

Second International TouMaLi Conference

Effective Waste Management for Sustainable Tourism and Marine Ecosystem Protection

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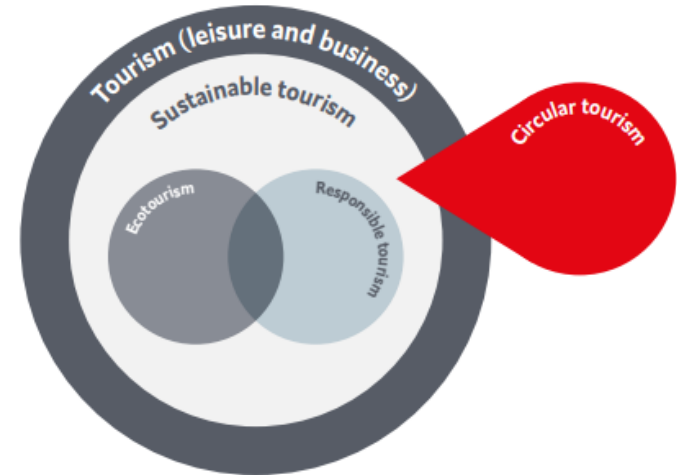
National Strategies for a Circular Economy approach in the Tourism Sector: EGYPT



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- Tourism is highly dependent on resources from a wide range of sectors, generating meaningful contributions to people’s lives and the economy. At the same time, the future of the sector needs to be linked to the urgent global efforts to promote sustainability and to fight the environmental challenges of our time.
- Responsible tourism practices and sustainable tourism developments have become a priority for Egypt.
- To achieve this transformation of the industry, a systematic approach is necessary—one in which different sectors collaborate, with a focus on environmental, social, economic and cultural dimensions.

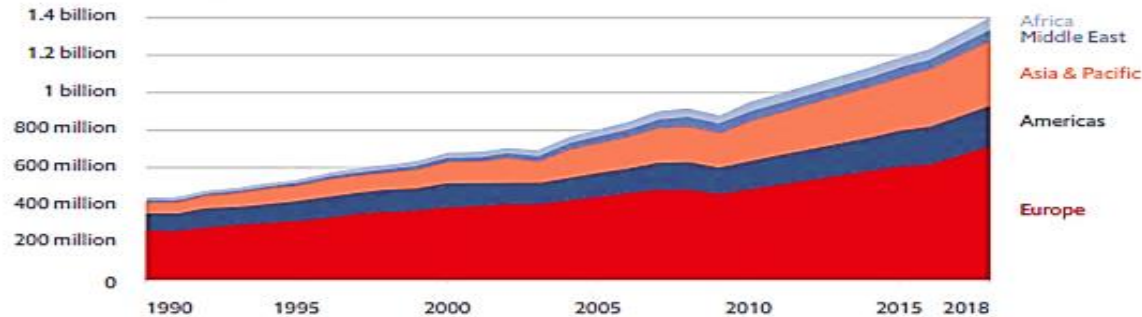
FIGURE 1. Understanding tourism





- Circularity in tourism promotes natural resource conservation and regeneration, as well as the sustainable use of resources and a reduction in waste. Moreover, circularity enables new business models, creates opportunities for new jobs and services, and relies more heavily on digitalization. Tourism provides great strategic value as it is considered a major element in a diversified economy.
- In Egypt, our industry is expected to double in size by 2030. This creates a huge responsibility to urgently transform the way we work, placing environmental policies front and centre of everything we do.

FIGURE 2. International tourist arrivals



- But in change lies tremendous opportunity. From policymakers to hoteliers, everyone throughout the business can reap the innumerable rewards of sustainable tourism, not just in helping to tackle climate change, but also in creating new micro economies and essential jobs.

- After an unprecedented halt in tourism at the height of the covid-19 pandemic, a slow recovery in global tourism is under way. According to the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), global international tourist arrivals increased by 130% in January 2022 compared with 2021. The industry is a valuable contributor to livelihoods—both directly and through its vast supply chain—accounting for over 10% of global GDP, and an even larger share in some regions: 12% in Southeast Asia and 15% in the Caribbean, for example. In Egypt, tourism accounts for around 9% of GDP. The post-covid recovery of the industry, therefore, signals wider economic recovery.

FIGURE 4. Total economic contribution of tourism to GDP in the Middle East (% of GDP, 2019)

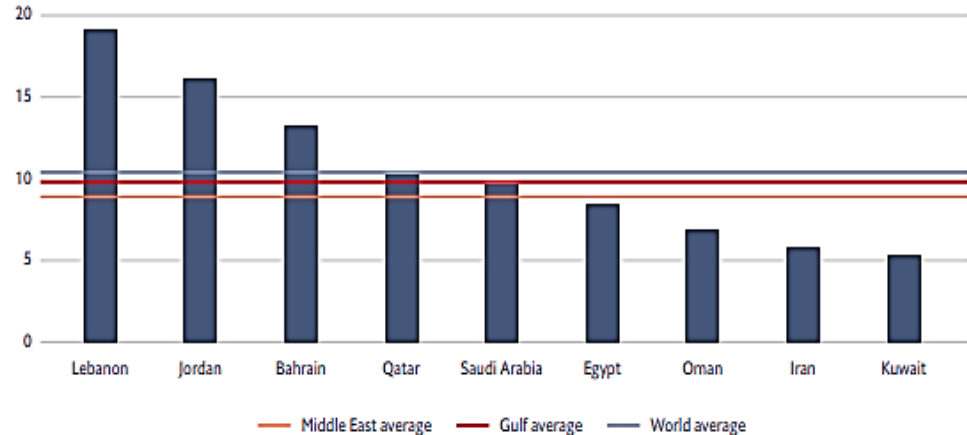
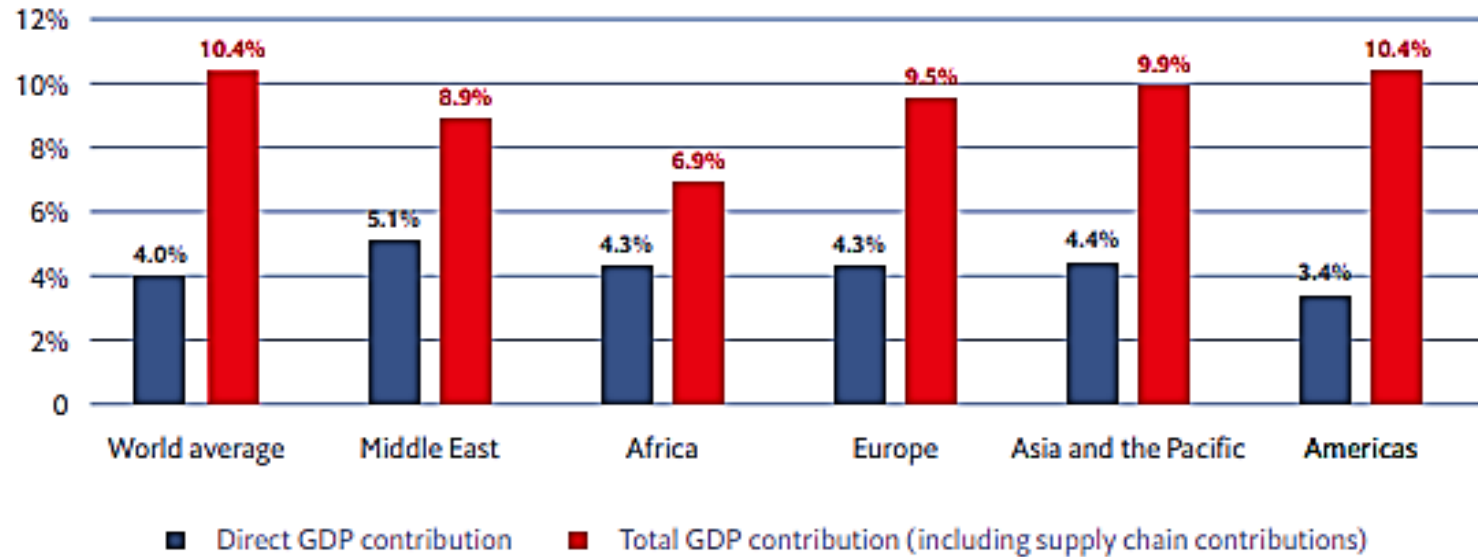
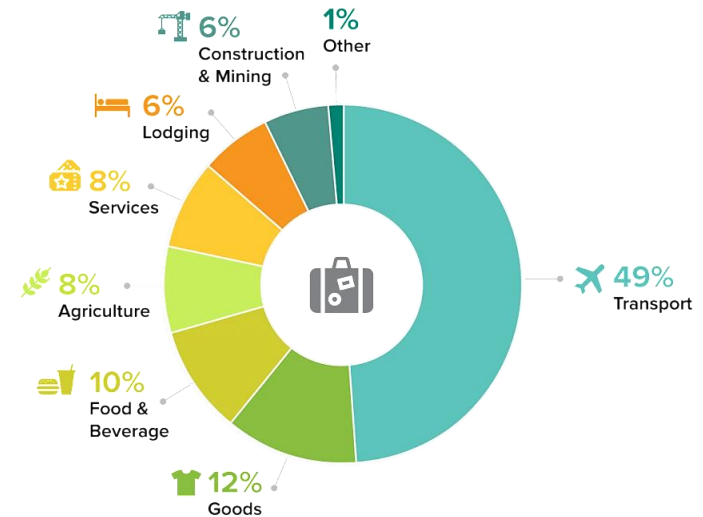


FIGURE 5. Economic contribution of tourism



- The tourism industry is also responsible for environmental degradation through carbon emissions, waste generation and resource depletion. It accounts for 8% of global greenhouse gas emissions—of this, almost 50% is generated from transport alone, including aviation and ground transport. The sector is also responsible for around 14% of all solid waste generated globally, with each tourist generating an average of 1.7kg of waste per day, over twice as much as the global daily average per person of 0.7kg.

FIGURE 6. The carbon footprint of global tourism, by sub-sector



- These challenges to sustainability are even more concerning in Egypt, where the tourism industry is expected to more than double in size by 2030 - the fastest projected growth of any region in the world.

FIGURE 7. Circular tourism framework



- Circularity principles provide a framework for breaking this link, emphasizing the recycling and regeneration of resources to maximize use, and the reduction of waste.
- Changing mindsets towards sustainability and circularity across all tourism stakeholders is the single most important hurdle to overcome before progress can be made. green initiatives can help the tourism industry lower costs in the long term, with positive feedback loops to the price to consumers. Education plays a primary role in raising awareness around the issues of sustainability in tourism, clarifying misperceptions and stimulating action on both the demand and supply sides.
- Successfully transitioning the tourism industry to a pathway to circularity requires cross stakeholder collaboration to achieve scale and impact. The tourism value chain is vast and complex, involving a range of stakeholders. Each plays a role in creating a circular tourism industry. The industry (including hoteliers, tour operators, transport providers and others) plays a role in identifying innovative ways to minimize or eliminate waste in processes through circular practices.

- Egypt is still at an early stage on its journey to sustainable tourism owing to a unique set of challenges. Unlike countries such as Costa Rica, Turkey and Portugal which have made strong progress on sustainable tourism, Egypt lags behind.
- A circular tourism industry can offer many opportunities for economic growth in Egypt. Investments - both private and public - in circular tourism can help expand the sector, spur economic growth and create jobs for the local population. For example, a circular tourism strategy that aims to platform local destinations can create jobs for unemployed youth who are uniquely qualified to act as tour guides showcasing their local history or to host tourists in small bed-and-breakfasts.

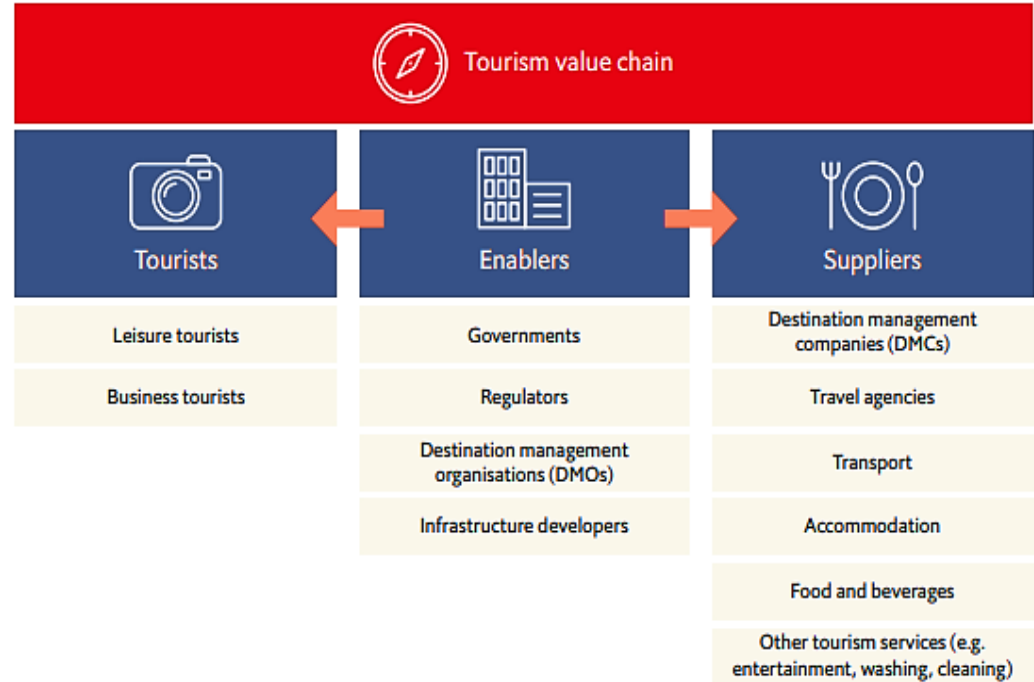


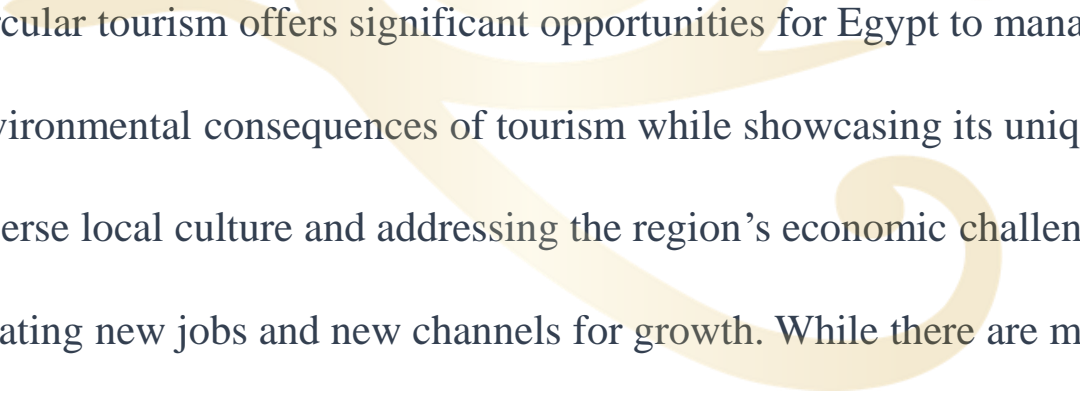
- Mega events in Egypt can serve as a catalyst for circular tourism, but fully leveraging the benefits requires strategic long-term planning and integration with the wider sustainability agenda. Egypt is establishing itself on a global platform as a host destination for large international events, such as Expo 2020 and the 2022 FIFA World Cup
- Developing systems for collecting data on key sustainability metrics will enable informed decision-making on the demand and supply sides. The availability of data is a particular challenge in Egypt. Sustainability metrics can allow tourism industry players to track progress and identify gaps. With the right data, travel agencies, for example, can curate alternative holiday packages to allow informed customers to then make decisions weighing up factors that matter to them such as environmental impact, cost and experience.



FIGURE 8. Tourism value chain

- The tourism value chain is vast and complex, involving a range of stakeholders, all playing a role in creating a sustainable tourism industry. The industry itself plays a role in identifying ways to minimize or eliminate waste in its processes through circular practices. Tourists play a role in approaching holiday planning with a more sustainable mindset. And policymakers play a role in developing the infrastructure and regulatory framework to support greater sustainability.



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- Circular tourism offers significant opportunities for Egypt to manage the environmental consequences of tourism while showcasing its unique and diverse local culture and addressing the region's economic challenges by creating new jobs and new channels for growth. While there are many challenges to market transformation that need to be addressed, there are even greater opportunities to seize.













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