

Aleksandra Koszarek-Cyra

Sustainable Tourism Response

www.en.ug.edu.pl

25.05.2021





Sustainable Tourism Response Matrix

NEED	RISK (if no action)	Sustainable Tourism RESPONSE	Relevant SDG	CASE STUDY
Extending the tourism season	Strong seasonality, unstable revenues, workforce drainage	Off-season experience design (e.g. nature events, education, wellness)	SDG 8 – Decent work & economic growth SDG 11 – Sustainable communities	Aalborg (DK) – winter festivals & cultural offers beyond peak season
Protecting coastal ecosystems	Dune loss, beach erosion, reduced destination attractiveness	Building restrictions, dune restoration, designated visitor pathways	SDG 14 – Life below water SDG 15 – Life on land	Słowiński National Park (PL) – zoning of visitor traffic, active protection of shifting dunes
Sustainable tourist mobility	Emissions, congestion, pollution in peak season	Intermodal transport, cycling infrastructure, park & ride	SDG 11 – Sustainable mobility SDG 13 – Climate action	Kołobrzeg (PL) – expansion of Velo Baltica cycling network & bike-share
Preserving local identity & local economic gains	“Mass tourism” crowds out local SMEs & culture	Support for local suppliers & services, “local first” certification	SDG 8 – Local jobs & fair growth SDG 12 – Responsible consumption & production	Bornholm (DK) – regional brand supporting local food & craft businesses
Managing waste & water during peak load	Overburdened services, littered beaches	Zero-waste programs, deposit-return systems, modular seasonal infrastructure	SDG 12 – Zero waste SDG 6 – Clean water & sanitation	Gdynia (PL) – plastic-free beach initiatives & advanced waste separation
Climate resilience	Sea-level rise, extreme weather events	“Regenerative tourism”: visitors as co-guardians of coastal nature	SDG 13 – Climate action SDG 14/15 – Ecosystem protection	Hanko (FI) – nature monitoring & adaptation with visitor involvement
Long-term destination attractiveness	“Overtourism effect” → decline in experience quality	Visitor limits, product diversification, digital visitor-flow management	SDG 11 – Resilient communities	Dubrovnik (HR) – booking slots & caps for visitor numbers



ECONOMIC Challenges

These relate to income structures, employment stability, and dependence on tourism.

Challenge	Description / Impact
Strong seasonality	Coastal towns depend heavily on the short summer season — unstable income and employment.
Dependence on mass tourism	Economies built around low-value, high-volume tourism are fragile (e.g. pandemic shocks).
Leakage of profits outside the community	Large external operators dominate; little money stays with local residents and SMEs.
High maintenance costs of tourism infrastructure	Seasonal overuse of roads, sewage, and public services creates long-term financial burdens.
Lack of innovation and diversification	Missed opportunities in creative, eco, or wellness tourism; overreliance on “sun & sea.”



ENVIRONMENTAL Challenges

These directly affect the quality and sustainability of natural assets — the main foundation of tourism.

Challenge	Description / Impact
Coastal erosion and dune loss	Uncontrolled construction and artificial coastal reinforcement destroy natural barriers.
Water and soil pollution	Overloaded sewage systems, marine litter, and microplastics on beaches.
Infrastructure pressure	Hotel and parking expansion at the expense of green areas and coastal forests.
Traffic emissions and noise	Heavy car traffic increases air and noise pollution, reducing liveability.
Climate change	Sea-level rise and extreme weather events threaten coastal ecosystems and infrastructure.



SOCIAL Challenges

These involve quality of life, social cohesion, and relations between residents and visitors.

Challenge	Description / Impact
Gentrification and rising living costs	Property prices and rents rise, pushing locals out of central districts.
Resident–tourist conflicts	Overcrowding, noise, lack of privacy, and overstressed public services.
Lack of community participation	Tourism policies often made without consulting local residents.
Low job quality	Seasonal, low-paid, unstable jobs dominate the tourism sector.
Erosion of local cohesion	“Touristification” disrupts traditional neighbourhood ties and weakens community identity.



CULTURAL Challenges

These concern identity, heritage, and the authenticity of the tourism experience.

Challenge	Description / Impact
Commercialisation of local culture	Traditions and authentic expressions are turned into “tourist performances,” losing their true meaning and value.
Loss of place identity	Rapid tourism growth homogenises cities — same shops, same hotels, loss of uniqueness.
Weak integration of culture and tourism	Local arts, cuisine, and crafts are often underused in tourism strategies.
Conflict between heritage and development	Investment pressure (new hotels, infrastructure) threatens cultural landscapes and historic sites.

Thank you for your attention!

Rector's Office
of the University of Gdańsk

ul. Jana Bażyńskiego 8
80-309 Gdańsk

+48 58 523 30 00

www.en.ug.edu.pl