United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO)

MUNUC 33

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAIR LETTER.....**3**

COMMITTEE HISTORY.....**5**

TOPIC A: SEA TRAVEL.....**7**

Statement of the Problem.....7

History of the Problem.....14

Past Actions..... 18

Possible Solutions.....22

Bloc Positions.....26

Glossary.....32

Bibliography.....33

TOPIC B: CULTURAL HERITAGE AND ECOTOURISM.....**36**

Statement of the Problem.....36

History of the Problem.....41

Past Actions..... 44

Possible Solutions..... 48

Bloc Positions.....51

Glossary.....57

Bibliography.....58

CHAIR LETTER

Dear Delegates,

Welcome to the United Nations World Tourism Organization at MUNUC 33! My name is Lucia Poggi, and I will be your committee chair at this year's conference. I am so excited to meet and work with all of you!

I am currently a second-year student at the University of Chicago, hopefully majoring in Political Science and Economics. Last year, I served as an Assistant Chair for the Obama 2008 campaign crisis committee at MUNUC 32. I have a wide range of interests but am especially interested in domestic and electoral politics, sustainable travel and agriculture, and marine tourism. Apart from MUNUC, on campus, I am a consultant for Eckhart Consulting, a member of the Outdoor Adventure Club, and a Ranger for the Phoenix Outdoor Program, a pre-orientation backpacking program for freshmen. I've spent my past few summers teaching whitewater kayaking at a local day camp, and I recently interned for a political and corporate advertising agency.

I hope you are as excited as I am to explore tourism through the lenses of sea travel and ecotourism and cultural tourism. Though you may know quite a bit about these topics – and have even experienced or participated in them yourselves – I hope that exploring them in depth and with a specific focus on their ramifications for sustainable development and tourism will be interesting and, hopefully, fun. Sea travel is wildly popular and growing but can have huge impacts on our ecosystems and the local cultures and populations of destinations and port cities. Ecotourism and cultural tourism are growing subsectors of the tourism industry that offer major opportunities for sustainable development but, conversely, may also have adverse effects when allowed to be mismanaged or corrupted. Balancing the benefits of tourism for economic and cultural growth with potential negative effects will be a key component of our debate and your resolutions.

Over the coming months, you will spend time learning about and delving deep into these topics and their nuances and relationships. I hope you discover new aspects of tourism and the world that you

previously didn't know about, or even just a fun fact or two along the way. Please reach out to me if you have any questions about MUNUC, our topics, the University of Chicago, or anything else. I look forward to seeing you at MUNUC 33!

Best,

Lucia Poggi

COMMITTEE HISTORY

The United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) has its roots in the International Union of Official Travel Organisations (IUOTO), the first meeting of which was held in the Hague in 1947 following the dissolution of the International Union of Official Tourist Propaganda Organizations (IUOTPO).[1] In 1948, the European Travel Commission (ETC) was created within the IUOTO and was followed over the next nine years by regional commissions for Africa, the Middle East, Central Asia, and the Americas.[2] Over the next several years, the IUOTO participated in a number of United Nations conferences and, in 1967, declared it the International Tourist Year.[3]

In September of 1970, the IUOTO adopted the Statutes of the World Tourism Organization (WTO), following pressure generated by the 1969 General Assembly and Intergovernmental Conference to create an organization like the UNWTO.[4] Five years later, the first General Assembly of the WTO met, where Robert Lonati, who had served as Secretary-General of the IUOTO since 1957, was selected as Secretary-General of the WTO.[5] Since its inception, the UNWTO has discussed and debated many topics related to tourism and has produced a number of reports and documents, including the Tourism Bill of Rights and Tourist Code in 1985 and the Global Code of Ethics in 1999.[6]

Now, the UNWTO focuses on promoting tourism as a mechanism for economic and political development, ensuring sustainability and competitiveness, and supporting and engaging with both member nations and non-governmental organizations alike.[7] 159 member states, 6 associate members, and over 500 affiliate members collaborate on projects and discussions across the globe,[8] tackling challenges and determining the future of tourism and our world. In particular, the UNWTO

[1] "History," UNWTO, accessed September 9, 2020, https://www.unwto.org/history#1970.
[2] "History."
[3] "History."
[4] "History."
[5] "History."
[6] "History."
[7] "About Us," UNWTO, accessed September 9, 2020, https://www.unwto.org/about-us.
[8] "About Us."

has been working toward the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), using tourism as a means of achieving such goals.[9]

[9] "Tourism 4 SDGs," UNWTO, accessed September 9, 2020, https://www.unwto.org/tourism4sdgs.

TOPIC A: SEA TRAVEL

Statement of the Problem

Sea travel is a very popular way to engage in tourism all over the globe, especially to destinations that may be less accessible or suited to travel by water, including coastal cities and far-flung locales like the Galapagos and Alaska island chains. However, sea travel poses a number of risks and challenges and must be properly managed – by everyone involved – in order to ensure that sea travelers can enjoy their experiences while not risking the stability and safety of cultures, environments, and economies. Sea travel, especially cruising, has been increasing significantly in recent years, prompting bigger boats, additional destinations, cooler destination activities, and greater impacts on the world. An estimated 30 million people were projected to take to the seas via cruise in 2020, compared to 17.8 million people who cruised in 1999.[10] Of course, this projection was prior to the coronavirus pandemic, which devastated the industry.

Though these figures do not include people who charter private boats, yacht travel has also been growing, including to typical destinations like the Mediterranean and Caribbean and to newer, less traveled (but also potentially more fragile) locations such as the Amazon.[11] Yacht travel poses many of the same issues as cruise travel, albeit on a significantly smaller scale given the differences in sizes between the boats and between the industries as a whole. Sea travel is growing in popularity and accessibility and therefore is becoming a bigger sector of the tourism industry. As the leading organization regarding global tourism, the United Nations World Tourism Organization is committed to and responsible for promoting responsible, sustainable, and accessible tourism. As such, the UNWTO must ensure that cruise travel – and its growth – and yachting are sustainable, responsible, and beneficial for the travelers as well as other stakeholders, including destinations, ports, and economically reliant citizens.

[10] Francesca Street, "Is the Cruise Industry Responsible for Overtourism?," CNN Travel, August 16, 2019, https://www.cnn.com/travel/article/overtourism-cruise-industry/index.html.
[11] Kate Lardy, "Charter Course: 2019 Trends for the Charter Market," Boat International, March 5, 2019, https://www.boatinternational.com/charter/luxury-yacht-charter-advice/charter-course-2019-trends-for-the-charter-market--39835.

Sea travel is defined as "any movement of goods and/or passengers using seagoing vessels on voyages which are undertaken wholly or partly at sea."[12]

For the purposes of what the UNWTO will discuss during conference, sea travel will be limited to those voyages undertaken for the purpose of recreation and tourism, including cruises and private yachting, and primarily to those voyages taken overnight or designed to be longer than a day or two. In other words, the UN World Tourism Organization will be considering sea travel, rather than sea tourism – adventures such as fishing or scuba diving that take place in planned activities from land are a different consideration. Ships that operate solely for the purpose of transport, shipping, and trade will also not be considered in during conference.

A major difference in sea travel from the rest of the tourism industry is the sheer number and variety of stakeholders in any given cruise, ship, or itinerary. Most cruise passengers are from the United States, followed by China, Germany, and the United Kingdom,[13] but the most popular destinations include the Caribbean, the Mediterranean, and non-Mediterranean Europe.[14] This means that a number of very different countries are in tight relationships with one another and must manage economic intricacies, regulatory differences, and so on while also navigating their own priorities.

One particular issue is the issue of flagging and how a ship's flag plays into the regulations to which a ship is subjected and how issues can be managed. Every ship on the ocean must have a "flag state," which then controls and regulates the ship subject to the flag country's laws.[15] For example, a ship flagged in the United States is subject to U.S. law, as well as international maritime law, and inspections. A "flag of convenience" is any ship flagged in a country that's different from the country of the ship's owners.[16] Many ships are flagged as flags of convenience, often to try to avoid taxes and regulations found in their home nations; the practice has existed for many years. In the U.S., 95% of

[12] "Sea Transport," OECD Glossary of Statistical Terms, March 13, 2002, https://stats.oecd.org/glossary/detail.asp?ID=4277.
[13] "2020 State of the Cruise Industry Outlook" (Cruise Lines International Association, 2020), https://cruising.org/-/media/research-updates/research/state-of-the-cruise-industry.pdf.
[14] "2019 Cruise Trends & Industry Outlook" (Cruise Lines International Association, 2019), https://cruising.org/news-and-research/-/media/CLIA/Research/CLIA-2019-State-of-the-Industry.pdf.
[15] "Cruise Ship Registry, Flags of Convenience, Flag State Control," CruiseMapper, November 26, 2015, https://www.cruisemapper.com/wiki/758-cruise-ship-registry-flags-of-convenience-flag-state-control.
[16] "Cruise Ship Registry, Flags of Convenience, Flag State Control."

operating cruise ships are flagged in other countries (Liberia and Panama are the most popular).[17] These differences in flags, in addition to bringing in other stakeholders, can also pose challenges for regulation and management of cruise ships and their impacts all over the globe.

Finally, other nations – such as New Zealand – are growing rapidly both as home nations and destination ports, giving them a particularly unique set of considerations in the global discussion surrounding sea travel.[18] All of these factors combine to make determining who should be making what decisions, what is at stake, and who gets to make the rules quite difficult in the sector of sea travel and tourism.

Current Situation

Environmental Effects

Sea travel – particularly cruising, given its scale and popularity – has a huge impact on the environment, as any sort of major transportation does. In addition to its effects on our oceans and marine life, its sheer scale has an impact on the environments of its destinations as well. Cruising allows for a huge number of tourists to enter ports at the same exact time, leading to a concentration in tourism that can lead to overcrowding and the environmental difficulties that come alongside it. Many ports, such as Barcelona and Mallorca, are polluted due to the sheer number of travelers that come through the city each day.[19] And in Santorini, for example, garbage has doubled in the best five years thanks to the sudden and massive influx of concentrated tourism.[20] Managing the environmental impacts of tourism is not limited to the cruise ships themselves but also to the tourists.

Furthermore, pollution is not limited to smaller cruise companies, or to the destinations themselves. Large cruise companies have consistently been punished for and found guilty of dumping waste and

[17] "Cruise Ship Pollution: Background, Laws and Regulations, and Key Issues," Every CRS Report, December 15, 2010, https://www.everycrsreport.com/reports/RL32450.html.
[18] "Tourism Growth Is All at Sea," *The New Zealand Herald*, August 16, 2019, sec. General News, https://search-proquest-com.proxy.uchicago.edu/docview/2273244565/4866D36C91734799PQ/10?accountid=14657.
[19] Street, "Is the Cruise Industry Responsible for Overtourism?"
[20] Talia Lakritz, "7 Places Being Ruined by Cruise Ships," Business Insider, February 5, 2020, https://www.insider.com/cruise-ships-environmental-impact-tourism-2019-9.

over-polluting. One study cites that Carnival Corporation emitted almost ten times more sulphur oxide around Europe than all European cars in a single year.[21] In addition to general oceanic and air pollution, cruise ships often dump waste and wastewater throughout the oceans and in port. Loose international flagging laws make it difficult to regulate many cruise ships, as they register in "flags of convenience:" in five years during the 1990s, foreign-flagged cruise ships illegally dumped waste in U.S. waters 87 times.[22]

These environmental effects have potential long-term consequences, too – in one horrifying story, a Carnival Corporation ship spilled an undefined thousands of gallons of waste into the waters surrounding the Great Barrier Reef, a global treasure and a huge source of tourism income for Australia.[23] Only in the future will the consequences of that sort of damage be known, as

[21] Street, "Is the Cruise Industry Responsible for Overtourism?"
[22] "Cruise Ship Pollution."
[23] Lakritz, "7 Places Being Ruined by Cruise Ships."

understandings of ocean pollution and reef damage grow, but these consequences certainly have ramifications not only for the reef and ecosystem but the Australian and global tourism sectors and economies.

Furthermore, cruise ships often leave their engines on for the entirety of their stay in port, and their noise can disrupt underwater wildlife, such as dolphins and turtles. Anchoring in busy ports – when ships are unable to dock and tie up due to demand – can drag anchors along the seabed, which can kill coral reefs, sea grasses, and other organisms.[24] Other fears and considerations include the transmission of organisms from one locale to another, one reason the Galapagos Islands instituted strict regulations and screening systems, as the introduction of a new species could wreak havoc on ecosystems.[25] All of these have a direct impact not only on global oceans but the immediate ecosystems surrounding the ships, which could pose consequences in the future for ports that rely on their surrounding ecosystems and nature to offer activities and incentives for cruise ships and cruisers alike.

Economic and Cultural Effects

Cruise ships have a huge economic impact across the globe and especially on their destination ports. In 2019, cruise ships generated $134 billion in economic impact, including billions of dollars in salaries and millions of jobs.[26] Many destination ports are absolutely reliant upon the tourism generated by cruise ships – in Dubrovnik, Croatia, 80% of locals are reliant on tourism for their livelihoods.[27] Even in the U.S., the cruise industry provides thousands of jobs and an influx of millions of dollars. Cruise ships argue that they pay a huge amount of money to ports for the ability to dock and use the port – which they often do – and that they therefore help strengthen local and global economies. But ports – like the Bahamas used to – also sometimes pay millions of dollars in incentives,[28] which makes

[24] Kate Connolly and Sean Smith, "A Rising Tide: 'Overtourism' and the Curse of the Cruise Ships," *The Guardian*, September 16, 2019, sec. Cities, https://www.theguardian.com/business/2019/sep/16/a-rising-tide-overtourism-and-the-curse-of-the-cruise-ships.
[25] Lakritz, "7 Places Being Ruined by Cruise Ships."
[26] Street, "Is the Cruise Industry Responsible for Overtourism?"
[27] Connolly and Smith, "A Rising Tide."
[28] Ron Hurtibise, "Bahamas Unhappy with Cruise Passenger Spending; No Longer Paying Incentives to Cruise Lines," South Florida Sun Sentinel, October 22, 2018, https://www.sun-sentinel.com/business/fl-bz-bahamas-unhappy-with-cruise-passenger-spending-20181022-story.html.

figuring out the actual economic benefits even more difficult, especially when taking into account increased infrastructure and government needs to manage the ships.

The relevance of that influx of cash to locals, however, can be difficult to estimate – many locals do not receive these economic benefits if they are not working directly with cruises to offer tours and so forth. In addition, of course, the environmental impacts on the destinations and their surrounding waters are difficult to estimate and may only become apparent in the future. Furthermore, the economic benefits can be difficult to gauge. As a result, some ports, like in Portland, Maine, spend large sums of money renovating and adding to their port infrastructure to accommodate larger ships, even though those ships do not always generate enough profit to benefit the lost dollars. Portland is also an example of a port that has also run into issues with existing businesses, such as a private ferry company, that now are considering relocating or have run into logistical difficulties due to the influx of cruise ships and shrinking harbor space.[29] Just because a cruise ship pays money to a given port or provides jobs and economic impact does not mean that locals are the beneficiaries, or that that monetary influx is distributed equitably.

In addition to their economic impacts, cruise ships also have a significant impact on the daily lives and cultures of their destinations. Many destinations report damaged historical sites and generally excessive tourism. Plus, there are a number of anecdotal accounts that report shifts in businesses from unique small businesses owned by locals to touristy souvenir shops, which could mean a potential decline in economic value and a certain decline in cultural value and sustainability.[30] In Venice, a UNESCO report stated that the tourism, especially the high concentration due to cruise ships, is "endanger[ing] the identity and the cultural and social integrity of the property."[31]

Like unique environments such as the coral reefs, for many destinations, the culture and history are a huge draw for the cruisers and tourists. Some tourists even now have noticed the influx of concentrated tourism that comes with the cruise ships and are reporting less enjoyable experiences due to the overcrowding.[32] Some cruise ship companies have even begun to build their own ports in

[29] Colin Woodard, "Benefits of Cruise Ships Overstated," *Morning Sentinel*, June 11, 2018, https://search-proquest-com.proxy.uchicago.edu/docview/2052734440/fulltext/23153C011D6F4657PQ/1?accountid=14657.
[30] Connolly and Smith, "A Rising Tide."
[31] Lakritz, "7 Places Being Ruined by Cruise Ships."
[32] Street, "Is the Cruise Industry Responsible for Overtourism?"

order to mitigate their impact and to provide a more enjoyable, less crowded experience for their patrons.[33] The key is to find a balance between current tourism and sustainability to allow tourism to continue for years to come in order to secure long-term economic success for these destinations.

Cruises offer a fun, exciting way to see a number of destinations all from the comfort of a 'floating hotel.' But they also pose huge risks, especially at the scale to which the cruise industry has grown and continues to grow. As yachting also increases, more and more people have taken to the seas and coastal ports. With that brings opportunities for increased environmental and cultural education, new experiences, and an influx of money, profit, and jobs to destination ports, as well as to countries making and maintaining cruise ships themselves. However, cruise ships are not always as beneficial as they make themselves out to be: they pose a huge number of environmental risks and have deep significant impacts on the cultural health and daily lives of their destinations. The UN World Tourism Organization must seek to establish a more sustainable route to sea travel success that protects the ecosystems and cultures of destination ports, while also providing sustainable and accessible economic success to tourism stakeholders.

An important note, this committee will be mostly concerned with the issues already mentioned in this section: pollution, economic impacts, and overcrowding among them. COVID has had a massive detrimental impact on the cruising industry as a whole, but as much as possible, it will not be a main focus of committee. Resolving the challenges posed by a pandemic to a particular industry is extremely ambitious, far too ambitious to be only a small part of the broader topic here. Delegates should feel free to consider the impacts of COVID on cruising, but this should not be a primary focus of working papers and resolutions. Addressing the aforementioned longstanding economic, cultural, and environmental problems should take precedence.

[33] Street.

History of the Problem

Sea travel has always been a popular way to explore the world, but its popularity has only grown in recent years, which has led to a significant increase in many of the issues with - and benefits of - cruising and sea travel across the globe. Understanding the history of sea travel is critical to understanding its recent growth and the best management practices to more appropriately regulate the industry going forward. One critical question is how best to address sea travel sustainability while promoting the UNWTO's support of tourism.

The first cruise ship - or the closest thing to what we consider a modern cruise ship - was founded in 1818 by Black Ball Line to transport passengers from Europe to North America and vice versa.[34] Notably, Black Ball was one of the first lines to focus on passenger comfort, a precursor to what we know today, as most ships at the time were focusing primarily on transport as well as mail and other sectors of the maritime industry. Several years later, what is now known as P&O Cruises began to operate several small ships to take passengers to the Mediterranean on what is considered the first true leisure cruises, designed simply for the enjoyment of the destination.[35] Prior to this era, any cruising had been done primarily for travel and transport. Throughout the 1800s, ships and cruise lines began to shift to prioritizing passenger comfort and enjoyment over previous priorities such as mail transport, a shift in priorities which continued into the 1900s. However, in 1912, the sinking of the infamous Titanic kicked off a series of events that greatly decreased the prevalence of cruising, including World Wars I and II, in which many cruise ships were used for a variety of wartime purposes, as well as the Great Depression, which decreased the amount of money spent on cruises and the number of passengers.[36] In the 1960s, though, cruises came back with a vengeance: companies began to focus on the destination, rather than the journey, and cruising came into popularity as what we now consider as modern cruising.[37]

On the other hand, yachting came into widespread popularity well before the advent of cruising. Yachts were developed in the 1300s by the Dutch, who initially used the boats to catch pirates and

[34] Michael Grace, "A Brief History of Cruising," *Cruise Passenger* (blog), March 14, 2011, https://cruisepassenger.com.au/a-brief-history-of-cruising/.
[35] Grace.
[36] Grace.
[37] Grace.

other criminals in shallow waters; quickly, however, merchants and other wealthy people began to use these same boats to celebrate their returning merchant and trade ships and for pleasure and status.[38] Furthermore, yacht racing became popular after the return of the exiled King Charles II, when he received a yacht as a gift and was inspired to build more ships and start racing.[39] After the first yacht race was held in 1662, yachting continued to grow in popularity.[40] In the mid-1800s, the advent of internal combustion engines and steam power allowed yachts to become larger and able to travel longer distances, developing into the yachts we now know today.[41] And finally, in 1907, the governing body of yachting was founded, around which time the hobby split into two factions: racing and pleasure.[42] Today, yachting and yachts can run the gamut from small pleasure craft used for racing to massive superyachts used for global travel.

In the past several decades, both sectors of the sea travel industry - cruising and yachting - have grown immensely. Cruising has grown from around four million passengers in 1990 to an expected 24 million in 2020, alongside immense growth in general tourism.[43] Cruise lines that we know today, such as Carnival Cruise Lines and Royal Caribbean Cruise Lines, were founded in the mid-1900s, and their revenue has only continued to increase alongside the popularity of cruises.[44] Around the time of their creation is also when cruising became not only about the destination but also about the experience on board and when a variety of now-common amenities, and a prevalence of an all-inclusive onboard system, came about.[45] However, this has also led to an increase in many of the problems outlined in the Statement of the Problem above. Cruise ships have increased immensely in size, from 20,000 tons for a large ship in the 1970s to 220,000 tons now, and the percentage of ships registered under "flags of convenience," which helps corporations evade taxes and regulations, has increased from 18% in 1970 to around 75% now.[46] These parallel increases only increase the need for

[38] "From Sails to Motors: The History of Yachting," Van Isle Marina, October 22, 2019, https://vanislemarina.com/from-sails-to-motors-the-history-of-yachting/.
[39] "From Sails to Motors."
[40] "From Sails to Motors."
[41] "From Sails to Motors."
[42] "From Sails to Motors."
[43] Jeb Sprague-Silgado, "The Caribbean Cruise Ship Business and the Emergence of a Transnational Capitalist Class," *Journal of World-Systems Research* 23, no. 1 (February 28, 2017): 93–125, https://doi.org/10.5195/jwsr.2017.623.
[44] Sprague-Silgado.
[45] "Cruise Ship Industry," JobMonkey, accessed June 26, 2020, https://www.jobmonkey.com/cruise/necessity_to_pleasure/.
[46] Sprague-Silgado, "The Caribbean Cruise Ship Business and the Emergence of a Transnational Capitalist Class."

regulation and management, as cruise lines grow more powerful, their environmental impact increases, and their economic advantages and disadvantages become more pronounced across the globe.

Now, with the influx of tourism and the huge increases in sea travel, many destinations and ports are heavily reliant on cruise ships for revenue. The cruise industry creates billions of dollars in economic impact each year;[47] although its economic impact can be unevenly distributed, the industry is still a critical player in the tourism industry and the global economy. Though the most popular cruise destinations have remained consistent (primarily the Caribbean and the Mediterranean),[48] additional nations and ports are increasing in popularity, such as New Zealand, posing additional challenges for the management of cruising's cultural, environmental, and economic impacts. There is also a growing expansion of smaller cruise ships that cater to more specific needs and desires, whether that means increased luxury or different destinations, that only serves to increase the number of impactful vessels on the oceans and the overall impact of sea travel.[49] Some of the growth in yachting, as well, can be understood through many of the same factors and desires that are leading to this increase in smaller cruise ships.

Alongside the economic growth, of course, have come more instances of environmental and cultural damage inflicted by cruise ships, even as they claim to - and sometimes actually do - promote global and cultural understanding. Pollution and garbage have plagued popular European ports such as Mallorca and Santorini, as the number of cruise tourists soars with little management or regulation until quite recently.[50] In another example - in 2018 - a ship owned by Carnival Cruises spilled thousands of tons of waste into the Great Barrier Reef, an already damaged and precious ecosystem.[51] Carnival was investigated and fined, but the damage remains. Cruise ships - and the

[47] Francesca Street, "Is the Cruise Industry Responsible for Overtourism?," CNN Travel, August 16, 2019, https://www.cnn.com/travel/article/overtourism-cruise-industry/index.html.
[48] "2019 Cruise Trends & Industry Outlook" (Cruise Lines International Association, 2019), https://cruising.org/news-and-research/-/media/CLIA/Research/CLIA-2019-State-of-the-Industry.pdf.
[49] "Cruise Ship Industry."
[50] Talia Lakritz, "7 Places Being Ruined by Cruise Ships," Business Insider, February 5, 2020, https://www.insider.com/cruise-ships-environmental-impact-tourism-2019-9.
[51] Lauren Kent CNN, "A Cruise Ship Spills Thousands of Liters of Waste in the Great Barrier Reef, Harming Coral Already in Troubled Water," CNN, accessed August 6, 2020, https://www.cnn.com/2018/10/23/health/cruise-ship-spills-waste-in-great-barrier-reef-trnd/index.html.

steady increase of tourists associated with them - have also damaged and decreased existing local culture, historical sites, and local ways of life in places like Venice, Italy.[52]

These are just a few examples of recent moments of environmental, historical, or cultural destruction caused by cruise ships. Though limited information exists on the correlation between sea travel's growth and sea travel's environmental and cultural impacts, they are only increasing as sea travel does, evidenced by ports' increasing pollution and crowds. Although economic reliance upon cruise ships is also driving economic growth, the economic benefits must be balanced with the need to protect local environments, histories, and culture through regulations designed to prevent cruise ships from, for example, getting away with a fine for dumping waste into precious ecosystems like the Great Barrier Reef.

Sea travel has a long, storied history, in terms of both cruising and yachting, and has played and plays a critical role in the global economy and in tourism as a whole. However, in recent decades, the industry's growth has exploded, which has also increased its impacts on the environment, global and local economies, and cultural and historical hotspots. Sea travel, as its history shows, is not going anywhere anytime soon, but management and regulation of its increasing popularity, impact, and risks must become more robust than it has been historically.

[52] Lakritz, "7 Places Being Ruined by Cruise Ships."

Past Actions

Given the global and interstate nature of sea travel, the difficulties of action and of establishing guidelines and regulations are many. Many countries, and even some individual ports, have established their own regulations and rules surrounding cruise ships, sea tourism, and the industry. But many of these guidelines change based on the region; furthermore, not all of these regulations and sentiments are the same across and within regions, as different states and even sometimes ports may have different opinions and rules. There are very few global regulations and rules to manage global sea tourism or ships in international waters. Beyond these difficulties, the nature of the industry makes it difficult to determine jurisdiction when ships are flagged in, traveling in, and docking in different nations regularly.

Individual ports, like Santorini, have instituted their own rules and regulations. In addition, countries like Croatia and Ecuador have done the same. The United States also has its own set of maritime laws that, like in most countries, apply to ships within its waters. Some of these regulations and rules might be cruise-specific, like in Santorini, but others, like in the United States, apply more generally to all ships and the shipping and sea travel industries together.

In Dubrovnik, Croatia, for example, the mayor has instituted a limit on the number of cruise ships allowed to dock per day and will soon limit visitors - not just cruise ships - as well as tax each visitor a small fee.[53]

In the United States, for example, the Clean Water Act dictates sewage discharge and pollution of coastal as well as interstate waterways, which means it applies not only to small boats and yachts but to shipping vessels and cruise ships.[54] American laws also include laws addressing graywater, solid and hazardous waste, and other such issues, but these, again, apply only in American waters and are enforced only by American organizations such as the Coast Guard.

[53] Kate Connolly and Sean Smith, "A Rising Tide: 'Overtourism' and the Curse of the Cruise Ships," *The Guardian*, September 16, 2019, sec. Cities, https://www.theguardian.com/business/2019/sep/16/a-rising-tide-overtourism-and-the-curse-of-the-cruise-ships.
[54] "Cruise Ship Pollution: Background, Laws and Regulations, and Key Issues," Every CRS Report, December 15, 2010, https://www.everycrsreport.com/reports/RL32450.html.

Again, because cruises have so many different countries involved in their industry, the difficulty in management and regulation is significant. Often, this difficulty is most pronounced when ships are not moored at port – and therefore are in international waters – at which points there can be very little jurisdiction or power depending on the broken law or ignored regulation. Existing infrastructure can also have a huge effect on what can be done; Montenegro, for example, has no designated marine reserves and is not a member of the European Union, meaning that ships can circumvent E.U. laws and regulations, such as those on what kind of gas must be used.[55]

The International Maritime Organization (IMO), which sets international maritime standards for its 152 member nations, has implemented the 1973 International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships, which was updated by the Protocol of 1978.[56] MARPOL 73/78 works to address pollution by considering pollution by oil, discharge, sewage, garbage and its disposal, emissions, and other regulations and standards.[57] Under MARPOL 73/78, the country in which a ship is flagged is responsible for that ship's adherence to the standards and regulations.

Some cruise lines have been voluntarily working on improving their environmental, and occasionally cultural and economic impacts, to varying degrees of success. Some have tried new ports – or even new destinations entirely – while others work on plastic reduction or waste production and disposal. One cruise line, Hurtigruten, has phased out the use of unnecessary single-use plastics (some other lines have future goals or deadlines by which to do this as well) and operates the first battery-powered ship.[58] Other cruise lines have been working on utilizing shore power while in port, so as to reduce the need to keep their motors running, or otherwise working to update technology and reduce or eliminate their carbon footprints.[59]

The Cruise Lines International Association (CLIA) and its 25 member lines have also adopted a set of regulations and rules that draw from many of the guidelines set forth by governments across the globe. Generally, gray- and blackwater must be disposed of at least four miles from shore –

[55] Connolly and Smith, "A Rising Tide."
[56] "Cruise Ship Pollution."
[57] "Cruise Ship Pollution."
[58] "2020 Cruise Trends: More Private Islands, Theme Cruises, Expeditions," USA Today, January 1, 2020, https://www.usatoday.com/story/travel/cruises/2020/01/01/2020-cruise-trends-more-private-islands-theme-cruises-expeditions/2785049001/.
[59] "2020 Cruise Trends: More Private Islands, Theme Cruises, Expeditions."

although, of course, this still has ramifications for the overall health of our global oceans – and waste must be disposed of with respect to varying guidelines.[60] Some parts of the industry have also partnered with the organization Conversation International to address biodiversity concerns in port regions, especially the Caribbean and Mediterranean, and have introduced initiatives to help ameliorate some of the biodiversity issues caused by cruise ships. These include but are not limited to cruise maps including important marine ecosystems, passenger awareness, and vendor education.[61] Again, however, these partnerships and regulation adoption are voluntary, meaning they are positive but ultimately meaningless in the face of avoidance, ignorance, or mistakes.

Although some nations and ports are implementing stricter regulations and harsher oversight, other nations and ports continue to welcome cruise lines and their ships with open arms, drawing cruise ships and yachters to their ports in favor of the economic revenues. Regulations and oversight, of course, have the potential to hurt the relationship between a port and cruise line, which can have damaging repercussions depending on the economic systems and importance of tourism that already exist. For example, South Africa, in 2018, spent almost $18 million on a new cruise port in order to draw more tourism and participate in the global growth of tourism already discussed in this background guide.[62] Clearly, this construction and desire for growth and tourism is in direct opposition to some of the feelings surrounding cruise ships in nations like the Bahamas, making global regulation and oversight difficult to create and enforce.

The international nature of sea tourism is a major part of its appeal: sea tourism, and cruising specifically, offers the ability and opportunity to see inaccessible parts of the world and a unique, fun experience on the high seas. But its international nature also makes it very difficult to regulate, as so many different states, jurisdictions, and ports are involved in so many different aspects of the industry. As such, international laws and governing bodies surrounding cruise ships are few and far between and focus primarily on the environmental impact, essentially ignoring potential negative - and even positive - economic or cultural impacts. Furthermore, the confusing jurisdictions make it difficult to enforce existing regulations and laws, especially given cruise lines' sneaky use of flags of

[60] "Cruise Ship Pollution."
[61] "Cruise Ship Pollution."
[62] "CNN Marketplace Africa to Investigate Growth of Cruise Ship Tourism in SA," *Bizcommunity.Com*, March 2, 2018, https://search-proquest-com.proxy.uchicago.edu/docview/2009692757/4866D36C91734799PQ/1?accountid=14657.

convenience. Many destination ports have instituted their own laws and regulations, but these change from region to region and even port to port, and some ports and nations are even trying to generate more cruise ship travel, rather than less.

The UNWTO itself has done little of substance to regulate or manage sea travel and cruise ships. They have hosted several conferences focused on Small Island Developing States (SIDS), which have focused on tourism more broadly but have not emphasized sea travel as a unique challenge within tourism.[63] Results of conferences like these, like the Mauritius Strategy, focus generally on themes important to sea travel such as biodiversity and cultural protection but fail to mention specifically the impacts of cruises and sea travel on such concerns.[64] Going forward, the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) must establish guidelines that take into account environmental, economic, and cultural impacts as well as the difficulty of enforcement and of balancing different member states' needs and desires.

[63] "Small Islands Developing States (SIDS)," World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), accessed August 6, 2020, https://www.unwto.org/sustainable-development/small-islands-developing-states.
[64] "Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States," January 13, 2005, 30.

Possible Solutions

International Cooperation

The United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) can and should develop a plan for international cooperation in sea travel and cruise ship regulation. Given how quickly the cruise industry is growing,[65] consideration of the environmental, economic, and cultural ramifications of such tourism influx and growth is critical to ensuring a sustainable future for everyone. The UNWTO and its member states can build off the voluntary, state-instituted, and MARPOL guidelines that have already been established[66] to create environmental guidelines and rules, but more consideration must be given to potential cultural loss as well as the economic distribution of cruise tourism. Cultural preservation, and ensuring that local populations benefit as much, if not more, from sea travel as ports and governments, is critical to truly sustainable sea travel and to achieving UNWTO goals.

What this looks like will, of course, differ from place to place, given the historical and cultural differences and contexts in each destination. However, local languages, historical sites, and cultural artifacts must be preserved in order to promote sustainable tourism as well as protect the rights of local communities. The UNWTO could encourage limitations on visitors to specific, fragile historical sites, if practical, regardless of limitations on cruise ships. Member states could also fund additional preservation and maintenance efforts at particularly vulnerable sites. An extreme, but effective, measure for language preservation could be the implementation of indigenous language education at elementary schools across a given region. The UNWTO could also encourage member states to participate in cultural awareness and education campaigns, promoting a global tourist that is aware, educated, and interested without being prone to cultural destruction or inadvertently promoting cultural loss.

Like cultural preservation, economic equity and distribution is also difficult to come by, as evidenced by the lack of existing research and evidence on the subject. The UNWTO could establish a fund,

[65] Sprague-Silgado, "The Caribbean Cruise Ship Business and the Emergence of a Transnational Capitalist Class."
[66] "Cruise Ship Pollution."

conference, or program to galvanize such research, seeking to learn whether local populations benefit as much from sea travel as ports and cruise lines would like to say. Local governments could implement regulations and rules requiring cruise ships docking at their ports to use a certain percentage of small businesses when offering tours and activities to cruisers, or ports could offer rent security or grants to small local businesses along the waterfront. As with all else relating to sea travel, solutions to economic equity will look different depending on the sea travel landscape, the economic dependence on sea travel, and the relationship between vendors, ports, and nations, but all can work together to come up with solutions that both sustain sea travel for the foreseeable future and allow tangible economic growth to all facets of a destination, not just local officials and port infrastructure.

Furthermore, the UNWTO also can promote solidarity and cooperation between member states, as a unified front and similar regulations will force more cruise lines and cruise ships to comply, reducing the confusing mess of regulations and the inability to enforce such regulations. Hosting conferences specific to cruise ships and sea travel, for example, would encourage member states to discuss the trials and tribulations as well as possible solutions, rather than solving them as individual ports or nations. Encouraging independent research through organizing, promoting, and providing grants to global, independent research could also empower member nations to collaborate, use each other's resources and influence, and detach from the cruise lines in terms of research on economic, environmental, and cultural impacts. Furthermore, helping to implement a global set of regulations and rules, in tandem with existing international maritime law as well as MARPOL, could eliminate some of the benefits of flags of convenience, empower member states to attack misbehaving corporations more precisely and powerfully, and set all destinations, home countries, and flag states on an equal and level playing field.

Flags of Convenience

The UNWTO can also work to reduce the use of flags of convenience by cruise ships and their parent corporations, as these flags only serve to make regulation and monitoring of cruise ships more difficult and increase the potential for tax evasion and other economic repercussions as well as

environmental disasters.[67] Because of sovereignty and private corporations, addressing flags of convenience is a difficult proposition that will involve work both to get these states to implement additional regulations and to incentivize cruise lines to flag their ships in their actual home port nations. For example, the UNWTO could recommend and help to implement additional, global recommendations, as stated above, in tandem with MARPOL and international maritime laws, thus decreasing some of the benefits ships receive by flying under a flag of convenience. More similar laws across the board would encourage ships to simply fly where they are actually owned and based. Implementing a global policy for punishing hazardous environmental behavior, for example, might reduce the allure of a flag of convenience, as ships would still be subject to regulations, inspections, and fines.

On the other hand, states that are not flags of convenience, or that are not typically, could incentivize, whether through adjusting regulations in cooperation with cruise lines to provide more benefit or by offering economic rewards or priority, cruise lines to fly in their home countries. For example, the United States might implement a policy that provides an economic break to ships that are both owned and flagged in the U.S. Again, flags of convenience pose a particularly thorny problem given national sovereignties, a lack of international power, and the simple but powerful

[67] "Cruise Ship Pollution."

economic draws. But increasing regulations and monitoring in nations that often are flags of convenience, as well as offering these incentives will reduce the tax evasion and environmental disasters that increase and are more difficult to manage when ships are flagged in such states.

Independent Research

The UNWTO and its member states can also increase independent research - ensuring that it is separate from funding by cruise lines and their parent corporations - relating to the actual economic and cultural effects of cruise ships. Currently, the economic benefits of cruise ships are difficult to discern, especially with relation to the indigenous and local populations of a destination port, as most research focuses on bigger numbers like overall revenue, passengers, and port fees.[68] Offering grants, creating independent research committees, or incentivizing research with a focus on local and indigenous populations might be a few routes to examine. An understanding of the relevance of cruise ship travel and sea tourism to local and indigenous communities and economies is critical to implementing regulations and ensuring sustainable cruise ship and sea travel growth that has a beneficial effect on all parties involved, not just cruise lines and state governments.

Redistribution and Renewal

Finally, another possible solution, and what is probably part of a larger plan that the UNWTO must imagine and implement, is the encouragement of new destinations and the redistribution of economic and cultural impacts. Many cruise ship destinations are the same from itinerary to itinerary and cruise line to cruise line.[69] By encouraging new destinations, without encouraging a parallel unsustainable growth in sea travel, environmental impact will be spread throughout the globe, as long as those destinations are appropriately protected. And, furthermore, working with member states to develop ports and infrastructure, and with cruise lines to develop activities and itineraries, will ensure that local and indigenous populations, cultural heritage, and onshore destinations are protected and are equally benefitting from the influx of cruise travel.

[68] Colin Woodard, "Benefits of Cruise Ships Overstated," *Morning Sentinel*, June 11, 2018, https://search-proquest-com.proxy.uchicago.edu/docview/2052734440/fulltext/23153C011D6F4657PQ/1?accountid=14657.
[69] "2019 Cruise Trends & Industry Outlook."

Bloc Positions

As mentioned, sea travel has many different stakeholders from corporations to UN member states, all of whom have a variety of priorities and inclinations surrounding sea travel and its growth and regulation. As such, defining blocs and bloc positions can be and is very difficult, as positions differ from country to country and even sometimes from port to port within a nation.

There are, however, some general trends in terms of where passengers are from, which destinations are most popular, and where ships are flagged, which will be the most salient bloc positions when examining possible solutions or stances. In 2018, most cruise passengers were from North America, followed by Western Europe and Asia.[70] Comparatively, very few cruise passengers hailed from the Caribbean or Central America,[71] notable in particular due to those regions' popularities as destinations. Projected prior to 2020 and the COVID-19 epidemic, 32% of cruises were destined for the Caribbean, followed by 17% for the Mediterranean; no other regions come close to the Caribbean and Mediterranean in terms of attracting cruise ship travel.[72] However, again, because these regions are so general, and have such different economic and cultural priorities, there are very few true bloc positions to define. However, the following are a few examples of how different member states or port cities have handled or are handling the current problem.

Dubrovnik, Croatia

In 2018, three million cruise ship tourists disembarked in Dubrovnik,[73] a huge number for a city of under 30,000 residents.[74] 80% of local Croats depend upon cruise ships and their associated influx of tourism for their livelihoods. However, the huge increase in tourism to Dubrovnik has resulted in a loss of existing businesses, replaced by tourist shops, and alleged damage to important historical and cultural destinations in the city.[75] Dubrovnik is a key example of a city in which its historical and

[70] "2020 State of the Cruise Industry Outlook."
[71] "2020 State of the Cruise Industry Outlook."
[72] "2020 State of the Cruise Industry Outlook."
[73] Connolly and Smith, "A Rising Tide."
[74] "Dubrovnik Population," accessed August 6, 2020, http://population.city/croatia/dubrovnik/.
[75] Connolly and Smith, "A Rising Tide."

cultural sites are a significant draw for tourism and therefore economic growth, making a balance between tourism promotion and sustainability critical to enabling long-term growth.

In 2019, Dubrovnik - again, not Croatia as a whole - limited the cruise ships to just three per day and staggered acceptable docking times. In 2020, control measures increased: the number of tourists will be limited to 4,000 daily, and each will face a small fee beginning in 2021,[76] a way to ensure both reduced tourism and revenue for the city.

Santorini, Greece

Almost one million cruise ship tourists visit Santorini on day trips annually, compounded by robust tourism on land as well. Since 2013, garbage on the island has more than doubled, which leaders, who also emphasize the strain on existing infrastructure, attribute to the increasing influx of tourists.[77] However, cruise ships, like in Dubrovnik, are a critical part of the Santorini and Greek economies, and locals do depend on the tourists for business. Santorini is an example of a disagreement between regional leaders - the mayor - and economic stakeholders such as local retail associations.[78]

Now, Santorini is limiting cruise ship tourists to 8,000 per day, double Dubrovnik's limits.[79] The island has not instituted any other sorts of new regulations or controls on cruise ships. Santorini and Dubrovnik serve as two examples of ports in similar regions engaging in different control techniques and managing varying, different needs of their citizens, tourists, and economies.

The Bahamas

The Bahamas, a hugely popular cruise ship destination and home to some of the cruise lines' private islands, no longer pays cruise lines to come to and dock in their ports.[80] The Bahamas feels that

[76] Connolly and Smith.
[77] Costas Paris, "A Greek Island Paradise Tries to Be a Little Less Welcoming," *Wall Street Journal*, September 1, 2018, sec. Business, https://www.wsj.com/articles/a-greek-island-paradise-tries-to-be-a-little-less-welcoming-1535799602.
[78] Paris.
[79] Paris.
[80] Ron Hurtibise, "Bahamas Unhappy with Cruise Passenger Spending; No Longer Paying Incentives to Cruise Lines," South Florida Sun Sentinel, October 22, 2018, https://www.sun-sentinel.com/business/fl-bz-bahamas-unhappy-with-cruise-passenger-spending-20181022-story.html.

cruise ship passengers do not spend enough money when they disembark, reducing the economic benefits of the cruise ships and reducing the sense behind monetary incentives given to cruise lines.[81]

In the future, the Bahamas plans to incentivize more passengers to disembark or visit by improving their own infrastructure. If monetary incentives return, the Bahamas will most likely relate the incentive amount to the number of passengers that disembark, rather than just to the cruise ship's arrival in port.[82] The Bahamas serves as an example of a hugely popular destination that has focused on the economic - rather than cultural or environmental - side of sea tourism.

St. Kitts and Nevis

On the other hand, as some nations shut down and limit cruises, other nations continue to promote, and even ask for, cruise ships. St. Kitts and Nevis, for example, recently finished construction on a second pier in its capital city of Basseterre.[83] The $48 million build will enable the port to hold three of the largest cruise ships, in line with some of the most popular port destinations in the world.[84] The expansion comes as St. Kitts and Nevis grows in popularity and as sea travel growth shows no signs of slowing. Clearly, while some ports are fed up with the tourism influx, other ports are welcoming the opportunity to show off what their destinations have to offer.

Cozumel, Mexico

The island of Cozumel, Mexico, has a huge amount of biodiversity and ecological value that must be protected but that also makes it an excellent vacation destination. But Cozumel took a slightly different approach to cruise ship management than outright bans or limits, and certainly than inviting them in. A variety of government organizations, private sector corporations, and other stakeholders created and implemented an education plan for cruisers, teaching them about

[81] Hurtibise.
[82] Hurtibise.
[83] Laurie Baratti, "New $48-Million Cruise Pier Opens at Port Zante in St. Kitts and Nevis," TravelPulse, November 10, 2019, https://www.travelpulse.com/news/cruise/new-48-million-cruise-pier-opens-at-port-zante-in-st-kitts-and-nevis.html.
[84] Baratti.

Cozumel's natural ecosystems and biodiversity.[85] In six months, a 30-second educational video shown on cruise ships docking in Cozumel reached an estimated 500,000 people.[86] In addition to the video, the group worked with cruise ships to implement a new water separation program to manage waste and placed pictures and conservation messages in places often passed by cruise ship passengers.[87] These projects offer a new idea and solution for the cruise ships: work with cruise ships to increase education and understanding, rather than an outright ban.

Honduras

Honduras, too, in recent years, has also continued to welcome cruise ship passengers and has even expanded its ports and capacities in the past decade. On the island of Roatán, within the last 12 years, Honduras has renovated one port and built another, allowing for three to seven ships to dock or anchor at a time.[88] On the mainland, a $30 million port was built in Trujillo in 2014, welcoming a few ships per year.[89] And in 2018, Honduras opened another port on its Pacific coast, accommodating even more passengers.[90] Though their cruise tourism is still smaller, and many of the ships Honduras receives are smaller than the ships docking at other locations, like St. Kitts and Nevis, Honduras is actively participating in construction and development to allow for more cruise ships.

Boracay, Philippines

In order to combat over tourism via cruise ships, the port of Boracay in the Philippines also took a hybrid approach, rather than an outright ban. Large ships are banned overall, and the government has laid out specific dates during the high season during which cruise ships of any kind are also banned in Boracay to reduce overcrowding.[91] However, the Philippines are providing cruise lines with

[85] Erica Avrami, "Harboring Tourism: Cruise Ships in Historic Port Communities" (Charleston, South Carolina, February 2013), https://www.wmf.org/sites/default/files/article/pdfs/Charleston-Report.pdf.
[86] Avrami.
[87] Avrami.
[88] "Honduran Shores Attract New Cruise Lines," Cision PR Newswire, July 11, 2017, https://www.prnewswire.com/news-releases/honduran-shores-attract-new-cruise-lines-300486323.html.
[89] "Honduran Shores Attract New Cruise Lines."
[90] "Honduran Shores Attract New Cruise Lines."
[91] Maria Stella Arnaldo, "Philippines' Boracay Island Tackles Overtourism With Bans on Cruise Ships in Peak Seasons," Skift, April 25, 2019, https://skift.com/2019/04/25/philippines-boracay-island-tackles-overtourism-with-bans-on-cruise-ships-in-peak-seasons/.

alternative destinations: other port cities in the same region, such as Iloilo or Bacolod.[92] This unique solution offers different challenges and benefits: the solution did not necessarily appease the residents of Boracay who were opposed to the cruise ships, but the hybrid model redistributes some of the economic benefits and does reduce overcrowding.

Glacier Bay National Park, Alaska, United States of America

As another example of cruise ship management in a critical and unique ecosystem, Glacier Bay National Park is managed by a federal government agency, which uses limits and permits to manage cruise ships. The agency allows applications for a cruise ship visit every ten years and grants acceptances based on a number of considerations, including the sustainability of the cruise ship and line as well as on-board education.[93] There are also strict regulations on those accepted, as well as limits on the daily number of cruise ships and the months in which cruise ships are permitted.[94] Glacier Bay National Park serves as an example of a government agency taking complete control of cruise ships and cruise ship admittance and using that control to protect a fragile ecosystem, rather than attempt to balance potential economic needs or benefits.

Bruges, Belgium

Bruges, Belgium, has also capped the number of cruise ships permitted daily to try to preserve the local economy and culture.[95] Previously, five ships could dock on any given day; now, the number is just two.[96] Like other European destinations, the cap comes alongside other measures to combat overtourism and to try to advocate for longer stays, rather than day trips, in cities.[97] A cruise ship cap

[92] Arnaldo.
[93] Lee K. Cerveny, Anna Miller, and Scott Gende, "Sustainable Cruise Tourism in Marine World Heritage Sites," *Sustainability* 12 (January 14, 2020): 24.
[94] Cerveny, Miller, and Gende.
[95] "Cities Who Banned Cruise Ships and Enforced Rules to Tackle Mass Tourism," Ship Technology, August 15, 2019, https://www.ship-technology.com/features/cities-who-banned-cruise-ships/.
[96] Helen Coffey, "Bruges Cracks Down on Overtourism to Avoid Becoming 'Complete Disneyland,'" The Independent, June 13, 2019, https://www.independent.co.uk/travel/news-and-advice/bruges-overtourism-tourist-visitors-belgium-cruise-ship-cap-day-trips-tourists-rules-a8956856.html.
[97] Helen Coffey, "Bruges Cracks Down on Overtourism to Avoid Becoming 'Complete Disneyland,'" The Independent, June 13, 2019, https://www.independent.co.uk/travel/news-and-advice/bruges-overtourism-tourist-visitors-belgium-cruise-ship-cap-day-trips-tourists-rules-a8956856.html.

will reduce overtourism, hopefully making Bruges more appealing for a longer trip, and protecting resources for a more sustainable approach to tourism overall.

Amsterdam, Netherlands

Amsterdam, the Netherlands, like Dubrovnik, has introduced an individual tax on each day-tripper in an effort to increase trip durations and therefore economic output.[98] Although the tax actually resulted in a reduction in cruise ship arrivals,[99] time will tell whether the reduction in tourism has benefits for the sustainability of tourism or the long-term economic benefits of the new tourism structure. For many destinations, particularly those faced with overtourism from all angles, not just cruises, limiting cruise ships is just one piece of the overall puzzle on a quest for sustainability and must be factored into an overall solution.

Overall, individual ports and nations take very different approaches to encouraging, managing, or reducing cruise ships and sea travel. Many ports are still dealing with balancing the desire to welcome tourists, the need for economic stimulation, and the risks of overtourism and cultural damage done by cruise ships. Ports in Spain, for example, have been home to grassroots protests and to attempts by the local governments to implement regulations.[100] Cruise ships are also, often, pieces of larger puzzles that also require limits and regulations.

Differences exist between government officials and locals, between local and national government officials, between ports, and between nations themselves, not to mention differences between destinations and cruise ship lines. As such, the UNWTO must create solutions that can balance and benefit all of the involved parties and their needs, whether economic, environmental, historical, or cultural.

[98] "Cities Who Banned Cruise Ships and Enforced Rules to Tackle Mass Tourism."
[99] Donald Wood, "Amsterdam's Tax on Cruise Passengers Results in 40-Percent Drop in Arrivals," TravelPulse, December 2, 2019, https://www.travelpulse.com/news/destinations/amsterdams-tax-on-cruise-passengers-results-in-40-percent-drop-in-arrivals.html.
[100] "Cities Who Banned Cruise Ships and Enforced Rules to Tackle Mass Tourism."

Topic Glossary

Clean Water Act: an example of national legislation regulating waterway pollution in the United States

Cruise Lines International Association (CLIA): a governing body of 25 member cruise lines that advocates for cruise lines and implements its own regulations

Destination port: city in which ships anchor or dock and passengers disembark

Flag of convenience: a flag different than the country of the ship's owners

Flag state: the country in which ship pay taxes and follow regulations and inspection

International Maritime Organization (IMO): a governing body of 152 member states that implements maritime regulations

MARPOL 73/78: IMO protocols addressing ship pollution and outlining other maritime and regulatory standards

Sea travel: any movement of goods or people wholly or partially via a body of water

Small Island Developing States (SIDS): a category of states defined by the UNWTO that are the topic of special conferences and protocols to improve environmental protections and economic stimulation

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"The Effects of Mass Tourism (How Tourism Is Destroying 30+ Destinations)." Green Global Travel, 21 Dec. 2017. greenglobaltravel.com, https://greenglobaltravel.com/effects-mass-tourism-overtourism-destroying-destinations/.

"Tourism Growth Is All at Sea." The New Zealand Herald, 16 Aug. 2019. ProQuest, https://search-proquest-com.proxy.uchicago.edu/docview/2273244565/4866D36C91734799PQ/10?accountid=14657.

Wood, Donald. "Amsterdam's Tax on Cruise Passengers Results in 40-Percent Drop in Arrivals." TravelPulse, 2 Dec. 2019, https://www.travelpulse.com/news/destinations/amsterdams-tax-on-cruise-passengers-results-in-40-percent-drop-in-arrivals.html.

Woodard, Colin. "Benefits of Cruise Ships Overstated." Morning Sentinel, 11 June 2018. ProQuest, https://search-proquest-com.proxy.uchicago.edu/docview/2052734440/fulltext/23153C011D6F4657PQ/1?accountid=14657.

TOPIC B: CULTURAL HERITAGE AND ECOTOURISM

Statement of the Problem

The UNWTO defines **cultural tourism** as "a type of tourism activity in which the visitor's essential motivation is to learn, discover, experience and consume the tangible and intangible cultural attractions/products in a tourism destination," including all aspects of a given society, including the intellectual, artistic, spiritual, and emotional features of a culture.[101] Cultural tourism is quite possibly the tourism people 'typically' imagine and includes everything from museum visits to restaurant stops and provides the education and increased global understanding tourists and travelers so often seek. In fact, the UNWTO and its member nations have even broken down cultural tourism to include three subtypes: tangible cultural tourism, such as monuments or historic buildings; intangible heritage, such as food or music; and contemporary culture, such as film or fashion.[102] As a means of connecting with indigenous communities, cultural tourism can also benefit these communities through increased employment, community pride, and decreased poverty, especially when tourism revenue is used to boost programs and protections surrounding these cultures.[103] But, as with all tourism, cultural tourism can have a negative impact on local communities, cultures, and economies when mishandled or not organized in a sustainable way.

The International Ecotourism Society defines **ecotourism** as "responsible travel to natural areas that conserves the environment, sustains the well-being of the local people, and involves interpretation and education."[104] The definition goes on to further outline principles by which people can engage in actual ecotourism, including but not limited to keeping environmental and physical impacts to a minimum, ensuring generation of revenue for local and indigenous populations, and so on. Many of these principles will have similarities or parallels to the principles of cultural tourism but are simply applied more explicitly to conservation and the environment of a given destination. Like cultural

[101] World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), "Tourism and Culture," World Tourism Organization, March 9, 2018, https://doi.org/10.18111/9789284418978.
[102] World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), *Tourism and Culture Synergies* (World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), 2018), https://doi.org/10.18111/9789284418978.
[103] World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), "Tourism and Culture."
[104] "What Is Ecotourism," *The International Ecotourism Society* (blog), accessed August 17, 2020, https://ecotourism.org/what-is-ecotourism/.

tourism, ecotourism can benefit local communities through employment and economic gain, but it also has the opportunity to emphasize cultural understanding and increase funding for and awareness of conservation efforts.[105] Alongside the growth of ecotourism, however, has come an increase in "greenwashing," in which marketing efforts are made to make trips, hotels, and tourism opportunities sound more eco-friendly and sustainable than they really are.[106] Like cultural tourism, ecotourism can negatively impact the communities and environments it ostensibly serves when mishandled or when improperly and unsustainably managed.

As discussed throughout Topic A, tourism of any sort poses an array of issues and concerns for destinations and their environments, cultures, and populations, risks which are only increasing as tourism rapidly expands. These effects are felt all over the globe by all sorts of destinations. Cultural tourism and ecotourism, if handled unsustainably or carelessly or allowed to go unregulated, as forms of tourism, can certainly fall into this category, which is why organization, regulation, and protection of these more sustainable types of tourism is critical to success and to the UNWTO's mission.

Tourism is, quite simply, booming and growing faster than even the world's economy. In 2018, there were 1,401,000,000 international tourist arrivals across the globe, contributing nearly 1.5 trillion dollars in receipts.[107] Most of these arrivals were in Europe and Asia and the Pacific, but all regions of the world are visited and should be included in discussions of tourism and its benefits and harms; for example, Asia and Africa, not Europe, are the most rapidly growing tourist destinations.[108] Top tourism destinations in 2018 included France, Spain, the USA, China, and Italy, all of which were also included in the top tourism earners for that year.[109] All member states mention sustainability at least once when outlining tourism and their tourism policies. Furthermore, leisure and recreational tourism – which includes subsets of tourism like cultural tourism and ecotourism – is the primary

[105] "What Is Ecotourism."
[106] "The Truth about Travel: The Growth of Ecotourism | Environmental Leadership, Action and Ethics," accessed August 17, 2020, https://edblogs.columbia.edu/scppx3335-001-2014-1/2014/03/12/the-truth-about-travel-the-growth-of-ecotourism/.
[107] "International Tourism Highlights: 2019 Edition" (World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), August 28, 2019), https://doi.org/10.18111/9789284421152.
[108] "International Tourism Highlights: 2019 Edition."
[109] "International Tourism Highlights: 2019 Edition."

reason for travel, making it even more critical to ensure that recreational tourism and its subsets are being regulated and managed in a way that promotes sustainability and benefits everyone involved.

The UNWTO wants to increase and strengthen sustainable tourism, utilizing tourism as a way to empower destinations economically and culturally, increase global understanding, and protect and preserve vital parts of our world's diversity. Cultural tourism and ecotourism both, at least according to their definitions, fit neatly into those aims and provide more specific ways to address the traditional challenges – and benefits – of tourism. But they have their own risks, too, including those risks included in 'normal' tourism.

Ecotourism, for example, often includes visits to protected wildlife zones or observing protected, endangered, or otherwise rare or interesting animals. But the increase in animal-human interaction is detrimental for the animals and could affect the animals both in the present, as their behavior changes, and in the future, as populations and even genetics adapt to the presence of humans.[110] Therefore, ecotourism and these sorts of visits must be managed to ensure that animal-human

[110] Russell Jackson, "Wildlife at Risk from Eco-Tourism as Animals Learn to Live with Us," *The Scotsman*, October 10, 2015.

interactions are minimized, that these sorts of consequences are being studied and considered, and that the benefits of the visits are not outweighed by the consequences and costs of hurting animal populations, behavior patterns, and biodiversity. On the other hand, ecotourism is often used as a mechanism to raise money for conservation and education efforts for animals in these precise situations; a visit might encourage a donation for conservation, which could have a net positive effect.

Cultural tourism, for example, can also result in societal changes, as populations adjust to the need to provide resources for tourists or simply to the influx of different influences and growth.[111] Similarly, even as cultural tourism seeks to maintain and show off the culture of a given destination, some of the unique properties of a given destination can be lost as the tourism industry standardizes across the world and as our world becomes increasingly interconnected.[112] And like discussed in Topic A, tourists can also increase material damage to critical historic or cultural institutions such as monuments or heritage sites. On the other hand, of course, cultural tourism also offers the opportunity to maintain culture by positioning it as a main draw, as opposed to fitting a destination into more conventional types of tourism, as well as providing economic benefits for the peoples of a destination.[113]

Cultural tourism and ecotourism are seeing a huge increase, driven partially by the increase in tourism generally and partially by the desire to participate in sustainable tourism or to have truly unique experiences. But alongside this rise in tourism has come a rise in overtourism, which has been damaging cultural institutions, frustrating locals, and otherwise affecting the lives of tourism destinations. Cultural tourism and ecotourism have a unique ability, more so than conventional tourism, to enable sustainable tourism that ensures generation of revenue for everyone, increased cultural and environmental understandings, protection of biodiversity and cultural resources, and more. But left unchecked, or when issues like greenwashing are allowed to arrive, cultural tourism

[111] Hayley Stainton, "Cultural Tourism Explained: What, Why and Where," *Tourism Teacher* (blog), February 4, 2020, https://tourismteacher.com/cultural-tourism/.
[112] Stainton.
[113] Stainton.

and ecotourism are no more helpful than conventional tourism – and leave open the potential for even more harm, as seen with changing animal behavior patterns due to human interaction.

The United Nations World Tourism Organization seeks to establish more sustainable tourism practices across the world, and cultural tourism and ecotourism do and will play a huge part in that. Our task is to find ways to ameliorate potential for destruction or harm caused by these tourism subsets, strengthen their roles as tourism opportunities and replacements for traditional tourism, and empower member nations and destinations to take advantage of their cultures and environments to bring in economic revenue and tourism without risking overtourism or harm to their economies and cultures.

History of the Problem

Travel and tourism have long histories: travel first began thousands of years ago when migration was critical to survival. For hundreds of years, tourism has been popular but reserved solely for the most influential, powerful, and wealthy. However, in 1841, Thomas Cook introduced the first travel tour, in which his clients paid a set fee for their transportation, food, and entertainment, the first glimpse into what is now commonplace in the modern tourism industry and into what spurred modern tourism and similar offshoots such as cruises or all-inclusive resorts.[114] By the middle of the 20th century, the invention of the car and plane, as well as the formal introduction of a paid vacation policy into the modern workplace, made travelling significantly more common. This growth in travel and tourism was further accelerated by increased travel associated with World War II and the economic boom that followed.[115]

Ecotourism and cultural tourism have their own histories within the industry of tourism and are, compared to general travel and tourism, relatively new phenomena, though not quite as new and trendy as might be expected. Ecotourism's beginnings are linked back to Alexander van Humboldt, who traveled to Central and South America in the late 1700s and was followed quickly by the likes of Charles Darwin in the Galapagos, exploring for the sake of scientific discovery and understanding.[116] However, the term ecotourism was created by architect Héctor Ceballos-Lascuráin in 1983, and it wasn't for another several years before ecotourism became what it is today, including through formal organization such as the foundation of the Center for Responsible Travel in 2003 and a focus by the United Nations.[117] Now, ecotourism represents $263 billion of the worldwide economy and has seen huge growth in recent years, much like cultural tourism and tourism overall.[118]

On the other hand, cultural tourism, as a major component of general and conventional tourism, has existed unnamed since the advent of tourism and travel itself; culture and understanding has been a

[114] "The Traveling Public and Tourism Promoters" (Pearson Higher Ed), 34, accessed August 17, 2020, https://www.pearsonhighered.com/assets/samplechapter/0/1/3/4/0134484487.pdf.
[115] "The Traveling Public and Tourism Promoters."
[116] "Infographic - Ecotourism History and Impact," *Greenloons* (blog), June 30, 2014, https://greenloons.com/2014/06/30/infographic-what-is-the-history-and-impact-of-ecotourism/.
[117] "Infographic - Ecotourism History and Impact."
[118] "Infographic - Ecotourism History and Impact."

major draw of travel for people dating back to those early years of travel to and from empires by the wealthy upper classes. The first UNWTO World Conference on Tourism and Culture, however, was not held until 2015, as the delineations among types of tourism have become more popular and widespread.[119] Furthermore, the definition of cultural tourism – and how narrow or broad that definition should be – is often debated, which makes understanding and pinpointing precise histories or trends difficult.

Since 2008, travel for leisure, recreation, and holidays, into which both ecotourism and cultural tourism fall, has grown about 5% annually,[120] a significant increase that leaves open the question of whether enough is being done to monitor and regulate tourism and these burgeoning subsets. By all other measurements as well, including expenditures and receipts, tourism has increased rapidly, adding more money to the global economy and becoming a greater part of global trade. And it's not just economically that the industry is growing – international tourist arrivals have increased, too,[121] meaning that there is not only more money in tourism but more people, which poses concerns regarding overtourism and whether infrastructure and cultural landmarks can handle such an influx. This growth does not seem to be slowing down anytime soon and has occurred faster than the growth of the global economy, spurring questions about infrastructure and whether these destinations can handle such huge crowds, many of which will sound familiar after Topic A and the discussion of cruise ships and overtourism.

Recent trends in travel and tourism include "travel 'to change,'" "travel 'to show,'" "pursuit of a healthy life," and "rising awareness on sustainability," among others.[122] All of these trends fit as reasons one might participate in cultural tourism or ecotourism: cultural tourism introduces new perspectives and understandings, for example, thus paralleling the trend of travel to change. And ecotourism often has benefits for health in terms of hiking or activity levels and, of course, for sustainability. As trends dive more towards cultural tourism and ecotourism, increases in these tourism subsets do not seem to be slowing. Furthermore, more than half of all travelers are interested in sustainability, and 73% have made plans to stay in an environmentally friendly hotel

[119] World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), "Tourism and Culture."
[120] "Global and Regional Tourism Performance," accessed August 17, 2020, https://www.unwto.org/global-and-regional-tourism-performance.
[121] "Global and Regional Tourism Performance."
[122] "International Tourism Highlights: 2019 Edition."

this year.[123] Of course, sustainability and environmentally friendly plans do not equate to cultural tourism or ecotourism, but the general trend is certainly away from conventional mass tourism and towards more sustainable, focused subsets of the tourism industry like ecotourism or cultural tourism.

As of 2019, international tourist arrivals have doubled since 1960.[124] As the global economy shifts, so too does tourism and its demographics and stakeholders: Chinese citizens, for example, made 10.5 million international trips in 2000 but an incredible 156 million in 2018.[125] As the global economy continues to shift and grow, and as travel only increases in accessibility, ecotourism and cultural tourism will play critical roles in the growth of tourism as well as determining who is traveling and where people are going. But they will play equally critical roles in ensuring whether tourism is and remains sustainable and beneficial for all parties or whether cultures, environments, and economic benefits will be lost to mass tourism and marketing lies like greenwashing. The United Nations World Tourism Organization must establish definitions of tourism subsets like cultural tourism and ecotourism, engage with all relevant stakeholders, and create methods by which to track, understand, and regulate the explosive growth of tourism, ecotourism, and cultural tourism. In order to maintain progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals, ecotourism and cultural tourism must be explicitly addressed as growing, potentially hugely beneficial subsets of the tourism industry.

[123] Andrew Graft, "Travel and Tourism Statistics: The Ultimate Collection," accessed August 17, 2020, https://blog.accessdevelopment.com/tourism-and-travel-statistics-the-ultimate-collection.
[124] Annie Lowrey, "Too Many People Want to Travel," The Atlantic, June 4, 2019, https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2019/06/crowds-tourists-are-ruining-popular-destinations/590767/.
[125] Lowrey.

Past Actions

Like the tourism industry as a whole, much work remains to be done to manage and control increasing global interest in ecotourism and cultural tourism. As the world becomes increasingly globalized and interconnected, too, more actions will need to be taken to adapt to new, potentially unforeseen challenges. For example, many of the effects of sea travel that the UNWTO will take up during MUNUC 33, like increased disruption to sea life and overtourism in historically and culturally significant port cities, will parallel or relate to ecotourism and cultural tourism.

However, work has begun all over the globe to find solutions to issues facing the tourism sector, including the ecotourism and cultural tourism subsectors. These issues range from global - like climate change - to regional - like indigenous language loss - but all play critical roles in the world and in the sustainability of tourism and the sustainable development of global economies and cultures. Across the globe, the UNWTO, its member states, and non-government organizations and the private sector have taken ecotourism and cultural tourism and their challenges on, in order to create a more equitable and sustainable world.

World Tourism Organization

In 1999, the World Tourism Organization itself adopted the Global Code of Ethics for Tourism, which encompasses many of the cultural and environmental effects of tourism and therefore has a strong relationship to both ecotourism and cultural tourism. Furthermore, the Global Code of Ethics includes tourism as a contributor to sustainable development and cultural interaction and outlines potential ways to improve tourism and its potential contributions.[126] Article 1, for example, acknowledges its contribution to "mutual understanding and respect between peoples and societies," a major component of cultural tourism, and emphasizes the importance of developing mutual understanding and respect and acknowledging the inherent risks of tourism.[127] While the Global Code of Ethics does not necessarily apply directly to cultural tourism, this Article certainly does and illustrates the role cultural tourism plays in the greater tourism industry and the ways

[126] World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), "Global Code of Ethics for Tourism," World Tourism Organization, accessed May 26, 2020, https://www.unwto.org/global-code-of-ethics-for-tourism.
[127] World Tourism Organization (UNWTO).

aspects of each can be applied to the other. Similarly, Article 3 acknowledges tourism as "a factor of sustainable development" and encourages prioritizing resource conservation, biodiversity protection, and more critical elements of ecotourism.[128] While the Global Code of Ethics is more an outline than anything else, it serves as an important touchstone for values and priorities when examining tourism and its risks and potential impacts.

Furthermore, four years later in 2003, the World Tourism Organization founded the World Committee on Tourism Ethics (WCTE). The WCTE ensures the proper interpretation, dissemination, and application of the Global Code of Ethics for Tourism.[129] Together, while the two do not directly relate to or mention specifically ecotourism or cultural tourism, the Global Code of Ethics for Tourism and the World Committee on Tourism Ethics lay out values and suggestions for tourism that do and will have a direct impact on the sustainable management and promotion of tourism sub-sectors like ecotourism and cultural tourism. The World Tourism Organization is also responsible for preparing reports for the United Nations General Assembly regarding sustainable tourism; recent reports have focused on tourism and development in Central America, the promotion of tourism as a means for the eradication of poverty, and more.[130] These reports serve to keep tourism at the forefront of the United Nations debate and discussions and promote tourism as a means of sustainable development and a way to achieve the United Nations' greater goals.

On the side of ecotourism, which is perhaps easier to measure and define when it comes to risks and direct impacts, given the environment's suitability for management and tracing, the World Tourism Organization has partnered with the United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP) several times, with the first time occurring in 2002, to organize global conferences focusing on ecotourism.[131] At these conferences, member states and their representatives were able to

[128] World Tourism Organization (UNWTO).
[129] "World Committee on Tourism Ethics (WCTE)," United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), accessed September 9, 2020, https://www.unwto.org/world-committee-tourism-ethics.
[130] World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), "UNGA Sustainable Tourism Resolutions," World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), accessed May 26, 2020, https://www.unwto.org/sustainable-development/unga.
[131] "UN Hails Forum's Declaration Defining Basis for Ecotourism Development," UN News, May 23, 2002, https://news.un.org/en/story/2002/05/36022-un-hails-forums-declaration-defining-basis-ecotourism-development.

strategize, discuss, and problem solve, contributing to a greater global understanding of ecotourism and its role in tourism and in sustainable development and greater United Nations goals.[132]

By keeping tourism at the forefront of sustainable development, the World Tourism Organization has subsequently promoted the development of ecotourism and cultural tourism. However, given these subsectors' unique opportunities for sustainability, more must be done to popularize these subsectors and establish overarching values and projects relating to ecotourism and cultural tourism.

Non-Government Organizations

In addition to the World Tourism Organization and other United Nations committees and organizations, there are many non-profits and tourism organizations around the world doing work to promote sustainable tourism, ecotourism, and cultural tourism. In addition to these non-profits, there are also many - too many to name - private sector initiatives and private tours and travel

[132] "UN Hails Forum's Declaration Defining Basis for Ecotourism Development."

organizations that work to promote sustainable travel and engage in legitimately beneficial, responsible tourism, often by working directly with governments and non-government organizations.

However, one example of a non-profit is the Center for Responsible Travel (CREST), which was founded in 2003 and has gone on to advise governments, corporations, and other global organizations on responsible tourism.[133] In the years since its founding, CREST has played a role in sustainable tourism development all around the world. Recently, for example, CREST developed a sustainable tourism plan in the South Al Sharquiyah region of Oman, worked with indigenous groups in Mexico, and published a study on the effects of the cruise industry in Cuba, in addition to many, many other projects.[134]

Like any issue of magnitude facing the world, more remains to be done to promote and problem solve in the fields of ecotourism and cultural tourism. With the increased interest in these subsectors of the tourism industry, now is the time to jump on possible solutions and create new ways to establish sustainable travel and tourism across the globe, galvanizing economic growth, social development, and cultural understanding. Often, these solutions will come in the form of partnerships among organizations like the World Tourism Organization, governments, non-government organizations, and the private sector.

[133] "About Us," Center for Responsible Travel, accessed May 26, 2020, https://www.responsibletravel.org/whoWeAre/aboutUs.php.
[134] "CREST Milestones 2003-2018" (Center for Responsible Travel, 2018), https://www.responsibletravel.org/docs/CREST_Milestones_2003-2018.pdf.

Possible Solutions

There are many potential solutions to the problems related to ecotourism and cultural tourism, just as there are many solutions to the problems that plague the greater tourism industry. As with sea travel and cruising, the many stakeholders in the ecotourism and cultural tourism industries will have a variety of opinions, beliefs, and solutions, some of which may be genuine contributions to the sustainable development of tourism and some of which may not.

However, many of the possible solutions outlined here include increasing understanding of the effects of tourism and encouraging collaboration. By increasing understanding and global collaboration, the resulting solutions will offer benefits for all stakeholders, promote sustainable economic and social growth, protect ecosystems and local communities and cultures, and manage other, related global issues such as climate change. As seen in Past Actions, and in regions across the globe, many of these solutions will require buy-in not just from the World Tourism Organization and its member states but also the private sector, non-government organizations, local populations, and more. By working together from the start, solutions will be truly sustainable.

Impacts of Tourism

The World Tourism Organization should improve global understandings of the intersectional impacts of cultural heritage and ecotourism on various regions of the world through specific, research-based analysis. The specific regional reports generated for the General Assembly offer a glimpse into what such understandings and analyses may look like,[135] but an increased understanding of the way ecotourism and cultural tourism – these specific sectors, not tourism in general – affect environments, ecosystems, cultures, and indigenous groups will better equip individual member states and the World Tourism Organization as a whole to formulate plans and goals. Without an understanding of specific effects of these specific subsectors, plans and goals cannot tackle underlying issues and will instead be combatting issues related to tourism as a whole, rather than shifting into the promotion of sustainable practices.

[135] World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), "UNGA Sustainable Tourism Resolutions."

Furthermore, a delineation of the impacts of ecotourism and cultural tourism by travel mechanism – for example, cruise ships versus organized tours on land – will be critical to moving forward and constructing a more sustainable tourism industry. As seen in Topic A with sea travel, each individual mode of transportation and travel mechanism poses its own challenges and benefits to a variety of stakeholders. Analyzing each of these through the lens of ecotourism and cultural tourism will give member states and the World Tourism Organization a more holistic and better understanding of where, how, and why these sectors of tourism affect travel, destinations, and tourists.

Tourism Regulations

The World Tourism Organization must publish additional guidelines for member states with more specific details regarding ecotourism and cultural tourism. Currently, annual reports, conferences, and research have resulted in vague doctrines like the Global Code of Ethics,[136] often related to tourism as a whole rather than specific subsectors, but more specific outlines of the meanings and impacts of ecotourism and cultural tourism and the ways member states ought to manage these tourism sectors will enable greater industry regulation, sustainability, and collaboration. By identifying specific guidelines and markers, industry members as well as member states will be able to do their part to aid in sustainable tourism development and strengthen ecotourism and cultural tourism while maintaining destinations' natural ecosystems and cultures. Again, one of the keys to true sustainable development and problem solving will be collaboration among a variety of stakeholders and groups, and increased guidelines and markers from the World Tourism Organization will only serve to provide a unified, coherent, and concrete set of goals for everyone involved.

The World Tourism Organization must also identify and publicize data and recommendations regarding corruption, ill-run organizations, green-washing, and other practices among travel organizations claiming to run ecotourism and cultural tourism trips. In order for member states and travel organizations to maximize sustainable tourism development, the World Tourism Organization must lead a path forward towards transparency, which will allow member states to better manage,

[136] World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), "Global Code of Ethics for Tourism."

enforce, and implement regulations as well as punishments for mismanaged tourism or corrupt tourism organizations and travel operators.

Similarly, the World Tourism Organization ought to incentivize participation by member states and travel organizations in sustainable cultural tourism and ecotourism, as opposed to conventional tourism, by continuing to emphasize the potential benefits of these subsectors. By focusing on the opportunity for sustainable, long-term growth, rather than short-term gain, and involving groups often overlooked in industry discussions, such as indigenous populations, the UNWTO can promote global collaboration and buy-in to the tourism of the future.

Just as each problem with tourism and overtourism affects each region and country differently, there are many different solutions to the issues that come with ecotourism and cultural tourism. However, the most sustainable and productive solutions will be those that take into account research-backed propositions and work with a variety of stakeholders - including the private sector and indigenous and local populations - to create solutions that will work in the long-term, creating ripple effects for economies, cultures, and destinations across the globe.

Bloc Positions

Like sea travel, given that different nations and member states all have different needs for and interests in tourism, ecotourism and cultural tourism do not necessarily have set bloc positions. However, there are several regions of the world that have commonalities that increase their shared experiences with these tourism subsectors.

Small Island Developing States (SIDS)

One such bloc that the UNWTO has paid special attention to in recent years has been Small Island Developing States (SIDS), which are hugely popular among tourists but face unique challenges due to their small sizes, remoteness, and aspects of their environments and biodiversity.[137] A list of SIDS can be found in the UNWTO report "Tourism in Small Island Developing States (SIDS)," but the category includes Caribbean nations like Aruba and the Cayman Islands, Pacific islands like Palau and Tonga, and more all over the globe (though there are none in the Mediterranean).[138]

Recent conferences surrounding SIDS and tourism have discussed climate change, disaster management and mitigation, and social and economic development.[139] In some of these nations – such as Samoa and the Maldives – tourism has had a direct impact on their recent shift from Least Developed Country (LDC) status.[140] With relation to ecotourism and cultural tourism, specifically, the UNWTO has noted that challenges include natural resources and climate change as well as community engagement.[141] Special focus must be paid to ensuring that ecotourism and cultural tourism programs in these regions protect natural resources, reduce the effects of climate change, and appropriately engage with and protect indigenous communities and cultures. Similarly, many

[137] "Small Islands Developing States (SIDS)," World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), accessed August 6, 2020, https://www.unwto.org/sustainable-development/small-islands-developing-states.
[138] "Tourism in Small Island Developing States (SIDS)," *World Tourism Organization (UNWTO)*, n.d., 6.
[139] "Small Islands Developing States (SIDS)."
[140] "Tourism in Small Island Developing States (SIDS)."
[141] "Tourism in Small Island Developing States (SIDS)."

opportunities exist within tourism to engage with conservation and environmental protection efforts, and economic sustainability and growth, that will serve to benefit SIDS.[142]

Indigenous Communities

Indigenous communities also have a unique role to play in tourism, especially with regard to cultural tourism. The UNWTO views tourism as a potential key to unlocking economic growth in indigenous communities, especially given the rising popularity of cultural tourism overall, but also acknowledges the important concerns surrounding this sort of tourism and the need to protect indigenous populations and cultures.[143]

Perhaps more critical in this area of tourism than in any other is engagement and partnerships with indigenous and local communities as well as governments, tourists, etc.[144] The UNWTO has outlined

[142] "Tourism in Small Island Developing States (SIDS)."
[143] World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), ed., *Recommendations on Sustainable Development of Indigenous Tourism* (World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), 2019), https://doi.org/10.18111/9789284421299.
[144] World Tourism Organization (UNWTO).

recommendations that specifically relate to tourism and indigenous communities and emphasizes the need for respect, consultation, empowerment, equitable partnerships, and protection.[145]

There are many ways in which ecotourism and cultural tourism can become important pathways to sustainable economic growth and development for indigenous and local populations, but there are also many ways in which tourism could harm these communities. In order to work towards truly sustainable ecotourism and cultural tourism, indigenous and local communities and their needs must be kept at the forefront of the debate.

Europe

As another example, the Council of Europe has divided Europe into four distinct "macro-regions" and focused on cultural tourism as a means of growth and development in Europe and in these macro-regions specifically.[146] The four regions include the Baltic Sea Region, which includes Scandinavia, Denmark, and the Baltics; the Danube Region, which includes Romania, Hungary, the Czech Republic, and more; the Adriatic and Ionian Region, which includes parts of Italy and Greece, among other states; and the Alpine Region, which includes parts of Italy, Switzerland, and so on. By dividing Europe into macro-regions, the Council of Europe hopes to outline each individual region's needs and strengths while also promoting trust, resource use, and stronger overall strategies.[147]

The Council of Europe acknowledges the critical role that cultural tourism plays in drawing tourists to Europe – 40% of European tourism is, in fact, cultural tourism, meaning that Europe has a unique bloc position and strong ties to the importance of cultural tourism and the need to develop cultural tourism sustainably, promoting it as a means to growth while also protecting local cultures and historical objects and places.[148] Within the Council of Europe, the Cultural Routes of the Council of

[145] World Tourism Organization (UNWTO).
[146] "Cultural Tourism in the EU Macro-Regions: Cultural Routes to Increase the Attractiveness of Remote Destinations" (Council of Europe), accessed September 9, 2020, https://rm.coe.int/routes4u-manual-attractiveness-remote-destination-cultural-tourism/16809ef75a%0A%0A.
[147] "Cultural Tourism in the EU Macro-Regions: Cultural Routes to Increase the Attractiveness of Remote Destinations."
[148] "Cultural Tourism in the EU Macro-Regions: Cultural Routes to Increase the Attractiveness of Remote Destinations."

Europe has also placed a special focus and emphasis on remote locations, utilizing tourism and cultural tourism as a means to sustainable growth.[149]

The strategies outlined for these regions differ slightly. For example, in the Baltic Region, the Council focuses on the region's religious identity, architecture, and historical importance to European movement.[150] For development in the Baltic Region, the Council suggests focusing, for example, on the less focused on but potentially valuable history of marine heritage.[151]

This example serves as an example of using cultural tourism as a means of linking a larger bloc – Europe – and its individual regions. Cultural tourism can be used to benefit the entire bloc, even if it means focusing on smaller regions within the bloc. Furthermore, focusing on lesser known aspects of cultural heritage – such as the Baltic marine heritage – and working together, as well as promoting more remote regions, may be key to increasing cultural tourism while maintaining sustainability.

Central and South America

On the other hand, ecotourism can also come with its own blocs and regional differences and needs. For example, ecotourism has played – and can play – a critical role in the development of Central America. But, as with all tourism, overtourism and a lack of regulation can result in the destruction of natural environments and ecosystems that are critical to ecotourism overall; deforestation, for example, while not directly related to tourism, has significantly affected the region's biodiversity and ecosystems, thereby affecting its ecotourism.[152]

However, there have also been developments in conservation. Costa Rica, for example, has placed 11% of its land in protected national parks, which will preserve it for years of sustainable ecotourism to come.[153] Other Central American nations like Belize and Honduras have more than 40% of their

[149] "Cultural Tourism in the EU Macro-Regions: Cultural Routes to Increase the Attractiveness of Remote Destinations."
[150] "Cultural Tourism in the EU Macro-Regions: Cultural Routes to Increase the Attractiveness of Remote Destinations."
[151] "Cultural Tourism in the EU Macro-Regions: Cultural Routes to Increase the Attractiveness of Remote Destinations."
[152] "Sustainable Travel & Ecotourism in Central America," Frommer's, accessed September 10, 2020, https://www.frommers.com/destinations/central-america/planning-a-trip/sustainable-travel--ecotourism.
[153] "Sustainable Travel & Ecotourism in Central America."

land masses under some sort of protections.[154] However, in all of these nations, land and forests are still being lost year after year.

Costa Rica has worked with the private sector and local populations, establishing private reserves that are now famous across the world for their unique biodiversity.[155] By promoting ecotourism, and actively working to protect its biodiversity and establish new preserves and activities, Costa Rica has steadily and rapidly increased its tourist arrivals, making tourism a critical component of its economy.[156] On the other hand, the Brazilian ecotourism industry is significantly less developed, meaning that there are significant opportunities as well as significant risks.[157] By creating a more holistic, balanced approach, and working with local populations, perhaps Brazil can also establish a sustainable ecotourism program and strengthen its economy.

Though Costa Rica and Brazil are just two Central and South American nations, the two sit at opposite ends of the ecotourism spectrum in the region.[158] By looking at each other's strengths, and by learning from what more developed ecotourism industries have done well and what they could have improved, the UNWTO and regional blocs like Central and South America can work together to increase ecotourism, protect resources, and create sustainable economic and social growth.

While these are a select few regions and blocs affected by ecotourism and cultural tourism, every region of the world carries with it unique characteristics that make it a candidate for ecotourism and cultural tourism. The key is discovering these characteristics and promoting them in such a way that preserves them for years to come, allowing access now while also ensuring sustainability in the future. Sometimes, this happens on a country-by-country level, like the protections of forested lands in Central America, while other times that promotion happens on a regional level, like with the European macro-blocs, or even a global level, as seen with the UNWTO's focus on SIDS. But a focus

[154] "Sustainable Travel & Ecotourism in Central America."
[155] Raul Gouvea, "Managing the Ecotourism Industry in Latin America: Challenges and Opportunities," *Problems and Perspectives in Management* 2 (2004): 10.
[156] Gouvea.
[157] Gouvea.
[158] Raul Gouvea, "Managing the Ecotourism Industry in Latin America: Challenges and Opportunities," *Problems and Perspectives in Management* 2 (2004): 10.

on individual regions will enable the UNWTO - and the region itself - to see where the most opportunity lies, therefore maximizing growth while protecting tourism and resources.

Glossary

Center for Responsible Travel (CREST): an example of a non-government organization focusing on tourism by advising governments and corporations and working on projects to increase sustainable tourism across the globe

Cultural tourism: subsector of tourism in which the tourist wishes to explore and understand the culture of a given destination, including the intellectual, artistic, spiritual, and emotional aspects

Ecotourism: subsector of tourism in which the tourist seeks to explore the local environment, often in ways that promote conservation and sustainability

Global Code of Ethics for Tourism: UNWTO document outlining values and standards for tourism and emphasizing its role as a mechanism for economic growth and sustainable development

Greenwashing: marketing efforts to make tours, hotels, and other aspects of tourism seem more "green" or sustainable than they really are

Small Island Developing States (SIDS): a category of nations designated by the UNWTO that receives special focus to address their unique challenges with relation to the environment, culture, sustainability, and economic growth

World Committee on Tourism Ethics (WCTE): committee within the UNWTO that interprets and applies the Global Code of Ethics for Tourism

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