



WTTC publishes new report on destination resilience

Global tourism body says destination resilience is crucial to long-term sustainability

COVID-19 has impacted all destinations highlighting the need for better-preparedness for future risks

San Juan, Puerto Rico: The World Travel & Tourism Council ([WTTC](#)) today published a new report on practical guidelines and case studies to support destinations in becoming more resilient and sustainable at its Sustainability and Investment Forum taking place in San Juan, Puerto Rico.

The report, 'Enhancing Resilience to Create Sustainability in Destinations', jointly created with [ICE](#), WTTC's industry partner and a renowned global consultancy and digital services provider, provides practical, structured insights, for destinations as they consider their resilience and sustainability.

Following the last two years of chaos brought on by the almost complete halt to international travel, no tourism destination has been untouched by the impact of COVID-19.

And, many destinations have also been affected by major shocks, such as extreme weather.

To support and guide destinations, this innovative analysis builds on real life case studies and presents a range of resilience actions for destinations before, during or aftershock events.

The report provides five elements destinations should focus on to build both resilience and long-term sustainability: environment, infrastructure, energy, economic, and societal resilience.

It offers four phases to analyse the shock and its aftermath: 'understand the risk', 'prepare for shocks', 'respond to shock', and 'longer term strategies'.

The report presents case studies illustrating how destinations which rely heavily on tourism, whether they are cities or islands, deserts or tropics, apply resilience awareness.

Puerto Rico is one of the destinations featured as a case study, highlighting the string of environmental crises and economic challenges that have made resilience a cornerstone of their tourism strategy.

Key learnings underline the importance of small businesses, identifying risks and implementing initiatives to handle any potential crisis.

Julia Simpson, WTTC President & CEO, said: “COVID has had a devastating impact, decimating the Travel & Tourism sector around the world. But it’s certainly not the first shock to bring chaos destinations and their citizens.

“This report allows destinations to understand how to better prepare, act, and plan for future risks, strengthening their resilience and long-term sustainability.

“The pandemic has taught us you can never be prepared enough. Destinations have learnt not only from their own experiences, and those of other countries as they recover and build back.

“Puerto Rico is an example of a destination that learned through COVID and natural disasters to become more inherently resilient.”

John Wasson, ICF Chair & CEO, said: “For over half a century, ICF has been passionate about partnering with organizations all over the world to enact and institutionalize sustainable policies and practices.

“Today, we are proud to partner with WTTC to offer unique insights and practical guidance on developing adaptable sustainability plans that build long term resilience, despite prevailing uncertainties and increasing extreme events.”

Lastly, the report offers recommendations identified as key for destinations in their journey to improve their resilience: developing successful governance models, ensuring ownership and shared value, and preparation and processes for the next shock.

In 2019, the Travel & Tourism sector’s contribution to GDP was 10.3% (U.S. \$9.6 trillion), falling to 5.3% (nearly U.S. \$4.8 trillion) in 2020 when the pandemic was at its height, and suffered a staggering 50% loss.

WTTC’s latest EIR report also revealed that 2021 saw the beginning of the recovery for the global Travel & Tourism sector.

Its contribution to GDP climbed an impressive 21.7% year on year, to reach more than US\$5.8 trillion.

The sector saw a recovery of more than 18 million global Travel & Tourism jobs, representing a positive 6.7% rise in 2021.

While recovery is underway, more can be done to ensure the sector has a sustainable and inclusive future.

To read the report in full, please click [here](#).

-ends-