

Schweizer SDG Tourismus-Dialog

Swiss Dialogue on Tourism and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

Dialogue Suisse sur le Tourisme et les Objectifs de Développement Durable (ODD)

Dialogo svizzero sul turismo e gli obiettivi di sviluppo sostenibile (OSS)

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Executive Summary

After two years of implementing the “Swiss SDG Tourism Dialogue”, this final report presents an overview of the concepts and approaches executed, and draws conclusion from it. Its recommendations are formulated in view of informing the dialogue’s continuation by the “Competence Center for Sustainability in Swiss Tourism” KoNa, as well as for other interested parties from around the world that wish to seek inspiration in the work carried out.

The “Swiss SDG Tourism Dialogue” has been piloted as a two-year dialogue initiative around sustainability and SDGs in tourism. It has fostered the sharing of information and facilitated the exchange and networking among tourism-related stakeholders within Switzerland, and across the Swiss borders (chapter 1).

Project **duration**: 01.01.2020-31.12.2021

Budget: 139'270 CHF + tax + own funds

Objectives: Inform, Exchange, Innovate

The initiative has brought together stakeholders and perspectives from

- the Swiss **incoming tourism**
- the Swiss **outgoing tourism**
- the strengthening of tourism in developing and emerging countries via Swiss-funded and/or Swiss-implemented **international development cooperation**.

A facilitative and inclusive approach, supported by academic research, has provided overall guidance for the implementation of the Swiss SDG Tourism Dialogue (chapter 2):

- **Community facilitation** has had the objective to activate the exchange among stakeholders, to improve the flow of information and to link stakeholders with available knowledge and platforms (chapter 2.1).
- A **social network analysis** (SNA) has aimed at capturing the network of relevant Swiss tourism stakeholders, the flow of information regarding sustainable tourism from one to another, and related exchange among them (chapter 2.2).
- **Communication materials** around the hashtag #SwissTourism4SDGs have supported the interaction with relevant partners and community members, as well as the Swiss SDG Tourism Dialogue’s public appearance in the media, the internet and offline (chapter 2.3).
- Strengthening collaboration “from within the tourism sector”, the Swiss SDG Tourism Dialogue has been integrated into the Swiss Tourism Federation (STV)’s “Competence Center for Sustainability in Swiss Tourism” (KoNa) for its **continuation** from 2022 onwards (chapter 2.4).

The Swiss SDG Tourism Dialogue has carried out a series of stand-alone, as well as continuous activities (chapter 3). These activities have followed different concepts, and the experiences implementing them produced a series of specific learnings and recommendations.

- The implementation of permanent activities has been focussed on enabling and coordinating exchange around sustainability-related tourism topics through physical as well as virtual communication, networking and learning:
 - A **LinkedIn group** with **+850** members has served the purpose of informally *informing, sharing, and exchanging* online and within the privacy of the participating community. <https://www.linkedin.com/groups/13847119/>
 - With the aim to *documenting* experiences and learnings, as well as best-practices, the collaboration with the **UNWTO platform “tourism4SDGs”** has originated in a specially featured presentation of **+70** uploads. <https://tourism4sdgs.org/switzerland/>
 - **“Matchmaking”** has been oriented at initiating connections by introducing two persons with similar interests or goals to each other.

- The “**event-in-event**” concept with **photobooth** was developed and executed in **8** occasions to integrate the topic of sustainability and tourism into *already existing* industry events.
- Collaborating with one-time activities by partners (chapter 3.2) and executing own one-time activities by the project itself (chapter 3.3) has furthermore targeted the strengthening of information and communication between industry representatives that do not naturally interact with each other:
 - A traditional **webinar** format with **97** participants opened the dialogue in Switzerland to the urging topic of how to cope with and continue within the challenges that the Covid-19 pandemic poses for the tourism sector.
 - The **hybrid panel discussion** on “Climate, Mobility & Tourism” has brought together stakeholders across the sector and opened the event to an international audience: **37** of them attended physically and **53** joined virtually.
 - The “Tourismus **Camp**” combined a virtual meeting format with the visual appearance of videogames with **50** individuals, with a physical barcamp workshop for **25** persons four months later.
 - The “SDG **world café**” brought together participants from **30** different countries for a virtual networking event. **84** stakeholders from the Swiss and international tourism sector gathered in an informal setting to exchange questions and recommendations on **17** different sustainability-related topics.
 - At an event specifically with and for the **media**, **+50** journalists and numerous tourism stakeholders challenged the industry by exploring “sustainability in tourism – more than just hot air?”
- Additional activities that had been identified during the design stage of the Swiss SDG Tourism Dialogue could not be implemented due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Some of them merit a second consideration once the situation allows (chapter 3.4).

Overall conclusions and recommendations have been formulated with a view to future initiatives and collaboration models (chapter 4).

They include:

- Contents and formats:
 - Focus on what is relevant.
 - Be inclusive in the sharing of information.
 - Demystify the “physical-only”.
 - Pilot with the trial-and-error principle.
 - Sustainability is fun – live it, don’t preach it.
- Modalities:
 - Inform and exchange.
 - Share and document.
 - Innovate.
 - Leverage the interface of incoming <> outgoing <> development cooperation.
 - Work from within the industry.
 - Make targeted use of already existing formats.
- Partnerships:
 - Establish a sounding board.
 - Activate and maintain the network community.
 - Shape the future from within, not by creating a new player in the system.
 - Look beyond the end of the plate.

Implementing the Swiss SDG Tourism Dialogue in parallel to the first two years of the Covid-19 pandemic has been made possible only by the outstanding commitment and continued interest of its partners and stakeholders (chapter 5):

- **1** financing partner
- **8** consortium members and co-financing partners
- **60** network partners
- **+850** community members



1 The “Swiss SDG Tourism Dialogue”



Key data of the initiative :

8 consortium members, 60 network partners, +850 community members

Project duration: 01.01.2020-31.12.2021

Project budget: 139'270 CHF + tax + own funds

Objectives of the Swiss SDG Tourism Dialogue: Inform, Exchange, Innovate

Increasing the tourism sector's contribution to the Sustainable Development Goals



Inform



Learn through
practice-oriented
exchange



Spread & foster
Innovation



Enable and coordinate the exchange

#SwissTourism4SDGs

Switzerland has been a driving force behind the 2030 Agenda and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Tourism holds the potential to contribute to the achievement of the SDGs in numerous ways: SDGs 8, 12 and 14 include indicators that directly address the tourism sector. Being crosscutting in nature, tourism can also indirectly contribute to all other SDGs. Within the context of this initiative, this specifically included Swiss **incoming tourism**, Swiss **outgoing tourism** and the strengthening of tourism in developing and emerging countries via Swiss-funded and/or Swiss-implemented **international development cooperation**.

The Swiss SDG Tourism Dialogue strives towards more sustainability in tourism through **information, knowledge exchange and collaboration**.

Key activities have included:

- Facilitation of “**event-in-event**”s*, and own events;
* The “Event-in-Event” concept was developed to integrate the topic of sustainability and tourism into *already existing* industry events.
- **Sharing** of information via [LinkedIn](#);
- **Documentation** on [UNWTO's tourism4SDGs](#).

The Swiss SDG Tourism Dialogue has started as a temporary initiative from January 2020 to December 2021, with financing from the Swiss State Secretariat for Economic Affairs, SECO, and co-financing by its consortium partners, FHGR (University of Applied Sciences of the Grisons), ecos, gutundgut, myclimate, SRV (Swiss travel association), STV (Swiss tourism federation) and the Swiss Parks Network, and its consortium leader, the Swiss Foundation for Technical Cooperation (Swisscontact).

From 2022 onwards, the Swiss SDG Tourism Dialogue has been integrated into the Swiss Tourism Federation (STV)'s “**Competence Center for Sustainability in Swiss Tourism**” ([Kompetenzzentrum Nachhaltigkeit](#), KoNa).



2 Background & context



2.1 Approach: Community facilitation



Concept

The Swiss SDG Tourism Dialogue has started from the initial position that many different initiatives and information already exist concerning tourism and the SDGs in Switzerland and abroad – yet many are little known or insufficiently accessible. The task has therefore been to activate the exchange among stakeholders, improve the flow of information and link stakeholders with available knowledge and platforms.

- Instead of duplicating already existing efforts and competing with them -> the Swiss SDG Tourism Dialogue has assumed the role of a networker, moderator, and facilitator.
- Instead of creating (resource-intensive) structures for an own (new) stakeholder -> the Swiss SDG Tourism Dialogue has enabled conversations and interaction among tourism stakeholder and within the industry.
- Instead of investing in own communication infrastructure -> the Swiss SDG Tourism Dialogue has linked and visualized already existing initiatives, activities, and content.

Key factors for success

Community facilitation is most successful if

- ✓ Information can be distributed in a straightforward manner via easily accessible online and offline channels;
- ✓ Topics, questions, and issues exchanged upon are relevant to its participants;
- ✓ Facilitation is ensured by a group of qualified and respected moderators; and
- ✓ A minimum of active participants engages in the dialogue.

2.2 Stakeholders: Social network analysis



Concept

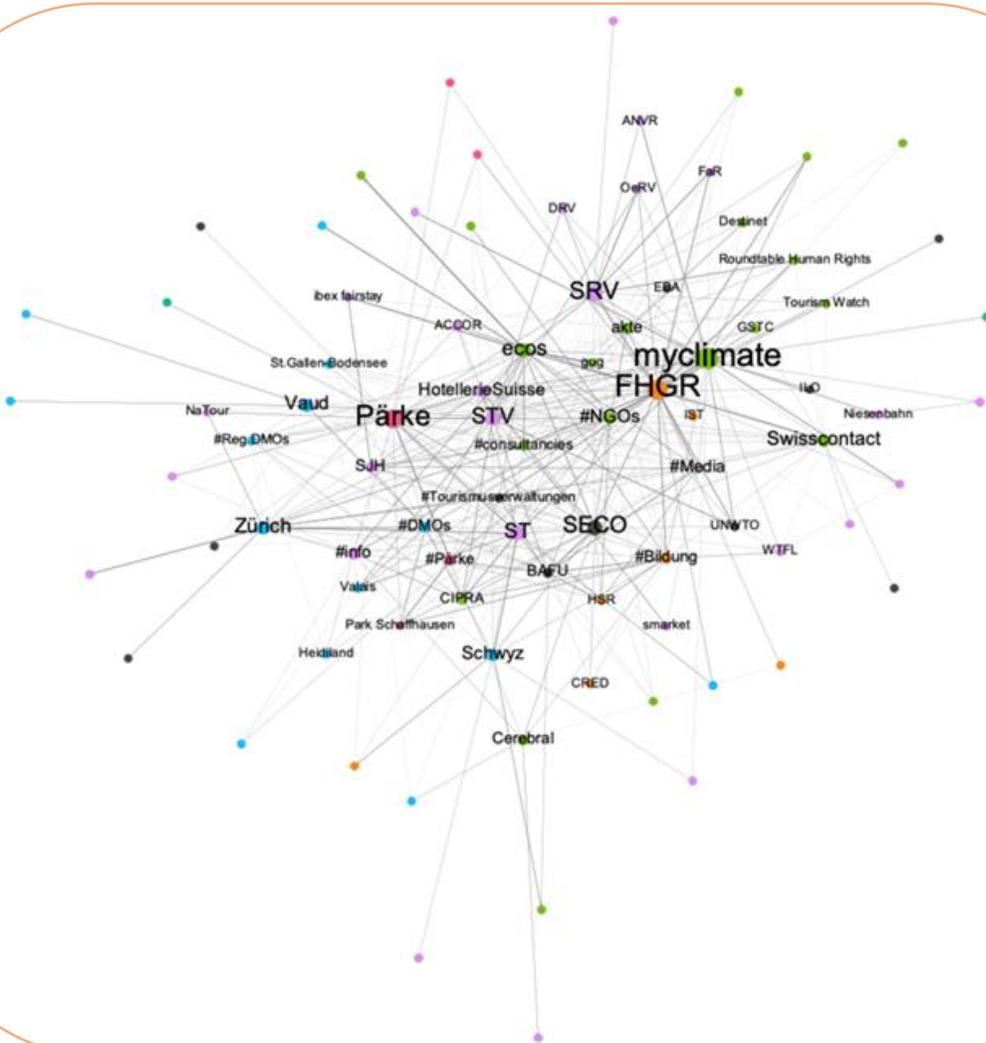
A Social Network Analysis (SNA) is a method used to capture and analyse different connections and interdependences between specific players in a network. The SNA allows one to identify

- Stakeholders and their degree and kind of interactions with each other,
- So-called “gatekeeper” positions, pointing towards key players in positions that connect other stakeholders,
- How active stakeholders are within the overall network, and
- If interaction is mutual or one-sided.

The SNA carried out by the FHGR and Swisscontact within the frame of the Swiss SDG investigated stakeholders, the flow of information regarding sustainable tourism from one to another, and related exchange among them.

Key factors for success

- **Pay attention to different functions in the network:** Some stakeholders are important to multiply the flow of information and knowledge (outreach), others to provide rapid communication access (efficiency).
- **Carrying out a SNA to inform project and dialogue work is not a quantitatively perfect means to itself but serves the purpose of informing project activities** with the current state and identifying relevant points of interest for reflection and adjustment. Its execution is therefore as practical-oriented and as pragmatically executed as possible.
 - **The desired degree** of background information and explanations **informs the research design and data collection methods** selected.



Learnings from the first SNA for the Swiss tourism industry 2020

The **results** of the SNA have shown that

- **Umbrella organizations generally have a key role.** Many of the umbrella organisations have access to information and provide this information from other key players vertically to their members. On the other hand, this also means a potential filter, which prevents direct, diagonal communication.
- **Generally, the SNA shows rather weak horizontal communication,** the members of umbrella organizations communicate with each other only to a limited degree. Even more, the direct-diagonal communication (thus, the communication of one umbrella directly to members of another umbrella) is especially weak.
- **Individual actors (institutions as well as persons) can have high importance as well.** Several individual actors – not being a formal network or umbrella organisation – show high importance. Due to their good communication with different stakeholders, they can play a bridging function to enable horizontal and diagonal communication.
- **Only some communication bridges between outgoing and incoming tourism exist.**
- A closer look to the different SDGs reveals, that **tourism still stands for economic growth more than it is seen as an instrument to achieve partnership, climate action or responsible consumption and production patterns.**
- **Only a few stakeholders have a rather high communication importance in all SDGs.** The Swiss Parks Network, Protected Areas and DMOs in general have a strong function of inter-disciplinary and cross-sectorial networking within their region/ destination. This leads to the situation that they more often communicate on a broader variety of issues.
- **Partnerships for the Goals (SDG 17) scores last in comparison of the different SDGs.** NGOs, education & public sector communicate with relatively higher importance than the tourism sector itself in SDG 17.
 - **Communication to non-Swiss partners shows different intensity,** different importance and often one-directional means (e.g. newsletter) on the part of Swiss stakeholders.

For the outlook and the future further development of the Swiss SDG Tourism Dialogue – and other upcoming structures dealing with sustainable tourism in Switzerland – the following key recommendations could be identified:

- **Facilitation of the strengthening of personal relationships** between stakeholders with sufficient room and time for informal exchange, relationship, and community building measures.
- Continuing the intensive collaboration with a few key actors of high importance and **leverage these stakeholders' multiplying role.**
- At the same time **increasing the diversity within the network,** e.g., by further strengthening the communication of non-touristic actors such as NGOs, academia and Protected Areas with their important bridging functions.
- **Stimulation of new ways and formats of communication** that are suitable to overcome existing barriers and filters.
- **Stimulation of the communication and exchange between incoming and outgoing** touristic stakeholders.
- **Support of the visualization of benefits of inter-sectorial cooperation** towards more sustainability in tourism.
- **Reaching out to the media to mainstream sustainability** in tourism higher into the overall tourism-related communication in Switzerland.

Social Network Analysis of the Swiss Tourism System: [Guidelines](#)

- Context
- Approach
- Steps and Organization



2.3 Communication materials

Communication materials with graphic design have been developed to support the consortium's communication with relevant partners and community members, as well as the Swiss SDG Tourism Dialogue's public appearance in the media, the internet and offline. The developed texts and graphic design include the hashtag #SwissTourism4SDGs, its translation into a logo, business cards, a PowerPoint template, a 1-pager project sheet and a 5-pager project summary.

→ The lean yet appealing design and the catchy appearance of the hashtag as logo has provided the Swiss SDG Tourism Dialogue with a recognition value beyond its name or individual people.

#SwissTourism4SDGs



#SwissTourism4SDGs

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

Schweizer Dialog zu Tourismus & den Zielen für nachhaltige Entwicklung
Dialogue suisse sur le tourisme & les objectifs de développement durable

Teile Deine Denkanstösse, Projekte und Fragen in unserem LinkedIn-Netzwerk.

Partagez vos réflexions, vos projets et vos questions dans notre réseau LinkedIn.



info@swisstourism4sdgs.org

An own email address (info@SwissTourism4SDGs.org) was set up to have an own means of communication for project-related activities that were considered to be better communicated via an independent email address rather than with a specific consortium partners' email. This email address is currently being handed over to the successor STV.

#SwissTourism4SDGs

2.4 Planning for a future set-up

A key part of the original project design also included implementing the Swiss SDG Tourism Dialogue as a pilot – both at the level of activities as well as at the overall coordination level – that unfolds into a sound implementation model with sustained business planning. It was foreseen that the pilot's learnings and recommendations directly feed into the future model for the Swiss SDG Tourism Dialogue.

Half-way into the project implementation, the Swiss Tourism Federation (STV)'s sustainability group launched a process to organize Switzerland's different initiatives relating to Swiss *incoming* tourism under one roof – the idea of the "[Competence Center for Sustainability in Swiss Tourism](#)" (KoNa) was born.

With the explicit objective to avoid duplication of efforts and to strengthen collaboration "from within the tourism sector", the Swiss SDG Tourism Dialogue refrained from developing an own parallel model and instead

- **participated** in STV's consultation rounds for the design of KoNa;
- **shared** the Swiss SDG Tourism Dialogue's learnings and recommendations already on a rolling basis with the team designing the KoNa; and
- **facilitated** the process of linking Swiss outgoing tourism as well as Swiss-funded/-implemented development cooperation with KoNa.

As a result, KoNa has officially announced to continue the participatory, open and international spirit of the Swiss SDG Tourism Dialogue. From 2022 onwards, KoNa's scope of work will be to:

- Continue and further development the Swiss programme for sustainable tourism ([Swisstainable](#)), a certification scheme developed by Switzerland Tourism;
- Continue the Swiss SDG Tourism Dialogue and interlink the community;
- Measure and report on sustainability in tourism;
- Ensure the interface with other relevant sectors and the scientific community; and
- Create synergies and ensure knowledge transfer.

3 Activities



Based on the overall approach and direction as described in the previous section, the Swiss SDG Tourism Dialogue carried out a series of stand-alone, as well as continuous activities – all guided by the overall aspiration to share relevant information and facilitate exchange and networking among stakeholders within Switzerland, and across the Swiss borders.

3.1 Permanent activities by the Swiss SDG Tourism Dialogue



Throughout the course of the two years of project implementation, the following activities have been running visibly in public as well as indirectly visible in the background:

LinkedIn group

Concept



Why?

Originally planned as a “side show” to the event-in-event concept (below), one of the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic was that the LinkedIn group gained increased importance for providing the possibility for continued exchange.

What?

A **virtual** space in which we

- ...share our knowledge and experiences concerning sustainability in tourism.
- ...find answers to burning questions thanks to swarm intelligence.
- ...exchange over innovative ideas and can find new partnerships.

How?

We chose the LinkedIn Group as a **format**:

- Working within an existing platform already frequented by relevant stakeholders has proven clearly beneficial over creating own intranet-like structures. Budget-wise but also for accessibility and outreach.
- LinkedIn caters more to the Swiss SDG Tourism Dialogue’s focus on exchange among businesses and organizations (B2B) than other virtual platforms do.
- Participants write in their own language, since LinkedIn provides an automatic-built-in translation function.
- In contrast to the public company page (visible to all LinkedIn members), the chosen format of a “private group” allows for a more intimate exchange and questioning.

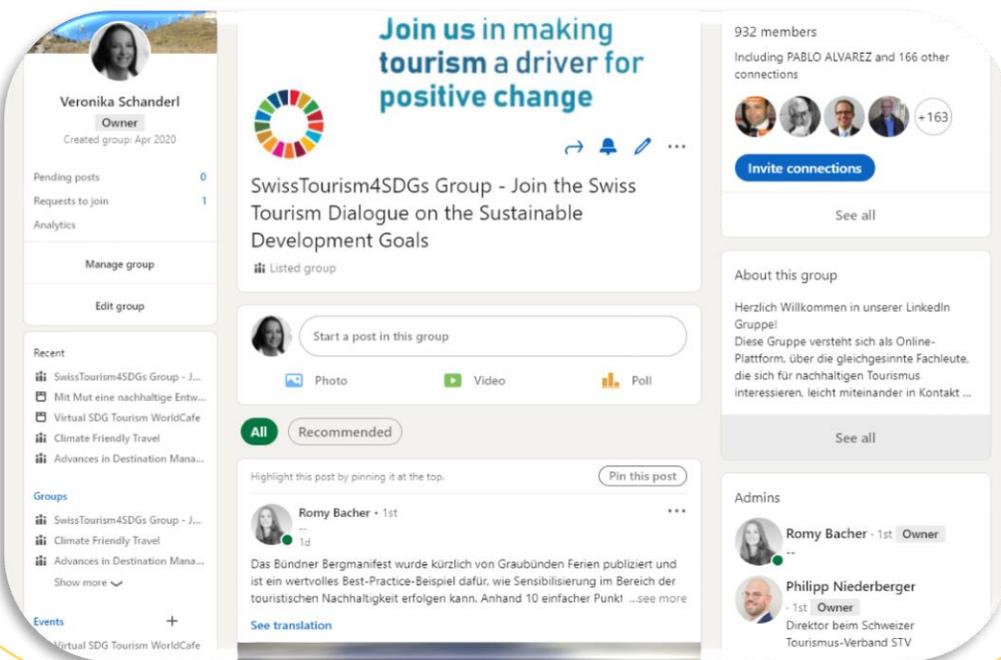


Join us in making tourism a driver for positive change

Observations and experiences

Over the course of 2 years, the number of participants from within Switzerland and from abroad has steadily grown. Peaks in new members' requests can be directly attributed to the sharing of practical access information at own events and events-in-events. The number of +850 members (early-2022) in this group points to a generally high interest of stakeholders from all around the world in information and exchange on topics regarding sustainability, SDGs and tourism.

The relatively low number of members that *actively* contribute and share information, and the even lower number of members that enter a *dialogue* with other members inside this group could be due to a number of reasons: a "private group" with 800+ members no longer feels "private"? Higher interest in receiving than sharing information? Joining out of curiosity, rather than driven by a strong interest in a virtual conversation with like-minded, yet strangers?



Members can share their thoughts, their food for thoughts, their questions and concerns directly. They can recommend information on relevant own and third-party events, initiatives and competitions, on news and interesting reading.

Moderation inside the group, but also – and more importantly – behind the scenes, to get to know the individual members inside the group, learn about their expectations to understand how the group can be relevant to their wishes and needs.

The focus is on *informal* exchange and inspiration with the dialogue network.

Learnings and recommendations

- A virtual space for exchange of information and stimulating dialogue needs to be directly connected to information and communication means that relevant stakeholders anyway already use.
- Some tourism stakeholders are more used to exchanging offline than online ... don't force them into the virtual, involve them into the offline-dialogue activities and continue online with those that feel comfortable interacting online.
- While dialoguing constantly and at a high level with 800+ members cannot be expected, inclusiveness means that no new member request gets rejected, even if they do not directly come from within the tourism industry itself – these group members could be indirectly related and/or contribute with inputs from outside-the-box thinking and provide/seek inspiration from/for other industries
- Inclusiveness also means that everybody is allowed to post without censorship. However, the moment a group member uses this possibility for spamming the group with advertisement that has no relation to the topic of tourism and sustainability – and is not interested in elaborating further on the relevance of a certain post for the desired focus of the exchange – a group moderator needs to seek the dialogue with this person, and in a worst case, have the liberty of stopping such dynamics.

Concept

While an own, new LinkedIn group serves the purpose of *informing, sharing, and exchanging* online, the Swiss SDG Tourism Dialogue has aimed at collaborating with an existing platform for *documenting* experiences and learnings, as well as best-practices.

At an initial stage, two options have been considered: UN DESA (Department of Economic and Social Affairs)'s "[SDG good practices](#)", on the one hand, and UNWTO (United Nation's World Tourism Organization)'s "[Tourism For SDGs Platform](#)", on the other hand.

The Swiss SDG Tourism Dialogue partnered with UNWTO's database,

- due to its specific focus on tourism,
- since its design had also been co-financed by SECO, and
- because inserting information seemed to be relatively easy, by uploading just a boiler plate, linking to the stakeholders' own website and resources, as well as clicking through a series of boxes to make the specific upload accessible through the platform's generic search functions.

Contributing with inspirations from the Swiss incoming tourism, the Swiss outgoing tourism, and the Swiss-funded and/or Swiss-implemented international development cooperation's activities in tourism, relevant stakeholders from the consortium and the overall network (as well as the Swiss SDG Tourism Dialogue's community facilitator themselves) uploaded their contributions to the categories: initiatives, stories, events, education/ training offer, company CSR and research.

Observations and experiences

UNWTO kindly assisted the process through

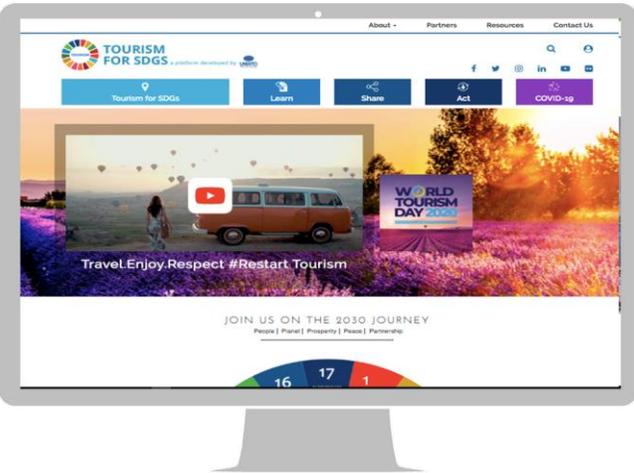
- programming of a [specific landing and summary page](#),
- the integration of the hashtag #SwissTourism4SDGs into their themes/metatags,
- and with specific promotional activities through their own social media channels and among all its UNWTO member states.

Swiss stakeholders only partially/in some cases warmed up to the idea of uploading their experiences into a global database,

- unless a specific stakeholder has an explicit mandate and/or organizational resources allocated to sharing knowledge and learnings (such as, e.g., some development cooperation stakeholders do); and
 - sometimes discouraged by unclear benefits, by the database's technical imperfections, or by organizations-internal communication restrictions.

Learnings and recommendations

- Especially if working beyond a nation's borders – like the Swiss SDG Tourism Dialogue has been aiming at – collaborating with a big-name global player is highly suitable to provide access and outreach into an already existing international network, as well as an international marketplace.
- Sharing knowledge can sometimes even have the value of indirect promotion.
- Uploading, managing uploads and maintenance need to be as easy and intuitive as possible, to require little work and encourage participation.
- When stimulating a dialogue, critically reflect if an own database is needed (or a priority within the normally limited scope of resources) and consider joining forces with an already existing platform or database. Any needed investment needs to be justifiable in view of the expected outcome.
- Decide if only "best practices" are eligible to be features in such a database (and thus require resources to define what is "best", to review, select, etc), or if "experiences" also qualify.
- Consider additional or alternative means to mere "uploading", e.g., "SDG good practices" organizes a yearly competition, which is likely to increase stakeholders' drive and stimulus, as well as to reduce your own workload.
- Feed- and share-back successful database entries into the community.



Swiss SDG Tourism Dialogue,
an initiative

Funded by

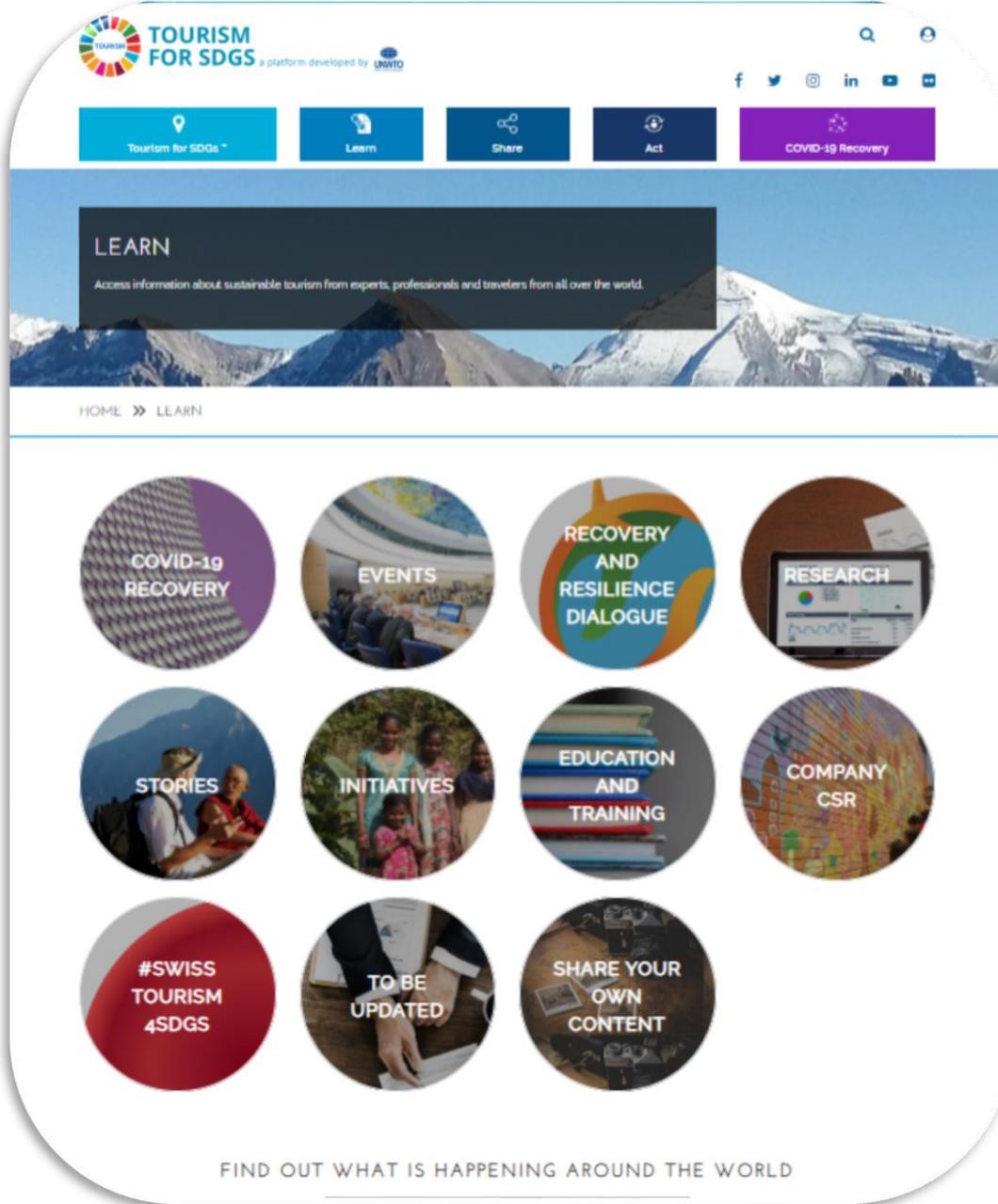


Eidgenössisches Departement für
Wirtschaft, Bildung und Verkehr (SEW)
Bundesministerium für Wirtschaft und
Transport (BWT)

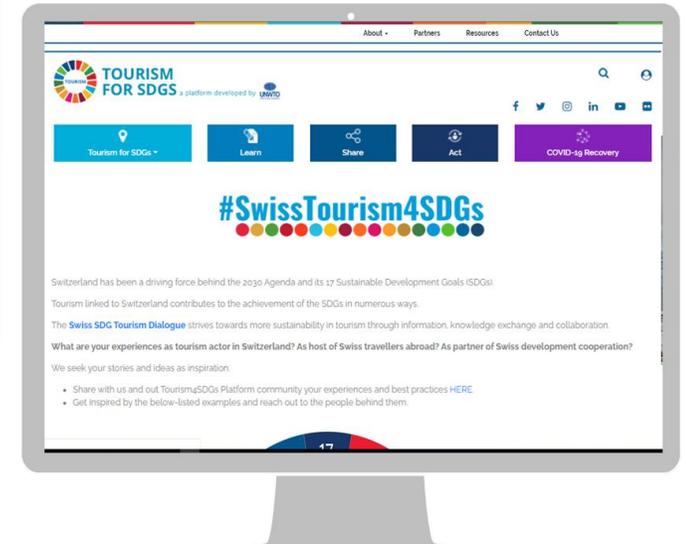
Implemented and co-financed by



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#SwissTourism4SDGs



Initiating connections: “Matchmaking”

Concept

In its original idea, the Swiss SDG Tourism Dialogue envisaged “matchmaking” primarily in combination with the events-in-events concept, by introducing two persons with similar interests or goals to each other at physical events.

Any good community facilitator has “a feeling” for the topics that are close to the heart of individual group members: the burning questions driving them, the needs moving them and the curiosities inspiring them. Based on that overall understanding and dexterity a good community facilitator can bring together two parties that could be of relevance to each other.

Influenced by the Covid-19 pandemic, matchmaking was to some degree also transferred into the virtual world, where matchmaking can happen online (e.g., using the @ symbol together with the parties’ names in LinkedIn) or behind the scenes (e.g., via email to both).

Observations and experiences

- Several opportunities for matchmaking could be initiated in 2020 and 2021 (especially with the World Tourism Forum Lucerne, WTFL, and through the integration of international stakeholders into the dialogue). However, these have been above all due to the initiative of one single party in the Swiss SDG Tourism Dialogue’ consortium and would have also happened without the specific SDG-related motivation driving the process of linking them with each other.
- Overall, matchmaking at physical events happened to a rather limited degree only. A reason for this is that different people in the consortium assumed the role of the community facilitator at different events with different audiences.

Learnings and recommendations

- Matchmaking is easier, if the community facilitator is well rooted and well interlinked within the relevant thematic network, and has an extrovertive character and a curious yet pragmatic mindset.
- Proactiveness prevails – don’t wait until someone asks you to search for a match for them.
- Dare to introduce two parties to each other before knowing that they will be a “perfect match”. You anyway never know that.
- For community facilitators still growing into their role, a recommendation more at a personal level: Don’t force it, but let it develop and grow over time. Increasing reputation and standing within the community will automatically lead to your opinion being sought-after also in terms of recommendations for partners and contacts.

Event-in-Event with Photobooth

Concept

Seeking a close collaboration with existing tourism industry events, the Swiss SDG Tourism Dialogue has aimed at operating “from within” the sector. This has included the development and implementation of a so-called “event-in-event” concept, through which the sensitization on the importance of sustainability in tourism and linking the relevant parties with each other was included directly into existing events.

With the aim of facilitating the networking character through a physical presence with high recognition value, the Swiss SDG Tourism Dialogue developed a visually eye-catching “photobooth”:

- A tailor-made backdrop combined with a rented IT infrastructure, this installation allows event participants to take their picture in front of the SDG symbols.
- The #SwissTourism4SDGs gets superimposed technically onto each picture taken.
- A fancier version (not rented by the Swiss SDG Tourism Dialogue) includes the option for paper-printsouts of pictures.

The selection of events has been based on a set of criteria, including

- the desired target group (focus on businesses and organizations rather than individual tourists, as per the project’s mandate; and informed by the priorities identified during the SNA);
- the interest of the event organizers in collaborating towards more sustainability in tourism; and
 - logistical and pandemic-related considerations.

#SwissTourism4SDGs



Observations and experiences

Despite pandemic-related limitations, the photobooth has been in action at eight events:

- STV General Assembly (GV), 21 Aug 2020
- Greenbuzz, 10 Sept 2020
- STV GV, 20 Aug 2021
- Swiss Hospitality Summit, 07-08 Sept 2021
- Swiss Travel communicators' media event, 09 Nov 2021
- World Tourism Forum Lucerne, WTFL, 15-16 Nov 2021
- Milestones, 16 Nov 2021
- Tourismus Forum Schweiz, TFS, 25 Nov 2021

The photobooth has proven useful to enter into conversations with interested event participants and evaluate their general interest in the SDGs and tourism, or more generally sustainability-related topics.

Getting a picture taken together with other people is a tested and popular feature at professional events highlighting the networking character of the gathering. It is also in this regard that event participants interpreted the SDG photobooth:

- Events with more entrepreneurial and dynamic participants resulted in more and more fun pictures; events of more formal and organized character generated less quantity and more serious pictures being taken.
- Such nature of events equally influenced the interest of stakeholders to interact and participate in in-depth conversations and open dialogue and exchange on sustainability in tourism.

Originally, we had planned that the community facilitator uses their presence at the photobooth also to assist stakeholders with uploading information directly live into the UNWTO database. This idea could not be implemented due to the reduced role and importance of the photobooth within the overall conceptual design of the different events – and above all, due to stakeholders' higher interest in networking among each other than documenting something online while at a physical event.

Over time, the novelty factor of the photobooth has visibly decreased – tourism stakeholders attending more than one event have been gradually less interested in their picture in front of the SDG backdrop.

Due to the very strong visual focus on pictures, it could also be observed that the original idea of the photobooth – a visually appealing feature that people recognize as *the* place to exchange with like-minded others on news and experiences around sustainability and tourism – has fallen into the background during its 17 months in action.

Learnings and recommendations

- Simulating the dialogue around SDG and tourism via being frequently and systemically present at industry events instead of relying only on own events has proven a relevant concept – not only in terms of the efficient use of resources, but also in its outreach: Essential stakeholders are anyway already present at those events. This has been of specific relevance also for the Swiss SDG Dialogue's official Launch – happening relatively late into the calendar year due to the pandemic-related shift of attention within the industry – which was embedded into the STV's GV.
- Dialogue and exchange at the photobooth does not happen automatically – administrative support and content moderation is needed.
 - The quality of conversations directly depends on the experience and skills of the community facilitator.
 - Consider two people to share the community facilitation and moderation role. This allows for sufficient resources for moderating and linking people, in addition to assisting in the process of getting nice pictures taken.
 - The moderator needs to accept its role in facilitating a content exchange in a neutral and objective manner. Even though moderators from within the industry have the benefit of an existing network and thematic soundness already, real dialogue happens when they put on the hat of the moderator and put aside their own stakeholder role and interest.
- Due to the perceived decreasing attractiveness of SDG pictures, the moderation concept into which the photobooth is embedded – and maybe the appearance of the photobooth itself – merits further reflections and update.
- Don't understand the event-in-event as an isolated activity or an independently operating exercise, but plan for follow-up offline and online activities (e.g., by posting the pictures into the LinkedIn group; by linking with those people that left their business cards with the community facilitator; feeding-back interesting facts, practices and stories from the physical conversations into the virtual exchange on LinkedIn).



Photobooth in action

Greenbuzz

Milestone

TFS

WTFL

GV STV'20

GV STV'20

3.2 One-time activities (by partners)

One of the core findings of the SNA has been the relatively weak flow of information and communication between industry representatives horizontally and diagonally: Stakeholders organized via umbrella organizations have a relatively higher degree of interaction among themselves, but to a limited extent interact beyond their familiar network. Supporting the global objectives of the Swiss SDG Tourism Dialogue by specifically trying to bridge this gap, selected one-time activities by the Swiss SDG Tourism Dialogue's consortium partners, as well as the own SDG World Café have been implemented.

Concept

Within the frame of the initiative “[Klimaspuren](#)” (*Climate traces/ traces of the climate*), the University of Applied Sciences of the Grisons organized the event “[tourism, mobility, climate](#)”.

The hybrid concept allowed the invitation to partners and industry representatives from around the world and specifically developing countries as virtual participants.

With the aim to foster the integration of international participants into the event, the Swiss SDG Tourism Dialogue provided financial support for simultaneous translation into English, as well as in-kind contributions for international marketing outreach.

03rd June 2021

Organized by:



In cooperation with:



Observations and experiences

In addition to 37 participants physically attending the event in Chur, 53 virtual participants joined from

- several Swiss Government bodies (national and cantonal level),
- numerous representatives from the Swiss and European organized civil society and tourism industry interested in sustainable tourism development
- FHGR researchers and students
- media, and
- project implementers and their partners from international development cooperation countries.

The concept did not allow a virtual participation on the panel discussion, but in the audience only.

Due to the specific thematic focus of the event, the selection of panel discussion participants, and the limited possibility to integrate the audience until the moment for questions-and-answers, the conversation focussed on the Grisons – serving as inspiration for participants from other geographic areas.

Learnings and recommendations

- In a setting with only Swiss audience on-site, a purely English-speaking event would have resulted in less vivid panel inputs and discussions among panellists and with the (physically present) audience.
- Integrating international participants depends on the availability of language access – e.g., provided by simultaneous translation – but also on their specific interest in an event’s topic and its relevance for their contexts, as well as its time within their specific time zone.
- Integrating international audience via simultaneous translation for virtual participants has been an idea added to the already existing event’s concept – to make use of the already planned hybrid event, and to test the idea of simultaneous translation. For events that aim for such integration as key objective, not only/necessarily simultaneous translation is needed, but full integration of this objective into the entire event concept (incl. in its thematic orientation and international panellists), accepting that in result also the audience might be more international and less Swiss.

Tourismus Camp (gutandgut)

Concept

Organized by:  In cooperation with:    

Using the tested concept of a so-called “barcamp”, Tourismus Zukunft und gutundgut organized a two-fold event: a virtual exchange format, followed by a physical workshop in a Swiss park. At the resulting “[Tourismuscamp Schweiz 2021](#)”, arranged under the buzzword “sustainability”, 17 SDG-different topics and initiatives were presented, and feedback obtained from the sessions’ groups.

09th June 2021 + 12-15th October 2021

Cf. [Minutes of the event](#)

Observations and experiences

- During the *online* camp, around 50 stakeholders from Switzerland and Germany met via the “Meetingland” platform, and exchanged ideas on the topic of sustainability in tourism. Building on impulse talks around sustainability, sessions on current issues were prepared and led by the participants.
- 25 stakeholders from the Swiss tourism industry participated in the *physical* camp – out of which 3 students could join thanks to financial support by the Swiss SDG Tourism Dialogue.
- The workshop format allowed individual participants to communicate in their own language (German, French or English). Due to the overall pandemic-related context, however, only German-speaking participants attended the event.

Learnings and recommendations

- Using a videogame like software such as “Meetingland” increases the fun-factor of a virtual event.
- A workshop format that is broken down into smaller sessions for which the thematic as well as methodological ownership lies with the individual workshop participants, allows to adjust the discussions to the desired topics of conversation of the individual participants themselves.
- On the other hand, the scope of contents unknown prior to a 2-days event format encouraged only the most curious stakeholders to join.
- The very participatory approach allowed for in-depth conversations around relevant topics.



3.3 One-time activities (by the project)

As a direct effect of the pandemic – reduced/ stopped travelling, but also stakeholders’ shift of attention to pandemic-related urgencies – the Swiss SDG Tourism Dialogue adjusted its original approach: Originally, it was planned to only work from within the system, to stimulate the dialogue around tourism and SDGs via bringing the topic into already existing formats for exchange and events. When the pandemic reduced the number of possibilities for physical events, and significantly diminished the chances for international linkage, the Swiss SDG Tourism Dialogue stepped in with a selected number of own events to bridge the pandemic-related gap and vacancy in the overall events calendar:

Concept

The Covid-19 pandemic, its effects on tourism and on sustainable development, have challenged the modern-day tourism industry like no other big external shock before. How to return from that shock, how to continue on – questions like those and others dominated the industry dialogue during the first half of the Swiss SDG Tourism Dialogue project duration.



The time was marked by the emerging need for new information that connects sustainability with recovery – therefore, the Swiss SDG Tourism Dialogue organized a webinar that aimed at providing inspirations from within the tourism sector itself and from other sectors, and at encouraging “out-of-the-box” thinking towards a journey of more sustainability in tourism.

02nd November 2020

Cf. [event invitation on LinkedIn](#)

Observations and experiences

The 1-hour event structure followed a standard webinar format: Key input presentations with the possibility for questions and answers. It was carried out in German.

6 speakers and 1 moderator prepared and led through the virtual meeting, 90 participants from all around the world attended in the audience.

The chosen webinar format is suitable for sharing many different inputs in little time.

Since the pandemic slowed down the process of introducing oneself within the tourism industry in 2022, the webinar has had the positive side-effect of promoting the existence of the Swiss SDG Tourism Dialogue, its purpose and activities.

Learnings and recommendations

- At a moment in the pandemic where still relatively little information to offer on tourism’s way back was available and openly discussed, the webinar filled a temporary information and communication gap, as shown by the relatively large number of participants. Don’t compete with existing events, but fill the gap when and where needed.
- True its facilitative role, the Swiss SDG Tourism Dialogue did not aim at assuming a technical expert role itself, but facilitated access to knowledge and experience, and brought together committed and interested audience. With other big players working on big answers and guidance on recovery-related topics, this focus of facilitation instead of own investment has proven useful.
- Whenever the transferability of presented ideas and measures is of special interest to the participating audience, it should receive sufficient attention in preparatory work as well as during the event itself (duration, panellists, language, interaction with the audience beyond Q&A, etc).



Concept

Also during the second year of the project's implementation, the pandemic situation has still not allowed for physical meetings with participants from around the world. With the SDG world café, an alternative was developed in 2021: The virtual set-up allowed to also include participants regardless their location on the globe. The SDG world café has been organized by the Swiss SDG Tourism Dialogue with the purpose to facilitate its participants to

- Meet people from around the world online
- Exchange experiences and recommendations in an informal setting
- Update on news and best practices in sustainable tourism

Each “coffee table” was moderate by a “table host” from a broad mix of private and public sector representatives, academia, non-governmental organizations, and civil society. The hosts guided the discussion according to some key questions. Otherwise, there was no prefixed or predefined structure.

The event was organized in Zoom, a software that allows the creation of small groups via so-called breakout rooms:

- Each breakout room corresponded to an individual “coffee table” with a specific SDG relevant topic and a set language.
- Participants got the chance to enrol for two different “coffee tables” within an own registration process.
- Two rounds of small groups around these virtual thematic tables were organized.
- Allocation of participants to the individual tables strived for ensuring a match as high as possible between i) participants’ interests, ii) participants’ language skills, and iii) tables’ topics.
- During the event, conversation notes and shared information was documented on table-specific Miro boards (a virtual flipchart software) by the host and table participants themselves.

On 22nd September 2021, the SDG world café brought together participants from **30** different countries for a virtual networking event. **84** stakeholders from the Swiss and international tourism sector gathered in an informal setting to exchange questions and recommendations on **17** different sustainability-related topics.



Observations and experiences

Table hosts received detailed information on the event conceptualization beforehand and were onboarded on an individual basis into their role and the expected format of the World Café. Priority was given on facilitation skills around a specific SDG-related topic and carving out the guiding questions for table discussions.

This event has not offered the opportunity to place pure advertisements, neither for the hosts nor for the participants or the initiators – a message communicated to all sides concerned and adhered-to.

Organized as a public event with pre-registration and table hosts' ability to moderate in different languages (English, German, French, Italian, Spanish), the inclusive and participatory format allowed for a relatively large outreach globally.

The complex set-up of matching participants' interest, language skills and thematic offer requires sufficient time and dedication for preparatory administrative work in the background.

Providing a structured space for explicitly informal knowledge exchange within different groups of the tourism industry has proven useful to strengthen the network within the industry - horizontally, vertically, national and international.

The small-scale groups of individual tables allowed for intimate exchange among participants, whereas the interactive format served the purpose of peer-to-peer exchange focussed on specific topics.

Interested tourism representatives from Latin America joined despite the early morning hours, stakeholders from Asia stayed up late to be able to participate.

After the event, the key take-away messages of each table were synthesized directly by the different table hosts themselves. The booklet has been shared via email with the event participants, and also shared with the wider community via the Swiss SDG Tourism Dialogue's LinkedIn Group.

Cf. [Key take away messages](#).

Learnings and recommendations

- The interactive format has turned out to be a good opportunity for stakeholders to directly interact with each other, by initiating discussions about specific topics which have a relevance for stakeholders from several touristic sub-sectors from different places of the world.
- Clear communication concerning expectations and responsibilities directly contributes to the success of an event's implementation.
- Individually accompanying table hosts is time-consuming, but results in a sound alignment of table content focus within the desired relation to the SDGs, reduces possible duplications in contents, and increases the firmness of individual table hosts in their role.
- The plannability and preparatory work of allocating participants to specific tables got seriously impacted by the "new behaviour in the virtual world" of registering and not showing up to a virtual event. To avoid too much administrative work in the background, consider switching to a specialized coffee table software, or in Zoom allowing all event participants to get the role of co-hosts and thus be able to freely move between tables.
- In future editions, the complexity and organizational workload can be reduced by less quantity of tables and collaborating with already experienced table host partners.
- The format serves well the purpose of structured yet informal exchange and bridges the barriers of country borders and language skills – without the need of travelling.
- Documenting key take-away messages allows to access and share information beyond what was discussed at one's own tables. With additional time resources, individual follow-up stories and exchanges could be shared via the LinkedIn group (e.g., 1 per every or every other week), to leverage the already collected inspiration and take the exchange one step further.

SDG world café

No presentations or speeches! → Instead: All event participants have contributed with our questions, knowledge, experiences and insights

Your opinion and your experiences matter.



FHGR, Switzerland:
Human rights in tourism



PPSE, Kosovo:
Collaborative destination management

ALLEGRA

Allegra Tourism, Switzerland:
Tourism infrastructure

ecos

ecos, Switzerland:
Tourism and the textile industry



Acotur, Colombia:
Resilience



Ministry of Tourism, Cambodia:
Tourism recovery post-Covid-19



myclimate, Switzerland:
Climate-friendlier hospitality industry

TUTAKA

Tutaka, Switzerland:
Sustainability communication



The Travel Foundation, United Kingdom:
Local value chains



Swiss Parks Network, Switzerland:
Overtourism in nature areas



Travelise, Switzerland:
Service design



WTFL, Switzerland:
Conservation & Community



Swisscontact, Switzerland:
Human resource



Hospitality & Tourism Academy, Albania:
Skills development in tourism



fairunterwegs and SRV, Switzerland:
Consumer behavior and demand



Guyana Tourism Authority, Guyana
Scientific. Academic. Volunteer. Educational



TourCert, Germany:
Certification

Collaboration with the media

Concept

The SNA also identified a relatively weak integration of the media into the overall industry dialogue around sustainability and tourism.

Therefore, in addition to the press release drafted by the Swiss SDG Tourism Dialogue for the project's launch, a separate initiative was started to better interlink with the relevant professional media in Switzerland: Together with the Swiss Travel Communicators (STC), a [specific media event](#) was organized for 9th November 2021.

The event was dedicated to the topic "[sustainability in tourism – more than just hot air?](#)" and followed the tested podium discussion concept of STC during which four well-known personalities from the tourism industry were on hand to answer questions.



Panel discussion participants

09th November 2021

Learnings and recommendations

- Integrating the interested professional media into the dialogue relies on frequent interaction. Press releases and one-time-only activities serve the purpose of generating interest and understanding, however, it is through permanent involvement that integration into the dialogue happens. Don't reduce media representatives to their media role – consider them as members on equal footing in the conversations around sustainability and tourism.
- Invite interested media representatives to join the LinkedIn group. Raise awareness that the group's intention is to provide a "private space" that allows the possibility to ask questions and seek input. Respecting this desired privacy, posts and conversations in the group should therefore not directly be found in the media later-on. For this reason, it is recommended to agree with media on how the information shared within the group can be used further.

Observations and experiences

The press release was shared with the pertinent media via the Swiss SDG Tourism Dialogue's consortium partners.

Over 50 journalists representing the most important Swiss daily media and travel media in addition to numerous tourism stakeholders attended the STC media event on sustainability in tourism.



Participants at the media event



3.4 Possible additional activities



The initial planning for the Swiss SDG Tourism Dialogue had been carried out in October 2019: Under the leadership of Swisscontact, the consortium's offer to the Swiss State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO) was elaborated for the participation in an invited competitive selection process. Simultaneously with the project start and detail conceptualization work, the Covid-19 pandemic took over the world. Adaptive project management required the validation of initial ideas within the changing context.

As a result, the following activities were discarded from the work plan due to their limited feasibility and/or relevance within the pandemic context:

Joint elaboration of case studies on SDGs and tourism

Idea

One Case studies with topics of global relevance are often elaborated by individual stakeholders, e.g., from a development organization or a researcher. Stories by the private or public, or the local or international civil society are often found in organizations' communication materials. In this traditional context, the elaboration of case studies and stories provides insights into the respectively other perspective, often based on a person's visit to a respectively other country.

With the specific aim to strengthen the relations between inbound and outbound tourism, the co-creation of joint case studies was envisaged: Defining the overall topic (relating to sustainability and tourism) and focus of attention, as well as the conceptualization of the research work as well as the case study itself happens together by co-authorship of two persons from two countries.

The initial idea was based on positive past experiences by Swisscontact in this regard and included the possibility to link stakeholders from developing and emerging countries with stakeholders from the Swiss tourism industry and academia (incl., e.g., student projects).

However, entering the pandemic has made it clear that stakeholders have other priorities than co-creating knowledge and learning around sustainability and tourism.

Recommendations

- Reconsider and reassess the idea now that the pandemic is not a novum anymore and stakeholders' interest in sustainability and "building back better" has resurfaced. Use the momentum of recovery to specifically stimulate cross-border inspiration and dialogue.
- Sufficient resources are needed for the overall planning, coaching and advisory process. Anchoring such endeavour within a stakeholder with strong intrinsic motivation (e.g., academia, development cooperation player, or association with clear own (not contracted) mandate in knowledge exchange and learning) would reduce such costs.

Intensified international linkage at physical events

Idea

Traditionally, representatives of a specific country are invited to participate in an event of a respectively other country, in order to participate as speaker or in a panel discussion.

With the specific aim to strengthen the relations between stakeholders from Switzerland and other countries, specifically from the developing and emerging nations, the collaboration during the event conceptualization was envisaged to be stimulated: Already the preparation for a specific event or session will be done together. The party of the respectively “other side” will be proactively involved already into the topic setting and conceptualisation.

The initial idea was based on positive past experiences by Swisscontact in this regard and included the plan to build on already planned travels and event participations.

However, entering the pandemic has had the effect of a significantly limited number of events that could be potential candidates for such an initiative.

Recommendation

→ While the idea as such remains an interesting endeavour, such initiative adds to the complexity and multi-layered workload of a community facilitator. With other initiatives, permanent as well as periodic activities running in parallel, it is recommended to not prioritise this idea with significant time investment, but rather just keep it mind in order come back to it ad-hoc once a suitable opportunity arises.

“Help desk” and Pool of speakers

Idea

One of the initial ideas discarded during the course of project implementation included the set-up of a so-called “help-desk” and of a pool of speakers that could be sought-after when needed.

Learning

The Swiss SDG Tourism Dialogue started identifying suitable contacts but didn’t build up a long and comprehensive list of potential speakers, because – like for a “help-desk” – there was no demand. The reason for that was not only because of Covid-19, but also due to limited promotion in a targeted way. Promotion did not happen due to the lack of a structured and comprehensive offer – and the fox bites its own tail.

Certainly, there was no demand also because the tourism community in Switzerland is already highly connected – to the degree that an event organizer searching for speakers, or a tourism stakeholder searching for expert advice, is in most cases able to already identify them from within their own direct and indirect network and does thus not need to (find and) rely on an intermediary to organize the speaker for him.

Recommendation

→ Focus on situation-specific matchmaking instead of investing in the supply-centred setting up of identifying, validating, acquiring, administrating and promoting speakers.

4 Conclusions and recommendations

For the continuation of the Swiss SDG Tourism Dialogue by the STV's KoNa, as well as for other interested parties from around the world that wish to seek inspiration in the work carried out by the Swiss SDG Tourism Dialogue over the past two years, this chapter presents the consolidated conclusions and recommendations after two years of piloting the dialog initiative.

4.1 Contents and formats

- **Stay focused to remain realistic:** Don't try to cover *all* possible topics and *all* forms of assistance and *all* possibilities of wishes that *all* stakeholders along the *entire* tourism value chain and *all* their supply chains could possibly need.
- **Focus on what is relevant:** "Relevance" is perceived differently by different actors – therefore, don't over-research *all possible* needs of *all possible* participants in *all possible* dialogue formats. While the balance is relevant at meta-level, accept that individual interventions and activities in specific moments of time are of specific relevance to individual groups of people only. That in mind, "relevance" is only in selected cases defined by geographic borders (e.g., Switzerland <> outside Switzerland), but by similar thematic interests based on individual business foci and/or similar challenges in search for solutions.
- **Be inclusive in the sharing of information:** While stimulating bi- or multilateral conversations and collaboration requires more effort the bigger the target population, the outreach of sharing information requires less effort the bigger the audience. Established exchange platforms like the LinkedIn group facilitate a relatively high inclusiveness and transparency beyond geographic or association membership borders. Some complementary activities might be helpful for selected groups of participants not (interested to become) active on LinkedIn.

- **Demystify the "physical-only":** While the importance of physical contact, exchange and networking for human beings as persons and industry stakeholders shall not be negated, the last two years have proven that it is not *the only* way to share information, communicate and collaborate with each other. Virtual means of dialoguing allows the inclusion of those not able to attend a physical gathering, in-country and internationally. It also paves the way for documentation and access to information beyond the duration of a specific event.
- **Pilot with the trial-and-error principle:** Piloting in the case of the Swiss SDG Tourism Dialogue = strategically planning and processing learnings at conceptual level + realizing quick wins at implementation level. Within the limited duration of two years of project duration and the pandemic dominating those years, adaptive project management also means to be brave in allowing yourself to go with the flow of how the situation evolves. Don't wait until the storm calms down but cleverly steer the process in view of the overall project objective.
- **Sustainability is fun – live it, don't preach it:** The need for sustainable development has arrived in today's society. And so has it in today's tourism industry, in Switzerland and globally. While the information and exchange around sustainability has been marked by singling out individuals, the turning point has long come to actively embrace sustainability's image by meaningful inspiration and leading by best practice. The stimulation of the dialogue through positively-connotated messages, examples and conversations, inspirational people, exciting stories and encouraging learnings, strengthens the broad anchoring of behavioural change within the tourism sector.

The tourism sector's contribution to the SDGs builds on the relevance and coherence of the dialogues' activities.

4.2 Modalities



- **Inform and exchange:** The distribution of examples, experiences and learnings serves as inspiration. Stimulating a dialogue among those not yet strongly interacting with each other enriches individuals' as well as the overall sector's knowledge base; it also fosters thematic as well as cultural cross-border understanding and respect.
- **Share and document:** Practical orientation not only in content but also in the style of communication allows an easier comprehension of messages and more-likely action as a result.
- **Innovate:** The promotion and encouragement of innovation builds on curiosity and an open mind in access to information, knowledge-exchange and learning.
- **Leverage the interface of incoming <> outgoing <> development cooperation:** The touristic activity seldomly happens in an isolated bubble – it is closely interlinked with other sectors and industries. Its customers, the tourists, flout borders politically, geographically and/or timewise. Development or management challenges vary *from one experience and destination to another*, and not per default from one country to another. The exchange around such similarities bears potential for inspiration and innovation beyond the imagined.

- **Work from within the industry:** Integrate relevant stakeholders into your initiative and its processes, instead of just moderating them as target audience. Organizations and businesses with an own intrinsic motivation and organizational mandate in sustainability in tourism and/or knowledge exchange and/or facilitation of learning do not expect to get financial compensation for every minute contributed. Due to this, financial compensations can be kept within reasonable spheres. The extremely high commitment of the Swiss SDG Tourism Dialogue through its consortium and network partners, as proven by the high degree of in-kind contributions, and continued even beyond the project duration, is evidence for that.

- **Make targeted use of already existing formats:** Taking advantage of existing platforms (e.g., LinkedIn), seeking collaboration with established initiatives (e.g., UNWTO's Tourism4SDGs) and fostering the dialogue around sustainability and tourism within existing exchange formats (e.g., "event-in-event"s) – instead of designing, developing, testing, adjusting, piloting, promoting, and maintaining something completely new (e.g., an own website, community intranet and database and only own events) not only reduces cost. It also directly increases accessibility and outreach and the likeliness of stakeholder participation.

The tourism sector's contribution to the SDGs derives from information, communication and innovation – through effectively and efficiently linking relevant stakeholders along the global tourism value chains and its supplying industries.



4.3 Partnerships



- **Establish a sounding board:** The diverse composition and spirit of the consortium behind the Swiss SDG Tourism Dialogue – intrinsically and idealistically motivated, not merely financially driven – created a space for enriching out-of-the-box-thinking at meta-level.
 - Consider continuing with a participation of the incoming and outgoing tourism, representatives of established sustainability initiatives, academic as well as relevant development cooperation stakeholders.
 - Keep its organization and moderation pragmatic, goal-oriented and efficient.
 - Validate ideas, planned activities and familiar experiences from different perspectives and different stakeholder group needs before going “public” into the community.

- **Activate and maintain the network community:** Bringing organizations with true interest and commitment to sustainability in tourism closer to each other by creating a community with network character constitutes the foundation for strong and long-term dialogue.
 - Stakeholders’ interest in being part of the network increased the specific value and usefulness for them. Such partnership thus needs to go beyond the sharing of information and exchange in a private LinkedIn group.
 - Consider, e.g., member-only activities (such as, e.g., the SDG world café or the bootcamp format) for network partners, a stronger focus on stimulating joint initiatives and projects.
 - Use a different communication channel than the private LinkedIn group (email conversations, closed sub-group within the LinkedIn group, etc).

- **Shape the future from within, not by creating a new player in the system:** The sustained and successful continuation of a dialogue project strongly increases if promotion is sought from within. It is easier and may happen even naturally if key players are integrated into the dialogue’s journey from day zero onwards.
 - The Swiss SDG Tourism Dialogue assumed the role of promoting the industry’s information-sharing, communication, exchange and learning beyond borders at a moment of time in which no such facilitative function existed. After two years of piloting the dialogue project, the successor implementor is coming from within the Swiss tourism industry itself.
 - In case such successor model is not emerging from the community by itself, consider breaking the task into different thematic areas and functions (e.g., inform, exchange, innovate), anchor responsibilities within existing initiatives already catering towards those areas and reduce the facilitative functions towards ensuring transparency over those functions and accessibility towards their leaders.

- **Look beyond the end of the plate:** Do not duplicate the efforts of already existing international initiatives. Seek the collaboration and promotion of international platforms specifically for accessing and promoting knowhow and exchange.

The anchoring of the Swiss SDG Tourism Dialogue within a group of diverse partners has ensured sustainability of project results and achievements, impact through outreach and scale.

Sustainability in tourism is each individual stakeholders’ responsibility and true to the saying “together, we are stronger”, also the strive towards increasing tourism’s contribution to the SDGs is easier with strong partnerships and alliances providing strong tailwind.



5 Partners

5.1 Financing partner

Swiss State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO)



Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
Confederazione Svizzera
Confederaziun svizra

Swiss Confederation

Federal Departement of Economic Affairs,
Education and Research EAER
State Secretariat for Economic Affairs SECO

SECO is the federal government's centre of expertise for core issues relating to economic policy.

Its aim is to ensure sustainable economic growth, high employment and fair working conditions by providing a stable environment for regulatory, economic and foreign trade policy.

The Swiss Tourism SDG Dialogue is a joint initiative by SECO's

- Tourism Policy ("DSTO") Promotion Activities Directorate, <https://www.seco.admin.ch/seco/en/home/Standortfoerderung/Tourismuspolitik.html>
- and
- Trade Promotion ("WEHU") of the Foreign Economic Affairs Directorate, <https://www.seco-cooperation.admin.ch/secocoop/en/home.html>.

5.2 Consortium partners

SECO has entrusted the implementation of the Swiss SDG Tourism Dialogue 2020-2021 to a consortium of **8** experienced and complementary partners, covering a broad range of stakeholders and multiplayers from the

- Swiss incoming tourism, the Swiss outgoing tourism and the Swiss-funded/-implemented international development cooperation in tourism; as well as
- academia and education, private sector, and non-governmental organizations.



Project kick-off with the Consortium, Zurich, 21.01.2020

Swiss Foundation for Technical Cooperation, Swisscontact (Consortium Leader)

<https://www.swisscontact.org/en>

About Swisscontact: We are a leading organisation in the implementation of international development projects. We promote inclusive economic, social and ecological development to make an effective contribution towards sustainable and widespread prosperity in developing and emerging economies.



ecos

<https://ecos.ch/en/>

ecos creates added value. Since 1987, the ecos consultancy has been supporting companies, public sector institutions, associations, municipalities, cantons, foundations and public services regarding their sustainable development projects. ecos creates added value for the environment, society and the economy.



University of Applied Sciences of the Grisons (FHGR)

<https://www.fhgr.ch/en/>

The University of Applied Sciences of the Grisons is an innovative and entrepreneurial university of applied sciences with over 2,000 students. It trains people to become responsible and skilled professionals and managers.



gutundgut gmbh

<https://www.gutundgut.ch/>

We develop and implement projects for tourism, leisure and culture.



myclimate

<https://www.myclimate.org/>

myclimate is a partner for effective climate protection, globally and locally. Together with industry partners and private individuals, myclimate wants to shape the future of the world through advisory services and educational programmes, as well as its own projects. It does so in a market-oriented and customer-focused way as a non-profit organisation.



Swiss Parks Network

<https://www.parks.swiss/en/>

The Swiss Parks Network is the umbrella organisation for parks and park projects in Switzerland. As such, the Swiss Parks Network develops a framework for dialogue, exchange and knowledge transfer between parks. It represents the parks at a national level and protects their common interests in Swiss politics. The Network also creates platforms for the parks' joint projects and promotes them towards the general public.



Swiss Tourism Federation (STV)



<https://www.stv-fst.ch/en>

The Swiss Tourism Federation keeps the political authorities and circles informed about current topics. It takes a stand in current issues and provides community relations to call attention to the importance of tourism as a branch of the economy.

Swiss Travel Association (SRV)

<https://www.srv.ch/>

SRV/STA (Swiss Travel Association) is the leading umbrella group of retailers/tour operators in Switzerland. They generate about 80 % of the travel industry's turnover. We promote responsible tourism, are member of "Roundtable Human Rights in Tourism", THE CODE, TourCert, Tourism for SDGs.



#SwissTourism4SDGs



[Click here to continue the conversation](#)

The Swiss Tourism SDG Dialogue moderates a private group on LinkedIn for exchange of information and networking. The moderation is being continued from 2022 onwards by the Swiss Tourism Federation (STV).

Use the **#SwissTourism4SDGs** hashtag, when uploading and sharing your initiatives, stories, events, education/ training offer, company CSR and research to the database of the World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO). They will not only appear in the overall database, but also in a specially featured section.

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