

5th UNWTO International Conference on Tourism Statistics

Session II: Linking Tourism Statistics and Sustainability

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Purpose

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Process to develop environmental indicators for New Zealand tourism

- Why was this undertaken
- What was considered
- What has been established
- Future steps

Tourism in New Zealand

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Tourism is important to the New Zealand economy:

- 18.3% of exports
- 9.2% of GDP (direct and indirect)
- 9.7% of employment (direct and indirect)

The New Zealand tourism experience is highly reliant on the quality of the natural environment



New Zealand Tourism Strategy 2015

Action 3.5

Develop indicators for the sector to measure, manage and monitor environmental impacts, and use these to evaluate performance over time.

Ministry of Tourism established a project to action this recommendation

Objective

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Overall objective of the project

To establish consistent and replicable information to monitor the relationship between tourism and the environment

The indicators need to represent a 'national' position rather than 'local' or 'site-specific' performance



Two overarching goals

- Monitoring the visitor's experience of the New Zealand environment
- Monitoring the tourism sector's impacts on the New Zealand environment

Focus of Project

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Focus to ensure:

- consistency with New Zealand's overall system of national environmental indicators
- The indicators address the environmental issues most important to New Zealand as a tourism destination

Project Limitations

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In-house Ministry of Tourism project

- A 'one staff-member' project
- No funding to buy or develop new data sources

Project Steps

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Seeing what else was out there...

- UNWTO Indicators Guidebook
- Practice in other countries
- New Zealand's National Environmental Indicators

Project Steps

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Identification of potential indicators

In an ideal world, what would we want to include as indicators

Long wish-list – hundreds of potential indicators



Assessment of current data to support the indicators

- Looked at a wide range of data that might support the indicators
- Assessed:
 - Availability
 - Reliability
 - Ability to replicate



Identification of indicators

- Selected 19 indicators:
 - Represented good coverage of the areas needing to be covered
 - Based on existing data that was reliable and replicable
 - Some changes to existing surveys were agreed
 - Agreements reached with the data holders/suppliers to provide on an annual basis (both public and private sector)

19 Indicators

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Covering

- Waste
- Water – quality, use
- Energy – distance travelled, efficiency
- Greenhouse gas
- Visitor perceptions
- Bio-security
- Conservation

19 Indicators

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- Satisfaction with rubbish bins and waste disposal facilities
- Water quality at monitored coastal swimming spot
- Bacterial water quality at monitored freshwater swimming spots
- Annual water usage of New Zealand Hotel Council members
- Perception of environmental practices of activity & attraction
- Perception of environmental practices of accommodation operators
- Perception of environmental practices of transport operators
- Visitor vehicle kilometres travelled: by mode of travel and per \$ to economy
- Efficiency of NZ's rental vehicle fleet.
- Commercial tourism vehicles meeting 3 & 5 star exhaust emissions standards
- Energy consumed by the tourism sector (transport and accommodation)
- Annual electricity and gas usage of hotels
- Greenhouse gases produced by tourism sector (transport & accommodation)
- Percentage of Qualmark members with 'Qualmark Enviro' accreditation.
- Satisfaction with beautiful natural landscapes and scenery
- Number of undeclared bio-security seizures per 1,000 overseas passengers.
- Percentage of New Zealand's territorial sea in marine reserves.
- Percentage of New Zealand's land legally protected for conservation

Delivering the Indicators

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First reporting in April 2009

To be updated annually (or more regularly as the data allows)

To be published on the Ministry of Tourism website

Looking Forward

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Key priorities are to

- Test the use of the indicators when launched
- Consider new data sources and how existing data can be made suitable for indicator use
- Ensuring alignment with evolving international and domestic best practice

Key thoughts

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- There are so many potential indicators
- There is a shortage of good quality and relevant data
- A practical approach is needed to reconcile these two
- Scaling down to a small number of achievable, replicable and affordable indicators is essential

We consider the indicators will be a permanent fixture with a modest ongoing cost and so should provide a high return on the effort involved in establishing them.