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Implementation of the Programme of Work

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Implementation of the Riyadh Declaration on the Future of Tourism: The Self-Assessment Tool and the Strategic Roadmap following the Member State consultation process

Executive summary

This document reports progress in implementing the Riyadh Declaration on the Future of Tourism, translating its commitments on AI and digital transformation into practical action through three instruments: the Global AI Maturity Framework, AI Self-Assessment Tool, and Strategic Roadmap on the Future of Tourism.

The Global AI Maturity Framework assesses Member States' readiness for responsible AI adoption across four dimensions: data infrastructure; governance, strategy and regulation; workforce capacity and skills; and interoperability. The Self-Assessment Tool helps tourism administrations identify gaps and priorities and develop tailored roadmaps reflecting their national context and maturity level.

The 2026 Member State consultation, with 82 responses from all six UN Tourism regions, showed strong momentum in AI adoption but highlighted gaps in governance, data, skills, interoperability and financing. It identified five priorities: sustainable and resilient tourism; workforce development and digital inclusion; SME digitalization and entrepreneurship; data governance and responsible AI; and international cooperation and peer learning, which underpin the Strategic Roadmap.

The document also presents the Strategic Roadmap on the Future of Tourism, prepared based on the consultation process with UN Tourism Member States, in accordance with the Riyadh Declaration. The Roadmap is submitted to the Council for consideration at this session, following the adoption of the Riyadh Declaration in resolution 795(XXVI), which welcomed its preparation.

Subject to its consideration and approval through the applicable institutional processes, implementation of the Roadmap would be pursued in close cooperation with Member States and supported, as appropriate, through institutional, capacity-building and technology-related activities, tailored to their different maturity levels and needs. Any resulting financial obligations will be met through voluntary contributions from interested Member States, at no additional cost to the regular budget of UN Tourism. Implementation will be subject to the applicable legal and institutional framework and any required approvals. The overall approach recognizes that AI is a means, not an end: its value lies in enabling more sustainable, inclusive and resilient tourism, with people, communities and responsible governance at the centre of digital transformation.

UN Tourism

DRAFT DECISION[1]

Agenda item 4
Implementation of the Programme of work
(document CE/127/4 RC-1)

The Executive Council,

Recalling resolution 795(XXVI),

Having examined the report on the Implementation of the Riyadh Declaration on the Future of Tourism,

1. *Takes note* of the progress in the implementation of the Riyadh Declaration, the self-assessment tool to measure AI readiness and implementation among Member States based on the global maturity framework, and the Strategic Roadmap, pursuant to the Riyadh Declaration on the Future of Tourism, as adopted by the General Assembly at the twenty-sixth session;

2. *Welcomes* the use of the self-assessment framework and the Member State consultation as complementary sources of evidence on AI readiness, priorities, challenges and opportunities in tourism;

3. *Encourages* Member States to engage in the self-assessment and to share relevant experiences, good practices, expertise and opportunities for cooperation;

4. *Takes note of* the Strategic Roadmap on the Future of Tourism prepared by the Secretariat in close consultation with Member States;

5. *Requests* the Secretariat to take the findings of the Global AI Maturity Self-Assessment and consultations with Member States into account in implementing the Strategic Roadmap, subject to available voluntary extrabudgetary resources, at no additional cost to the regular budget and in accordance with the applicable legal, financial and institutional framework of the Organization, and to report on progress to the Executive Council; and

6. *Invites* the Secretariat to report, as appropriate, on resources mobilized for the implementation of the Strategic Roadmap and to align activities with available resources.

[1] This is a draft decision. For the final decision adopted by the Executive Council, please refer to the Decisions document issued at the end of the session.

I. Introduction

1. The Riyadh Declaration on the Future of Tourism, adopted in resolution 795(XXVI) at the 26th session of the UN Tourism General Assembly in Riyadh in November 2025, provides a shared policy framework for advancing the future of tourism through innovation, responsible artificial intelligence, sustainability and international cooperation.

2. The Executive Council, at its 126th session, examined the report on the implementation of the Riyadh Declaration and took note of the activities carried out and the main achievements during the reporting period (CE/DEC/3(CXXVI).

3. Developed through consultation with UN Tourism Member States, the Declaration responds to the rapid technological transformation of the sector while emphasizing the need for capacity building, inclusion and sustainable development. It builds on established UN and UN Tourism frameworks and provides a basis for translating global commitments on AI and innovation into tourism-specific action.

II. Assessing AI Maturity in Tourism: Building the Evidence Base

A. Progress to date

Area / Mandate	Progress to Date	Next Steps
Global AI Maturity Framework	Presented at the **126th session of the Executive Council in Toledo**. The Framework establishes a common basis for assessing AI readiness and maturity in tourism, including data infrastructure, governance, workforce capacity and interoperability.	Further operationalize the Framework through the Self-Assessment Tool and its application across Member States.
AI Self-Assessment Tool	Based on the Global AI Maturity Framework. The Tool enables Member States to assess their AI readiness and maturity, identify strengths, gaps and opportunities, and establish a customized initial roadmap reflecting their specific needs, priorities and level of AI maturity.	To be launched in January of 2027, Full roll-out of the Tool to Member States and encourage its use. At the request of individual Member States, the assessment results may provide the basis for developing **tailored implementation plans**.
Member State Consultation	Consultation conducted in **August–September 2026**, receiving 82 responses from Member States across all six UN Tourism regions.	Consultation completed. The full findings will be shared with Member States following the 127th Session of the Executive Council.
Strategic Roadmap on the Future of Tourism	The AI Impact Report, Global AI Maturity Framework and Member State consultation provide complementary evidence to inform the identification of strategic priorities and areas for action contributing to the Strategic Roadmap mandated by the Riyadh Declaration.	Present the Strategic Roadmap to the Executive Council for consideration and, following its consideration, pursue its implementation in close consultation with Member States, taking into account their different levels of AI maturity, priorities and needs, and subject to available resources and the applicable institutional framework.
Tailored Member State Implementation Plans	The Self-Assessment Tool provides a basis for identifying Member States' specific needs, priorities and levels of AI maturity and for establishing an initial roadmap.	**Upon request from individual Member States**, use the assessment findings as a basis for the development of tailored implementation plans adapted to their national context and priorities.

Knowledge Exchange and Cooperation	The Framework and consultation process contribute to a common evidence base on AI readiness and Member State priorities, while supporting continued consultation, knowledge exchange and cooperation.	Continue Member State engagement, knowledge exchange and cooperation to support implementation of the Riyadh Declaration and the Strategic Roadmap.

B. The Role of AI and Digital Transformation in Tourism

4. Artificial intelligence and digital transformation are increasingly reshaping how tourism is planned, managed and experienced. Across the tourism value chain, AI is opening new opportunities to improve visitor services, strengthen destination management, support more informed decision-making and increase operational efficiency. At destination level, digital tools and AI can also support areas such as visitor-flow management, forecasting, accessibility, sustainability monitoring and more personalized tourism experiences.

5. The findings of the first UN Tourism Global Survey on AI in Tourism (2025), covering 64 Member States, demonstrate the growing relevance of these technologies for tourism administrations. Among respondents, 80% reported using or planning to use AI for tourism marketing and promotion, 75% for forecasting visitor numbers and economic impacts, and 62.5% for improving data-driven policy decisions. At the same time, adoption remains uneven, highlighting the importance of strengthening digital infrastructure, institutional capacity and skills to ensure that destinations can benefit from this transformation.

6. Digital transformation is therefore not only a technological process, but also an issue of governance, capacity and inclusion. Effective AI adoption requires reliable data, interoperable systems, an appropriately skilled workforce and clear policy and regulatory frameworks. It also requires attention to data protection, ethical use, workforce impacts and the risk of widening existing digital divides. Public-sector leadership will be essential to ensure that this transformation strengthens competitiveness, resilience, accessibility and the long-term value that tourism creates for destinations and communities.

III. The Mandate and Progress

7. The implementation of the Riyadh Declaration requires a structured approach to translate its commitments into actionable priorities and to understand the different levels of AI readiness across Member States. To this end, three complementary instruments are being advanced: a Global AI Maturity Framework for Tourism, a self-assessment tool to measure the level of maturity and elaborate an initial roadmap for each Member State and a Strategic Roadmap for the Organization.

8. The Strategic Roadmap will translate the Declaration's commitments into priority actions for the Organization. In parallel, the Global AI Maturity Framework, operationalized through an AI Readiness Index for Tourism, will provide a common methodology to assess levels of AI readiness and maturity, identify gaps and capacity-building needs, and track progress over time.

9. Progress to date includes the development of the Global AI Maturity Framework and its supporting Self-Assessment Tool, as well as the 2026 Member State consultation, which provides an important evidence base for the development of the Strategic Roadmap. Together, the Global AI Maturity Framework and the consultation will support the identification of Member State priorities, readiness gaps and areas for cooperation, providing an evidence-based foundation for the implementation of the Riyadh Declaration.

10. Building on the findings of the UN Tourism Global Survey on AI in Tourism, covering 64 Member States, and the publication *Implementing Artificial Intelligence in Tourism: Guidelines and Recommendations for the Public Sector*, UN Tourism has developed a Global AI Maturity Framework for Tourism to support Member States in assessing their readiness and capacity for the responsible adoption of AI in tourism. The framework is structured around four core dimensions: data infrastructure; governance, strategy and regulation; workforce capacity and skills; and interoperability.

11. Member States can assess their progress across three maturity levels: Exploring, Implementing and Consolidating. This allows tourism administrations to identify capacity gaps, benchmark their current position and determine priority actions to strengthen their readiness for AI adoption.

12. To operationalize the Global AI Maturity Framework, UN Tourism is launching a Self-Assessment Tool that will enable Member States to establish a baseline, monitor progress over time and identify areas where policy guidance, capacity development and technical support may be needed. The tool will also support knowledge exchange and provide a common basis for understanding AI readiness across different national and regional contexts, helping to promote the responsible, inclusive and sustainable adoption of AI in tourism.

IV. Global AI Maturity Framework and Self-Assessment Tool

Purpose of the Self-Assessment Tool

13. The Self-Assessment Tool is designed to help tourism administrations understand their current level of preparedness for AI adoption and identify where AI and other emerging technologies can create the greatest value for tourism development. It provides a structured diagnostic that goes beyond assessing readiness alone, linking institutional capabilities with strategic priorities and concrete use cases.

14. The objective is to provide each participating administration with a practical basis for action, helping it identify where to begin, what conditions need to be strengthened, and which AI initiatives are most appropriate to its national context.

AI Readiness and Maturity

15. The assessment examines the administration's readiness to adopt, manage and scale AI and other emerging technologies solutions. This includes its existing capabilities in data infrastructure, governance, workforce capacity and skills, and interoperability.

16. Moreover, it helps identify both existing strengths and areas requiring further development, providing a clearer understanding of the administration's current level of AI maturity and the enabling conditions required to move towards more structured and sustainable adoption.

Key Dimensions of Assessment

17. The diagnostic is structured around three main areas:

- AI readiness and enabling conditions: assessing the administration's capacity to adopt and use AI, including data infrastructure, governance, workforce capabilities and interoperability.
- Strategic tourism priorities: identifying the areas of tourism development where AI can deliver the greatest value and contribute most effectively to national priorities.
- AI use cases and projects: reviewing relevant applications of AI and identifying concrete projects that can be initiated, designed, assessed, consolidated or scaled according to the administration's level of readiness and specific needs.

How the Tool Can Support Member States: A Tailored Roadmap

18. The outcome of the assessment is intended to provide a practical basis for action. Member States will receive a clear picture of their current capabilities, strategic priorities and the AI projects most suited to their specific context resulting in a tailored action plan.

19. The tool also provides recommendations to strengthen the conditions required for effective implementation, including reliable data, appropriate governance frameworks, internal capabilities, human oversight and interoperability among systems and stakeholders. In this way, the assessment can help Member States move from initial AI experimentation towards more coordinated, responsible and scalable implementation.

V. AI and the Implementation of the Riyadh Declaration

20. The Riyadh Declaration sets out 11 interconnected thematic areas for advancing the future of tourism, with artificial intelligence and digital transformation serving as key enablers across these priorities. AI and other emerging technologies can support progress across areas including sustainability and resilience, data-driven decision-making, workforce development, cultural heritage, visitor-flow management, infrastructure, entrepreneurship and investment, while its effective adoption requires appropriate governance, capacity and international cooperation. The following thematic areas provide the broader framework for examining how AI can contribute to the implementation of the Riyadh Declaration and inform the development of the Strategic Roadmap.

Sustainable and Resilient Tourism

21. Tourism's long-term growth depends on its ability to generate economic and social value while protecting the environmental resources and communities on which the sector relies. Advancing a tourism sector that balances environmental stewardship, economic vitality and social wellbeing is therefore essential to strengthening its long-term sustainability and ability to adapt to changing conditions.

Digital Transformation and Innovation

22. Digital transformation is reshaping how destinations, businesses and visitors interact across the tourism ecosystem, creating new opportunities while also highlighting differences in technological readiness. Promoting the responsible adoption of digital technologies and innovation across the tourism sector requires investment in digital infrastructure while considering differing levels of technological and infrastructural development.

Resilience, Risk and Crisis Management

23. Tourism is particularly exposed to economic, environmental, health and other disruptions that can rapidly affect destinations and communities. Strengthening the sector's capacity to anticipate, prepare for and respond to such disruptions requires effective risk assessment, adaptive infrastructure and systems, and rapid response and recovery mechanisms.

Data Governance, Privacy and Responsible AI

24. As tourism becomes increasingly digital and data-driven, effective governance is essential to ensuring that technological progress is accompanied by appropriate safeguards. Strong data governance practices should protect privacy, cybersecurity and the data of tourists and industry stakeholders, while supporting the responsible and secure use of emerging technologies, including AI.

Data-Driven Tourism Management and Decision-Making

25. Reliable and relevant data provides the foundation for informed tourism policies, effective destination management and the measurement of progress. Strengthening tourism planning and decision-making therefore requires robust measurement mechanisms and tourism indicators that reflect the different dimensions of sustainability.

Skills, Workforce and Capacity Building

26. The continued transformation of tourism is changing the skills and capabilities required across the sector, while workforce shortages remain a challenge in many destinations. Addressing these gaps requires sustained investment in tourism education, training and capacity building, alongside greater knowledge exchange and learning among Member States.

Cultural Heritage and Inclusive Tourism

27. Tourism can contribute to the protection and celebration of cultural heritage while generating opportunities for local communities, provided that development respects their identity and social fabric. Promoting culturally respectful and socially inclusive tourism requires meaningful

community engagement, safeguarding cultural heritage and preserving the cultural identity of host societies.

Visitor Flows and Destination Diversification

28. The concentration of visitors in particular destinations can place pressure on communities, infrastructure and resources, while other destinations remain underdeveloped or receive fewer benefits from tourism. Innovative policies and strategies can support better management of visitor flows and encourage tourism development across emerging and less-visited destinations.

Tourism Infrastructure, Safety and Accessibility

29. Quality infrastructure and safe, accessible destinations are fundamental to both the visitor experience and the sustainable development of tourism. Strengthening basic services, transport and connectivity, alongside safety, security and accessibility standards, can support more effective and inclusive destination planning and management.

Entrepreneurship, Investment and Innovation

30. Entrepreneurs and tourism businesses play an important role in developing new solutions, services and experiences that contribute to dynamic tourism economies. Leveraging technology and AI-driven initiatives can support local entrepreneurship, stimulate innovation and create new opportunities for businesses across the tourism value chain.

International Cooperation and Peer Learning

31. Many of the opportunities and challenges facing tourism extend beyond national borders, making cooperation and knowledge exchange increasingly important. Strengthening collaboration and peer learning among Member States can support implementation of the Riyadh Declaration while recognizing different national contexts, levels of development and policy priorities.

VI. Member State Consultation Process and Evidence Base

Objectives and Approach

32. The strategic consultation on the Riyadh Declaration operationalization was designed to establish a baseline understanding of Member States' AI readiness, capacity, and priorities across the tourism sector. The consultation gathered data on national AI strategies, governance and regulatory frameworks, sectoral adoption patterns, digital infrastructure investments, and the specific challenges and opportunities Member States face in responsibly integrating AI solutions into tourism management and development.

33. Conducted between August and September 2026, the consultation has a structured online survey administered in five languages (English, Spanish, French, Arabic, and Russian) to ensure accessibility across the Member States. The instrument drew directly from the Declaration's 11 core themes—amongst them: sustainability, education, entrepreneurship, resilience, and investment—and sought to map each Member State's current position on the maturity spectrum (Exploring, Implementing, Consolidating) to inform the development of differentiated implementation pathways.

Areas Covered by the Consultation

34. The consultation surveyed Member States across five interconnected dimensions.

- First, the institutional and policy landscape: whether countries have national AI strategies specifically addressing tourism, governance frameworks, and regulatory mechanisms for AI deployment.

- Second, sectoral AI adoption: current practices in using AI-enabled tools for tourism data analysis, destination management, and policy planning at both public and private sector levels.

- Third, foundational capacities: the state of digital infrastructure investment, SME digital and AI implementation maturity, and the availability of government financial or policy support for AI adoption.

- Fourth, cross-cutting governance issues: data governance maturity, the state of reliable and valid tourism data systems aligned with UN Tourism standards, and infrastructure for responsible AI.

- Fifth, risk and resilience: how countries are leveraging AI for sectoral resilience, risk preparedness, and emergency response. The survey additionally elicited open-ended feedback on the main barriers to responsible AI adoption, privacy and cybersecurity concerns, and priority areas for capacity strengthening.

Key Findings thus far

35. 82 Member States completed the survey (see Annex I). The consultation shows that AI integration in tourism is at an important turning point, with operational practice advancing ahead of formal policy frameworks. On overall AI readiness for tourism, 52 Member States (63%) report being at the Exploring level, 25 Member States (30%) at the Implementing level and 2 Member States (2%) at the Consolidating level, while 3 Member States (4%) did not specify a readiness level. . Overall, 79 of 82 Member States (96%) report a defined level of AI readiness for tourism, from Exploring to Consolidating.

36. In addition to readiness levels, the consultation assessed the status of dedicated AI strategies for tourism, which can be compared for the first time with the 2025 UN Tourism Global Survey on AI in Tourism. In 2025, 11 of 64 responding Member States (17%) reported that their ministry had a specific AI strategy for tourism. In 2026, 8 of 82 Member States (10%) report a national strategy specifically addressing AI in tourism, and a further 28 (34%) report one in progress, an option not available in the 2025 survey. Taken together, 36 Member States (44%) now have a tourism-specific AI strategy in place or under development. While the two surveys differ in wording, answer options and respondents, and are therefore not directly comparable, the results point to growing momentum towards dedicated AI policy frameworks for tourism.

37. Formal governance frameworks for AI in tourism are at an early stage. 7 Member States (9%) report an established governance framework addressing AI in tourism, and a further 33 (40%) report one in progress. Regulatory frameworks are less advanced, with 5 Member States (6%) reporting one in place and 25 (30%) one in progress. Meanwhile, many Member States are already putting AI to work. 23 Member States (28%) use AI-enabled tools to analyse tourism indicators, nationally or at destination level, and a further 13 (16%) are piloting them. 36 Member States (44%) use AI to support sectoral resilience and risk preparedness, most often for visitor-flow management, predictive analytics and climate risk assessment. This points to a growing gap between how quickly AI is being adopted and the development of the frameworks that guide its use.

38. A significant finding is the breadth of practical AI engagement and government support. 36 Member States (44%) already use or are piloting AI-enabled tools to analyse tourism indicators, and a further 34 (41%) are developing them. In parallel, 58 Member States (71%) report at least one government mechanism supporting digital transformation and AI adoption among tourism businesses, most commonly SME digitalisation programmes (50%). Examples include Kuwait's Rashed virtual tour guide in the Visit Kuwait app, Indonesia's MaiA platform on Indonesia.travel, Argentina's AI-powered travel planner for Visit Argentina, Slovenia's ALMA virtual tourism assistant, and smart destination initiatives across several Member States.

39. Cross-cutting challenges persist across all maturity levels: weak tourism data governance infrastructure, fragmented data interoperability, gaps in SME technical capacity, limited government funding for AI implementation, and concerns around responsible AI oversight, cybersecurity, and data privacy. Despite these barriers, the consultation demonstrates both capability and commitment: Member States are pursuing practical AI solutions while simultaneously building the institutional, regulatory, and capacity foundations required for sustainable, responsible, and inclusive AI adoption.

Implications for the Roadmap

40. The consultation establishes a clear normative trajectory for the Roadmap across all Declaration points. Member States need a practical, tiered implementation framework that meets them where they are on the maturity spectrum and provides clear progression pathways. For countries in the Exploring phase, the Roadmap must prioritise capacity building on AI fundamentals, responsible AI governance principles, and diagnostic tools to assess tourism sector readiness. For the Implementing cohort, the focus shifts to sectoral pilots, SME support mechanisms, and harmonised data governance standards. For Consolidating practitioners, the Roadmap should facilitate peer learning, innovation acceleration, and regional knowledge networks.

41. Critically, the UN Tourism Roadmap must address the institutional gaps: helping Member States develop national AI strategies and governance frameworks specifically for tourism, with UN Tourism facilitating role in coordination and standard-setting role. The consultation also points to the need for integrated support on digital infrastructure, financial incentives for SME adoption, and multilateral mechanisms to ensure responsible AI practices are embedded at every stage.

42. Finally, the roadmap should frame AI and other emerging technologies not as an end in itself, but as an enabling tool for delivering on each of the Declaration's core points ensuring alignment between AI deployment and tourism policy outcomes.

VII. From Evidence to the Strategic Roadmap

Consolidating the Evidence

43. The strategic consultation conducted in 2026 gathered responses from 82 Member States across all six UN Tourism regions, providing a broad baseline on AI readiness and maturity in the tourism sector. The data reveals a sector in transition: while 8 Member States (10%) report having a national AI strategy specifically addressing tourism, a further 28 (34%) report that such strategies are in progress, signalling significant momentum towards operationalisation. These figures relate specifically to the status of dedicated national AI strategies and are distinct from the broader AI readiness levels reported above. Similarly, governance and regulatory frameworks continue to lag implementation, with 7 Member States (9%) reporting formal AI governance frameworks for tourism and 33 (40%) actively building these mechanisms.

44. However, Member States' engagement with AI in practice and their expectations of it tell a more dynamic story. Member States see clear value in AI for the sector, identifying data analytics (94%), forecasting (76%) and multilingual visitor services (72%) as the areas where AI could most improve tourism management, and marketing and demand forecasting (94%) and visitor flow and capacity management (89%) as the areas where it could most improve data collection and analysis. Adoption is already under way, with 44% using or piloting AI-enabled tools to analyse tourism indicators, and 40% describing public-sector capacity to use AI for policy and destination management as developing steadily. This gap between strong demand, growing practice and still-emerging frameworks underscores the value of structured guidance to ensure responsible, coordinated and sustainable AI integration.

45. The findings suggest a policy-practice gap in data governance and accountability. While 9% of responding Member States report formal governance structures, 28% report using AI tools in tourism, with applications including visitor analytics, demand forecasting, destination marketing and strategic decision support. This creates both opportunity and risk. Reported AI use demonstrates interest in practical applications, while the limited prevalence of formal governance structures highlights the need for coordinated standards, interoperability frameworks and safeguards for responsible deployment.

46. The consultation confirms that the foundation for the roadmap exists not in regulatory perfection but in demonstrated appetite, real-world experimentation, and clear recognition of both opportunities and risks. The challenge is to provide the institutional scaffolding, capacity support, and peer-learning mechanisms that allow Member States to scale successful pilots while building responsible governance architecture in parallel.

Identifying Common Priorities

47. Across geographies and development contexts, Member States converge on a consistent set of priorities that the roadmap must address.

- First, sustainable and resilient tourism development emerges as the leading strategic anchor: Member States prioritize AI applications for visitor flow management, climate risk assessment, predictive analytics, and destination resilience.

- Second, workforce capacity and digital inclusion is universally acknowledged as a bottleneck: skills gaps in AI literacy, data management, and technical capabilities are reported across regions, with particular urgency in emerging economies.

- Third, SME digitalization and entrepreneurship support reflects the economic reality that small and medium tourism enterprises drive local value creation but lack access to technology, capital, and expertise.

- Fourth, data governance and responsible AI emerges as a prerequisite: Member States identify privacy protection, cybersecurity, ethical AI deployment, and institutional capacity for data governance as foundational requirements that must be embedded from the outset.

- Fifth, international cooperation and knowledge exchange is recognized as essential: few Member States can solve these challenges in isolation, and peer learning, joint pilot projects, and coordinated standard-setting are seen as force multipliers.

48. Together, these priorities form the backbone of the roadmap and align directly with the 11 commitments of the Riyadh Declaration.

Translating Commitments into Strategic Directions

49. The Riyadh Declaration's 11 core themes sustainability, resilience, innovation, digital transformation, entrepreneurship, data governance, workforce development, cultural heritage, visitor flows, infrastructure, international cooperation, and inclusive tourism must translate into concrete strategic directions grounded in Member State realities.

50. For sustainable and resilient tourism, the national roadmaps should prioritize AI applications in environmental monitoring, climate adaptation, and disaster response, supported by capacity-building and shared datasets.

51. For workforce and skills development, it must map AI-related competencies across public and private sectors and establish scalable training pathways differentiated by Member State maturity levels.

52. For data governance and responsible AI, it should promote strong data governance practices, ethical guidelines aligned with relevant United Nations documents and international frameworks as well as the UNESCO Recommendations on the Ethics of Artificial Intelligence, and regional platforms for secure data-sharing and AI governance.

53. For entrepreneurship and innovation, the national roadmap must create mechanisms to connect startups with governments, investors, and markets through pilot projects, incubators, and public-private partnerships.

54. For infrastructure and digital connectivity, it should support Member States in building foundational digital infrastructure such as data systems, interoperable platforms, and analytical capabilities that enable AI deployment at scale.

55. For international cooperation, the national roadmaps must establish coordination mechanisms, peer-learning networks, and joint initiatives that allow Member States to benefit from shared solutions while adapting to local contexts. Each strategic direction must clarify what Member States at different maturity levels (Exploring, Implementing, Consolidating) should prioritize in the first, second, and third years of implementation.

Potential Areas for Action and Cooperation

56. UN Tourism's roadmap identifies several high-impact areas where immediate action and multilateral cooperation can unlock value and accelerate progress.

- First, launch the Global AI Maturity Self-assessment Tool that Member States can use to benchmark their position, identify capacity gaps, and track progress transparently. This tool is freely available for all Member States.

- Second, explore the possibility of establishing regional AI Governance Networks where Member States collaborate on data governance standards and cybersecurity protocols.

- Third, launch Pilot Projects that bring together Member States plus private sector partners to test AI solutions with lessons learned shared across the network.

- Fourth, promote the development and use of reliable Tourism Data and Indicators, and interoperable systems that enable Member States and businesses to share tourism data securely and ethically.

- Fifth, establish an AI Skills Programme through UN Tourism that offers tiered training programmes for tourism policymakers, data managers, and SME leaders delivered regionally and online to reach geographically dispersed audiences.

- Sixth, explore opportunities to facilitate access to existing financing mechanisms, grants and blended finance instruments to support AI adoption by tourism SMEs, particularly in least-developed and lower-middle-income countries, considering the funding constraint identified by 65 percent of respondents.

- Seventh, promote dialogue and knowledge-sharing on AI ethics and accountability among UN Tourism Member States, the tourism industry, civil society and relevant experts, with a view to exchanging good practices and supporting the responsible use of AI in tourism and exploring the opportunity to create an informal, consultative working group to facilitate such exchanges.

57. These actions may be pursued in parallel, according to the priorities and needs identified by Member States, and subject to the availability of resources. Their implementation shall be contingent upon the availability of voluntary and extrabudgetary contributions, as applicable, and shall not entail additional financial obligations for the regular budget of UN Tourism, in accordance with resolution 795(XXVI).

Towards the Strategic Roadmap on the Future of Tourism: Guiding Principles

58. **People and communities at the centre.** UN Tourism and Member States must place travellers, tourism workers, and host communities at the heart of every AI initiative, ensuring that technology enhances human connection, cultural exchange, and quality of life rather than replacing them. Every recommendation in this Roadmap is designed to keep AI adoption inclusive, transparent, and genuinely beneficial to all.

59. **Capacity as the engine of opportunity.** Sustainable AI adoption is built on strong foundations such as reliable data infrastructure, sound governance, skilled talent, and interoperable systems. UN Tourism supports Member States in strengthening these four pillars through its Global AI Maturity Readiness Framework, enabling each destination to progress at its own pace, from first exploration to full consolidation.

60. **Innovation guided by trusted governance.** UN Tourism encourages Member States to embrace AI with ambition, while developing clear national and sector-specific strategies, ethical guidelines, and regulatory frameworks that keep pace with innovation. Sound governance is what transforms experimentation into lasting, responsible progress.

61. **Partnership as a multiplier of impact.** The Roadmap is built on cooperation between different ministries (Tourism, Education, Economy, Infrastructure, Environment, etc.), levels of government, the private sector, academia, and Member States. Through cooperation and

knowledge-sharing platforms, as appropriate, UN Tourism can facilitate the exchange of experiences and good practices, enabling countries to learn from one another and advance together.

62. **A shared path towards sustainable growth.** AI adoption in tourism can drive innovation and competitiveness while safeguarding natural and cultural heritage and build more resilient destinations. UN Tourism's Roadmap ensures that progress in AI translates into progress for people, economies, and the planet alike.

Roadmap: Structure, Phases and Calendar

63. The strategic roadmap operationalizes the Riyadh Declaration by converting evidence and priorities into a tiered, actionable framework that meets Member States where they are and supports them to progress toward more mature, responsible, and sustainable AI adoption.

64. The roadmap is structured around three implementation phases:

- Phase 1 (2026-2027) focuses on foundation-building, launching the Global AI Maturity Self-assessment tool, initiating capacity-building, exploring appropriate coordination and knowledge-sharing arrangements, subject to, where required, the applicable legal and institutional framework and any required authorization by the competent governing bodies, and facilitating initial exchanges among interested Member States and regional stakeholders.

- Phase 2 (2027-2028) emphasizes scaling and integration, expanding pilot projects, deepening regional cooperation and knowledge-sharing, promoting the exchange of experiences on data standards, and broadening access to training and information on potential financing opportunities, subject to available resources.

- Phase 3 (2028-2029) focuses on consolidating progress and assessing impact; documenting measurable economic, social and environmental outcomes associated with AI adoption, encouraging the sharing of lessons learned, and further strengthening UN Tourism’s role in facilitating knowledge exchange on responsible AI innovation in tourism.

65. The proposed phases and timelines are indicative and subject to the applicable future Programmes of Work and Budget, the availability of extrabudgetary resources and any required approvals.

66. Throughout, the roadmap embodies the principle that AI is a means, not an end: it should enhance destinations' ability to deliver sustainable, inclusive, resilient tourism that creates shared value for communities, businesses, governments, and visitors. Implementation will be monitored through a Global AI Maturity Framework, which will track progress on the four core dimensions (data infrastructure, governance, workforce, interoperability) at both Member State, regional and global levels, informing annual adjustments and ensuring accountability.

67. The roadmap acknowledges that technology alone cannot achieve the Riyadh Declaration's vision; it requires strengthened institutions, ethical commitment, equitable financing, and sustained political will. Yet with these elements in place and with UN Tourism's mandate under the Riyadh Declaration, convening capacity and technical expertise, the roadmap can catalyse a tourism transformation that harnesses AI responsibly to advance the prosperity, resilience, and sustainability that global tourism demands.

Next Steps

68. The UN Tourism Roadmap will be operationalized drawing on UN Tourism’s existing institutional capacity, regional presence and partnerships. Coordination and implementation arrangements will be determined in accordance with the applicable institutional framework, subject to the approval of the competent governing bodies where required and the availability of resources. Any activities giving rise to additional financial obligations will be contingent upon voluntary and extrabudgetary contributions and will not entail additional costs to the regular budget of UN Tourism, in accordance with resolution 795(XXVI).

69. The roadmap will be rolled out in three coordinated tracks.

- First, implementing the AI Maturity Self-Assessment Tool, and promoting ethical and accountable AI use in tourism, drawing on relevant UN recommendations and international frameworks.

- Second, the Capacity-Building Track mobilizes human and technical resources: launch of the AI Skills Programme, explore the possibility of engaging technical experts, as appropriate and subject to required approvals and available resources for the potential working group, and initiation of online learning programs tailored to the Exploring, Implementing, and Consolidating maturity levels.

- Third, the Technology Track will support the implementation of technology-related projects in interested Member States, subject to the availability of voluntary contributions and the applicable legal and institutional framework. Any proposed activities will be developed in consultation with interested Member States and relevant partners and implemented subject to the required approvals and available resources. Public-private partnerships may be explored, where appropriate, in accordance with the applicable rules and procedures.

70. The above tracks are subject to the applicable legal and institutional framework and, where required, authorization by the competent governing body.

71. Implementation support may be made available to Member States according to their maturity level and needs: Exploring countries receive foundational diagnostics, governance guidance, and access to international best practices (those shared by Member States through the survey, as well as any new ones that may emerge); Implementing countries receive targeted technical support, access to financing, and opportunities to host pilot projects; Consolidating countries are invited to lead regional working groups, mentor peer states, and contribute to global standard-setting.

72. These three implementation tracks will operate across the three phases, with priorities and activities evolving according to the objectives of each phase.

73. Implementation will be monitored through progress reports, updates at statutory events. Success metrics include adoption of the maturity assessment tool, Member States in pilot projects, and demonstrated progress on the four core dimensions (data infrastructure, governance, strategy and regulation, workforce capacity and skills, interoperability) as measured by a Global AI Maturity Index.

74. From ideas to action: this Roadmap is UN Tourism’s invitation to build, together, a tourism sector where artificial intelligence serves people and planet and guarantees prosperity for all.

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Annex I: List of respondents to the Member States' consultation on the Riyadh Declaration

Africa

Benin
Burkina Faso
Cabo Verde
Cameroon
Côte d'Ivoire
Gambia (the)
Guinea
Kenya
Mauritius
Mozambique
Niger
Nigeria
Seychelles
Sierra Leone
Somalia
Zambia

East Asia / Pacific

Brunei Darussalam
Indonesia
Japan
Malaysia
Mongolia
Myanmar
Philippines
Republic of Korea
Thailand

South Asia

Bhutan
India
Iran, Islamic Republic of
Maldives
Sri Lanka

Middle East

Bahrain
Egypt
Jordan
Kuwait
Lebanon
Libya
Oman
Saudi Arabia
Qatar
Syrian Arab Republic
United Arab Emirates

The Americas

Argentina
Belize
Chile
Colombia
Cuba
Ecuador
El Salvador
Guatemala
Jamaica
Mexico
Nicaragua
Panama
Paraguay
Peru
Uruguay

Europe

Andorra
Austria
Bosnia and Herzegovina
Bulgaria
Croatia
Cyprus
Czechia
France
Georgia
Germany
Hungary
Israel
Italy
Kazakhstan
Lithuania
Malta
Monaco
Portugal
Serbia
San Marino
Slovakia
Slovenia
Spain
Switzerland
Türkiye
Ukraine