



THE GLASGOW DECLARATION: A COMMITMENT TO A DECADE OF TOURISM CLIMATE ACTION

We have long known that our dependence on fossil fuels, unsustainable land use, and wasteful consumption patterns drive climate change, pollution and biodiversity loss. Recently, COVID-19 has deepened our awareness of the connection between these impacts and risks to human health.

Rebalancing our relationship with nature is critical to regenerating both its ecological health and our personal, social and economic well-being. It is also critical for tourism, which relies on and connects us with flourishing ecosystems. Restoring nature - and our relationship with it - will be key to our sector's recovery from the pandemic, as well as its future prosperity and resilience.

We declare our shared commitment to unite all stakeholders in transforming tourism to deliver effective climate action. We support the global commitment to halve emissions by 2030 and reach Net Zero as soon as possible before 2050. We will consistently align our actions with the latest scientific recommendations, so as to ensure our approach remains consistent with a rise of no more than 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels by 2100.

According to the latest UNWTO/ITF research, tourism CO₂ emissions grew at least 60% from 2005 to 2016, with transport-related CO₂ causing 5% of global emissions in 2016. Unless we accelerate decarbonisation, sector CO₂ emissions could rise 25% or more by 2030, compared to 2016.

As outlined in the One Planet Vision for a Responsible Recovery of Tourism from COVID-19, committing to and planning for a green recovery offers us a unique opportunity to transform the sector in line with the objectives of the Paris Agreement. If we can move rapidly away from carbon- and material-intensive ways of delivering visitor experiences, instead prioritising community and ecosystem wellbeing, then tourism can be a leader in transforming to a low-carbon future.

The alternative is worsening vulnerability. Climate change, pollution and biodiversity loss jeopardise most tourism activities. Rising sea-levels, more frequent floods, and other extreme weather events threaten community livelihoods everywhere, from infrastructure and supply chains to food security.

Climate change impacts are most severely felt by under-represented and vulnerable groups such as women, Indigenous communities, people living with disabilities, and small island states. A just and inclusive transformation of tourism must prioritise their voices and needs, as well as those of younger generations who will otherwise pay the full price of our inaction.

A just transition to Net Zero before 2050 will only be possible if tourism's recovery accelerates the adoption of sustainable consumption and production, and redefines our future success to consider not only economic value but rather the regeneration of ecosystems, biodiversity and communities.

A Co-ordinated Plan for Tourism Climate Action

This declaration aims to lead and align climate action across tourism stakeholders, including government and institutional agencies; donors and financial institutions; international organisations; civil society; the private sector; and academia.

As signatories we commit to deliver climate action plans within 12 months of signing and implementing them accordingly.

If we already have plans, we commit to updating or implementing them in the same period to align with this declaration.

We commit to report publicly both progress against interim and long-term targets, as well as the actions being taken, at least annually.

To ensure climate action is aligned across all of tourism, we agree on five shared pathways for our plans to follow:

Measure: Measure and disclose all travel and tourism-related emissions. Ensure our methodologies and tools are aligned to UNFCCC-relevant guidelines on measurement, reporting and verification, and that they are transparent and accessible.

Decarbonise: Set and deliver targets aligned with climate science to accelerate tourism's decarbonisation. This includes transport, infrastructure, accommodation, activities, food & drink, and waste management. While offsetting may have a subsidiary role, it must be complementary to real reductions.

Regenerate: Restore and protect ecosystems, supporting nature's ability to draw down carbon, as well as safeguarding biodiversity, food security, and water supply. As much of tourism is based in regions most immediately vulnerable to the impacts of climate change, ensure the sector can support affected and at-risk communities in resilience building, adaptation and disaster response. Help visitors and host communities experience better balance with nature.

Collaborate: Share evidence of risks and solutions with all stakeholders and our guests, and work together to ensure our plans are as effective and co-ordinated as possible. Strengthen governance and capacity for action at all levels, including national and sub-national authorities, civil society, large companies and SMEs, vulnerable groups, local communities and visitors.

Finance: Ensure organisational resources and capacity are sufficient to meet objectives set out in climate plans, including the financing of training, research and implementation of effective fiscal and policy tools where appropriate to accelerate transition.

We commit to deliver plans aligned with these pathways to cut tourism emissions in half over the next decade and reach Net Zero emissions as soon as possible before 2050.

CITATION

One Planet Sustainable Tourism Programme (2021) – Glasgow Declaration: a Commitment to a Decade of Climate Action

