

Strategic Positioning of ISTO

The DNA of ISTO and the Sustainable Development Goals



isto.international



[Follow us on Twitter](#)



[Visit our Facebook](#)



[Connect with us on LinkedIn](#)



BACKGROUND

ISTO Strategic Framework

2018-2020



The **strategic framework 2018-2020** (June, 2018) states that ISTO has a double mission:

- Encourage the development of Tourism for All; that is to say any activity contributing to a greater access to holidays and tourism activities for everyone.
- Promote and support the different forms of tourism that benefit people, communities and the development of local areas, and relate to responsible, solidarity, fair or community tourism; for instance any form of people-oriented travel or holidays, based on discovery, encounters and exchanges with local communities and contributing to the well-balanced development of the destination areas.

The **DNA of ISTO** is an expression of what ISTO stands for, the realms in which ISTO and its members are active and the operational implications this has when talking about member services, working criteria, target populations (partners, institutions, potential members) and communicative efforts. The DNA should be conceived as modern and operational translation of the **Montreal Declaration (1996)**, which presents the assets of social tourism and the identification criteria of social Tourism. The Declaration was broadened in perspective and specifications were added in the addendum of Aubagne (2006).

The DNA of Social Tourism has been first developed within the PROFIT project by the European section and later adopted after consultation of the European members at their yearly meeting in La Roche, France (October 2017).



BACKGROUND

ISTO Strategic Framework

2018-2020



For ISTO and its members, who have clearly expressed through the consultation that the **Sustainable Development Goals** and in particular those concerning the tourism sector and the actors of social and fair tourism, are a useful point of reference to rely on for ISTO to formulate concrete pathways of action.

- 93 % of the respondents stated that the ISTO should integrate matters of sustainability and the SDGs into its permanent action.

The SDGs can go hand in hand with the DNA of Social Tourism. This will help us to embed our strategic framework in recognized and esteemed international criteria and programs. Therefore we also made the link with the **UNWTO Global Code of Ethics**.



BACKGROUND

Objective of this note



The **ISTO Statutes** (art.3) inform us that ISTO has two objectives, internationally:

- Encouraging the development of tourism for all.
- Promoting and supporting the different forms of tourism that benefit people, communities and the development of local areas, and relate to responsible, solidarity, fair or community tourism.

For the reflection meeting in January 2019 a number of key actions have been defined. The objective is to integrate the mission of the organization, the results of the member consultation (June 2018) and the elements outlined above. ISTO wants to evolve as an organization and bring in new attractive and recognizable elements to establish a greater visibility for the organization in a structured manner.



STRATEGICAL CONSIDERATIONS

DNA & SDGs as a strategical, operational and communication tool for ISTO



We believe that the DNA can provide a useful strategic and operational mechanism that will help us to:

- **Structure the activities** ISTO has set out to perform in its statutes (ISTO statutes, art. 3):
 - Communicate with all International Organizations active in tourism
 - Participate in every meeting that might contribute to the achievement of its goals
 - Embed the meetings of the regional sections and workgroups in a coherent way
 - Create communication tools and networks offering reciprocal services
 - With which it can carry out projects and actions
 - Publish a magazine and administer the websites
 - Maintain the closest possible work relations with its members
 - Defend and represent the interest of social tourism whenever necessary
 - Projects
- Provide in an effective, modern and attractive way **answers to the wishes and demands expressed by our members** through official consultations and other channels. Here we set out some relevant findings of the consultation which has been performed in June 2018.

STRATEGICAL CONSIDERATIONS

DNA & SDGs as a strategical, operational and communication tool for ISTO



Concepts and the development of ISTO

- 93 % of the respondents stated that the ISTO should integrate matters of sustainability and the SDGs into its permanent action.
- 82 % of the respondents believe that ISTO should take a position on societal aspects of Tourism (e.g. overtourism)

Organization and internal communication

- 29% feel that they are not sufficiently informed on the activities of ISTO
- 37% feel that they are far removed from the life and the activities of ISTO
- 61% do not feel well informed about the activities of the regional sections, whereas 93% of them express their interest in these activities
- 65% desire to be more active within the regional sections
- There is a clear desire to move away from rigid, statutory meetings in favor of:
 - Be less formal in the meetings
 - Work more through thematically organized workgroups
 - Preference for quality and substantive preparation when having a debate
- 55% do not participate on a regular basis on ISTO activities.

STRATEGICAL CONSIDERATIONS

DNA & SDGs as a strategical, operational and communication tool for ISTO



Communication and external promotion (consultation June 2018)

- Only 40% think that the current communication and external promotion is sufficient. 46 % state that it is insufficient.
- When asked about who should be addressed by the external communication public agencies, universities and tourism colleges and civil society partners come up highest (these are the actors that very often work with SDGs)
- 93% are in favor of a day or week for social and responsible tourism (SDGs are actively sponsored and promoted by the UN)

Services to ISTO members

- 5 types of actions have been identified by more than 50% of the respondents as expected benefits for members:
 - Sharing of good practices (almost 70%)
 - The finding of partners and the participation in a network (60%)
 - International Representation (almost 60%)
 - Advocacy in favor of the dimensions of tourism of passed on by ISTO (56%)
 - The pooling of know-how and the elaboration of common tools (55%)

STRATEGICAL CONSIDERATIONS

DNA & SDGs as a strategical, operational and communication tool for ISTO



- 3 other types of actions are to be considered (ca. 45%):
 - Access to institutions and call for offers
 - Access to information and documentation
 - Formation (76% wants ISTO to formalize existing formations)
- Proposals made by members:
 - Network establishment
 - A visible and modern lobby organization
 - Set up of an (international) observation system on tourism
- **Embed our strategic framework in recognized and esteemed international criteria and programs.** In this document we want to align each one of the DNA-aspects with the SDGs. Moreover we also paid attention to the UNWTO Global Code of Ethics and the Montreal Declaration which states the core principles of what Social Tourism/Tourism for All stands for.
 - Partnership relations (universities, social organizations, advocacy organizations, public bodies, ...)
 - Private and public sponsoring
 - Potential members



KEYWORDS – POSITIONING



- **UPDATE**

ISTO wants to update its DNA in the light of the arrival of new members (1) and changing trends in the societal and institutional environment (2).

1. The integration of fair and responsible tourism within ISTO puts new issues, demands and an enlarged scope on the agenda.
2. The Sustainable Development Goals are an articulation of a changing global environment in which ISTO needs to position itself.

- **DISTINGUISH**

The expression of the core values and the mission in the form of the DNA should help ISTO to present itself as a unique and attractive organization.

- **UNITE**

In the light of the new members and the demands expressed by the members concerning the way we organize our actions and communicate about it is important to present a recognizable DNA. This should allow for a greater coherence in our communication and in our actions (1) and for an effective and expertise pooling generating enthusiasm and participation of our members (2).

ISTO should keep transforming itself, with the help of communication tools and efforts and a clear identity (DNA) from a cold and distant network to a warm community where everyone feels at home.

KEYWORDS – POSITIONING



- **DEVELOP**

In line with what was mentioned above, new ways of actions and expertise pooling should be considered. The DNA and its different elements should help in order to establish this.

- **INSPIRE**

The adoption of the DNA for the whole organization should permit us to inspire our members to engage themselves for the SDG and become protagonists for a sustainable, social and responsible tourism.

The DNA of Social, Fair and Responsible Tourism



SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



FAIR BUSINESS

Fair local business & sustainable regional economic development



Keywords:

ILO (International Labour Organization)

Fundamental labor rights

Infrastructure

Social tourism accommodations

Corporate Social Responsibility

Flourishing destinations

Fiscal fairness

Overtourism

Provide employment competence

Staff training

Professionalism

Performance

Local econ. benefits

Regional development

Non-econ. added value

Digitalization

Social objectives

Objective & honest information

Gender equality

Sustainable and responsible

consumption

Innovation

Volunteers

Short description:

Fair local business refers to the economic and infrastructural aspects of social tourism. Tourism plays an important role within global and local economies. Social Tourism actors work within this environment and therefore need to **perform in a competent, and professional way**. With respect to workers, local suppliers and the local community. Growth should be human-centered.

Social Tourism operators commit themselves to **social objectives and the creation of a non-economic added value** for both visitors and workers. Give an opportunity to the greatest number of visitors to go on a holiday, work with respect for the environment and the local community and provide honest information towards customers are just some examples.

Fair employment and decent working conditions are crucial elements of our DNA, for example in providing training opportunities for workers. Social Tourism operators not only commit themselves to respecting the rights of their workers but also to follow their fiscal obligations and respect the principles of **fiscal justice** towards the communities at large. These aspects also concern volunteers as they must work in decent conditions and under a clear and precise contract.

FAIR BUSINESS

Fair local business & sustainable regional economic development



Short description:

Tourism actors should regulate themselves through the concept of Corporate social responsibility (CSR). They commit that way to managing the social (including individuals and working conditions), environmental and economic effects of their operations responsibly and in line with public expectations and policies.

Sustainable regional economic development

Social and sustainable Tourism must be embedded in the local society, an integrated approach where tourism development takes into account local opportunities and stakeholders is important for a balanced tourism development. We understand local opportunities in two ways.

Firstly, it is important for tourism actors to create local opportunities for travelers. The idea is for them to be in contact with the local people and surroundings, and not only with the touristic infrastructures. Secondly, construction materials should be mainly provided by regional industries. It is also essential that local people are trained to work in the tourism sector.

In general, Social Tourism contributes to **regional development opportunities** for neglected regions, growing job opportunities for skilled and unskilled workers and the reduction of inequality.

This approach could also be a way to fight overtourism in some areas, as tourists could be redirected to more rural and less known areas.



FAIR BUSINESS

Fair local business & sustainable regional economic development



Key SDGs:



No poverty: fair employment for local workers



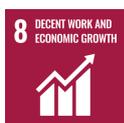
Zero hunger: promote sustainable agriculture



Quality education: lifelong learning and training opportunities for workers



Gender equality: same access to employment and growing chances, fair payment for women (and men)



Decent work and economic growth: decent work conditions, fair hours, sustainable regional development



Industry, innovation and infrastructure: promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation in social tourism



Reduced inequalities: development opportunities for rural and remote communities – for workers and economic growth



Sustainable cities and communities: promote and safeguard local cultural heritage, controlling the impact of overtourism

FAIR BUSINESS

Fair local business & sustainable regional economic development



Key SDGs:



Responsible consumption and production: smart use of local or fair trade products, waste management, non-economic added value creation



Peace, justice and strong institutions: fiscal justice



Partnerships for the goals: ISTO



ENVIRONMENT

Resource efficiency & environmental protection



Keywords:

Green Label

Waste reduction & management

Responsible energy use

Eco friendly products

Raising awareness

CO2-emission

Biodiversity

Environmental protection

Limits to growth

Equitable use of resources

Future generations

Access to clean water for all

Access to energy for all

Sustainable consumption

Ecosystems

Product lifecycle management

(PLM)

Short description:

Tourism plays an important social, cultural and economic role for regions and communities. It is however important to **satisfy the needs of present and future generations in an equitable way**. There are limits to growth and touristic development needs to take into consideration the entire life cycle of the resources for the environmental protection.

Social tourism actors contribute to the struggle against global climate change and the depletion of natural resources. This can take place through responsible energy and water use, choosing local sustainable products, waste management, responsible transportation, etc. The sector can also contribute to customer awareness about environmental issues.



ENVIRONMENT

Resource efficiency & environmental protection



Key SDGs:



Quality education: inform and raise awareness about the environmental impact of tourism



Clean water and sanitation: waste management and responsible use of water in the business



Affordable and clean energy: responsible use of (renewable) energy resources



Industry, innovation and infrastructure: zero energy buildings, ...



Responsible consumption and production: responsible transportation, food consumption, use of environment friendly cleaning products, management of plastic waste



Climate Action: see below



Life below water: prevent plastic use and other waste that end up in the ocean and kills biodiversity



Life on land: respect natural landscape, the environment and local biodiversity



Partnerships for the goals: ISTO

INCLUSION

Holiday Participation for All



Keywords:

Social Policies
Supporting network
Tourism for All/ Holiday
Participation
Destinations for All

Staff awareness
Raising awareness
Accessible infrastructure
Social Tourism Operators
Equality / Inclusion

(Dis)ability
Equitable use of resource
Non-discrimination
Public Support
Poverty reduction

Short description:

ISTO has at its core to encourage the development of Tourism for All (double mission).

Article 24 of the universal declaration on human rights "gives the right to everyone to rest and leisure, including reasonable limitation of working hours and periodic holidays with pay". People still encounter barriers to reach this goal. Tourism should be accessible in every sense.

Inclusion concerns "any activities contributing to a greater access to holidays and tourism activities for everyone" taken, both on the level of public agencies, social organizations, and social tourism operators.

Social Policy should inform, prescribe or establish these measures. The support of public authorities plays an important role. On the other hand the engagement of social organizations and social tourism operators is essential.

Social and responsible tourism actors take into account all types of barriers: social, cultural, physical, psychological and financial.



INCLUSION

Holiday Participation for All

Key SDGs:



No poverty: holiday participation for all



Gender equality: Individuals should all have access to holidays, no matter their gender.



Industry, innovation and infrastructure: accessible buildings and infrastructure for disabled people



Reduced inequalities: holiday participation for all in order to overcome physical, psychological, economical barriers



Peace, justice and strong institutions: public authorities play an important role enabling holiday access for everyone



Partnerships for the goals: ISTO



SOLIDARITY

Between guests and hosts,
generations and members of
a global society



Keywords:

Social cohesion

Cultural heritage

Social & cultural development

Host communities & visitors

Partnerships & cooperation

Public good

Non-disruptive integration into
the local environment

Awareness

Development of territories

Tolerance and diversity

Sustainable development

Flourishing destinations

Development programs

Peace & tolerance

Short description:

Reconcile tourism development and respect for local communities and cultures. Tourism should be integrated in a non-disruptive manner into the local environment. Moreover it contributes to the social and cultural development of regions.

Visitors and host communities should be facilitated to participate in occasions for intercultural exchange that engender respect for diversity and mutual tolerance. Social tourism operators and public authorities play a crucial role in raising awareness amongst both visitors, staff and host communities for these themes. In this way Social Tourism contributes in a small but considerable way to the advancement of peace and global citizenship.

Holidays are experiences and occasions to discover and to meet new people, thus contributing to **social cohesion**. Social tourism actors play an important role in the **empowerment of communities** and the establishment of **dignifying circumstances**. Responsible tourism wants to improve access to local heritage for local communities encouraging therefore domestic tourism. Citizenship and participation are important goals.

A last element is the contribution of responsible tourism to **development cooperation programs and activities** in less developed countries. This can be divided in two parts. On one side, the exchange of experiences and good practices between similar organizations/companies in developed and less developed countries/regions.

SOLIDARITY

Between guests and hosts,
generations and members of
a global society



Short description:

On the other side, the development of touristic volunteering through which travelers enjoy discovering a new culture and region while they are helping communities in need (building schools/houses/libraries, helping with agriculture, teaching, etc). It is very important that the needs are clearly defined and that the trip is not a disguised way for operators to make money.

International help is also about providing financial solutions (direct funding from wealthier countries, implementation of microcredit systems, etc).

Key SDGs:



No poverty: support for cooperative and small-scale producers contributing to viable local communities and the diversification of their income sources



Zero hunger: support for cooperative and small-scale producers contributing to viable local communities and the diversification of their income sources



Quality education: global citizenship awareness and education



Reduced inequalities: to improve access to local heritage for local communities (and not only for tourists)



Peace, justice and strong institutions: meetings between hosts and guests bring out tolerance and peace, and helps mutual cultural understanding.



Partnerships for the goals: ISTO

QUALITY OF LIFE

Tourism as a vehicle for individual and collective fulfillment



Keywords:

Human Rights

Citizenship

Discovery

Psycho-social benefits

Health

Public good

Experience

Meaning

Non formal learning

Tolerance and diversity

Connect Your Story

Personal enrichment

Peace & tolerance

Education

Free (quality) time

Slow tourism

Family

Short description:

Experiencing holidays brings many benefits and opportunities **for individual enrichment and realization to persons**. Especially for students, young people, families and seniors which form important target groups for social tourism operators.

Social tourism actors, in their mission to deliver non-economic added value, pay special attention to the cultural, social, psychological, educational, physical, ... **beneficial effects of travelling** on visitors.

In a collective sense, social tourism plays an important role in **reinforcing the social tissue**: the construction of a social identity, benefitting family life and family integration and in empowering communities.



QUALITY OF LIFE

Tourism as a vehicle for individual and collective fulfillment



Key SDGs:



Good health and well-being: enjoying a break to rest and to have paid holidays helps for the well-being



Quality education: non formal learning benefits on a social, cultural, psychological scale



Sustainable cities and communities: reinforcing the social tissue, empowering communities



Peace, justice and strong institutions: knowing other cultures brings tolerance and helps work towards peace



Partnerships for the goals: ISTO



Strategic Positioning of ISTO

The DNA of ISTO and the Sustainable Development Goals



isto.international



[Follow us on Twitter](#)



[Visit our Facebook](#)



[Connect with us on LinkedIn](#)

