



Advisor Resources Package

competence area 3

natural & cultural heritage

developed by **CIMBB**



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Advisor Resource Package: **introduction**

Addressed to:

- Sustainable tourism advisors
- VET providers
- Small tourism providers

offers a set of eight blended learning resources to support tourism and local development through the promotion of sustainable and efficient use of natural, cultural and economic resources in watercourse regions.



natural & cultural heritage: about competence area 3

Almost all European cities were built along waterways, there are many small rivers and streams shaping European's landscapes. These watercourses connect cities, people, communities, cultures, habits, traditions, itineraries, all key elements in touristic attractions. This competence area describes the knowledge, skills and attitudes the sustainable tourism advisor needs to acquire to support small tourism providers, in watercourse regions, in strengthening efforts to protect, safeguard and promote the natural and cultural heritage.



natural & cultural heritage: in this competence area you will learn how to

- differentiate natural heritage and cultural heritage
- define tangible and intangible heritage
- correlate watercourses (rivers, lakes, small rivers and stream) as natural and cultural heritage assets
- facilitate the comprehension of the existing UNESCO Culture Conventions, and in specific the Convention on the Protection of the Underwater Cultural Heritage
- provide references and tools for small tourism providers to devise a plan for managing the tourist-carrying capacity in watercourse regions
- assess the level of commitment of small tourism providers, in specific those located in watercourse regions, towards the safeguarding of cultural and natural heritage
- demonstrate the role of small tourism providers, in specific those located in watercourse regions, in local heritage management

Competence area 3: **guidance**



In this section you can find knowledge-based contents presenting key factual and conceptual information about the topics covered by the **natural & cultural heritage** competence area

Cultural heritage is **the set of distinctive spiritual, material, intellectual and emotional features** of a particular place or region, that encompasses art and literature, lifestyles, ways of living together, value systems, traditions and beliefs that is passed on from generation to generation (UNESCO).

At a time of increasing globalisation, the preservation and sustainability of cultural heritage is a challenge for tourism.

Cultural heritage

Natural heritage is part of the cultural heritage of a particular place or region and refers to the **natural resources, land and ecosystems** that constitute the habitat of threatened species of animals and plants (UNESCO).

These natural sites are valued for their natural beauty – for touristic activities – and conservation and include, e.g., nature parks and reserves in rural, mountain and watercourse regions, zoos, aquaria and botanical gardens.

Natural heritage

Cultural heritage is often expressed as tangible or intangible.

As part of human activity, it produces tangible representations of the value systems, beliefs, traditions and lifestyles of a particular place or region, e.g., buildings, archaeological sites, landscapes and artefacts, which are **visible and tangible traces from antiquity or the recent past** (UNESCO).

Tangible heritage

Cultural heritage also encompasses oral traditions and expressions – including language –, performing arts, social practices, rituals and festive events, knowledge, practices concerning nature and the universe and traditional craftsmanship of a particular place or region (UNESCO).

It is **transmitted from generation to generation**, provides a sense of identity and continuity and safeguards traditional culture.

Intangible heritage

UNESCO's World Heritage Convention (1972) establishes the **nomination of 'World heritage' sites** of exceptional value to humanity, most of which are tourist destinations.

Tourism can thus help the conservation and enhances the protection of heritage resources for future generations, if properly managed by countries and local tourism providers.

World Heritage

Over the last years, UNESCO has recognised **more than 250 natural sites** across 100 countries – from which 50 are watercourse landscapes – considered as the most exceptional natural places in the world.

Its main goals are to pursue the long-term conservation of biodiversity and the sustainable development of local or regional communities through job creation and tourism.

Natural World Heritage

Cultural tourism can be defined as the **movements of persons who satisfy the human need for diversity**, tending to raise the cultural level of the individual and giving rise to new knowledge (World Tourism Organisation).

Tourism is the ideal arena to learn about cultural and natural heritage and it is commonly associated with educational culture (e.g., visiting a museum, trying the local food and going on a tour).

Cultural tourism



Overtourism is the phenomenon whereby **certain places of interest are visited by excessive numbers of tourists**, raising undesirable effects for the places visited (Oxford Dictionary).

Overtourism is thus responsible for jeopardising global natural (environmental/ecosystem challenges) and cultural heritage (loss of local authenticity, increased prices of housing/goods).

Overtourism

Tourism carrying capacity is the **maximum number of persons which could visit a location within a given period**, such that local environmental, physical, economic, and socio-cultural characteristics are not compromised, and without reducing tourist satisfaction' (World Tourism Organisation).

Decision-makers and tourism providers should thus evaluate if their touristic activities are sustainable or not before encouraging a rise in visitor numbers.

Tourism carrying capacity

Sustainable cultural tourism tries to **ensure good conservation practices of the cultural and natural heritage** of a particular local or region. It offers a new perspective on tourism as it places heritage and local or regional communities at the centre of the decision-making process (European Commission).

It tries to solve challenges related to overcrowding, cultural appropriation and the loss of authenticity and the environment.

Sustainable Cultural Tourism



Competence area 3: **tutorials**



In this section you can find a set of self-explanatory task-cards, specifically designed to provide real-world challenge and supply the practical information to develop your competences on **natural & cultural heritage**

Task card 1: understanding UNESCO's Culture Conventions

outline

This action card aims to support the sustainable tourism advisor in guiding the small tourism provider in **better understanding the existing UNESCO Culture Conventions**, and in specific the Convention on the Protection of the Underwater Cultural Heritage.

To achieve that, the sustainable tourism advisor will present **where to find and analyse them** so that small tourism providers, interested in protecting their underwater cultural heritage, can **identify and then define their own priorities** and efforts to help protect, safeguard and promote it.

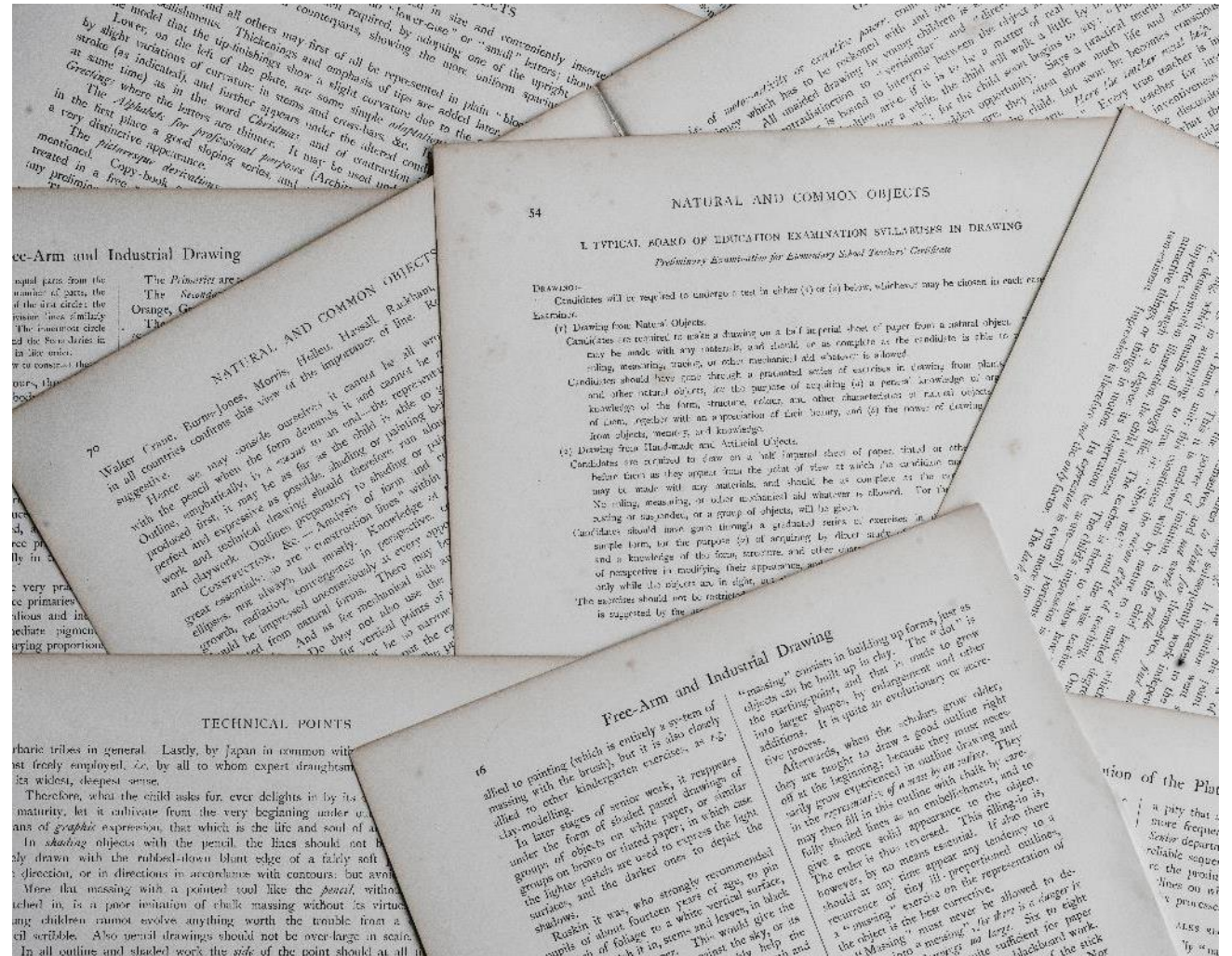


Action 1: search

Step1: access the en.unesco.com platform

Step2: identify the six Culture Conventions on the legal affairs > instruments > conventions search page

Step3: access each Culture Convention for an overview of the existing international legislation



source: <https://unsplash.com/photos/5cFwQ-WMcJU>

Action 2: **analyse**

Step1: take note of the relevant article titles of the Underwater Convention that might impact your business

Step2: read carefully the selected articles and underline relevant information

Step3: map the relevant information collected by using a bullet points list



source: <https://unsplash.com/photos/TswOPhWcrmQ>

Action 3: **assess and define**

Step1: compile your bullet points list into a do's and don'ts checklist

Step2: assess what your business can do in the scope of the Underwater Convention

Step3: define key priority areas for your business with a higher impact on your region's underwater cultural heritage



source: <https://unsplash.com/photos/RLw-UC03Gwc>

Throughout this action card, you have learned about **how tourism has the potential to reinforce international cultural protection practices**, by understanding the UNESCO Culture Conventions.

These initial steps helped you in assessing and defining what priorities are most relevant for your business to help protect, safeguard and promote the underwater cultural heritage of your region. You can replace the tools suggested to others more adaptable to your needs and knowledge.

Based on the defined priorities, you should **identify a set of forward-thinking activities** for your business to implement.

summary

Task card 2: devising a sustainable cultural tourism management plan



outline

This task card aims to support the **delivery of a sustainable cultural tourism management plan** by small tourism providers to counterattack overtourism (i.e., overcrowding of destinations).

Specifically, references and tools will be offered so that a **process of tourism carrying capacity in watercourse regions** can happen, through the introduction, development and implementation of new strategies based on a customised plan.

Action 1: **assess**

Step1: identify the issues related to tourism activities in your region by using a DPSIR model

Step2: assess your region's tourism carrying capacity (good, medium, low)

Step3: take note of relevant responses and the stakeholders to perform them



source: <https://unsplash.com/photos/qWwpHwip31M>

Action 2: **collect and elaborate**

Step1: consult relevant tourism management references to identify additional actions and benchmark indicators

Step2: review or add new actions to your DPSIR model

Step3: match each action with the relevant stakeholder (companies, community, policy, tourist)



source: <https://unsplash.com/photos/JdhzbzfUOtU>

Action 3: **draft**

Step1: translate the DPSIR into a sustainable cultural tourism management plan (detail priorities, indicators, concrete actions)

Step2: include a SMART methodology analysis

Step3: propose and define a sustainability governance for periodic assessments



source: <https://unsplash.com/photos/fIq0tET6llw>

Throughout this action card, you have learned about the steps and tools needed to **customise a plan to address visitors' growth in watercourse regions**. You have done this by analysing relevant references and by adding new ones or reviewing the actions you have defined before from the Underwater Cultural Heritage Convention framework.

You have also been presented with the DPSIR model, which can help you better visualise how your business is or can contribute to counteract overtourism challenges.

For further definition of new overtourism strategies within a business reality, you can also use the **visual mapping tool**.

summary

Competence area 3: **hands-on resources**



In this section you can find scenario-based situations designed specifically to illustrate how **natural & cultural heritage** competence area can be put into practice by small tourism providers



source: <https://unsplash.com/photos/S7-kX92aaBE>

Scenario 1: assessing commitment level

The owner of a **bus tour guide service** provides touristic trips to his/her region's big lake, known for its natural beauty. This lake is always **overcrowded with tourists**, causing challenges to its preservation. Due to this, his/her local Government decided to name the site a 'protected landscape' and appealed to regional tourism operators to make strategic changes.

Scenario 1

There is a small tourist business operating nearby a big lake. He/she owns a bus tour guide service that provides **tours to the lake on a daily basis.**

This lake is a regional attraction, known for its natural beauty, surrounded by mountains and wild life.

However, as the lake attractiveness grows, there is an increasing concern about the **overtourism in the area** and the challenges it entails (e.g., water and soil pollution, and increased housing construction for tourism).

Linked with the natural preservation is the fear of increased housing and food prices for local residents.

Scenario 1

Pressured by local residents and environmental associations, the local government decided to fund a study on the impacts of tourism in the region's natural and cultural heritage.

Based on its conclusions, it **named the lake site a 'protected landscape'** and applied to UNESCO's natural world heritage. This decision stopped the arbitrary building of holiday homes by which helped with the amount of cars been parked at the lake side, free parking was available in areas near but not at the lakeside, these were just some of the sustainable measures implemented.

The local government also encouraged tourism providers to get involved and commit to heritage conservation and management and **come up to their own creative solutions.**

Scenario 1

The business owner understood that preserving the lake and the community's living conditions would benefit its business in the long-term and that the **right balance between economic profit and sustainable tourism activities** needed to be found.

He/she internally assessed their level of commitment (how much he/she was willing to compromise/do) to find that right balance.

This included consulting the local Government's legislation as well as the main UNESCO Conventions, including the Underwater Convention, to take note of relevant responses and assess what the company could/was willing to do, based on a do's and don'ts list.

Scenario 1

Due to the local government's-imposed measures, buses could no longer park near the lake and visitors were confined to restricted sightseeing areas.

The business owner, used the information that they compiled, based on their internal assessing, decided they were willing to implement a concrete solution in the short-term: to **digitalise the tour trip (through a 3D digital tour)** tourists who would have previously used the bus tour, can avail of the experience from anywhere or anytime and this idea makes it available to visitors and the general public, to preserve but also promote the lake as a regional asset.

Scenario 1: assessing commitment level

- In what way should local governments facilitate and encourage those involved in tourism activities to respect and enhance their heritage?
- What should be the level of commitment of small tourism providers towards safeguarding their heritage?
- What is the role of digitalisation in the area of cultural and natural heritage preservation?

Scenario 1: assessing commitment level

TRY to

- Keep up with local / regional / national / international legislation on heritage preservation, including underwater, to manage future expectations for tourism providers
- Assess your level of commitment towards heritage preservation, including underwater, by clearly identifying what is the right balance between profit and sustainability for your company
- Harness the potential of digitalisation to make tourism sites available to everyone, while being preserved at the same time

AVOID to

- Assume that policy concerns go against your business's economic sustainability. Do not resist change, work with it to find a balanced solution for you
- Elaborate on solutions that do not match specific local / regional heritage challenges. Try to commit and contribute to the overall local / regional preservation effort
- Limit your commitment to the lowest level. Be an agent of change and, if needed, identify other sources of income that could help you



source: <https://unsplash.com/photos/dgRh4MQ1AGQ>

Scenario 2: demonstrating relevance

The government of a given country decided to **fund national initiatives** that support the preservation and promotion of the country's heritage. The head of a museum decides to form a consortium of tourism providers and proposes a project to **raise awareness and increase tourism** in several city sites that are located near an important river of that country. A clear sustainable cultural tourism management plan is needed.

Scenario 2

The government of a given country decided to fund national initiatives that support the preservation and promotion of the country's cultural and natural heritage, in an effort to **promote more sustainable cultural tourism practices**.

The head of a museum dedicated to promote one of the country's main rivers' natural and cultural heritage, and its importance for the country's social and economic life, decided this would be a good opportunity to raise awareness and increase tourism in some cities that surround the river banks.

His/her idea was to form a **consortium of small tourism providers** (e.g., hotels, tours, museums) operating in the cities located near the river.

Scenario 2

To submit the application the consortium needed to clearly identify the ways in which they were expected to **contribute to the safeguarding and promotion of the river's cultural and natural heritage.**

All partners agreed that each one would come up with an activity directly linked to the river to be part of a touristic river route that visitors could take across the river, to visit the different river sites.

This way, tourists interested in the river's history and importance could take the suggested route and visit the different locations, with different touristic attractions connected to the river, thus enjoying its cultural and natural beauty (e.g. bike rides along the river, temporary exhibitions on the river's importance, boat tours).

Scenario 2

The head of the museum also knew that the consortium needed to submit with the project a **well defined sustainable cultural tourism management plan**, as an increased attractiveness of the river route was to be expected.

They decided that in order to foresee any upcoming issues related to **increased tourism activity** and assess if their cities had the capacity to deal with overtourism problems.

The small tour providers came to the conclusion that additional measures might be needed to support the tourism carrying capacity of the new river route and consulted tourism management references to benchmark responses to be included in the project proposal.

Scenario 2

Afterwards, they **set up a customised plan** that included the main challenges and potential responses to address future visitors' growth in those watercourse cities.

The plan included relevant initiatives such as agreeing on a maximum number of boat tours across the river per day (to limit the number of visitors), the creation of a governance committee that included the consortium and the city councils to follow-up on any identified problem and working with environmental associations for the preservation of underwater life.

After the project was submitted, the consortium won the needed funding to implement the tourism river tour.

Scenario 2: demonstrating relevance

- At a time of increasing globalisation, how far can small tourism providers go to actually contribute to proper tourism management of a given local or region?
- In what ways should relevant stakeholders work together to safeguard and promote natural and cultural heritage that is shared by many regions?
- What is the importance of public funding for shared responsibility regarding underwater heritage?

Scenario 2: demonstrating relevance

TRY to

- Engage with all relevant stakeholders (other businesses, municipalities) to make sure your region's tourism carrying capacity is continuously assessed
- Promote joint projects with other tourism providers whenever possible, so that the economic costs of properly managing local heritage are spread by evenly
- Keep up with public initiatives that might support your individual or community efforts. This will help you increase your level of commitment towards a sustainable tourism

AVOID to

- Come up with individual responses for community problems that are not framed within broader initiatives, as they might not have the expected effect on your region
- Do not care about your region's heritage. Your business depends on its preservation and promotion, and it is up to you, as part of the community, to safeguard it, also for your business's economic sustainability
- Believe your small role in your region's heritage management will not make a difference. There is always some level of support to be provided and if all do their part, change will be felt

Competence area 3: **practical tips**



In this section you can find a checklist of points to adopt **natural & cultural heritage** practices in local tourism businesses

Familiarise yourself with the UNESCO Culture Conventions, particularly the Underwater Convention, and understand the opportunities and responsibilities they represent to your tourism business in terms of protecting, safeguarding and promoting your region's natural and cultural heritage

Practical tip 1

Strengthen your relations with other local tourism providers and decision-makers and keep pace with policy development on sustainable cultural tourism, so as to foresee future responses for current overtourism problems

Practical tip 2

Make sure you find the right balance between economic profits and top-down pressure for developing a sustainable tourism business around cultural and natural heritage assets. This requires a high level of awareness regarding your level of commitment towards more sustainable practices

Practical tip 3



Try to keep up to date and get involved in joint projects or initiatives for the conservation and promotion efforts of your region's heritage, particularly if they are a shared asset. This might encourage you to commit to more sustainable practices, as efforts are shared among many

Practical tip 4

Competence area 3: **useful reading**



In this section you can find a list of relevant online resources to help you go further on **natural & cultural heritage**

Defining Cultural Tourism

www.tourismteacher.com/cultural-tourism/

Interaction between world heritage and sustainable tourism

<https://whc.unesco.org/en/tourism/>

Natural capital as heritage

<https://whc.unesco.org/en/conventiontext>

Sustainable Cultural Tourism

<https://culture.ec.europa.eu/cultural-heritage/cultural-heritage-in-eu-policies/sustainable-cultural-tourism>

Tangible cultural heritage as part of human activity

www.cultureindevelopment.nl/cultural_heritage/what_is_cultural_heritage



The importance of intangible cultural heritage for sustainable development

www.unesco.org/en/legal-affairs/convention-safeguarding-intangible-cultural-heritage

The importance of watercourse world heritage conservation

<https://whc.unesco.org/en/natural-world-heritage>

The phenomenon of overtourism

www.rb.gy/uduxff

Tourism carrying capacity

www.witpress.com/Secure/elibrary/papers/ECO07/ECO07034FU1.pdf

What is cultural heritage?

<https://en.unesco.org/fieldoffice/santiago/cultura/patrimonio>



You have completed competence area 3, well done!



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