

# The Riyadh Declaration on the Future of Tourism



Antonio Lopez De Avila, Director of Innovation, Education and Investments

## SECTION ONE · PREAMBLE

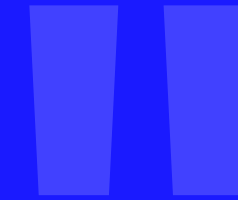
# A turning point in how we travel.

Rapid technological advances — including **AI and other emerging technologies** — are fundamentally transforming the sector. They provide opportunities for growth, innovation and empowerment, while also risking **deepening inequalities** between States, regions and destinations.

## ANCHORED IN

2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development  
Chengdu Declaration on Tourism & the SDGs  
Kyoto Declaration on Tourism & Culture  
Global Code of Ethics for Tourism  
International Code for the Protection of Tourists  
UNGA Resolution on Trustworthy AI

The Declaration responds to a sector both expanding and exposed: to climate, to crises, to workforce shortages, to the uneven gains of digitalisation. Its eleven operative articles are anchored in instruments already binding Member States.



The global tourism sector stands at a **turning point** — in how people travel, how destinations evolve, and how communities thrive.

FROM THE DECLARATION

Adopted at UN Tourism GA26 · Riyadh, 2025

# Eleven articles. One declaration.

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- 01** Act immediately to advance and accelerate progress towards a more sustainable tourism sector that balances environmental stewardship, economic vitality, and social wellbeing.
- 02** Advance and promote the responsible adoption of digital transformation and innovation in the tourism sector by incent.
- 03** Strengthen sectoral resilience by advancing risk assessment and preparedness, investing in adaptive infrastructure and systems, and fostering rapid response and recovery mechanisms to ensure continuity and stability in the face of disruptions.
- 04** Adopt and maintain strong data governance practices that ensure privacy, cybersecurity, data protection for tourists and industry stakeholders, while encouraging safeguards against cybersecurity threats.
- 05** Develop a robust and relevant decision-making mechanism, based on reliable data to strengthen tourism indicators for all dimensions of sustainability.
- 06** Address workforce shortages and skills gaps by encouraging investments in tourism education and training, and sharing knowledge amongst all Member States.
- 07** Promote culturally respectful and socially inclusive tourism by engaging authentically with local communities, safeguarding cultural heritage, and protecting the social fabric of host societies, while preserving cultural identity.
- 08** Confront the challenges of uneven tourist distribution by promoting innovative policies and strategies to channel tourism flows towards emerging destinations.
- 09** Improve tourism infrastructure and strengthen public safety by enhancing basic services, transport and connectivity, as well as security and accessibility standards, in the planning and management of destinations.
- 10** Enable vital tourism economies by taking advantage of technological and AI-driven initiatives to support local entrepreneurship.
- 11** Cooperate to achieve the goals of the Riyadh Declaration, while being mindful of the diverse policy priorities of Member States.

SECTION THREE · BY THE NUMBERS

# The shape of the commitment.

Eleven articles. Three directives. Twelve months to first delivery. Two scheduled reviews. One declaration — adopted in Riyadh.

ARTICLES · OPERATIVE

11

**ELEVEN ARTICLES**  
Each Member State commits across all eleven, with national reporting on indicators and impact.

THEMES · WORKING

04

**FOUR THEMES**  
Sustainability · Digital & AI · People · Distribution & Cooperation.

DIRECTIVES · ISSUED

03

**THREE DIRECTIVES**  
A roadmap, an AI Impact activation, and a global maturity framework.

FIRST DELIVERY

12<sub>ma</sub>

**TWELVE MONTHS from adoption**  
To deliver the strategic roadmap to the Executive Council.

SECTION FOUR · DIRECTIVES

# General Assembly Mandate.

Three concrete instructions to the Secretary-General and UN Tourism — each with a deadline and a venue.

DIRECTIVE II  
to the Secretary-General

## AI Impact & Maturity.

Activate the **AI Impact on Tourism Report & Recommendation Guide** and prepare a **global maturity framework / index for AI and tourism** — to help Member States assess readiness, identify gaps, unlock opportunities, and guide responsible and safe AI adoption. Both to be presented at the EC's first ordinary session of 2026.

2026

EC · 1ST ORDINARY  
SESSION

DIRECTIVE I  
to the Secretary-General

## Strategic Roadmap.

In close consultation with Member States, prepare a **strategic roadmap on the future of tourism** and present it to the Executive Council within 12 months of adoption. Should financial obligations arise, funding shall be through **voluntary contributions** from interested Member States, at no additional cost to UN Tourism's regular budget.

12 months

EC · 2nd ORDINARY  
SESSION

DIRECTIVE III  
to UN Tourism

## Adoption Review.

Prepare a report on **Member State adoption and use** of the AI Impact on Tourism Report & Recommendation Guide and the global maturity framework / index — including **recommendations to improve both instruments and their utility** — and present it to the Executive Council at its first ordinary session of 2027.

2027

EC · 1ST ORDINARY  
SESSION

Consultation

# Close Consultation.

The Secretary-General's roadmap is prepared "in close consultation with Member States." Five sequential steps from kickoff to Executive Council presentation.

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| <div><div>1</div><div>STEP ONE</div><div>Initiation <b>Call.</b></div><div>An opening briefing to Member States explaining the methodology — how the strategic roadmap will be developed, the role of national inputs, the timeline and the venues of presentation.</div><div><div>FORMAT</div><div>Plenary briefing</div><div>OUTPUT</div><div>Method &amp; timeline endorsed</div></div></div> | <div><div>2</div><div>STEP TWO</div><div>Member-State <b>Survey.</b></div><div>A structured questionnaire circulated to every Member State — capturing the national status, gaps and priorities across the eleven articles of the Riyadh Declaration.</div><div><div>REACH</div><div>All Member States</div><div>OUTPUT</div><div>National status by article</div></div></div> | <div><div>3</div><div>STEP THREE</div><div>Consolidate <b>Inputs.</b></div><div>UN Tourism consolidates the responses — synthesising national submissions into an integrated draft roadmap aligned to the eleven articles and the SG's mandate.</div><div><div>OUTPUT</div><div>Consolidated draft roadmap</div><div>LENS</div><div>Eleven Articles · 3 Directives</div></div></div> | <div><div>4</div><div>STEP FOUR</div><div>Final <b>Review.</b></div><div>The consolidated draft is sent back to Member States for final review — capturing comments, adjustments and clarifications before the version of record is fixed.</div><div><div>CHANNEL</div><div>Written review window</div><div>OUTPUT</div><div>Final draft roadmap</div></div></div> | <div><div>5</div><div>STEP FIVE</div><div>Present to <b>Executive Council.</b></div><div>The strategic roadmap is presented to the Executive Council at its second ordinary session — completing the twelve-month delivery mandated by the Declaration.</div><div><div>VENUE</div><div>Executive Council</div><div>SESSION</div><div>2nd ordinary · 2026</div></div></div> |
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SECTION SIX · WHAT'S BEEN  
DONE

# Already in **motion.**

Two reskilling programmes built and a self-assessment instrument under development the first concrete deliverables of the Declaration, ready to roll out in 2026.

## TRAINING PROGRAMME I

jointly with Amadeus

## AI & the **Customer Journey.**

An online training programme on AI and AI tools for tourism management — developed **jointly with Amadeus** — equipping ministry and National Tourism Authority officials to apply AI across the traveller lifecycle.

## FORMAT

Online · Officials

## AUDIENCE

Ministries & NTAs

## ROLLOUT

2026

## PARTNER

Amadeus

## TRAINING PROGRAMME II

with Harvard University & experts

## UN Tourism AI **Recommendations.**

A landmark programme delivered with **Harvard University professors** and other leading experts — built around the **UN Tourism AI Recommendations Guideline** as its operational curriculum for officials.

## FORMAT

Online · Officials

## AUDIENCE

Ministries & NTAs

## ROLLOUT

2026

## PARTNER

Harvard + experts

## DIGITAL TOOL

to measure implementation

## A digital self-assessment for **Member States.**

A cutting-edge digital self-assessment instrument — letting every Member State **benchmark its national AI adoption** and generate **bespoke roadmaps** aligned to the UN Tourism AI Recommendations. Operationalises the Declaration's measurement mandate.

## STATUS

In development

## MANDATE

Art. 02 · 04 · 05 · 10

## OUTPUT

National roadmap

## FOR

All Member States

# **The Riyadh Declaration** **on the Future of Tourism**

# **THANK YOU**

**Antonio Lopez De Avila, Director of Innovation, Education and Investments**