hani people have developed an intricate system of channels to bring water from the mountaintops to the terraces. The mist rising over these layered pools is an astonishing sight to behold. Elsewhere, there's the 5,000km stretch of the Silk Roads network, spanning back almost two millennia, and the temple, cemetery and family mansion of Confucius in the city of Qufu. Fujian Tulou, built over 120km in the south-west of the Fujian province, is a cluster of 46 multi-storeyed amphitheatre-like buildings, containing earthen houses (tulous) set around a square or circular courtyard. Housing up to 800 people, the buildings were constructed for defensive purposes, with only one entrance for each tulou. The tulous' plain façades are balanced with intricately decorated interiors. The relationship between the colossal buildings and the landscape of fertile mountain valleys embodies Feng Shui principles.

#### 5 FRANCE:

The country host 42 UNESCO World Heritage sites. There are the obvious choices, such as Notre-Dame Cathedral and the banks of The Seine, but straying from Paris you'll find the Gothic-style Benedictine abbey of Mont Saint-Michel, as well as the famed hillsides of Champagne.

#### 6 GERMANY:

Germany has 41 UNESCO-listed sites in total. Bauhaus was one of the 20th century's most progressive and influential art and design movements, with the Bauhaus School's sites in Weimar and Dessau both UNESCO-listed.

Other World Heritage sites in Germany include Cologne Cathedral, a Gothic masterpiece that was 632 years in the making, as well as the Hercules monument and water features of the Bergpark Wilhelmshöhe landscape park in Kassel.

The Wadden Sea also made UNESCO's list. Stretching across the Dutch, German and Danish North Sea, it is the largest unbroken system of intertidal sand and mud flats in the world. The area is home to marine mammals such as the grey seal and harbour porpoises.

The UNESCO-protected Messel Pit fossil site is also worth visiting. The site provides unique information about the early stages of the evolution of mammals.

## V. UN INVOLVEMENT

The UN is currently promoting projects regarding the topics and problematic about the preservation of Unesco Heritages and so the tourism that these sites have to offer. Unesco is also receiving funds from the EU and UN organizations with the purpose of maintaining WORLD heritages accessible to the overall tourism.

Tourism is one of the world's largest industries. The World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC) estimates that tourism generates some 12% of the world total GNP. With studies predicting continued growth, tourism is an increasingly important factor in the planning and management at UNESCO World Heritage sites. While no formal data have been collected, a site's inscription on the World Heritage List often coincides with a boost in visitation rates. Even at current rates, tourism is an important issue at World Heritage sites. A 1993 UNESCO- United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP) study showed that most managers of natural sites regard it as a key issue. Interviews and surveys carried out by the World Heritage Centre at cultural sites have revealed

similar concerns. Tourism offers well-known advantages. Visitor fees, concessions and donations provide funds for restoration and protection efforts. Visitors may be recruited as friends of a site and can help generate international support. Tour operators and hotel chains can play a role in the management of a site by making financial contributions, aiding monitoring efforts, or instructing their clients in responsible tourism. Tourism can also promote cultural values by supporting local handicrafts or by offering alternative economic activities. On the downside, tourism spawns well-known problems. Managing rapid tourism growth is a time-consuming process demanding clear policies, ongoing dialogue with stakeholders, and constant monitoring. Tourism activities require environmental impact assessments (EIAs) and procedures for minimising impacts. At sites with limited budgets and staff, growing tourism can stretch scarce resources and take managers away from protection efforts. While tourism can contribute to protection and restoration efforts, the right balance between economic gain and undesirable impacts can be elusive. Managers know that a tourist attraction must be periodically renewed to remain competitive. In the case of World Heritage sites, they are also aware that they are under an international obligation to maintain or restore the site's original values. This responsibility poses difficult questions regarding the degree of change that should be permitted to accommodate tourism growth. Another problem is ensuring that a portion of tourism revenue remains in the community as a means of fostering local protection, conservation and restoration efforts. To meet these and other challenges, managers have requested training and information on World Heritage as well as concrete examples of procedures for addressing tourism planning issues. The World Heritage Centre has responded by increasing its support for training in tourism management skills, including the publication of this manual. The manual addresses the needs identified by site managers and training centres. It provides a set of management methodologies and practices intended to help managers to solve tourism problems. It also establishes a common terminology with the aim of facilitating communication and information exchange among managers. Subjects include UNESCO, the World Heritage Convention and the World Heritage Centre, the tourism industry, working with the public, carrying capacity issues, tourism impacts, visitor management strategies, and interpretation and promotion; several of these subjects are illustrated by short case studies. The manual also offers a set of tools applicable to designing surveys, monitoring policy and management implementation, promoting sites and communicating with stakeholders. Managers can select the procedures that are appropriate for different sites, and adapt them accordingly.

## VI. USEFUL LINKS

[http://portal.unesco.org/es/files/45338/12417872579Introduction\\_Sustainable\\_Tourism.pdf](http://portal.unesco.org/es/files/45338/12417872579Introduction_Sustainable_Tourism.pdf)

<http://whc.unesco.org/uploads/activities/documents/activity-113-2.pdf>

<https://www.wanderlust.co.uk/content/the-top-10-new-unesco-world-heritage-sites/http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=57756#.WnnpKSXOXIV>

<https://www.un.org/development/desa/disabilities/issues/promoting-accessible-tourism-for-all.html>

<https://www.theguardian.com/cities/2017/aug/30/unesco-cide-world-heritage-status-hurt-help-tourism>