



**UIA Sustainable Tourism Work Programme
Aims and Objectives**

PREAMBLE

The built environment plays a pivotal role in shaping the way tourism interacts with nature, culture, and communities. As tourism grows, architecture and urban planning must evolve to foster experiences that not only celebrate heritage and aesthetics but also uphold ethical, ecological, and regenerative values.

The UIA Sustainable Tourism Work Programme aims to convene architects, planners and policymakers to explore how architecture and planning should lead the shift towards tourism that heals rather than harms, grounded in accountability, creativity, and ecological intelligence. It will look at examples of how architecture and urban planning have achieved positive outcomes in this field to inspire participants and provide a practical framework for applying these principles.

VALUE AND SIGNIFICANCE

- Connecting architecture with tourism, conservation, technology, and indigenous knowledge.
- Generating influential frameworks and guidelines that shape policy and practice.
- Promoting built environments that go beyond sustainability to actively revive ecosystems and uplift communities.
- Equipping the profession to respond to climate challenges and evolving travel behaviours.
- Fostering inclusive tourism that directly benefits local communities economically, socially, and environmentally, ensuring that tourism growth does not lead to displacement, inequality, or environmental degradation.
- Encouraging **regenerative tourism** that goes beyond harm reduction, aiming to restore ecosystems, regenerate economies, and rejuvenate local communities.

OBJECTIVES

The UIA Work Programme on Sustainable Tourism will serve as a hub for exploring strategies to manage the upscaling of the tourism industry, which results from a global access to vacationing and increased family budgets in a growing number of countries. It shall act as a think tank focused on the impacts the tourism industry is having on the territories and urban environments prone to tourism development, and shall branch into the following fields:

- Planet-positive design principles for tourism infrastructure.
- Responsible tourism strategies rooted in cultural sensitivity and ecological ethics.
- Architectural solutions to minimise environmental footprints in travel destinations.
- Climate-resilient planning in vulnerable tourism zones.
- Policy and planning frameworks integrating architecture and regenerative tourism.
- Design for destination futures.
- Tourism's role in preserving heritage.
- Circular economy in tourism.

The Work Programme will emphasise integrating local knowledge and indigenous practices into the design and planning of tourism infrastructure, ensuring cultural and ecological sustainability in the long run.

It will look into establishing clear indicators to evaluate how the connection between architecture and tourism translates into tangible benefits for the environment and communities, which would represent a significant advancement.

It will look into implementing a training component that aims to educate architects and planners on responsible tourism practices, which could broaden the programme's influence and ensure a more effective implementation of the proposed strategies.

ENGAGEMENT AND INVOLVEMENT

To maximise the impact and reach of the Sustainable Tourism Work Programme, strategic partnerships with global organisations, professional bodies, and UN agencies are essential. These collaborations will provide technical expertise, policy alignment, funding opportunities, and access to diverse networks that can amplify the programme's objectives. This should include the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UN Tourism), the Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC), among others.

The programme shall integrate multi-stakeholder participation, involving architects, planners, local governments, indigenous groups, cultural organisations, and the private sector to ensure a balanced and inclusive approach to sustainable tourism development.

PLANNED WORK

- Discussion on methodologies to address the tourism epidemic.
- Identify partners on the policy and practice sides to review existing initiatives, compile best practices, and develop them further where needed.
- Conduct research to find good examples and select the best for publication.
- Propose themes related to tourism as Forum themes, and study on how the approach to the UIA Forums could benefit from a more inclusive format that fosters dialogue among diverse stakeholders.
- Collaborate in the outcomes of the Forums and compile resulting declarations and recommendations with a view to publication.
- Evaluate the impact of best practices over time and allow for adjustments to strategies and more effective sharing of lessons learned.
- Define types of action, engagements, and collaborations to ensure that all voices, particularly those of indigenous and local communities, are represented and heard in development processes.
- Incorporate tourism resilience planning to address post-crisis recovery, such as strategies for the tourism industry's adaptation and growth in the wake of pandemics, natural disasters, or economic crises.
- Explore technological innovations to aid the sustainable management of tourism, including AI, blockchain, and smart city solutions. These innovations can improve resource management, reduce environmental footprints, and enhance the tourist experience through digital tools.