

**Guidance documents in support of the framework for the
International Year of Sustainable and Resilient Tourism 2027**

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Flagship Events

The International Year of Sustainable and Resilient Tourism 2027 (hereinafter, the International Year) provides a global platform to advance tourism as a driver of sustainable development and resilience. Mandated by the United Nations General Assembly and facilitated by UN Tourism, the International Year aims to mobilize governments, the United Nations system, international and regional organizations, the private sector, academia and civil society around a shared agenda to strengthen tourism's contribution to inclusive economic growth, environmental stewardship and social cohesion.

The designation of an International Year creates a rare, time-bound political window in which attention, commitment and visibility converge. It generates a unique momentum that goes beyond routine sectoral exchanges and allows tourism to be positioned within broader debates on resilience, territorial development and sustainable transformation. In this context, one flagship event per region will serve as a defining milestone of the International Year, transforming global ambition into regionally anchored progress. These moments will help accelerate alignment across policy areas, stimulate durable partnerships and translate shared objectives into concrete pathways that extend beyond 2027.

Taken together, the five flagship events (hereafter “the flagship events”) will shape a coherent global architecture under the International Year, reinforcing tourism's structural role in strengthening inclusive and resilient societies and ensuring that the momentum generated in 2027 contributes meaningfully to the evolving post-2030 development landscape.

I. Objectives

Under the International Year, the flagship events, one hosted in each UN Tourism region, will serve as defining milestones of 2027. While regionally anchored, each event will carry global relevance, addressing structural dimensions of sustainability and resilience that extend beyond regional boundaries.

Each event will translate the thematic pillars of the International Year into region-specific leadership and action. By focusing on distinct regional priorities, the events will reflect diverse economic structures, development pathways and risk environments, while contributing to a shared global narrative.

Together, the flagship events will form a coherent and differentiated architecture that ensures balanced geographic representation, thematic depth and strategic complementarity. Rather than duplicating discussions, they will demonstrate how sustainable tourism strengthens inclusion, resilience and long-term competitiveness across diverse global contexts.

II. Opening and closing of the International Year

1. Opening ceremony

The event will serve as the formal opening moment of the International Year, marking the transition from the preparatory phase of 2026 to a year of global implementation.

The launch will underscore that the International Year is not a stand-alone celebration, but a coordinated global effort designed to strengthen tourism's contribution to resilience and inclusion while preparing the sector for the post-2030 development framework.

Particular attention will be given to National Committees as the backbone of implementation, the central role of capacity-building in translating principles into practice and the contribution of the five flagship events in shaping regionally grounded yet globally relevant outcomes.

The event will clearly position the International Year as a structured consultation process for the positioning of tourism within the evolving Agenda 2030+ discussions. As communication materials and campaign elements will already have been introduced in advance, the opening will focus on setting political direction, reinforcing institutional coherence and consolidating a shared commitment.

To fulfil this role effectively, the Opening should be organized as a high-level half-day event with arrangements that enable broad global access for Member States, facilitate the participation of Steering Committee members and ensure strong international media involvement. The format and programme should be developed in line with the overall architecture of the International Year and the host setting. Given the political importance and global visibility of the Opening, the host arrangement should also ensure an appropriate level of financial and organizational support so that the event can be delivered to the standard required for a major milestone of the International Year.

2. Closing ceremony

The closing moment, possibly anchored at FITUR in early 2028, will be the opportunity for UN Tourism and all stakeholders to reflect and inform on the performance and impact of the International Year. More importantly, it will present the consolidated outcome of the global consultation process as the central legacy of the Year.

This outcome, derived from flagship and other events held throughout the Year, national processes, flagship reports and the rolling analytical roadmap, will form the substantive basis for tourism's positioning in the post-2030 negotiations.

In this context, lead Member States and institutional representatives, including the Chair of the Committee on Tourism and Sustainability, the Chair of the Executive Council and members of the Steering Committee, will jointly outline the next phase of engagement within the UN process.

While the Closing Ceremony will mark the official conclusion of the International Year, it will also set out how its findings, conclusions and recommendations can continue to inform and shape the coordinated negotiation phase, ensuring that tourism's contribution to resilience, inclusion and sustainable development is carried forward through structured leadership and coalition-building at the global level.

3. Flagship events

Themes and partners

This section outlines the thematic focus of the Flagship Events, one to be held in each region as a central component of the International Year. These events are directly linked to the thematic pillars of the International Year and translate global objectives into region-specific priorities. Each Flagship Event will address a defining regional dimension of sustainability and resilience, contributing to a coherent global architecture while reflecting diverse development contexts and risk environments.

The below themes and partners are intended as proposals for the consideration of the Member States and alternative themes and partners may also be proposed by interested host States. The final decision on the themes and venues of the flagship events will be taken by the UN Tourism Secretary-General after due consideration of the proposals received by Member States.

3.1. Africa

Theme: Biodiversity, Rural Livelihoods and Resilient Local Economies

Many destinations around the world depend on nature-based tourism. Strengthening local value chains and integrating biodiversity protection enhances long-term economic stability and community resilience. Tourism in these contexts is closely intertwined with ecosystem integrity and community wellbeing, making it a powerful lever for inclusive and sustainable growth.

The event will focus on:

- Tourism financing for protected areas;
- Community-based tourism models;
- Youth employment and skills development;
- Enhancing the positioning and branding of destinations.

3.2. Americas

Theme: Financing Resilient Tourism Value Chains

Tourism represents both a mature economic sector and a critical source of income for vulnerable economies. Strengthening tourism value chains through innovative financing mechanisms and enhanced support to micro, small and medium-sized enterprises is essential to protect destinations from economic volatility and systemic shocks.

Sustainable tourism finance and risk-sharing instruments can reinforce economic stability, promote digital integration and strengthen the resilience of tourism-dependent communities.

The event will focus on:

- Public–private investment models;
- Innovative financing and risk-sharing instruments;
- SME resilience and digital transformation;
- Strengthening regional tourism value chains.

3.3. Asia-Pacific

Theme: Skills, Innovation and Resilient Tourism Growth

In many destinations, tourism development combines dynamic economic growth with rapid technological innovation and evolving labour market conditions. At the same time, destinations face demographic shifts, climate exposure and increasing competitive pressures. Strengthening tourism resilience in this context requires a focus on human capital, innovation ecosystems and adaptive growth models.

By investing in skills development, fostering entrepreneurship and integrating technological innovation into tourism systems, destinations can strengthen long-term competitiveness while ensuring that growth remains inclusive and resilient.

The event will focus on:

- Workforce development, lifelong learning and skills mobility;
- Innovation ecosystems and digital transformation in tourism;
- Support to SMEs and start-up environments;
- Adaptive growth models in rapidly expanding destinations;
- Integrating climate awareness into long-term tourism planning.

3.4. Europe

Theme: Strengthening Inclusive and Resilient Territories through Sustainable Tourism

Sustainable tourism plays a leading role in maintaining connectivity, strengthening transport and digital infrastructure and supporting high-value economic activity across varied geographic contexts.

By advancing inclusive and balanced territorial development, sustainable tourism helps ensure that prosperity is broadly shared, regional disparities are addressed and demographic vitality is sustained. In doing so, tourism reinforces social cohesion and strengthens the long-term resilience and competitiveness of the world's diverse territories.

The event will focus on:

- Tourism as a driver of balanced territorial development and regional cohesion;
- Strengthening connectivity and infrastructure in diverse geographic contexts;
- Inclusive growth models that address demographic change and regional disparities;
- Sustainable investment strategies in culturally and environmentally sensitive areas;
- Integrating tourism into broader territorial and resilience policy frameworks.

3.5. Middle East

Theme: Diversification, Stability and Long-Term Transformation

Tourism is increasingly positioned as a central pillar of economic diversification. As countries pursue structural transformation, sustainable tourism investment contributes to employment generation, heritage preservation and long-term economic resilience.

Strengthening environmental sustainability and regional cooperation will reinforce tourism's role in supporting stability and inclusive development.

The event will focus on:

- Diversification beyond traditional economic sectors;
- Sustainable investment frameworks;
- Technology and Innovations;
- Heritage-led regeneration.

Hosting Conditions

It should be recalled that in accordance with [resolution 662\(XXI\)](#), the General Assembly explicitly requests that Member States hosting a UN Tourism meeting provide the conditions set forth in the template agreement developed by the Secretariat, which serves as the legal framework for host country agreements. It is based primarily on Article 32 of the [Statutes](#), the [Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the Specialized Agencies](#) and its [Annex XVIII](#) (applicable to UN Tourism), relevant General Assembly resolutions, and aligns with the overall United Nations policy on the matter. It is recommended that Member States interested in hosting a flagship event review the template agreement in advance to preparing a bid.

4. UN System engagement

A central political objective of the International Year will be to secure sustained high-level engagement within the wider United Nations system and to ensure that tourism is substantively reflected in discussions shaping the post-2030 development framework.

Engagement will begin in 2026, aligned with major intergovernmental milestones. The High-Level Political Forum in July 2026 and the 81st session of the United Nations General Assembly in September

2026 will provide early opportunities to position tourism within broader sustainable development debates and to initiate dialogue with the incoming President of the General Assembly. Early coalition-building among Member States will be essential to explore the establishment of a thematic focus on tourism during the 2027 session.

The 2027 SDG Summit, convened at Head-of-State level, represents a pivotal political moment. This milestone will allow tourism's contribution to resilience, inclusion and structural transformation to be reflected within the mid-term review of the 2030 Agenda.

Engagement in environmental negotiation spaces in 2026 will serve as preparation for the International Year. In particular, CBD COP17 provides a high-impact opportunity to consolidate tourism's role within biodiversity finance and nature-positive economic models. As the Biodiversity Conference convenes biennially, substantive and visible engagement will be essential. Building on the successful positioning achieved at the previous COP, tourism can further demonstrate its unique capacity to generate economic value from nature while reinforcing conservation incentives, including through net-positive approaches developed in partnership with key private sector actors.

Across these processes, the focus will be on securing durable outcomes, including joint policy briefs, structured contributions to outcome documents and coordinated cross-agency initiatives. The objective is to move beyond visibility and ensure that tourism is integrated into substantive policy language that will inform the emerging post-2030 negotiations.

5. UN Tourism GA and World Tourism Day

5.1. World Tourism Day (27 September 2027)

Hosted by Cabo Verde with the theme “Transforming Tourism through Education,” will provide an important milestone. It will highlight the role of education, skills and human capital in building resilience across the sector and will mobilise youth, academia, training institutions and industry partners around this agenda. As a widely recognised global observance, World Tourism Day will strengthen public engagement in the International Year and create momentum in the weeks leading up to the General Assembly, linking the campaign's broader narrative with the more technical and policy-oriented discussions that will follow.

5.2. UN Tourism General Assembly (October/ November 2027)

The GA will provide a very unique and important platform for presenting the key analytical outputs, including the flagship studies and the rolling analytical roadmap for the post-2030 agenda and for showcasing Member State achievements emerging from national committees, regional consultations and capacity-building activities.

The Assembly will also enable a high-level debate on the future positioning of tourism in global development frameworks and serve as the moment to consolidate the legacy of the International Year, whether through ministerial dialogue, the adoption of final recommendations or the consideration of pathways that may extend its impact beyond 2027.