

European Institute of Innovation, Entrepreneurship and Technology (EIET)

Course: Planning and Management of Sustainable Tourism Spaces

Assignment: 2

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Assignment 2

Question 1: Applying the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to a Tourism Destination

For this assignment, I have chosen Kerala, India, also known as “ God ’ s Own Country. ” Kerala is a popular international and domestic tourist destination famous for its backwaters, houseboats, Ayurveda, and cultural traditions.

At the same time, Kerala has also gained recognition for its Responsible Tourism Initiative, which makes it a good example of aligning tourism with the SDGs.

Relevant SDGs for Kerala Tourism:

1. SDG 8 – Decent Work and Economic Growth

- Tourism in Kerala generates employment for local communities in homestays, handicrafts, and guiding services.
- By promoting small-scale tourism businesses, Kerala ensures inclusive growth.

2. SDG 12 – Responsible Consumption and Production

- Kerala encourages eco-friendly accommodations, use of local food, and reduction of plastic in tourism zones.
- Community-based tourism projects provide authentic experiences without overuse of resources.

3. SDG 13 – Climate Action

- Kerala has faced severe floods in recent years, highlighting the importance of climate resilience.
- The state promotes eco-lodges, nature-based tourism, and awareness campaigns to minimize the carbon footprint.

4. SDG 14 – Life Below Water

- Protection of Kerala ’ s backwaters and marine ecosystems is vital for houseboat tourism and fishing communities.
- Regulations on waste disposal from houseboats and coastal clean-up projects support this goal.

5. SDG 15 – Life on Land

- Kerala ’ s wildlife sanctuaries and national parks (like Periyar Tiger Reserve) are key attractions.
- Community-based eco-tourism projects involve locals in conservation while generating income.

How Kerala aligns strategies with SDGs:

- Community Participation: Local people are trained and involved in running tourism businesses, creating ownership and sustainability.
- Eco-friendly Policies: Kerala promotes green certification for hotels, banning plastics, and using renewable energy where possible.
- Cultural Preservation: Traditional art forms like Kathakali, Kalaripayattu, and Ayurveda are integrated into tourism responsibly.
- Public-Private Partnerships: Collaboration between government, NGOs, and private operators ensures shared responsibility.

In short, Kerala ’ s tourism policies reflect a balance between economic growth, cultural preservation, and environmental protection,

making it an excellent example of aligning with the UN SDGs.

Question 2: Sustainable Tourism Development and Protection of Local Heritage

Sustainable tourism is not only about protecting nature but also about safeguarding cultural heritage and traditions.

However, it is important to ensure that these traditions are not commodified or turned into mere performances for profit.

How Sustainable Tourism Protects Heritage:

1. Community-Based Tourism

- Local communities manage tourism activities such as village tours, homestays, and handicrafts.
- This ensures that tourism income stays with the community while preserving authenticity.

2. Promoting Traditional Knowledge

- In Kerala, Ayurveda is a traditional system of medicine. Promoting Ayurveda-based wellness tourism keeps the practice alive while benefiting local practitioners.
- Culinary tourism highlights local food traditions without commercial overexploitation.

3. Safeguarding Cultural Events

- Festivals like Onam and temple arts are shared with tourists while still being primarily community celebrations.
- Regulations prevent over-commercialization or distortion of rituals.

4. Education and Awareness

- Tourists are educated about respecting traditions, dress codes in temples, and environmentally responsible behavior.
- This creates mutual respect between locals and visitors.

Avoiding Commodification:

- Instead of selling culture as a product, sustainable tourism presents it as a shared experience.
- Authentic interaction—such as staying in homestays or learning traditional crafts—allows tourists to experience culture respectfully.
- Strict regulations prevent the misuse of heritage sites or sacred practices for purely commercial purposes.

Example:

- A tourist visiting a Kerala village can learn about coconut farming or watch a Kathakali performance in its traditional setting, rather than in an artificial “tourist show.” This way, the culture is experienced authentically and the community benefits.

Conclusion:

Sustainable tourism can act as a bridge between modern tourism and traditional lifestyles. If managed properly, it protects local heritage, empowers communities, and promotes mutual understanding without reducing culture to a commodity.