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## SUSTAINABLE TOURISM OBSERVATORY- PATH TO BETTER ANALYSIS OF THE TOURISM SECTOR

### **Abstract:**

**Introduction.** The article presents an analysis of the socio-economic changes that have taken shape at the international level during the development of tourism, the first steps taken towards sustainable tourism and the creation of «observatory of sustainable tourism» in certain regions of many countries.

**Research methods.** In the article uses methods of scientific abstraction, analysis and synthesis, induction and deduction, systematic analysis.

**Results and discussions.** Many developed countries have already introduced sustainable tourism features and the sustainable tourism observatories have become an effective mechanism for monitoring the tourism sector in the region.

**Conclusion.** By introducing individual elements of foreign experience, the importance of creating an Observatory for Sustainable Tourism in the Samarkand region was revealed. At the same time, a set of indicators is proposed to solve problems that the observatory should investigate.

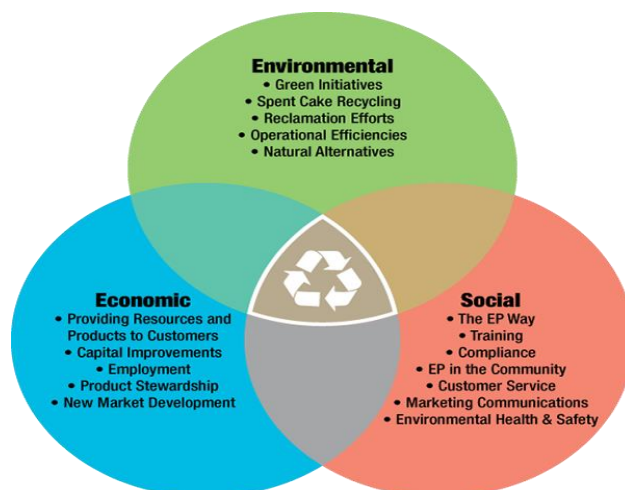
**Key words:** sustainable development, sustainable tourism, ecology, social factors, environmental protection, sustainable tourism observatory, set of indicators, tourism industry participants, monitoring.

**Introduction.** Tourism is one of the fastest growing sectors in the world, closely linked to the social, economic and environmental well-being of many countries, especially developing countries, also an important source of foreign exchange earnings and employment. Past century tourism was widely recognized as a clean and renewable industry, unlike other driving industries such as manufacturing, mining, forestry and others. Its development was considered less capital intensive because it used "priceless" natural, historical, social and cultural resources and a "smoke-free industry", but by the early 1970s, the negative effects of tourism began to show. which was considered.

**Materials and methods.** In 1980, the International Union for Conservation of Nature published its World Conservation Strategy, which included one of the first references to sustainable development as a global priority and the term "sustainable development" [1]. Two years later, the United Nations proposed in the "World Charter for Nature" five conservation principles, according to which human actions affecting nature should be controlled [2]. The term "sustainable development" gained political momentum after the Gro Harlem Brundtland report in 1987 focused on it. According to Brundtland, "sustainable development means meeting the needs of the current generation without compromising the needs of the next generation" [3]. He put forward the idea that resources should be sufficient not only for the needs of the present generation, but also for the development and satisfaction of the needs of the future generation. In 1992, Rio de Janeiro (Brazil) hosted the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) [4], 114 heads of state, 10,000 representatives from 178 countries, 1,400 non-governmental organizations attended in the global event. As a result of this event, the main goals of the aspirations of world leaders for sustainable development were clearly articulated in Agenda 21. The next step towards the concept of sustainable development was the adoption by the 70th UN General Assembly of the 2030 development agenda - "Transforming our world: the 2030 agenda." [5]. This resolution covers 17 sustainable development goals and 169 issues, the main goal of which is to eradicate poverty and achieve sustainable development worldwide by 2030.

The term "sustainability", which once referred only to environmentalists, has begun to attract representatives of other fields.

Let us dwell on the basic principles of the term "Sustainable Development", which were formed as a result of research conducted by leading economists, environmentalists and sociologists. Sustainable development is based on three main pillars: social, economic and environmental. Although the interpretation of the individual pillars varies, the three pillars are designed to work in conjunction with each other, true stability occurs when the three pillars are in balance.



**Figure 1-Three pillars of sustainable development<sup>1</sup>**

The term "sustainability" is interpreted differently by different scientists and international organizations. In the 1987 Brundtland Report, the term "sustainable development" is interpreted as "development that meets the needs of the present generation without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs" [6]. The World Tourism Organization defines sustainable tourism in the context of the United Nations sustainable development process as "tourism that fully takes into account its current and future economic, social and environmental impacts, meeting the needs of visitors, industry, the environment and host communities" [7]. Notably, 2015 marked a major milestone for global development as governments adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development along with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Sustainable tourism is tourism that meets the needs of today's tourists and locals, while at the same time providing sufficient opportunities for future generations. Sustainable tourism is based on the effective use of the potential of existing natural, national and historical resources to create opportunities for the long-term development of both tourism and society. The ultimate goal is to achieve high socio-economic growth, leaving environmental cleanliness and availability of natural resources to the next generation. This concept is in line with global tourism development trends and promotes sustainable development based on a new tourism brand.

Since the 1990s, the UNWTO (United Nations World Tourism Organizations) has conducted an extensive study of measurement indicators around the world and has published several guidelines based on the results of this study. Non-traditional measurement methods are gaining importance due to the need for more specific evidence that supports stakeholders at all levels to assess the impact of tourism. With the wide range of opportunities emerging from digitization in the tourism sector, responsible governance is supported by the availability of the necessary information by supplementing existing traditional data sources.

Over the past decade, many metrics have been developed within and outside the tourism industry in an attempt to assist destinations in measuring and managing their tourism development. While the ability to compare with other streams is often the driving force behind these initiatives,

<sup>1</sup> **THE 3 PILLARS OF THE SUSTAINABLE ECONOMY**, <https://sustrainy.erasmus.site/3-pillars-sustainable-economy>

each stream is a complex ecosystem with unique characteristics. Considering that sustainability is a complex ongoing process, INSTO (International Network of Sustainable Tourism Observatories) was created with the main goal of promoting destination approaches by focusing on processes and structures that ensure long-term sustainable development (sustainability). Despite efforts made towards sound and sustainable directions, challenges remain in measuring the lagging aspects in monitoring the environmental and socio-cultural pillars of sustainability. Addressing this issue and providing important information for management decision-making through a regional assessment of the impact of the tourism sector is the main goal of the UNWTO INSTO network. The International Network of Sustainable Tourism Observatories (INSTO), an international network of sustainable tourism observatories, aims to support trends in moving towards more holistic approaches to measurement and provides participants with the opportunity to share experiences, discuss, improve and learn on a live learning platform (INSTO website).

**Table-1****Eleven mandatory issue areas of INSTO [8]**

№	11 core issue areas that INSTO Observatories are required to monitor at least to a certain extend
1	Tourism Seasonality
2	Employment
3	Destination Economic Benefits
4	Governance
5	Local Satisfaction
6	Energy Management
7	Water Management
8	Waste Water (Sewage) Management
9	Solid Waste Management
10	Accessibility
11	Climate Action

A sustainable tourism observatory established in a certain area is required to monitor at least eleven mandatory problem areas (Table 1), and it is recommended to expand the scope of research. For these common problem areas, an appropriate indicator can be developed based on local needs. Therefore, if the indicators relate to these problem areas, they can be developed separately for each area.

This network of observatories was established in 2004 at the initiative of the UNWTO to support the sustainable management of the sector by measuring and monitoring the impact of tourism. INSTO aims to support and connect destinations that regularly monitor the economic, environmental and social impacts of tourism and promote sustainable tourism practices locally and globally. At the same time, the observatory will provide tourism managers and other stakeholders with key tools to strengthen institutional capacity to support the development and implementation of sustainable tourism policies, strategies, plans and management through the systematic application of monitoring, evaluation and information management.

Since the creation of the INSTO network from 2004 to 2023, a total of 37 observatories have been received: in China (8), Greece (1), Mexico (3), Brazil (2), Indonesia (5), Croatia (1), USA (1), Italy (1), Guatemala (1), Argentina (1), Australia (1), Canada (2), Portugal (3), Spain (6), Colombia (1). Although the first observatory was established in China in 2006, today there are a total of 37 regional observatories around the world that continuously and timely measure the impact of tourism (Table 2). They provide quality stakeholder services, up-to-date and reliable evidence to improve local decision-making processes.

**Results.** Tourist observatories may differ in structure, but they all have a common goal: the collection and analysis of reliable data for tourism policy, strategy and making the proper (reasoned) decisions. While the 11 questions recommended by the INSTO network of observatories are mandatory, each observatory differs in its structure and focus. INSTO does not

require its members to specifically oversee predetermined metrics, leaving enough flexibility in terms of content, focusing more on the innovative tools and methods they use in their processes.

**Table-2**

**Sustainable tourism observatories [9].**

<b>№</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>The name of the observatory</b>	<b>Year of membership</b>
1	Yangshuo, CHINA	Yangshuo Tourism Sustainable Development Observatory	2006
2	Huangshang Xidi Hongcun, CHINA	Huangshan Sustainable Tourism Development Observatory	2008
3	Zhangjiajie, CHINA	Zhangjiajie Sustainable Tourism Observatory	2011
4	Kanas, CHINA	Kanas Observatory	2012
5	Aegean Islands, GREECE	The Aegean Islands Sustainable Tourism Observatory	2013
6	Changshu, CHINA	Changshu Sustainable Tourism Observatory	2015
7	Xishuangbanna, CHINA	Guanajuato State Tourism Observatory (OTEG)	2015
8	Henan, CHINA	Henan observatory	2015
9	Guanajuato, MÉXICO	Guanajuato State Tourist Observatory	2015
10	Adriatic Coast, CROATIA	The Croatian Sustainable Tourism Observatory (CROSTO)	2016
11	São Paulo, BRAZIL	The Tourism and Events Observatory City of São Paulo (OTE)	2016
12	Sleman, INDONESIA	Sleman Tourism Observatory	2016
13	Lombok, INDONESIA	Lombok Tourism Observatory	2016
14	Pangandaran, INDONESIA	Pangandaran Regency Sustainable Tourism Observatory	2016
15	Toba, INDONESIA	Toba Lake Tourism Observatory	2017
16	Sanur, INDONESIA	Sanur Tourism Observatory	2017
17	Jiangmen, CHINA	Jiangmen Observatory	2017
18	Sonoma, California, USA	The Sonoma Sustainable Tourism Observatory	2017
19	South Tyrol, ITALY	Sustainable Tourism Observatory of South Tyrol (STOST)	2018
20	Alentejo, PORTUGAL	Alentejo Sustainable Tourism Observatory	2018
21	Buenos Aires, ARGENTINA	Tourism Observatory of the City of Buenos Aires	2019
22	Navarre, SPAIN	Navarre Tourism Observatory	2019
23	Antigua Guatemala GUATEMALA	Antigua Guatemala Sustainable Tourism Observatory	2019
24	South West Australia AUSTRALIA	Australia's South West Tourism Observatory (ASWTO)	2019

25	Thompson Okanagan region, Canada	Thompson Okanagan Sustainable Tourism Observatory	2019
26	Algarve, PORTUGAL	Algarve Sustainable Tourism Observatory	2020
27	Azores, PORTUGAL	Azores Tourism Observatory	2020
28	Canary Islands, SPAIN	Tourism Observatory of the Canary Islands	2020
29	Mallorca, SPAIN	Mallorca Sustainable Tourism Observatory	2021
30	Barcelona, SPAIN	Barcelona Tourism Observatory	2022
31	The Yukon, CANADA	The Yukon Sustainable Tourism Observatory	2022
32	Bogotá, COLOMBIA	Bogotá's Tourism Observatory	2022
33	Málaga, SPAIN	Sustainable Tourism Observatory of Málaga	2022
34	Biscay, SPAIN	Biscay Tourism Intelligence System	2022
35	São Paulo, Brazil	Center of Intelligence of Tourism Economics in the State of São Paulo (CITE)	2022
36	Yucatan, Mexico	Yucatan Sustainable Tourism Observatory	2023
37			

Analyzing the data in *Table 2*, it can be seen that the largest number of sustainable tourism observatories are located in China (8 observatories), and this country was one of the first countries to create a sustainable tourism observatory as an experiment. In the following years, there is a trend towards the creation of sustainable tourism observatories, mainly by European and American countries. On the more active Asian continent, Indonesia has established 5 sustainable tourism observatories.

**Discussion.** In general, sustainable tourism observatories have a number of positive features due to the fact that they are territorial in nature. In particular, taking into account the socio-economic, geographic, demographic factors of a certain region, it is possible to create an observatory. In this case, the volume of observatory research makes it possible to form a special one for the certain region.

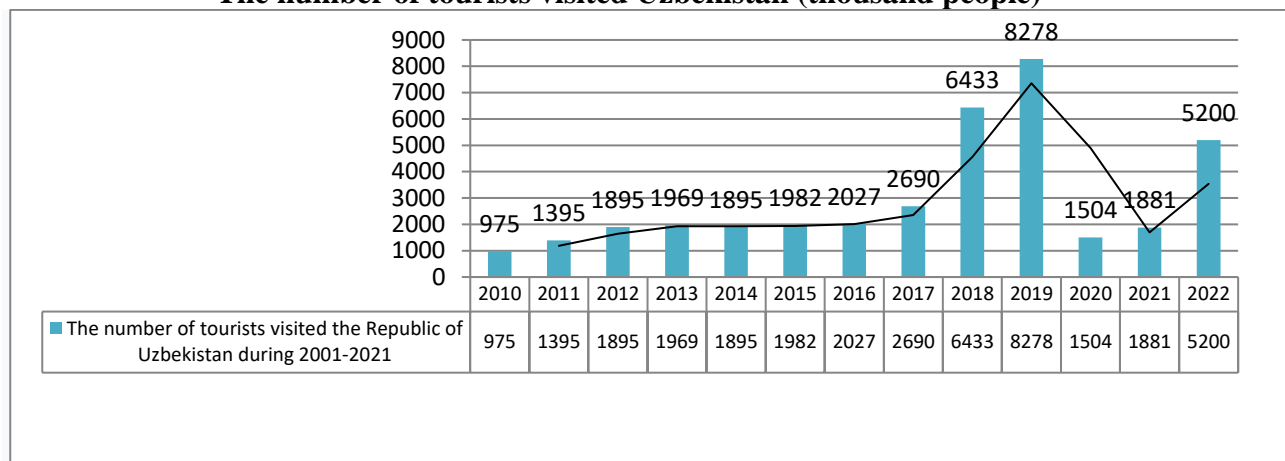
Uzbekistan is one of the countries located on the historical "Great Silk Road", and tourists mainly visit our homeland to see historical monuments and cultural architecture. There are more than 7,300 objects of cultural heritage located in different cities of our republic (including 2,330 architectural, 3,945 archaeological, 1,138 monumental monuments and 157 places of interest), at the same time, there are 4 architectural complexes in Uzbekistan - The historical centers of the cities of Khiva, Bukhara, Samarkand and Shahrisabz are included in the list of UNESCO World Cultural Heritage. At the beginning of the 21st century, the city of Samarkand was included in the UNESCO World Heritage List under the name "Samarkand - the crossroads of cultures." [10]

Samarkand is probably the most famous Uzbekistan's historic city. Over 2,750 years of age, it boasts very impressive architectural monuments and a rich history. Samarkand originated from Afrosiab. The Registan Square, with the three grand madrasahs on its sides, is the top of Samarkand attractive places. The most famous among others are Gur-e Amir Mausoleum, Bibi-Khanym Mosque is one of the largest mosques. [11]

Since the first days of independence, the tourism industry in our country has been considered as an industry that makes a significant contribution to socio-economic development. As a result of the reforms aimed at developing the tourism sector, the number of foreign guests visited Uzbekistan has increased significantly until March 2020 (until the borders are completely closed due to the pandemic). In 2017, 2,690,000 foreign tourists visited, which shows 24.7% increase compared to 2016. Moreover, proportionate growth was also observed in the following years, 6433.0 thousand foreign tourists visited in 2018 and 8278.0 thousand foreign tourists in 2019. [12]

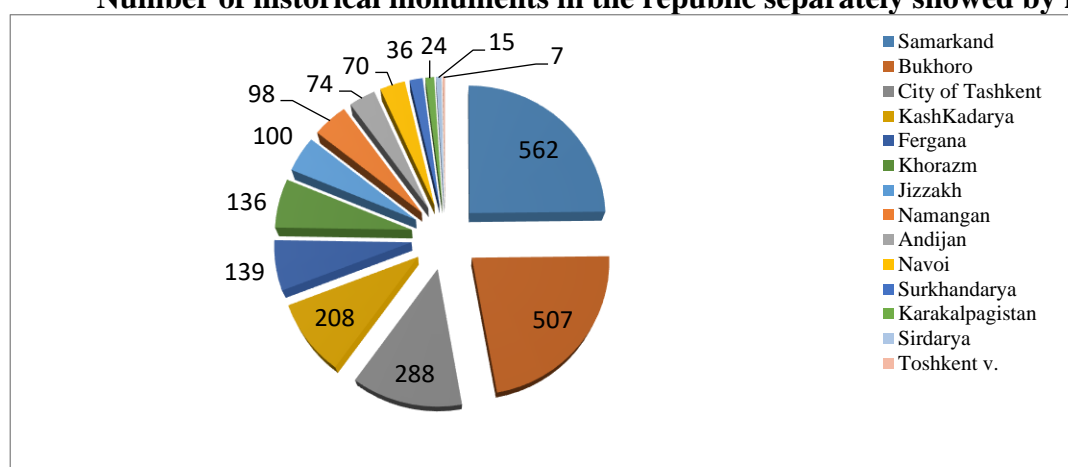
**Diagram-1**

**The number of tourists visited Uzbekistan (thousand people)<sup>1</sup>**



**Diagram-2**

**Number of historical monuments in the republic separately showed by regions**



**Table 4. Sustainable Tourism Observatory Study Indicators<sup>2</sup>**

STUDY AREA	PROBLEM AREA	INDEX NAME
Ecological	Ecological Climate change	Average distance from tourist destination to this destination
Environmental	Air pollution	Exceeding the standards of harmful substances in the air
Environmental	Waste management	Waste management
Environmental	Waste management	Waste per capita
Environmental	Energy and water management	energy consumption per capita
Environmental	Energy and water management	Energy consumption per capita
Environmental	Energy and water management	Percentage of energy consumed from renewable sources
Environmental	Mobility	Active movement of tourists
Environmental	Mobility	Movement of tourists by public transport
Environmental	Policy and practice of sustainable development and environmental management in tourism enterprises	Tourism enterprises with a sustainability certificate

<sup>1</sup>It was compiled by the author based on the data of the statistical bulletin of the State Statistics Committee of the Republic of Uzbekistan "Main indicators of the development of tourism and recreation in the Republic of Uzbekistan" in 2010-2021. This information is presented on 3 pages of annual bulletins

<sup>2</sup> The table developed by the author based on the web-page of the INSTO.

Environmental	Development control	Existence of current sustainable tourism plans or strategies at the destination
Economical	Seasonality of tourism facilities	Calculation of monthly maximum and minimum overnight phases in accommodation facilities
Economical	Impact on the economic development of the region	Average tourist spending on accommodation (per person per day)
Economical	Employment	Employment in tourism
Economical	Employment	The ratio of the average wages of tourism activities to the average wages of other activities
Economical	Providing diverse experiences	Variety of travel services
Social	Availability of access	Availability of access Tourist attractions
Social	Impact of tourism on society	The ratio of the number of tourists to the population
Social	Government management	Availability of effective management tools
Social	Gender equality	Wage ratio of women and men working in tourism
Social	Marketing strategy for sustainable tourism	Tourism marketing efforts using sustainability criteria.
Social	Satisfaction of the local population with tourism	People who believe that the tourist destination has a positive impact on the area
Social	Satisfaction of the local population with tourism	Locals who think the area is too popular with tourists
Social	Public safety	The opinion of tourists about public safety

As a result of our study, the "Observatory of Sustainable Tourism" should perform several basic functions. In particular, first of all providing practical recommendations for the development of a management and marketing strategy through methods for monitoring, analyzing and forecasting the economic, environmental and social problems of the region. Considering that the International Network of Sustainable Tourism Observatories (INSTO) has left sufficient flexibility within the eleven mandatory areas of observation, and taking into account the geographical, demographic, economic and other specific characteristics of the regions, through Table 4 we would like to propose a set of indicators that should be studied by observatory. In this compilation, indicators are presented in three groups, indicators related to social, economic and environmental problems are grouped separately. When developing sustainable tourism indicators, 11 questions recommended by the INSTO network of observatories were taken into account, based on the specific characteristics of the region and the possibilities of data collection.

**Conclusion.** The uniqueness of natural resources and cultural heritage cannot be the only and sufficient condition for ensuring the successful development of tourism in Uzbekistan, as they represent only one of the elements of tourism and recreation potential. The scenario of the long-term development of the domestic tourism industry involves the growth of its competitiveness, the transformation of innovative factors into the main source of economic growth.[13]

In our opinion, it is advisable to use several methods to collect the data presented in the table. In particular, although the main source of statistical data collection would be data from Comity of statistics of the Republic of Uzbekistan; in some cases it is possible to collect data using questionnaire and interview methods. With this set of metrics, we find it worthwhile to collect and publish data as a set throughout the year. At the same time, quarterly data should be transferred to a higher organization, and proposals formed on the basis of them will be submitted to the regional department, which will contribute to the improvement of management practice.

If sustainable tourism observatories later join the network of INSTO-sustainable tourism observatories, it will be possible to identify, adapt and compare the activities of the observatory and, as necessary, make changes through the regular exchange of knowledge and experience with other destinations. Therefore, we believe that in order to fully demonstrate the tourism potential of the region, it is necessary to use the experience of developed countries that have already taken bold steps towards sustainable tourism, and at the same time offer sustainable tourism based on the requirements of tourists who plan to organize their trips taking into account sustainability factor.

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