

News Release

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Spatial Data the Focus of UNWTO Sustainable Tourism Observatories Meeting

Madrid, Spain, 23 October 2018 – The World Tourism Organization's (UNWTO) International Network of Sustainable Tourism Observatories (INSTO) concluded its global annual meeting today in Madrid, welcoming observatories and other tourism stakeholders to share experiences of measuring and monitoring the impact tourism has on destinations, and explore the opportunities provided to tourism by innovation in location services.

With a revamped structure featuring a mentoring breakfast, discussion rounds and workshops, this year's Global INSTO Meeting focused on offering participants opportunities for interaction. Tourism stakeholders exchanged knowledge on achievements and challenges in measuring social, environmental and economic tourism impacts at destinations. In keeping with UNWTO's priority of promoting technological innovation that fosters sustainable tourism, attendees took part in three workshops on the potential of geo-referenced information for destination planning.

Guests saw live demonstrations of spatial analysis, brainstormed project ideas using satellite images and learned how to build data dashboards. Such advances in location intelligence can support destinations create more transparent and timely communication and decision-making. The workshops were co-led by the destinations South Tyrol (Italy), Buenos Aires (Argentina) and Portugal in cooperation with private and public sector partners ESRI Spain, SEGITTUR and Vizzuality.

The 2018 Global INSTO Meeting also accepted two new observatories to the network – Panama City, Panama and South Tyrol, Italy – taking INSTO's membership to 24. "Installing a project of this magnitude will allow us to continually measure the effects of tourism in a particular destination or region. We welcome this initiative with great enthusiasm considering the benefits that the entire tourism sector will receive in the short-



and medium-term, and its positive impact on many other economic activities,” said Gustavo Him, Minister of Tourism of Panama, on joining INSTO.

“The decision to join the international observatory network brings with it the responsibility to shape South Tyrol’s development according to sustainability principles. For some years, South Tyrol has been establishing itself as a green region. We see this as another important step in that direction and recognize the value of sharing progress with other pioneer destinations,” said Arno Kompatscher, Governor of South Tyrol.

About the new Sustainable Tourism Observatories

The *South Tyrol Sustainable Tourism Observatory* is hosted by Eurac Research’s Center for Advanced Studies and is the first observatory in Italy that will monitor and evaluate tourism development in the province of Bolzano-Bozen (South Tyrol) in northern Italy. It is a partnership of the province, tourism research and planning centre Eurac Research, Innovation Development Marketing, and South Tyrol’s regional development agency and destination management organization.

Eurac Research has built a participatory operational model for the Observatory. Besides monitoring the nine INSTO priority impacts, it aims to provide stakeholders with information and evidence on sustainable production and consumption, ski and outdoor sports tourism, biodiversity and nature protection, cultural heritage, mobility, land use, visitor satisfaction and management, and adaptation to climate change.

The *Observatory of the City of Panama* has been formed by the National Chamber of Tourism of Panama to collect and organize information for tourism planning from 16 destinations in Panama City. The country has recently revised its tourism plan and passed new legislations promoting sustainable tourism. The Observatory plans to install a modern system and train personnel for regular and timely tourism measurement.

In order to ensure a participatory approach and stakeholder commitment, an Observatory Working Group was established in spring 2018 including, among others, representatives of the Ministry of Tourism, National Institute for Statistics, different universities and the National Chamber of Tourism. Representatives of the Observatory visited the INSTO Observatory in Guanajuato, Mexico in May 2018 to research the best-fitting operational model to use.

Useful links:

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[2018 Global INSTO Meeting website](#)

[About the Network of Observatories](#)

[News release on the Panama Observatory](#)

