

## “EVERYONE HAS A ROLE TO PLAY IN SUSTAINABLE TOURISM” - EUROPEAN TRAVEL COMMISSION PUBLISHES HANDBOOK ON ENCOURAGING SUSTAINABLE TOURISM PRACTICES

- Policymakers, destination management organisations, the tourism industry, local communities and visitors each have a role to play in the sector’s transformation
- New ETC handbook brings clarity on how tourism organisations can encourage sustainable practices
- COVID-19 has influenced both businesses and consumers to think differently, with sustainability now as an important driver in purchase decisions

Brussels, 15 September 2021: Today, the European Travel Commission (ETC), representing 33 national tourism organisations in Europe, has published the new [Handbook on Encouraging Sustainable Tourism Practices](#) – a guide which explains how national and local tourism organisations can encourage tourism stakeholders at every level to build sustainable tourism practices into their everyday operations.

With a renewed focus on adopting practices that reduce the negative impacts of tourism as a result of COVID-19, the handbook contains valuable case studies from worldwide entities and destinations that have successfully forged more economically, socially, and environmentally viable tourism practices over the past years. The twenty case studies included in the handbook highlight the ways in which European and other worldwide destinations are embedding sustainable approaches into their travel and tourism sector, together with key takeaways for National Tourism Organisations (NTOs) and Destination Management Organisations (DMOs).

### Putting principles into practice

ETC believes Europe’s national and local tourism organisations have a major role to play in bringing their stakeholders together to develop a shared vision for sustainable tourism implementation. This vision encourages them to work with commercial and academic partners, as well as public sector and industry associations to generate valuable insights and identify ways to help Europe’s visitors make more environmental and community-friendly choices before and during their journeys.

The handbook also recognises that travel and tourism organisations, in particular small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs), that want to take action, often find it difficult to navigate the complex range of accreditation schemes, monitoring systems, funding mechanisms, campaigns and even equipment that exist in the sustainability ‘space’. Examples of responsible practices, together with a range of practical recommendations are presented in the handbook, which is now available to download free of charge from ETC’s website.

Commenting on the publication, Luís Araújo, ETC’s President, said: *“Destinations have a crucial role to play in strengthening Europe’s position and leading the transformation to a post-pandemic world. To this end, ETC expects this handbook will foster knowledge sharing and act as a vehicle for NTOs and DMOs to make their destinations more sustainable and resilient in the long-term. This handbook will provide a platform for sharing evidence-based case studies and actions that could potentially be implemented by destinations to encourage both the tourism supply and demand sides to act responsibly. We believe that this handbook will support European destinations in their efforts to build a tourism sector that is more respectful of the environment and that will equally benefit local economies and communities in the years to come.”*

### COVID-19 forces businesses and public to think differently

The case for adopting practices that reduce the negative impacts of tourism has always been strong, however, the pandemic has provided a catalyst for major change with a substantial number of supply and demand trends showing that sustainability is a major driver of travellers’ purchase decisions and a key point of competitiveness among Europe’s tourism businesses. The pandemic has forced those involved in the tourism sector to try and capitalise

on these trends and embed sustainable principles in destinations of all sizes.

*The handbook is freely available at <https://etc-corporate.org/reports/handbook-on-encouraging-sustainable-tourism-practices/>*

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#### [More information about the European Travel Commission](#)

The European Travel Commission (ETC) represents the national tourism organisations of Europe. Established in 1948, ETC's mission is to strengthen the sustainable development of Europe as a tourist destination and to promote Europe in third markets. Its 33-member tourism boards work together to build the value of tourism for all the diverse European destinations through cooperation in sharing best practice, market intelligence and promotion. For more information, visit [www.etc-corporate.org](http://www.etc-corporate.org) and follow [@ETC\\_Corporate](#).

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