

Agenda item 7:

International Year of Sustainable and Resilient Tourism 2027

Regional Consultations with Member States on the Preparations for the International Year of Sustainable and Resilient Tourism 2027 (IYSRT 2027)

1. The present background note is intended to support consultations with Member States in the framework of the Regional Commission meetings, as well as related virtual consultation meetings where appropriate, on the preparations for the International Year of Sustainable and Resilient Tourism 2027 (IYSRT 2027), proclaimed by the United Nations General Assembly in its resolution 78/260 of 26 February 2024.
2. The designation of 2027 as the International Year of Sustainable and Resilient Tourism reflects the recognition by the United Nations General Assembly of tourism's strategic importance as a driver of sustainable development and resilience. For Member States, it offers a timely opportunity to strengthen political attention, mobilize relevant actors across and beyond the tourism sector and advance more coordinated action at national, regional and global levels. The International Year is therefore intended not as a purely commemorative exercise, but as a practical framework to support implementation, strengthen capacities, generate policy-relevant knowledge and reinforce the long-term positioning of tourism in broader development discussions, including in the context of the post-2030 agenda.
3. The International Year is being developed as a Member State-driven and implementation-oriented process. Its design combines the established functions commonly associated with United Nations international years, including awareness raising, advocacy and broad stakeholder mobilization, with a stronger emphasis on delivery, implementation support and long-term policy relevance.
4. This note is intended to inform Member States of the current state of preparations for IYSRT 2027, present the principal elements of the framework being advanced by the Secretariat, support regional exchanges on priorities for implementation and follow-up and encourage early national and regional engagement in preparation for 2027.
5. The note is provided for discussion purposes and to facilitate regional exchanges among Member States.

1. Context and strategic orientation

6. International years proclaimed by the United Nations are time-bound instruments intended to concentrate political attention, stimulate coordinated action and support policy dialogue around issues of strategic relevance. In tourism, previous international years, notably the International Year of Ecotourism (2002) and the International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development (2017), demonstrated both the potential of such observances and the importance of a strong preparatory phase, clear objectives and effective links between global visibility and practical implementation.

7. The International Year of Sustainable and Resilient Tourism 2027 builds on this experience while responding to a significantly changed operating environment. It seeks to consolidate progress in advancing sustainable tourism while addressing the growing importance of resilience in the face of environmental, economic, social and geopolitical pressures affecting destinations and communities.
8. The overall objective of the International Year is to strengthen tourism's contribution to sustainable development and resilience at national, regional and global levels. In this context, the preparatory work places particular emphasis on raising awareness of the tourism sector's transformative potential within the broader sustainable development agenda, supporting Member States in integrating sustainability and resilience into tourism policies, planning processes and operational practices, fostering dialogue and cooperation across sectors and stakeholders and promoting practical implementation and measurable progress, including through strengthened institutional capacities. It also contributes to broader reflections on tourism in the evolving post-2030 development agenda.

2. Governance and preparatory process

9. To ensure a structured and inclusive preparatory process, the Committee on Tourism and Sustainability (CTS), at its twenty-second session, agreed that it would serve as the core of a Steering Committee for the International Year, complemented by the Chairs of the Regional Commissions, thereby helping to ensure that regional perspectives are reflected through consultation and information exchange with Member States in their respective regions.
10. The Steering Committee is envisaged as a consultative and coordinating platform during both the preparatory phase and the implementation of the International Year. It is advisory in nature and functions within the established intergovernmental framework of UN Tourism, without prejudice to the authority of the Organization's governing bodies. Its functions include providing strategic input on the orientation and priorities of the International Year, supporting structured Member State consultations, contributing to refining the implementation framework and encouraging alignment between national initiatives and the global objectives of the International Year.
11. The 23rd meeting of the Committee on Tourism and Sustainability, to be held in Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe, on 27 and 28 April 2026, serves as the principal in-person preparatory milestone before the 126th session of the Executive Council. It is conceived as an expanded CTS meeting, to which the Chairs of the Regional Commissions are invited as the proposed members of the Steering Committee. Subject to the relevant decisions of the Executive Council, the first meeting of the Steering Committee is envisaged to take place on 11 June 2026 in Toledo, Spain, in the margins of the Executive Council, to advance implementation under the endorsed framework.
12. Regional consultations with Member States are being pursued through the Regional Commissions. Where formal Regional Commission meetings take place before the Executive Council, these consultations are being conducted in person. Where formal meetings are scheduled for later in the year, virtual consultations are being convened in advance in order to ensure timely regional engagement.

3. Main elements of the framework

13. The framework being advanced for the International Year is organized around a number of mutually reinforcing elements intended to ensure both visibility and implementation impact.

3.1 Thematic areas and rationale

14. The current thematic orientation of the International Year is structured around five broad areas:
 - a. inclusive, sustainable and resilient economic growth and local value creation;
 - b. social inclusion, decent work, poverty reduction and community resilience;
 - c. environmental protection, biodiversity conservation, resource efficiency and climate action;
 - d. cultural values, diversity, living heritage and destination identity; and
 - e. mutual understanding, peace, security and crisis preparedness.
15. Taken together, these thematic areas are intended to reflect the diversity of regional realities while providing a common global framework.

3.2 National Committees

16. National Committees, or as appropriate other suitable national coordination mechanisms, are envisaged as the primary mechanism for implementation at the national level. They are intended to support the preparation, observance and follow-up of the International Year, while remaining flexible and proportionate to national institutional contexts and priorities.
17. Their role is expected to extend well beyond a purely coordinating function. National Committees are envisaged as the central platform through which Member States can organize national participation in a coherent and structured manner throughout the cycle of preparation, implementation and follow-up. In this context, they may contribute to the development of strategic action plans aligned with the objectives and principles of the International Year, facilitate coordination across relevant ministries and institutions and promote coherence between national priorities and the broader framework of the International Year.
18. National Committees are also expected to play an important operational role. This may include authorizing and registering activities, events and initiatives undertaken at national and local levels in line with agreed guidance and criteria, helping to ensure the integrity, visibility and coherence of activities carried out under the International Year. At the same time, they may support the mobilization of stakeholders across government, the private sector, civil society, academia and local communities and encourage broad-based participation in accordance with national circumstances.
19. In addition, National Committees may serve as an important platform for awareness raising, dialogue, capacity-building and knowledge-sharing. They may support outreach and communication activities, encourage collaboration with academic and research institutions, foster multi-stakeholder exchanges and help identify experiences and lessons of relevance beyond the national context.
20. Through these functions, National Committees, or as appropriate other suitable national coordination mechanisms, are expected to provide structured inputs to UN Tourism in support of regional and global processes, reporting and collective learning. Throughout 2027, such arrangements are expected to form the backbone of Member State engagement in the International Year.

3.3 Capacity-building as a delivery mechanism

21. Capacity-building is being given a particularly prominent role in the framework for the International Year. It is understood not as a stand-alone training activity, but as a central delivery mechanism for translating thematic priorities into strengthened institutional capacities and practical implementation at national and local levels.
22. The approach under preparation seeks to move beyond ad hoc activities towards more structured and implementation-oriented formats, with emphasis on policy coherence, practical application, follow-up and measurable commitments. In this respect, capacity-building is intended to play a catalytic role in supporting more durable institutional and policy outcomes.

3.4 Flagship events and regional relevance

23. A central element of the architecture of the International Year is the organization of five flagship global conferences, one hosted in each region. While regionally anchored, each conference is intended to carry global relevance and to translate the thematic pillars of the International Year into region-specific leadership and action.
24. Together, these conferences are expected to form a coherent global architecture that reflects diverse development pathways and risk environments while reinforcing tourism's contribution to inclusion, resilience and long-term competitiveness. Opportunities to host these flagship events will be open to Member States. Further information on the process for the identification of hosts, including an invitation for expressions of interest, will be communicated separately by the Secretariat.

3.5 Partnerships and support

25. The framework for the International Year also includes a structured approach to partnerships and support. In line with United Nations principles governing international years, the implementation of the International Year is expected to rely primarily on voluntary financial contributions. Other forms of support may complement such contributions, where appropriate and in accordance with the values, standards and procedures of UN Tourism.
26. Depending on their nature and relevance, such support may include voluntary financial contributions, selected in-kind contributions, event-based support and collaborative arrangements related to events, analytical work, publications, capacity-building, communication and outreach. All such support is intended to reinforce implementation and coherence across workstreams, while fully safeguarding the independence, integrity and public-interest mandate of UN Tourism.
27. In this context, Member States may wish to consider how voluntary contributions, partnerships and other forms of collaboration could help reinforce implementation at global, regional and national levels. Further guidance on the applicable modalities, principles and procedures will be communicated separately.

3.6 Knowledge base and legacy

28. A stronger analytical and forward-looking dimension is also envisaged through the development of a knowledge base composed of flagship reports prepared by the Secretariat, together with a broader body of research and publications developed in support of the International Year by external entities, including Member States and relevant institutions, in accordance with the

applicable guidance and criteria. This work is intended both to support implementation during the International Year and to contribute to broader reflections on the positioning of tourism within future global development frameworks.

29. In this way, the International Year is intended not only to generate visibility in 2027, but also to help produce knowledge, lessons and policy perspectives of relevance beyond the Year itself.

3.7 Communications and visibility

30. Communications and visibility constitute an important component of the International Year and of Member State engagement in its implementation. A common communication framework is being developed to support coherent messaging, visual identity and outreach across regions and countries and to facilitate a recognisable and consistent public profile for the International Year.
31. To support communication efforts, guidance and practical tools will be made available to Member States, including materials related to the visual identity and broader communication support for activities undertaken in the framework of the International Year. These arrangements are also intended to facilitate coherent use of the International Year's name and visual identity, as well as structured visibility of activities and contributions across national, regional and global levels.

4. Focus of the regional consultations

32. The regional consultations provide an opportunity to situate the International Year within the specific realities, priorities and opportunities of each region. In this context, particular attention may be given to the regional relevance of the thematic framework, the practical organization of national coordination mechanisms, priority areas for capacity-building and implementation support, and possible avenues for regional engagement in the flagship architecture and broader visibility of the International Year.
33. They also provide an opportunity to identify areas in which regional experiences, policy approaches and practical lessons may contribute to the wider analytical and political legacy of the International Year, including in relation to post-2030 discussions.
34. In this regard, Member States may wish in particular to indicate national or regional priorities that deserve stronger attention within implementation, areas where capacity-building and institutional support would be especially valuable, and regional initiatives or partnerships that could help reinforce delivery and follow-up under the framework of the International Year. In this context, the Regional Commissions may play an important role in fostering regional coordination, encouraging exchanges among Member States and helping to sustain momentum for implementation and follow-up within their respective regions.

5. Outlook

35. Following the regional consultations, preparations for the International Year will continue under the framework endorsed by the governing bodies of UN Tourism.
36. The first meeting of the Steering Committee is envisaged to take place in the margins of the 126th session of the Executive Council, subject to the relevant decisions of the Council. Thereafter, the International Year will move progressively from preparation towards implementation, with continued engagement of Member States through national, regional and global processes.

37. Regional Commission meetings and related consultations will remain an important channel for sustaining regional ownership, supporting implementation and follow-up and ensuring that the International Year reflects the diversity of regional contexts while advancing a coherent global agenda.

Conclusions and recommendations CEU/CR/7 (LXXII)¹

The Commission for Europe,

- Recalling [Resolution 78/260](#), adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on 26 February 2024, which proclaims 2027 as the International Year of Sustainable and Resilient Tourism, and invites the World Tourism Organization, mindful of the provisions contained in the annex to Economic and Social Council resolution 1980/67, to facilitate the organization and implementation of the International Year, in collaboration with Governments, relevant organizations of the United Nations system, international and regional organizations, and other relevant stakeholders;
 - Recalling further that previous international years, such as the International Year of Ecotourism (2002) and the International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development (2017), have demonstrated both the potential of such observances and the importance of a strong preparatory phase linking global visibility with practical implementation;
 - Taking note of the implementation-oriented framework being advanced by the Secretariat, which structures the International Year around five broad thematic areas, including economic growth, social inclusion, environmental protection, cultural values and mutual understanding, and aims to produce a lasting policy legacy beyond 2027;
 - Having heard the report of the Director of the Sustainable Tourism and Resilience Department,
 - Having heard the intervention(s) of the delegations of **XXX**,
1. Appreciates the structured, inclusive and Member State-driven preparatory process, including the proposed arrangements for the Steering Committee comprising the Committee on Tourism and Sustainability and the Chairs of the Regional Commissions, to ensure regional perspectives are appropriately reflected;
 2. Recommends that Member States establish National Committees, or other suitable national coordination mechanisms, to support coherent national participation, facilitate coordination across relevant stakeholders and contribute to the preparation, observance and follow-up, develop strategic action plans and authorize local and national activities aligned with the framework of the International Year;
 3. Encourages Member States to engage early in the preparations by identifying national and regional priorities, submitting expressions of interest to host regional flagship conferences and supporting implementation through voluntary financial contributions and strategic partnerships;
 4. Agrees to utilize the Regional Commission as a channel to foster regional coordination, facilitate capacity-building, share knowledge and ensure that regional experiences contribute meaningfully to the broader post-2030 development agenda.

¹ This is a draft of the conclusions and recommendations for the corresponding agenda item. For the final text adopted by the Commission, please refer to the Conclusions and recommendations document issued at the end of the session.