



## **"Boosting Sustainable Tourism Development and Capacity of Tourism SMEs through Transnational Cooperation and Knowledge Transfer"**

**GRO/SME/19/C/077 (COS-TOURCOOP-2019-3-01)**

**Project Logo:**



**Name of the Project:** Improving sustainability of tourism SMEs through knowledge transfer, international cooperation and multi-stakeholder engagement

**Acronym of the Project:** TOURISME

**Proposal Number of the Project:** 951103

**Project Duration and start date:** 30 months, 16<sup>th</sup> September 2020

**Lead partner/coordinator:**

1. Consulta Europa Projects and Innovation S.L / CE (Spain)

**Partners:**

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**Deliverable Number:** 2.1

**Title of Deliverable:** Literature Review on Sustainable Tourism

**Version of Deliverable:** v1

**Date of Submission of Deliverable:** 15.12.2020



## TOURISME

# Improving sustainability of tourism SMEs through knowledge transfer, international cooperation and multi-stakeholder engagement

### D2.1 – Literature Review on Sustainable Tourism

Grant Agreement No	951103	Project Acronym	TOURISME
Project Title	Improving sustainability of tourism SMEs through knowledge transfer, international cooperation and multi-stakeholder engagement		
Deliverable No	2.1		
Deliverable Full Title	Literature Review on Sustainable Tourism		
Work Package No. and Title	WP2 – Knowledge base and network		
Lead beneficiary	SSSA		
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Planned delivery date	15.12.2020		
Actual delivery date	17.12.2020		
Dissemination level	Confidential		
Document version	1		
Project start date	16 September 2020	Project duration	30
Document description	A brief report on sustainable tourism literature		



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## 1. Introduction

This report represents the output of a literature review carried out under the framework of the project “TOURISME: Improving sustainability of tourism SMEs through knowledge transfer, international cooperation and multi-stakeholder engagement” (Deliverable 2.1). The scope of this report is to provide a comprehensive overview of the state of art on the topic of sustainable tourism, especially focusing on evidences from 2010 onwards. To this aim, this report analyses different trends and themes related to sustainability within the tourism sector through the study of two different sources: academic literature and grey literature.

The report is structured as follows. Firstly, the relation between tourism and sustainability is presented in section 2 by highlighting the concepts of tourism, sustainable development, and sustainable tourism.

Section 3 explains the methodology used to carry out two literature reviews, performed drawing from two different databases.

Section 4 deals with an in-depth and systematic review of the state of art on sustainable tourism, drawing from academic papers. In this section, the database on sustainable tourism is analysed and discussed.

Section 5 explores evidences on the topic through an in-depth review, drawing from grey literature. As done in the previous one, the database is analysed and discussed.

Finally, section 6 summarises the trends and themes emerged by both academic and grey literature reviews, providing a comprehensive overview on sustainable tourism.

## 2. Theoretical Framework

### 2.1 Tourism

The term “tourism” does not have a shared and agreed definition (Buckley, 2012). Tourism involves different subjects, entities, and dimensions, encompassing many different economic, environmental, and social activities (Perles & Ivars, 2018). World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) has defined tourism as the activities of persons travelling to and staying in places outside their usual environment for not more than one consecutive year for leisure, business, and other purposes not related to the exercise of an activity remunerated from within the place visited (UNWTO 2018).

The tourism sector has a relevant role in the global economy. It generates economic benefits on local economies, creates and fuels small and medium enterprises, thus generating millions of jobs. It also fosters the economic development of emerging countries (Robin, Pedroche, & Astorga, 2017; Boluk, Cavaliere, & Higgins-Desbiolles, 2019; Batle, Orfila-Sintes, & Moon, 2018).

However, the downside of the tourism sector lies in the negative impacts produced to the environment, as it causes environmental damage, pollution, biodiversity loss, and heritage degradation (Costa, Rodrigues, & Pacheco, 2020; Girard & Nocca 2017). The development and expansion of the tourism sector lead to massive exploitation of resources, such as water, energy, and produce a large amount of waste (solid waste and sewage) that need to be well managed. The increase in tourism also leads to more mobility, which causes congestion on roads, noise and air pollution, and, therefore, CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. This might affect the development of tourist destinations in the medium and long term, due to the unsustainable imbalance between economic and environmental aspects (Boley, 2014; Pan, Gao, Kim, Shah, Pei, & Chiang, 2018; Girard & Nocca, 2017).

## 2.2 Sustainable Tourism

The concept of sustainability arose within the framework of sustainable development. According to the highest and most cited definition proposed by the Brundtland Commission (i.e. United Nations Report of the World Commission on Environment and Development: “Our Common Future”, 1987), sustainable development is a “development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs” (Brundtland et al., 1987, p. 15). Sustainable development emerged due to people’s awareness on the constraints of growth based essentially only on an economic perspective.

Therefore, sustainable development involves economic growth, but also social advancement and progress while protecting the environment (Brundtland et al., 1987). A Venn diagram is classically used to represent the sustainability concept as the overlap of three different dimensions: economic, social, and environmental (see Figure 1).

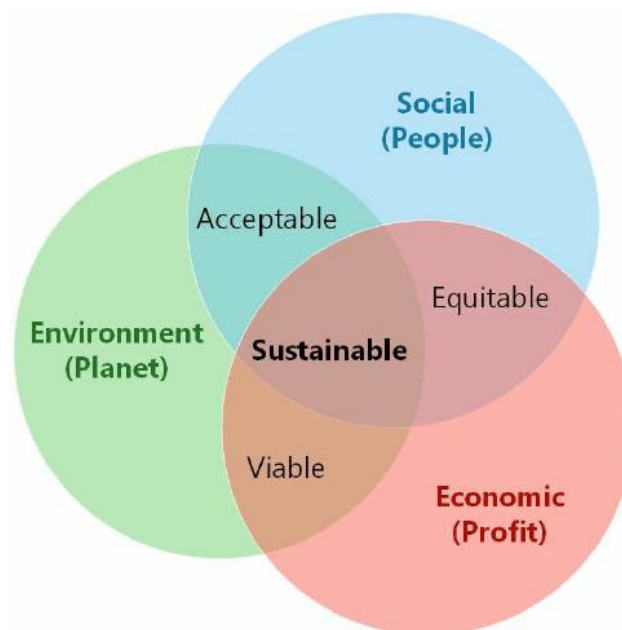


Figure 1. Venn diagram of sustainability dimensions<sup>1</sup>. Retrieved from Purvis, Mao, and Robinson (2018).

## 3. Methodology

As the aim of this study is to comprehend the main trends and themes on sustainable tourism, selected relevant documents on the topic were analysed. To have an accurate picture of sustainable tourism research and to comprehensively cover all literature and relevant documents, two different sources were considered: academic literature and grey literature. On the one hand, academic literature refers to scientific peer-review research papers published in academic journals by researchers to increase the knowledge on a certain topic. On the other hand, grey literature refers to documents produced by different entities such as academics, government, business industry, different institutions, etc that did not undergo strict peer-review processes and were not published in academic journals.

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<sup>1</sup> Economic sustainability is the achievement of profitability in the long term coherent with the goal of resource efficiency. Social sustainability encompasses social justice, social capital, community development, and social responsibility. Environmental sustainability implies the maintenance of natural resources.



Therefore, an excel document was filled in with documents by academic and grey literature. The choice of relevant documents was made by the partners of the project “TOURISME: Improving sustainability of tourism SMEs through knowledge transfer, international cooperation and multi-stakeholder engagement”, under the coordination of task leader Scuola Superiore Sant’Anna. This resulted in 87 research papers and 35 grey literature documents. Thus, a further screening was performed by selecting only documents from 2010 onwards, as to focus only on the most recent developments of sustainable tourism. This led to 73 scholarly papers and 31 grey documents to analyse.

Finally, bibliometric and content analysis for both kinds of literature was carried out to identify up to date information, trends, and themes related to sustainable tourism.

The scholarly papers are sorted by (1) year of publication; (2) publication journal; (3) authors’ country of affiliation; (4) reference country of the study; (5) type of study. Articles’ contents are investigated in the second step of the analysis following the division: (i) Environmental Management Aspects and Sustainable Tourism Development, and (ii) Circular Tourism.

Grey literature documents are sorted by (1) year of publication; (2) name of the author(s)/institution; (3) geographic field of application; (4) type of document. Documents’ contents are investigated in the second step of the analysis following the division: (i) Certification, (ii) Best Practices, and (iii) Others.

## 4. Review of Academic Literature on Sustainable Tourism

### 4.1 Bibliometric Analysis

The following subsections present the results of the bibliometric review of the academic database. Publication analyses in terms of the number of papers per year, journals, authors’ countries of affiliation and reference country of the study, and typology of study are shown. The results are compared with other literature reviews on the topic to further strengthen the robustness and comprehensiveness of the proposed work.

#### 4.1.1 Annual Trends of Tourism Sustainability Related Publications and Journal Analysis

The database consisted of 74 articles published between 2010 and 2020. Figure 2 shows how the trend significantly increased in the last four years. In fact, 2020 has the same number of papers published on sustainable tourism as in the time frame 2010-2015 (see Figure 2).

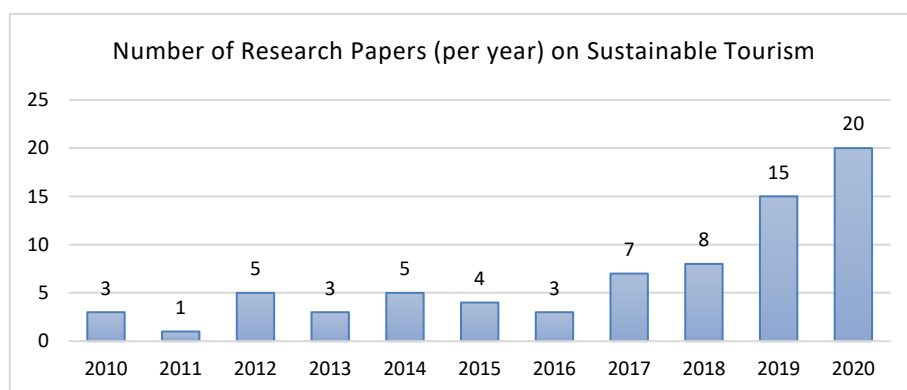


Figure 2. Research papers published between 2010 and 2020 (own database).

It is worth mentioning that this is due to the criteria used for the articles' selection process adopted by the partners of the project TOURISME. However, this exponential trend is consistent with the findings of a previous literature review (up to 2012) conducted by Ruhanen et al. (2015) and as well as with the findings of a recent literature review (up to 2018) conducted by Angels Niñerola et al. (2019). This recent literature review shows that sustainable tourism research has been focusing and encompassing on themes and concepts such as tourism sustainability, ecotourism, green tourism, blue tourism, circular tourism, bio tourism (see Figure 3). Indeed, Angels Niñerola et al. (2019) show that terms such as tourism sustainability and ecotourism are by far the most cited in the entire academic literature on sustainable tourism. Here, it is also worth noting that "circular tourism", a new trend - started in 2015, is gaining increasing attention (see Figure 3).

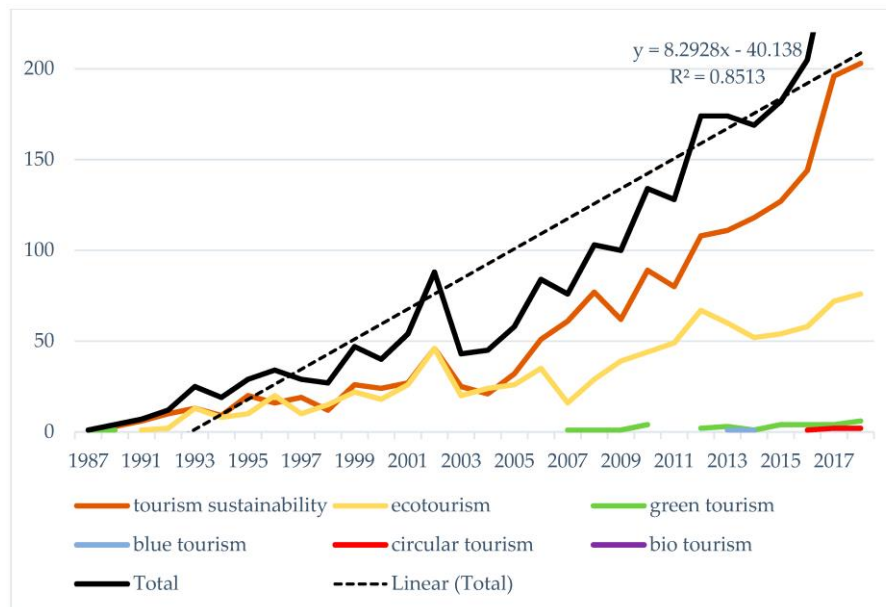


Figure 3. Publication trends in sustainable tourism research. Retrieved from Angels Niñerola et al. (2019).

Sustainability is the first ranked journal with 9 published articles, representing 12% of the articles in our database, followed by Journal of Sustainable Tourism with 5 articles, and Journal of Cleaner Production with 4 articles, respectively representing 7% and 6% of the articles in our database (see Figure 4). This is consistent with the findings of Angels Niñerola et al. (2019) which show how until 2018 the top 2 journals were Journal of Sustainable Tourism and Sustainability both in the number of papers and citations. This could be expected as the Journal of Sustainable Tourism was the first journal exclusively devoted to sustainable tourism research since 1993. Many other journals have articles related to the topic of sustainability in tourism, as sustainability encompasses multifaced and multidimensional aspects (Ruhanen et al., 2015). Thus, this also explains the great fragmentation of journals within our database.

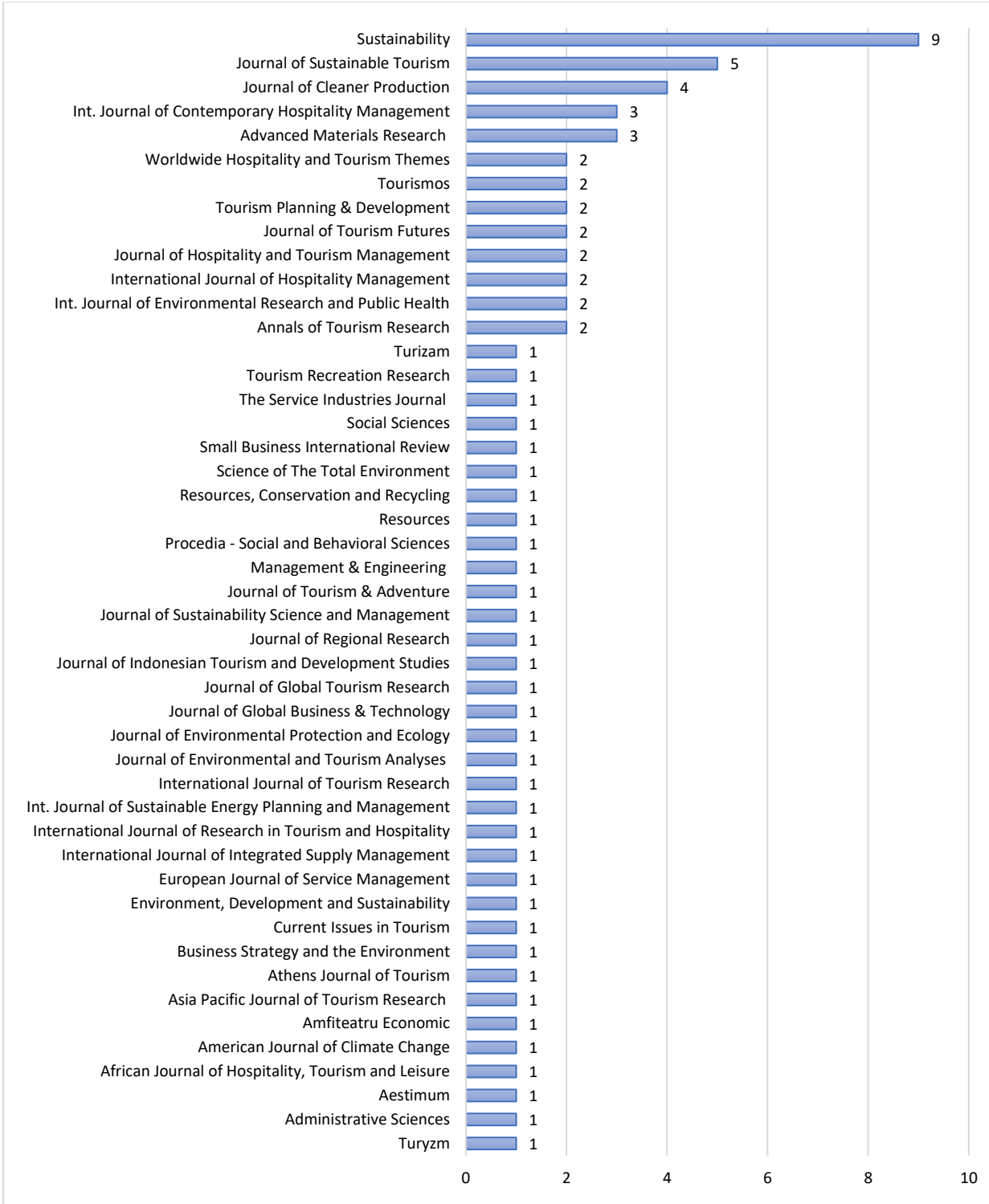


Figure 4. Number of research papers by journals (own database).

4.1.2 Geographic Distribution

Sustainable tourism research is worldwide, suggesting that it is a topic of relevance for authors from various countries. Based on the authors’ affiliation, many countries have published articles related to tourism, but the following top 10 countries account for more than 50% of the total articles in academic research (Angels Niñerola et al., 2019; Ruhanen et al., 2015). Table 1 shows the top 10 countries which have published the most research papers in the last 25 years.





*Table 1. Number of research papers and citations by countries. Adapted from Angels Niñerola et al. (2019).*

COUNTRY	TOTAL SAMPLE	
	DOCUMENTS	CITATIONS
United States	415	10,102
United Kingdom	294	10,064
Australia	274	6305
Canada	160	4838
China	124	727
Spain	118	1523
Malaysia	103	497
New Zealand	89	2264
Italy	86	721
South Africa	76	595

Table 1 shows the United States, the United Kingdom, Australia, Canada, China, Spain, Malaysia, New Zealand, Italy, and South Africa are the top countries in sustainable tourism research. These countries are also confirmed by Ruhanen et al. (2012) but in a different order. It means that the selection criteria of research papers do not change the top countries involved in sustainable tourism research.

Table 2 shows the results from our database. Our results, consistent with previous works, also show that the UK, Spain, Italy, China, Australia, and Canada are among the top 10 countries.

A novel approach proposed by this work is the attempt to collocate a field of application (study focus) for each article, i.e. the country on which the study focuses its attention. The results are shown in Table 2, and the geographical distribution is displayed in Figure 5. By doing so, and comparing the countries sorted by authors' institution, it seems that authors tend to focus on and to study sustainable tourism in the countries where they live. For example, 8 papers (12% of total) had Spain as their main focus of study out of 11 papers published by Spanish authors. Almost all the other authors examine sustainable tourism topics in their countries with a total (or almost total) correspondence as in the case of the UK (8-8), Greece (7-7), Italy (5-4), China (4-4) and so on. Figure 5 represents graphically the countries involved.

*Table 2. Number of papers by authors' country and focus of study.*

COUNTRY (AUTHOR)	NUMBER OF PAPERS	COUNTRY (STUDY FOCUS)	NUMBER OF PAPERS	PERCENTAGE (%)
Spain	11	Spain	8	12.12
UK	8	UK	8	12.12
Greece	7	Greece	7	10.61
Italy	5	Italy	4	6.06
China	4	China	4	6.06
Multiple countries	4	Romania	3	4.55
Romania	3	Australia	1	1.52



Australia	3	Canada	3	4.55
Canada	3	Taiwan	3	4.55
Taiwan	3	Denmark	2	3.03
Denmark	2	Poland	2	3.03
Poland	2	South Africa	2	3.03
South Africa	2	Turkey	2	3.03
Turkey	2	Albania	1	1.52
Albania	1	Latin America	1	1.52
Argentina	1	Austria	1	1.52
Austria	1	Bulgaria	1	1.52
Bulgaria	1	Caribbean Islands	1	1.52
Caribbean Islands	1	Costa Rica	1	1.52
Costa Rica	1	Guam	1	1.52
Guam	1	Indonesia	1	1.52
Indonesia	1	Lithuania	1	1.52
Lithuania	1	Malaysia	1	1.52
Malaysia	1	Mexico	1	1.52
Mexico	1	Nepal	1	1.52
Nepal	1	Portugal	1	1.52
Portugal	1	Slovenia	1	1.52
Slovenia	1	USA	1	1.52
USA	1	Zambia	1	1.52
		Fiji	1	1.52

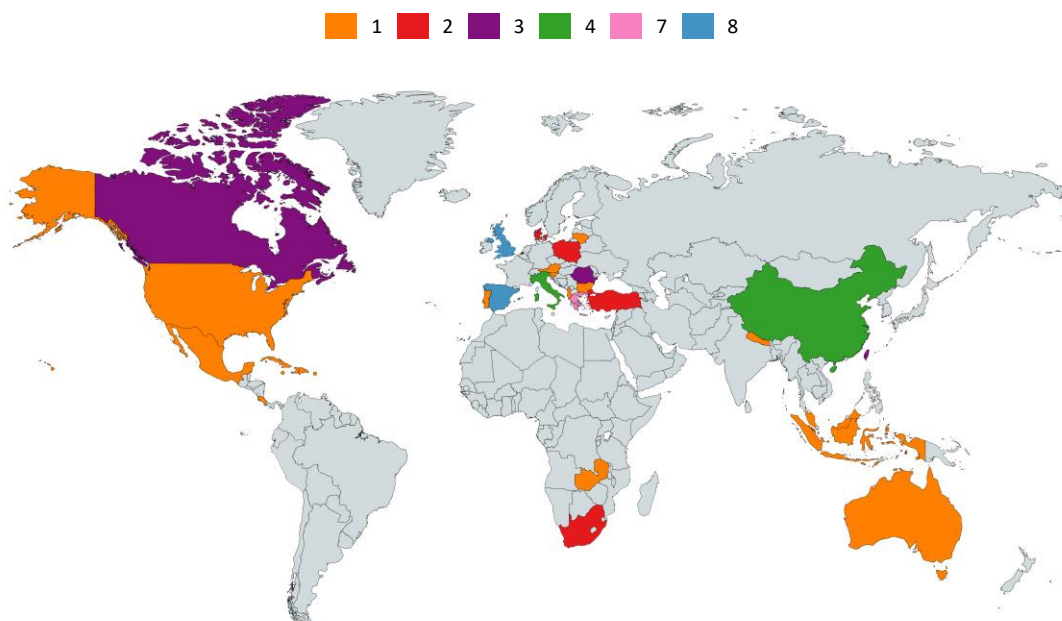


Figure 5. Graphical representation of countries considered by the studies (our database).



From the geographic distribution of the authors and of countries involved in research papers, some considerations can be drawn. First, although sustainable tourism research is widely recognized worldwide by academic literature, with many countries having published one article, it is not spread evenly throughout the world. Moreover, the countries involved in academic literature correspond to the countries where tourism is most present and developed and represent an important income and part of national GDP (Costa, Rodrigues, & Pacheco, 2020; Niñerola, Sánchez-Rebull, & Hernández-Lara, 2019; Batle, Orfila-Sintes, & Moon, 2018). To note the presence of emerging countries. Finally, authors tend to focus on their countries when studying sustainable tourism aspects, as they might be involved in local and national projects.

#### 4.1.3 Type of Studies

Our database was further classified by the type of studies. Table 3 shows the results: 29 papers were categorised as Desk Research and Literature Review and 44 were Case Study, of which 34 qualitative and 10 quantitative. Desk research refers usually to a type of methodology that involves secondary research, a study carried out at desk which is the output of elaboration of data already available in the literature. In our case, we refer to all those papers which contribute to paradigm creation. The literature review includes bibliometric and systematic review. A case study refers to a research approach that generates an in-depth understanding of an issue in its real-life context.

*Table 3. Type of studies*

TYPE OF STUDIES	NUMBER OF PAPERS
Desk Research and Literature Review	29
Case Study	44
Qualitative	34
Quantitative	10

Although theoretical papers are significant in presence, our database suggests a major trend towards case studies and empirical studies in academic literature. This was also noticed by Lu and Nepal (2009) who stated that the case study was the most employed approach within sustainable tourism research.

#### 4.2 Content Analysis

This section examines the state of art in terms of content and deals with the trends and patterns involved in sustainable tourism within academic literature.

Sustainable tourism has been widely embraced by the academic community, and many literature reviews have been carried out on sustainable tourism. Many literature reviews in tourist context are mostly based on analysis of authors, citations, perceptions of journal quality by authors, methodologies (McKercher, Law, & Lam, 2006; Xiao & Smith, 2006; Pechlaner, Zehrer, Matzler, & Abfalter, 2004;). Moreover, in terms of content, there is still an unclear classification of its patterns and topics. Terms such as “keywords”, “disciplines” “areas”, “themes”, “streams”, “subjects” often overlap in meaning between different literature reviews, as the term used, and its interpretation might be subjective (Angels Niñerola et al., 2019; Ruhanen et al., 2015; Darbellay & Stock, 2012; Lu and Nepal, 2009). In terms of keywords, Angels Niñerola et al. (2019) findings are the most updated and robust within sustainable tourism research. In their research, they identified the most frequent

keywords within abstracts and titles of 2647 articles in academic literature until 2018. A graphical representation of their findings is shown in Figure 6.

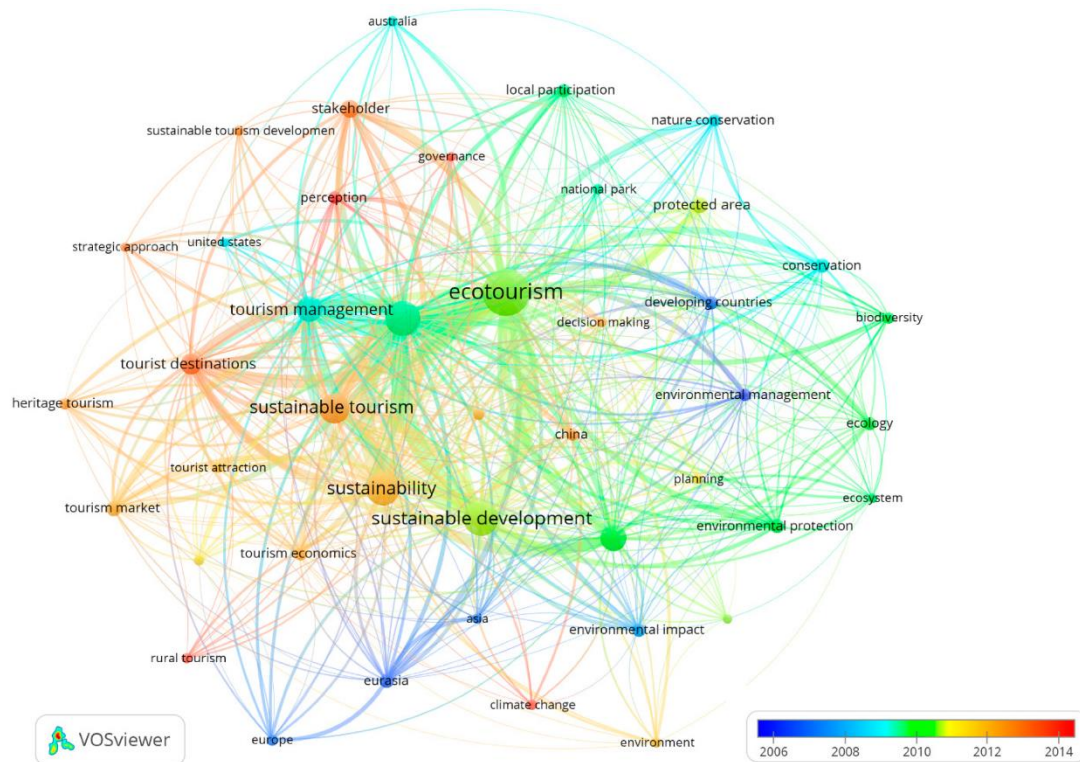


Figure 6. Keywords in sustainable tourism research<sup>2</sup>. Retrieved from Angels Niñerola et al., (2019).

The graph in Figure 6 denotes the relation between different keywords involved. The most used terms until 2018 are Ecotourism (1236 occurrences), Tourism Development (678 occurrences), Sustainable Development (661 occurrences), Sustainability (624 occurrences), and Sustainable Tourism (519 occurrences), respectively.

Angels Niñerola et al. (2019) also identified by the colour of the nodes two different streams: a first stream coloured from blue to green (to the right of the graph) which identifies early attention on ecotourism and environmental management-related aspects (ecology, environmental protection, environmental management, ecosystems and so on); a second stream coloured in orange and red (more to the left side) which identifies later attention on more sustainability-related aspects (sustainable tourism, sustainability, sustainable tourism development), thus encompassing all its dimensions and not only the environmental one.

After a review of the most important keywords, the following subsections deal with the main trends and themes within the sustainable tourism research, by analysing our database.

#### 4.2.1 Environmental Management Aspects and Sustainable Tourism Development

Since the Brundtland report (1987), sustainability as a concept has been integrated from various perspectives in tourism research, and thus particular attention is on ecotourism and the integration of sustainable development concepts.

<sup>2</sup> The size of the nodes represents the frequency while the distance between them reflects the strength of their relation. The network connections show the keywords that appear together more frequently; a line between two keywords indicates their co-occurrence. The thicker the line is, the greater the co-occurrence frequency. Finally, the colour of the node indicates the average number of publications per year in relation to the node.



Within these subjects, environmental management has had a central role to prevent tourism negative impacts on the environment. Research especially focuses on practices and case studies involving small-medium enterprises (Federico Buffa et al., 2018; Time Coles et al., 2016), hotels (Julio Batle et al., 2018; María-del-MarAlonso-Almeida et al., 2017; Ray Wang et al., 2012; Tania Kapiki et al., 2012), and tourist accommodation (Ana Ispas et al., 2019; Christopher Warre et al., 2017). The main environmental aspects examined are energy management, water management, and waste management, respectively. Energy management allows for more energy efficiency and saving, thus less GHG emissions, with the common aim to tackle climate change (Ana Ispas et al., 2019; María-del-MarAlonso-Almeida et al., 2017; Tim Coles et al., 2016). Water resources are another environmental aspect to manage, as water-saving leads to less consumption of resources and benefits economically the enterprises together with energy efficiency (Ray Wang et al., 2012; Cristopher Warren et al., 2017). Tourism growth also led to pollution issues, and waste management is then well considered. Waste management practices are especially studied in the context of local communities and islands, as in the case of Costa Rica, Mallorca, Tenerife, Kefalonia, and Rhodes. (Elizabeth Little et al., 2017; Chukwunonye Ezeah, et al., 2015)

Tania Kapiki et al. (2012) suggest that sustainable environmental management in tourism should involve “the establishment of feasible and measurable targets for energy consumption and waste creation; the use of renewable energy resources; recycling; the electricity and water saving”.

Small and medium-sized hotels have also begun to control their environmental aspects through environmental management systems (Ricardo Teruel-Gutiérrez, 2020).

In this regard, the tourism industry entails many different eco-certification schemes as self-regulation strategies. In sustainable tourism academic research, momentum is also on the application of those certifications, with a focus on how and whether they contribute to meet specific environmental standards and develops more sustainable tourism (Yilmaz et al., 2019a; Yusuf Yilmaz et al., 2019b; Buckley 2012; Jarvis et al., 2010). In this sense, Jamal and Dredge (2011) findings showed that in their case studies on Indigenous community issues and mainstream hospitality, eco-certification approaches did not yield relevant improvements in terms of environmental outcomes. However, Yusuf Yilmaz et al. (2019) found that eco-labels have significant positive impacts in sustainable tourism practices in the accommodation sector, comparing hotels according to whether or not they were eco-labeled certified. Thus, different certification schemes applied to different contexts might lead to diverse results. In fact, also managers’ attitude towards eco-labeling is an important factor in the effectiveness of those schemes (Yilmaz et al., 2019a).

Studies on perception, strategic approach, stakeholders, governance, and decision-making processes show an increasing trend in sustainable tourism development research (Angels Niñerola et al., 2019). Many articles study how the availability of public incentives encourages small-medium enterprises to adopt environmental management practices, showing that the role of institutional and public actors is crucial for implementing sustainable tourism practices (Buffa et al., 2018). Academic literature shows how sustainable tourism needs more responsible policies and forms of corporate governance to foster its development (Kornilaki et al., 2019; Maxim, 2015). Also, the study of managers’, enterprises’, and tourists’ behaviors is fundamental to understand what enabling factors might implement sustainable tourism practices. In this regard, for instance, Sardonou et al. (2015) studied the factors that affect entrepreneurs’ behavioural intentions towards sustainability and found that young entrepreneurs are more likely to accomplish sustainable development activities. Moreover, knowledge networks, websites, and the promotion of environmental labels and certified management systems in tourism businesses were found of importance by entrepreneurs. Núñez-Ríos et al. (2020) stressed the importance of organizational sustainability in tourism SMEs, stating that communication and inter-organizational relationships enhance their strategies and efforts using systems thinking to reach sustainable development goals in tourism.

Another hot theme is related to how to measure sustainable tourism as sustainable tourism is meaningless without monitoring tools such as indicators which can inform about the level of



sustainability of sustainable tourism related aspects. Indicators are powerful policy-making tools (Boley, 2014; Buckley, 2012).

Finally, the most recent noteworthy theme within academic literature is related to the COVID-19 pandemic. Researchers are discussing the effects of the COVID-19 crisis, which has heavily affected tourism throughout the world. COVID-19 crisis has opened a window for researchers to further debate on the environmental, economic, and social aspects within the sustainable tourism framework (Mustapha et al., 2020; Jones & Comfort et al., 2020; Peter Jones and Daphne Comfort, 2020).

#### 4.2.2 Circular Tourism

Circular Tourism is a recent trend and theme that is strongly emerging in tourism and it deserves a wider explanation.

To provide an overall presentation about the relationship between tourism and circularity, it is first necessary to provide a little overview of the concept of Circular Economy (CE).

CE refers to a restorative economy based on renewable energy and non-toxic renewable resources. It aims at limiting waste by recycling products, components, and resources, and by keeping products, components, and resources in use for longer (Sørensen et al, 2019).

The increasing awareness of the need to transform the current economic system is giving birth to numerous initiatives to switch every sector of our society to sustainability. The whole economy is in a process of transition from a linear to a circular model, as the path forward for our global society, and the tourism industry is not an exception and is also being disrupted by this transition (Vargas-Sánchez, 2019).

CE literature is rapidly growing, with an exponential growth since 2014, as shown by Figure 7.

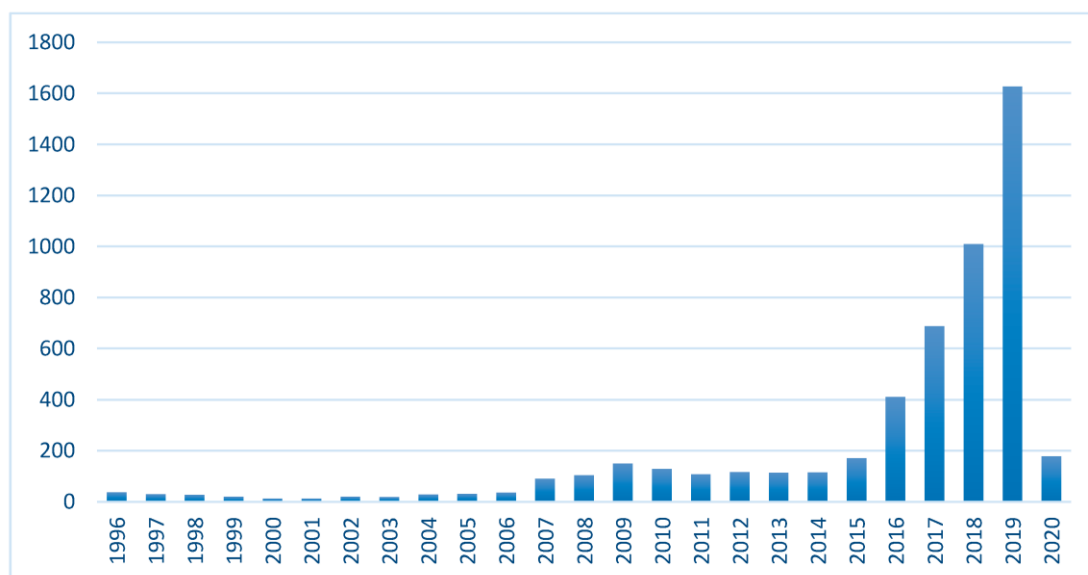


Figure 7. Number of papers published per year on CE. Retrieved from Rodriguez et al. (2020).

The results based on our database also confirms the exponential growth as reported by previous works. Indeed, our database shows almost twice the number of research papers focused on circular tourism as compared to the number of research papers focused on sustainable tourism (see Figure 8).

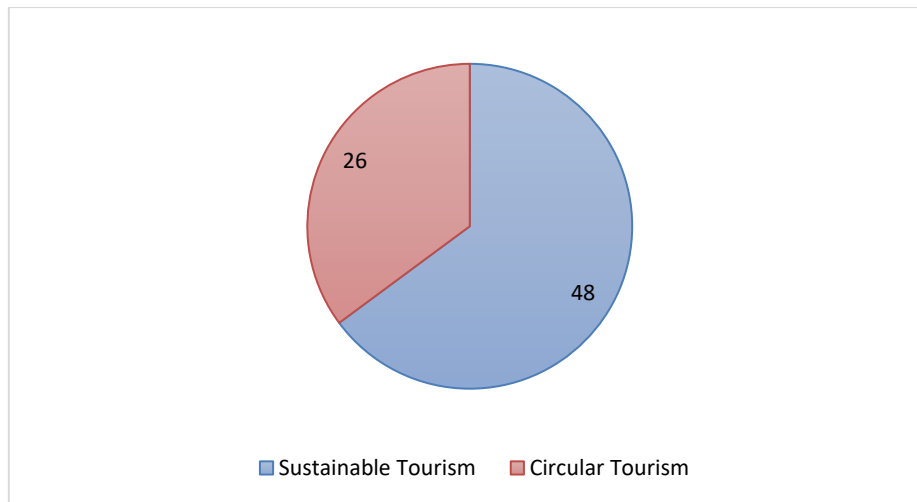


Figure 8. Number of research papers focused on circular tourism within our database.

According to the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO 2018), tourism should be configured according to sustainability principles, replicating and implementing existing best practices across its transversal value chain. In this perspective, the circular economy is proposed as a model able to contribute to the achievement of real sustainable tourism (Girard & Nocca, 2017).

Researchers in the literature focus on how circular economy can be integrated within tourism to bring a real improvement to sustainable tourism. In fact, many of the articles within our database and published in the last two years deal with the theoretical and possible application of these principles (Rodríguez, Florido, & Jacob, 2020; Niñerola, Sánchez-Rebull, & Hernández-Lara, 2019; Girard & Nocca, 2017).

In many cases, the practices of what we will henceforth call Circular Tourism are linked with the SDGs (Girard & Nocca, 2017; Rodríguez, Florido, & Jacob, 2020; Niñerola, Sánchez-Rebull, & Hernández-Lara, 2019), a theme that is inseparable from the concept of sustainability.

In many other cases, circular practices in the tourism sector are traced back to hotel facilities, studying not only the possible evolution of business models, inevitably subject to a change in their paradigm, but also concrete practices such as resource (water, energy, and waste) management (Buffa, Franch, & Rizio, 2018; Sørensen, Bærenholdt, & Greve, 2019; Giurea, Precazzini, Ragazzi, Achim, Cioca, Conti, & Rada, 2018; Jones & Wynn, 2019; Pattanaro & Gente, 2017).

Several studies used site-specific case studies (Wang, 2012; Khodaiji & Christopoulou, 2020; Little, 2017), touching on topics such as the maritime tourism sector, the possible applications of Circular Tourism in the islands (Schumann, 2020), or the development of rural agricultural plans (Jia, Qin, & Jia, 2014; Zhu, Li, & Ma, 2013). Carlos Rodriguez et al. (2020) acknowledged some of the latter themes as they identified the following streams in circular economy and tourism: agriculture and rural tourism, application of renewable energy in the tourism sector, cultural tourism and circular economy, hotels and tourists' circular practices, maritime sector and tourism, resources consumption in the tourism sector, sustainable development goals, tourism and waste generation.

Moreover, circular tourism proposes a model in which every tourism actor adopts an eco-compatible approach (Acampora et al., 2018). By applying the principles of a circular economy, hospitality and tourism companies can accelerate their businesses and move forward in thinking and action to create a more sustainable experience for all stakeholders involved in the hospitality and tourism industry (Van Rheede, 2012).

Moreover, studies on the need of institutional involvement for the implementation of circular practices in the tourism sector have increased (María del Mar Alonso-Almeida and José Miguel Rodríguez-Antón, 2020; Chilufya, Hughes, & Scheyvens, 2019; Perkumienė, Pranskūnienė,

Vienažindienė, & Grigienė, 2020). The Circular Economy Package Report, issued in Brussels on 4 March 2019 by the European Commission, said that: “In a circular economy the value of products and materials is maintained for as long as possible; waste and resource use are minimised, and resources are kept within the economy when a product has reached the end of its life, to be used again and again to create further value”. This requires actions ranging from upstream product innovation to downstream waste and recycling infrastructure, as well as engagement by governments, policymakers, businesses, and citizens, so multistakeholder participation in the tourism sector is strongly needed (Vargas-Sánchez, 2019).

Another incentive to circular tourism would be incentives driven by consumer demand, with more conscious tourists. Obtaining social legitimacy from tourism stakeholders at all levels through the integration of CE principles, as well as managing the corresponding cultural change to the necessary extent, is another crucial point (Vargas-Sánchez, 2019).

Circular tourism was also involved as a business model in articles concerning COVID-19 pandemics (Jones & Comfort, 2020; Peter Jones & Daphne Comfort, 2020; Mustapha et al., 2020).

## 5. Review of Grey Literature on Sustainable Tourism

### 5.1 Bibliometric Analysis

The following subsection presents the results of the bibliometric review of the grey literature database. Number of documents per year, type of author/Institution, the geographic field of application, and type of documents are shown.

Starting from 2010 the trend of publications about sustainable tourism has increased, especially in the last years (see Figure 9). Other grey literature documents have been published since the '90s, but in this report, only the most relevant documents starting from 2010 have been considered.

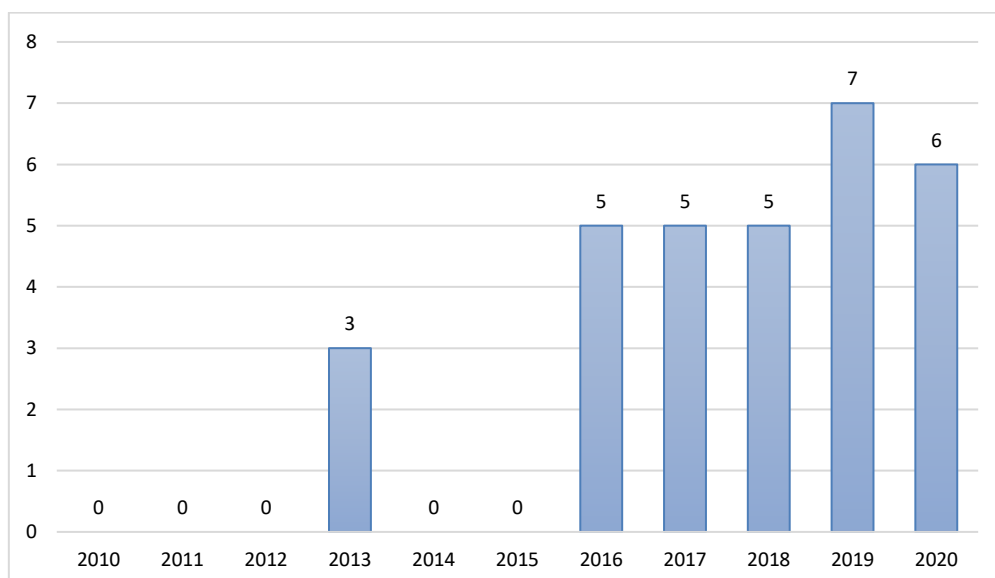


Figure 9. Number of documents in the grey literature (our database).

As shown in Table 4, the main authors/institutions in the context of grey literature are international actors, such as the UNWTO (United Nations World Trade Organization) from an international side, and the European Commission, from the European side.





*Table 4. Number of grey literature documents by authors/institutions*

AUTHOR / INSTITUTION	NUMBER OF DOCUMENTS	TITLES OF DOCUMENTS
UNWTO	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sustainable tourism and sustainable development in Central America</li> <li>One Planet Vision for a responsible recovery of the Tourism Sector (One Planet Sustainable Tourism Programme)</li> <li>Baseline Report on the Integration of Sustainable Consumption and Production Patterns into Tourism Policies</li> <li>Tourism and the Sustainable Development Goals – Journey to 2030</li> <li>Tourism for Development – Volume II: Good Practices</li> </ul>
European Commission	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The EU Ecolabel for Tourist Accommodation Services</li> <li>EMAS Sectoral Reference Document on Best Environmental Management Practice in the Tourism Sector</li> <li>Best Environmental Management Practice in the Tourism Sector</li> <li>Integrating Innovative Practices and Best Applications in European Union with regard to European Qualification Framework (ECOACT) Project</li> </ul>
URBAN-WASTE	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Guidelines for City Managers</li> <li>Compendium of waste management practices in pilot cities and best practices in touristic cities</li> <li>Situation and behavioural analysis of consume and waste behaviour and patterns</li> </ul>
ADEME	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ecolabel Européen et hébergement touristique</li> </ul>
ADT Acteurs du Tourisme Durable	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tourisme et changement climatique un enjeux mondial et local</li> </ul>
AREC ÎdF	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Energy renovation of hotels</li> </ul>
ARENE Île-de-France	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Energy consumption of Paris region cafés, hotels and restaurants</li> </ul>
Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ASEAN green hotel standard</li> </ul>
Azcárate, Benayas, Nerilli & Justel / REDS	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A guide to Sustainable Tourism</li> </ul>
CEETO	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Handbook of successful and innovative practices for a sustainable tourism inside Protected Areas</li> </ul>
Centre for Regional and Tourism Research, Denmark	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Destination: A circular tourism economy. A handbook for transitioning toward a circular economy within the tourism and hospitality sectors in the South Baltic Region</li> </ul>
CircE	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Action Plan</li> </ul>
ECOACT project	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ecotourism Action Plan</li> </ul>
Government of Spain	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sustainable Tourism Strategy of Spain 2030</li> </ul>
Hotel Institute of Technology of Spain (ITH)	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hotel Sustainability Model</li> </ul>
IEEP	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Expert Group on Green and Circular Economy in the Outermost Regions</li> </ul>
International Labour Organization (ILO)	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sustainable &amp; Socially Responsible Business Practices in the Hotel Industry Enhancing Workplace Conditions and Relations (Greener Business Asia Project)</li> </ul>
ISPRA	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Guidelines on EMAS and EU Ecolabel for tourism</li> </ul>
SEGITTUR	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Report on Circular Economy applied to Tourism</li> </ul>

Tippett, Ytterdal, & Strand	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ecolabelling for tourism enterprises. What, why and how</li> </ul>
UNCTAD	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Covid-19 and tourism: Assessing the economic consequences</li> </ul>
United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Compendium of Best Practices in Sustainable Tourism</li> </ul>

This trend is confirmed by the analysis of the field of application of those documents, in which the international and EU publications are the majority, followed by Spain and France (see Figure 10).

These institutions have moreover published documents of a general nature, dealing with topics and best practices valid for each geographical area of application. The main topics covered in these publications concern the certification systems (EMAS, Ecolabel, etc.), some innovative practices, and environmental management.

Furthermore, the aforementioned documents do not focus on a single level of application but instead take into consideration both the individual structures in the tourism field (accommodations, hotels, etc.) and good practices at a more macroscopic level, such as the management of entire touristic destinations or regions.

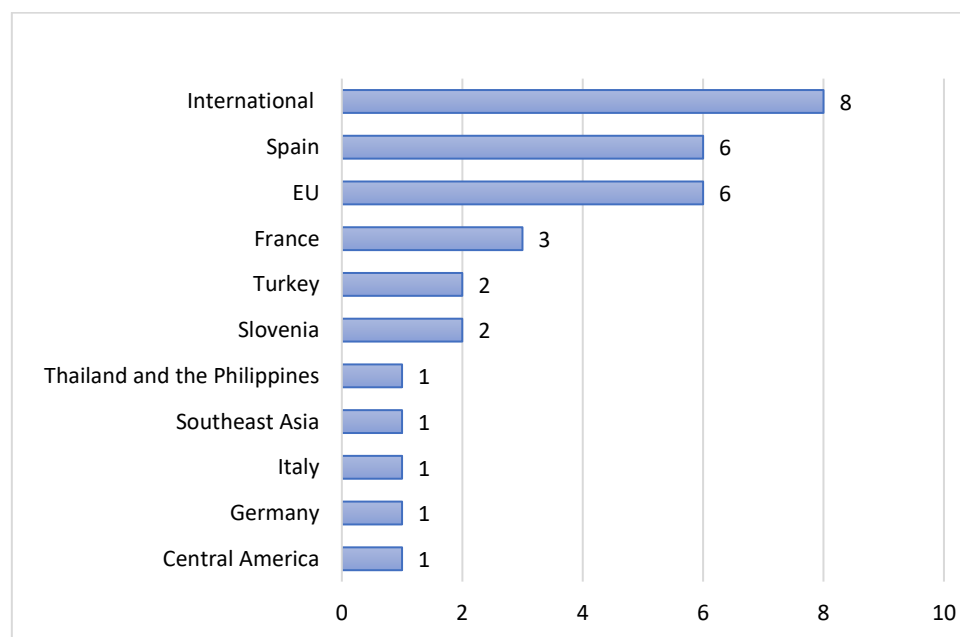


Figure 10. Number of documents by field of application (our database).

Grey literature was then divided into categories, based on the type of documents. It was therefore possible to identify four main document categories:

1. Sectoral Reference Document: this category refers to reference documents containing specific guidelines for some aspects of the tourism sector.
2. Handbook: documents containing more operational information.
3. Action Plans: detailed plans that outline the actions necessary to achieve one or more objectives.
4. Reports: they photograph the situation of the sector and report information on specific projects or areas of tourism.



Every document categorized is available with the respective reference in Table 5. Most of the documents examined are constituted by Reports.

*Table 5. Grey literature documents sorted by the type of documents.*

TYPE OF DOCUMENT	NUMBER OF DOCUMENTS	TITLE OF DOCUMENT (REFERENCE)
Sectoral Document Reference	6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• EMAS Sectoral Reference Document on Best Environmental Management Practice in the Tourism Sector, EU (European Commission, 2016)</li> <li>• Best Environmental Management Practice in the Tourism Sector, EU (European Commission, 2013)</li> <li>• The EU Ecolabel for Tourist Accommodation Services, EU (European Commission, 2017)</li> <li>• Guidelines on EMAS and EU Ecolabel for tourism (ISPRA, 2016)</li> <li>• One Planet Vision for a responsible recovery of the Tourism Sector (One Planet Sustainable Tourism Programme) (UNWTO, 2020)</li> <li>• ASEAN Green Hotel Standard, Southeast Asian Nations: Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao Peoples Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam (Association of Southeast Asian Nations - ASEAN, 2016)</li> </ul>
Handbook	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Destination: A circular tourism economy, EU, South Baltic Region (Centre for Regional and Tourism Research, Denmark, 2018)</li> <li>• Handbook of successful and innovative practices for a sustainable tourism inside (CEETO, 2018)</li> <li>• A guide to Sustainable Tourism, EU (Azcárate, Benayas, Nerilli &amp; Justel / REDS, 2019)</li> <li>• Modelo de Sostenibilidad Hotelera, Spain (Hotel Institute of Technology of Spain (ITH), 2019)</li> <li>• Guidelines for City Managers and Policy Makers, International (URBAN-WASTE, 2019)</li> </ul>
Action Plan	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Action Plan, Slovenia (CircE, 2020)</li> <li>• Sustainable &amp; Socially Responsible Business Practices in the Hotel Industry Enhancing Workplace Conditions and Relations (Greener Business Asia Project), Thailand and the Philippines (ILO, 2012)</li> <li>• Ecotourism Action Plan, ECOACT project, 2018</li> <li>• Tourisme et changement climatique un enjeux mondial et local, France (ADT - Acteurs du tourisme durable, 2020)</li> </ul>
Report	13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ecolabelling for tourism enterprises. What, why and how, EU, Partners in Denmark, Germany, the Netherlands (The Wadden sea World Heritage site), Norway (Geiranger area, northern part of World Heritage site West Norwegian Fjords) and the United Kingdom (The Wash and North Norfolk Coast) (Tippett, Ytterdal, &amp; Strand, 2020)</li> <li>• Compendium of Best Practices in Sustainable Tourism, Wei, (United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 2013)</li> <li>• Covid-19 and tourism: Assessing the economic consequences (UNCTAD, 2020)</li> </ul>



		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Tourism and the Sustainable Development Goals – Journey to 2030 (UNWTO, 2018)</li><li>• Tourism for Development – Volume II: Good Practices, (UNWTO, 2018)</li><li>• Baseline Report on the Integration of Sustainable Consumption and Production Patterns into Tourism Policies (UNWTO, 2019)</li><li>• Sustainable tourism and sustainable development in Central America (UNWTO, 2019)</li><li>• Expert Group on Green and Circular Economy in the Outermost Regions, Outermost Regions (ORs: Guadeloupe, French Guiana, Martinique, Mayotte, Reunion Island, Saint-Martin, the Azores, Madeira and the Canary Islands) (IEEP, 2017)</li><li>• Ecolabel Européen et hébergement touristique, France (ADEME, 2020)</li><li>• Directrices Generales de la estrategia de turismo sostenible se España 2030, Spain (Government of Spain, 2019)</li><li>• Informe sobre economía circular aplicada al turismo, Spain (SEGITTUR, 2019)</li><li>• Situation and behavioural analysis of consume and waste behaviour and patterns (URBAN-WASTE, 2019)</li><li>• Compendium of waste management practices in pilot cities and best practices in touristic cities (URBAN-WASTE, 2019)</li></ul>
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## 5.2 Content Analysis

By analyzing the content of grey literature documents were clustered into: i. Standard and Certifications, ii. Best Practices, iii. Others. Table 6 shows the categorization with respective references.

### 5.2.1 Standards and Certifications

The first categorization made in the subdivision by contents of the grey literature concerns standards and certifications.

Since 2003, the applicability of the Ecolabel has been extended to tourist accommodation services and since 2005 also to camping services. With the EU Decision 2017/175 these two realities came together and the EU Ecolabel criteria for Accommodation Facilities were born. The EU Ecolabel is applicable to all tourist facilities that provide, as their main activity, the provision of a paid overnight service.

Certifications in this field mainly concern accommodations and are designed for the accreditation of tourist facilities (European Commission, 2016; Tippet, Ytterdal, & Strand, 2020; ISPRA, 2016). For this reason, all the documents analyzed often report a series of indications for meeting the required standards and show the benefits of adopting these certifications.

By analyzing the documents that make up the "Standard and certifications" section, it is possible to identify some common actions valid for all companies in possession of sustainability certification in the tourism sector. These refer to (Tippet, Ytterdal, & Strand, 2020):

- create nature conservation areas;
- reduce emissions;
- more sustainable agricultural practices;
- decisions regarding land-use change should be taken with sustainability in mind.



There are different types of certifications in the tourism sector relating to the sustainability sector.

Tourism certifications can range from process certifications to ecolabels refer to the services such as EMAS, ISO 14001:2015, EarthCheck, Biosphere, Green Globe, National Park Partnership Programme, Green Tourism, Ecotourism Norway, Eco-Lighthouse, The Green Key, Nordic Swan, Tourcert, Certified Green Hotel, Dehoga, Global Sustainable Tourism Council, NEPCon, EU Ecolabel, Green Sign, Travelife, Green Table.

Despite the multiplicity of ecolabels present in the tourism sector, it is still possible to identify some salient features common to all (European Commission, 2017; ASEAN, 2016; ADEME, 2020; Azcárate, Benayas, Nerilli & Justel / REDS, 2019):

- Environmental engagement;
- Reduction of carbon emission and use of energy;
- Efficient use of water;
- Reducing pesticides and chemical substances;
- Management of waste;
- Reducing transportation carbon emissions;
- Reduction of food waste.

Depending on the context described in the documents, it is often possible to identify some examples of good practices or case studies, aimed at communicating the benefits of adopting certification systems or the advantages of achieving certain standards (European Commission, 2016; Tippet, Ytterdal, & Strand, 2020; ADEME, 2020).

The good practices that emerged are in accordance with the findings relating to the documents catalogued under the "Best practices" section, described below.

### 5.2.2 Best Practices

The second category identified, the most substantial, refer to Best Practices. This category includes documents that focus their attention on the possible virtuous actions that companies in the tourism sector can implement on their path towards sustainability.

Sometimes making use of some case studies to support the assertions made (CEETO, 2018; United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 2013), or of proposals for the correct planning of local/national tourism management strategies (ILO, 2012; UNWTO, 2019), these documents focus their attention on concrete planning efforts and possible concrete solutions.

The management of resources is assessed by taking into consideration that the consumption and the possibilities for closing material loops in tourism are affected by the diverse elements of the tourist destination, various groups of stakeholders, multi-faceted integration of the tourism activity into infrastructure, and horizontal support in the environment (CircE, 2020).

The analysis of best practices has been divided, for convenience, into a breakdown by types:

- Environmental management system: undertake an assessment of the most important direct and indirect environmental aspects associated with the enterprise, and to apply relevant performance indicators and compare with relevant benchmarks of excellence (Centre for Regional and Tourism Research, Denmark, 2018; IEEP, 2017; SEGITTUR, 2019);
- Destination management: it includes the development of the strategic destination, biodiversity and conservation, infrastructure and service provision, and environmental management of events (European Commission, 2013; UNWTO, 2018; UNWTO, 2019);
- Tour operators' and travel agents' activities: reducing and mitigating the environmental impacts of transport operations, driving environmental improvement of accommodation providers, working on discreet projects that address environmental hotspots associated with tourism within destinations, developing and promoting sustainable tours,



- encouraging more sustainable tourist behaviour (European Commission, 2013; ECOACT project, 2018);
- Accommodations: optimizing locations, services offered by accommodations (Centre for Regional and Tourism Research, Denmark, 2018; CircE, 2020; UNWTO, 2019; United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 2013);
  - Kitchens/Local food: Green sourcing of food and drink products, organic waste management, optimised dishwashing and food preparation, optimised cooking, ventilation, and refrigeration (Centre for Regional and Tourism Research, Denmark, 2018; CircE, 2020);
  - Mobility: sustainable forms (electric, methane- or gas-powered buses, incentives for the use of electric cars and other means of transport; rental of bicycles and development of cycling infrastructure; uniform EU standards for charging stations for electric cars) and sharing economy (car sharing) (CircE, 2020; CEETO, 2018; ADT - Acteurs du tourisme durable, 2020; SEGITTUR, 2019);
  - Waste/Water/Energy: introduction of waste management techniques e.g. waste reduction, reuse, recycling, waste separation and composting; encouragement of the involvement of hotel staff in waste reduction, reuse, recycling, waste separation and composting programme; encouragement of the involvement of hotel Guest in reuse, recycling, waste separation; introduction of energy-saving techniques and/or energy-saving technology and equipment for hotel to reduce energy consumption; installation of meters/equipment to monitor energy consumption; introduction of water-saving techniques and/or use of water-saving technology and equipment to reduce water consumption; regular maintenance for water-saving equipment; encouragement of the involvement of hotel guest in water-saving; ensure the quality of water used in the hotel (CircE, 2020; UNWTO, 2019; Hotel Institute of Technology of Spain (ITH), 2019; URBAN-WASTE, 2019; ILO, 2012; Centre for Regional and Tourism Research, Denmark, 2018).

Taking inspiration from multiple sources, some in-depth reports about the best environmental management practices in the Tourism sector (Styles et al. 2013) present an analysis covering the whole value chain of the tourism sector, from supply chain to services provided. A multiple-level approach has been used, based on the description of Tourism as a “multilayer system” made up by three main different levels, represents the most common one used when the assessment of Tourism is “holistic”, according to which, at the same time, social, economic and environmental impacts are taken into account.

In this regard, it has usually been assumed that:

- micro-level refers to the economic tourist operators, as for instance tourist establishments/facilities and to individual tourists;
- meso-level refers to the multiple relations existing within the sector and between the micro and macro levels, as for instance suppliers, waste management companies, etc;
- macro-level refers to tourist destinations as a whole, considering municipal, regional or national scales.

Taking inspiration from this subdivision, it was decided to replicate it also for each document concerning the best practices, indicating this subdivision for each breakdown by types, listed above. The details of this division can be viewed in the table present in Annex.

### 5.2.3 Others

Some documents, not attributable either to the "Standard and certifications" category, or to that of "Best practices", have been catalogued as "others".



Two of these documents talk about the theme of tourism by linking it with the recent COVID-19 emergency issue: these documents set out some possible actions that governments and the tourism sector in general could take to mitigate the devastating effects of the current sector crisis and to implement a more responsible tourism model.

The other three documents, “Tourism and the Sustainable Development Goals – Journey to 2030, UNWTO, 2018”, “Baseline Report on the Integration of Sustainable Consumption and Production Patterns into Tourism Policies, UNWTO, 2019” and “Directrices Generales de la estrategia de turismo sostenible se España 2030, Spain (Government of Spain, 2019)” talk about the linkage between tourism and SDGs, discussing the issues regarding tourism as a tool for development – both in terms of opportunities and challenges, as well as priorities for action. They also contribute to visualizing the progress achieved towards the implementation of SDG Target 12.b., which calls for “the development and implementation of tools to monitor sustainable development impacts of tourism”.

#### 5.2.4 Sustainable / Circular

The last effort made during the review of the grey literature was to try to bring each document and its content back into two macro-areas: "sustainable" and "circular".

“Sustainable” tourism may be considered as the application of the sustainable development idea to the tourism sector, using resources to maintain their long-term viability, minimizing negative impacts, and maximizing positive impacts (Weaver 2006). Hospitality and tourism companies, so, can contribute to the achievement of sustainable tourism through the application of CE principles. That is what we defined as “circular”. “Circular” and “sustainable” classification can be found both in Table 6.

Table 6. Documents categorized by the type of content

AREAS	NUMBER OF DOCUMENTS	LEVEL	TITLE OF DOCUMENT (REFERENCE)
Standard and Certifications	7	Sustainable	EMAS Sectoral Reference Document on Best Environmental Management Practice in the Tourism Sector, EU (European Commission, 2016).
		Sustainable	Ecolabelling for tourism enterprises. What, why and how, , EU, Partners in Denmark, Germany, the Netherlands (The Wadden sea World Heritage site), Norway (Geiranger area, northern part of World Heritage site West Norwegian Fjords) and the United Kingdom (The Wash and North Norfolk Coast) (Tippett, Ytterdal, & Strand, 2020).
		Circular	The EU Ecolabel for Tourist Accommodation Services, EU (European Commission, 2017).
		Sustainable	Guidelines on EMAS and EU Ecolabel for tourism (ISPRA 2016).
		Sustainable	ASEAN Green Hotel Standard, Southeast Asian Nations: Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao Peoples Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam (Association of Southeast Asian Nations - ASEAN, 2016).
		Sustainable	A guide to Sustainable Tourism, EU (Azcárate, Benayas, Nerilli & Justel / REDS, 2019).
		Sustainable	Ecolabel Européen et hébergement touristique, France (ADEME, 2020).
Best Practices	16	Sustainable	Best Environmental Management Practice in the Tourism Sector, EU (European Commission, 2013)





		Circular	Destination: A circular tourism economy, EU, South Baltic Region (Centre for Regional and Tourism Research, Denmark, 2018).
		Circular	Action Plan, Slovenia (CircE, 2020).
		Sustainable	Compendium of Best Practices in Sustainable Tourism, Wei, (United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 2013).
		Sustainable	Handbook of successful and innovative practices for a sustainable tourism inside (CEETO, 2018).
		Sustainable	Sustainable & Socially Responsible Business Practices in the Hotel Industry Enhancing Workplace Conditions and Relations (Greener Business Asia Project), (Greener Business Asia Project), Thailand and the Philippines (ILO, 2012).
		Sustainable	Tourism for Development – Volume II: Good Practices (UNWTO, 2018).
		Sustainable	Sustainable tourism and sustainable development in Central America (UNWTO, 2019).
		Sustainable	Ecotourism Action Plan (ECOACT project, 2018).
		Sustainable	Expert Group on Green and Circular Economy in the Outermost Regions, Outermost Regions (ORs: Guadeloupe, French Guiana, Martinique, Mayotte, Reunion Island, Saint-Martin, the Azores, Madeira and the Canary Islands) (IEEP, 2017).
		Sustainable	Tourisme et changement climatique un enjeux mondial et local, France (ADT - Acteurs du tourisme durable, 2020).
		Sustainable	Modelo de Sostenibilidad Hotelera, Spain (Hotel Institute of Technology of Spain (ITH), 2019).
		Sustainable	Informe sobre economía circular aplicada al turismo, Spain (SEGITTUR, 2019).
		Circular	Guidelines for City Managers and Policy Makers, International (URBAN-WASTE, 2019).
		Circular	Situation and behavioural analysis of consume and waste behaviour and patterns (URBAN-WASTE, 2019).
		Circular	Compendium of waste management practices in pilot cities and best practices in touristic cities (URBAN-WASTE, 2019).
Others	5	Sustainable/ Circular	One Planet Vision for a responsible recovery of the Tourism Sector (One Planet Sustainable Tourism Programme) (UNWTO, 2020).
		Sustainable	Covid-19 and tourism: Assessing the economic consequences (UNCTAD, 2020).
		Sustainable	Tourism and the Sustainable Development Goals – Journey to 2030 (UNWTO, 2018).
		Sustainable/ Circular	Baseline Report on the Integration of Sustainable Consumption and Production Patterns into Tourism Policies (UNWTO, 2019).
		Sustainable	Directrices Generales de la estrategia de turismo sostenible se España 2030, Spain (Government of Spain, 2019).

## 6. Conclusion

This document aimed to highlight up to date trends and themes in sustainable tourism, conducting literature reviews in academic and grey literature. From the findings of each literature review, the following conclusions can be drawn.

Sustainable tourism is a widely recognised concept both by scholars and non-academic institutions.





Since the Brundtland report, research papers have been increasing constantly over time. The academic interest is worldwide, but some countries such as the United States, the UK, Australia, Canada, and China represent by far the most involved in sustainable tourism scientific research. The most used research method for knowledge creation is the case study, with a trend showing that authors tend to investigate local sustainable tourism case studies.

Relevant grey literature reports are represented mainly by reports from the United Nations World Trade Organization (UNWTO) and the European Commission, and have an international and European field of application, respectively.

Several themes emerge in sustainable tourism. When referring to sustainability in tourism, environmental management related aspects are the most considered for sustainable tourism development. The environmental dimension of sustainability is thus the most relevant in literature. Best practices in environmental management represent a consistent portion of research. They are examined and encouraged in both kinds of literature, as the spread of good practices is key for enhancing sustainability in the tourism sector. In this regard, other important tools are represented by certifications and eco-labels, spread through reports and guidelines. However, whether and how those certifications might lead to better sustainable actions and enhance sustainable tourism is prevalently debated between scholars. Sustainable tourism's enabling factors research is also a major topic, with a focus on the role of stakeholders' (managers, tourists, institutions) perception and behaviour in promoting sustainable practices. Circular tourism, the integration of circular economy principles within the sector, has recently gained momentum as a business model able to increase sustainable tourism development.

Finally, the COVID-19 pandemic has brought uncertainty in the tourism sector, and its implications in terms of sustainability represent a theme that researchers will probably study for a long time to come.



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## 8. Appendix

### 8.1 Academic literature

NAME OF JOURNAL	NUMBER OF PAPERS	REFERENCES
Sustainability	9	Rodríguez et al., (2020) Grah et al., (2020) Núñez-Ríos et al., (2020) Rodríguez-et al., (2019) Ispas et al.,(2019) Niñerola et al., (2019) Yılmaz et al., (2019) Yusuf et al.,(2019) Oncioiu et al., (2018)
Journal of Sustainable Tourism	5	Sheller et al., (2020) Chilufya et al., (2019) Boluk et al., (2019) Kornilaki et al., (2019) Hall, (2013)
Journal of Cleaner Production	4	Alonso et al., (2020) Buffa et al., (2018) Robin et al., (2017) Coles et al., (2016)
Advanced Materials Research	3	Zhang et al., (2014) Liu et al., (2014) Zhu et al., (2013)
International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management	3	Jones et., (2020) Jones et al., (2019) Prud'homme et al., (2016)
Annals of Tourism Research	2	Sørensen et al., (2020) Buckley, (2012)
International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health	2	Perkumienė et al., (2020) María del Mar Alonso et al., (2020)



NAME OF JOURNAL	NUMBER OF PAPERS	REFERENCES
International Journal of Hospitality Management	2	Sainaghi, (2020) Batle et al., (2020)
Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Management	2	La Lopa et al., (2011) Jarvis et al., (2010)
Journal of Tourism Futures	2	Vargas-Sánchez, (2019) Heslinga et al., (2019)
Tourism Planning & Development	2	Maxim, (2015) Boley, (2014)
Tourismos	2	Ivanov et al., (2014) Khairat et al., (2012)
Worldwide Hospitality and Tourism Themes	2	Khodaiji et al., (2020) Vargas-Sánchez, (2018)
Turyzm	1	Kapera, (2020)
Administrative Sciences	1	Florido et al., (2019)
Aestimium	1	Girard et al., (2017)
African Journal of Hospitality, Tourism and Leisure	1	Mearns, (2016)
American Journal of Climate Change	1	Ezeah et al., (2015)
Amfiteatru Economic	1	Pamfilie et al., (2018)
Asia Pacific Journal of Tourism Research	1	Su et al., (2013)
Athens Journal of Tourism	1	Peter et al., (2020)
Business Strategy and the Environment	1	Philip et al., (2017)
Current Issues in Tourism	1	Sørensen et al., (2019)
Environment, Development and Sustainability	1	Sardianou et al., (2015)
European Journal of Service Management	1	Pattanaro et al., (2017)
International Journal of Integrated Supply Management	1	Julião et al., (2020)
International Journal of Research in Tourism and Hospitality	1	Maximiliano, (2017)
International Journal of Sustainable Energy Planning and Management	1	Jaroszewska et al., (2019)
International Journal of Tourism Research	1	Christopher et al., (2017)
Journal of Environmental and Tourism Analyses	1	Little, (2017)
Journal of Environmental Protection and Ecology	1	Kapiki, (2012)
Journal of Global Business & Technology	1	Costa et al., (2020)
Journal of Global Tourism Research	1	Schumann, (2020)



NAME OF JOURNAL	NUMBER OF PAPERS	REFERENCES
Journal of Indonesian Tourism and Development Studies	1	Putri et al., (2015)
Journal of Regional Research	1	Perles et al., (2018)
Journal of Sustainability Science and Management	1	Hamid et al., (2020)
Journal of Tourism & Adventure	1	Aryal, (2020)
Management & Engineering	1	Jia et al., (2014)
Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences	1	Wang, (2012)
Resources	1	Giurea et al., (2018)
Resources, Conservation and Recycling	1	Mohammed, (2020)
Science of The Total Environment	1	Pan et al., (2018)
Small Business International Review	1	Teruel et al., (2020)
Social Sciences	1	Falcone, (2019)
The Service Industries Journal	1	Hobson et al., (2010)
Tourism Recreation Research	1	Buckley, (2012)
Turizam	1	Kruja et al., (2010)

TYPE OF STUDY	NUMBER OF PAPERS	REFERENCES
Desk Research and Literature Review	29	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The unavoidable disruption of the circular economy in tourism (Vargas-Sánchez, 2018)</li> <li>2. From linear to circular tourism (Girard &amp; Nocca, 2017)</li> <li>3. Circular economy and new ways of doing business in the tourism sector (Pattanaro &amp; Gente, 2017)</li> <li>4. The sustainable development of circular economy under the perspective of ecological tourism (Zhang &amp; Tian, 2014)</li> <li>5. Research on the Development of Leisure Agriculture Tourism in Yi County Based on Circular Economy (Jia, Qin, &amp; Jia, 2014)</li> <li>6. Green Management of Tourist Attractions Region under the Background of Circular Economy (Liu, 2014)</li> <li>7. Explore and Analyse Development Model of Eco-Agricultural Tourism Based on Circular Economy (Zhu, Li, &amp; Ma, 2013)</li> <li>8. The COVID-19 Crisis, Tourism and Sustainable Development (Jones &amp; Comfort, 2020)</li> <li>9. A critical framework for interrogating the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals 2030 Agenda in tourism (Boluk, Cavaliere, &amp; Higgins-Desbiolles, 2019)</li> <li>10. Smart sustainability: a new perspective in the sustainable tourism debate (Perles &amp; Ivars, 2018)</li> <li>11. Green tourism in latin America (Maximiliano, 2017)</li> <li>12. Climate change and tourism: some industry responses to mitigate tourism's contribution to climate change</li> </ol>



		<p>(Mearns, 2016)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>13. Strategic Management of Nature-Based Tourism in Ijen Crater in the Context of Sustainable Tourism Development (Putri, Soemarno, Hakim, 2015)</li> <li>14. To Travel or Not to Travel? Both Have Implications for Sustainable Tourism (Boley, 2014)</li> <li>15. Framing behavioural approaches to understanding and governing sustainable tourism consumption: beyond neoliberalism, “nudging” and “green growth”? (Hall, 2013)</li> <li>16. Circular Economy Contributions to the Tourism Sector: A Critical Literature Review (Rodríguez, Florido, &amp; Jacob, 2020)</li> <li>17. Exploring Circularity: A Review to Assess the Opportunities and Challenges to Close Loop in Nepali Tourism Industry (Aryal, 2020)</li> <li>18. The current state of academic research into peer-to-peer accommodation platforms (Sainaghi, 2020)</li> <li>19. The Role of Institutional Engagement at the Macro Level in Pushing the Circular Economy in Spain and Its Regions (María del Mar Alonso-Almeida and José Miguel Rodríguez-Antón, 2020)</li> <li>20. A critical analysis of the impacts of COVID-19 on the global economy and ecosystems and opportunities for circular economy strategies (Mohammed K.B.Mustapha, J.Godsella, Z.Adamu, K.A.Babatunde, D.D.Akintade, A.Acquaye, H.Fujii, M.M.Ndiaye, F.A.Yamoah &amp; S.C.L.Kohk, 2020)</li> <li>21. The circular economy, natural capital and resilience in tourism and hospitality (Jones &amp; Wynn, 2019)</li> <li>22. The COVID-19 crisis and sustainability in the hospitality industry (Jones &amp; Comfort, 2020)</li> <li>23. The Right to a Clean Environment: Considering Green Logistics and Sustainable Tourism (Perkumienė, Pranskūnienė, Vienažindienė, &amp; Grigienė, 2020)</li> <li>24. Reconstructing tourism in the Caribbean: connecting pandemic recovery, climate resilience and sustainable tourism through mobility justice (Sheller, 2020)</li> <li>25. Factors to Foster Organizational Sustainability in Tourism SMEs (Núñez-Ríos, Sánchez-García, Rojas &amp; Olivares-Benitez, 2020)</li> <li>26. Tourism Research on Sustainability: A Bibliometric Analysis (Niñerola, Sánchez-Rebull, &amp; Hernández-Lara, 2019)</li> <li>27. Saving energy and water in tourist accommodation: A systematic literature review (1987–2015) (Warren &amp; Becken, 2017)</li> <li>28. Sustainability Reporting and Certification in Tourism (Buckley, 2012)</li> <li>29. Sustainable Tourism: Research and Reality (Buckley, 2012)</li> </ol>
Case studies	44	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Tourist practices in the circular economy (Sørensen &amp; Bærenholdt, 2020)</li> <li>2. Circular economy principles and small island tourism (Schumann, 2020)</li> <li>3. Consumers' perceptions of circular economy in the hotel industry: evidence from Portugal (Julião, Gaspar, &amp; Alemão, 2020)</li> <li>4. The Circular Economy Strategy in Hospitality: A Multicase Approach (Rodríguez-Antón &amp; Alonso-Almeida, 2019)</li> <li>5. Tourism-Based Circular Economy in Salento (South Italy): A SWOT-ANP Analysis (Falcone, 2019)</li> </ol>



		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>6. How to Carry out the Transition towards a More Circular Tourist Activity in the Hotel Sector. The Role of Innovation (Florida, Jacob, &amp; Payeras, 2019)</li> <li>7. Good Practices and Actions for Sustainable Municipal Solid Waste Management in the Tourist Sector (Giurea, Precazzini, Ragazzi, Achim, Cioca, Conti, &amp; Rada, 2018)</li> <li>8. Circular Economy—A New Direction for the Sustainability of the Hotel Industry in Romania (Pamfilie, Firoiu, Croitoru, &amp; Ionescu, 2018)</li> <li>9. Managing Sustainable Urban Tourism Development: The Case of Ljubljana (Grah, Dimovski, &amp; Peterlin, 2020)</li> <li>10. Exploring the sustainable tourism practices among tour operators in Malaysia (Hamid &amp; Isa, 2020)</li> <li>11. Sustainable development and the circular economy in Greece: case examples from Costa Navarino and Grecotel (Khodaiji &amp; Christopoulou, 2020)</li> <li>12. Sustainable development in the hotel industry: Between theory and practice in Poland (Kapera, 2020)</li> <li>13. Sustainable Energy Management: Are Tourism SMEs in Poland ready for Circular Economy solutions? (Jaroszevska, Chaja, &amp; Dziadkiewicz, 2019)</li> <li>14. Environmental Management Practices within Agritourism Boarding Houses in Romania: A Qualitative Study Among Managers (Ispas, Untaru, &amp; Candrea, 2019)</li> <li>15. Tourists and community development: corporate social responsibility or tourist social responsibility? (Chilufya, Hughes, &amp; Scheyvens, 2019)</li> <li>16. How to improve innovation in sustainable tourism? Five lessons learned from the Austrian Alps (Heslinga, Hillebrand, &amp; Emonts, 2019)</li> <li>17. The sustainability behaviour of small firms in tourism: the role of self-efficacy and contextual constraints (Kornilaki, Thomas, &amp; Font, 2019)</li> <li>18. Advances and challenges in sustainable tourism toward a green economy (Pan, Gao, Kim, Shah, Pei, &amp; Chiang, 2018)</li> <li>19. Revisiting green practices in the hotel industry: A comparison between mature and emerging destinations (Robin, Pedroche, &amp; Astorga, 2017)</li> <li>20. Energy practices among small-and medium-sized tourism enterprises: a case of misdirected effort? (Coles, Dinan, &amp; Warren, 2016)</li> <li>21. Implementation of sustainable development practices in the hospitality industry (Prud'homme &amp; Raymond, 2016)</li> <li>22. Tourism Waste Management in the European Union: Lessons Learned from Four Popular EU Tourist Destinations (Ezeah, Fazakerley, &amp; Byrne, 2015)</li> <li>23. Sustainable Tourism Practices of Accommodation Establishments in Bulgaria: An Exploratory Study (Ivanov, Ivanova, &amp; Iankova, 2014)</li> <li>24. Hospitality Industry Responses to Climate Change: A Benchmark Study of Taiwanese Tourist Hotels (Su, Hall, &amp; Ozanne, 2013)</li> <li>25. Implementing sustainable practices in greek eco-friendly hotels (Kapiki, 2012)</li> <li>26. The Investigation of Green Best Practices for Hotels in Taiwan (Wang, 2012)</li> </ol>
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	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>27. Integrating sustainability into tour operator business: an innovative approach in sustainable tourism (Khairat &amp; Maher, 2012)</li><li>28. Sustainable Tourism: A View from Accommodation Businesses (Hobson &amp; Essex, 2010)</li><li>29. The Benefits and Challenges of Sustainable Tourism Certification: A Case Study of the Green Tourism Business Scheme in the West of England (Jarvis, Weeden, &amp; Simcock, 2010)</li><li>30. The new face of the tourism industry under a circular economy (Vargas-Sánchez, 2019)</li><li>31. Determination of Managers' Attitudes Towards Eco-Labeling Applied in the Context of Sustainable Tourism and Evaluation of the Effects of Eco-Labeling on Accommodation Enterprises (Yılmaz, Üngüren, &amp; Kaçmaz, 2019)</li><li>32. Environmental management best practices: Towards social innovation (Batle, Orfila-Sintes, &amp; Moon, 2018)</li><li>33. Drivers of Success in Implementing Sustainable Tourism Policies in Urban Areas (Maxim, 2015)</li><li>34. Understanding the entrepreneurs' behavioural intentions towards sustainable tourism: a case study from Greece (Sardianou, Kostakis, Mitoula, Gkaragkani, Lalioti, &amp; Theodoropoulou, 2015)</li><li>35. Comparisons of stakeholders' perception towards the sustainable tourism development and its impacts in Shkodra Region (Albania) (Kruja &amp; Hasaj, 2010)</li><li>36. Institutional entrepreneurship enablers to promote circular economy in the European Union: Impacts on transition towards a more circular economy (Alonso-Almeidaa, Rodriguez-Antona, Bagur-Femenías &amp; Perramon, 2020)</li><li>37. Circular economy tourist practices (Sørensen, Bærenholdt, &amp; Greve, 2019)</li><li>38. The Sustainability of Romanian SMEs and Their Involvement in the Circular Economy (Oncioiu, Căpușneanu, Türkeş, Topor, Constantin, Marin-Pantelescu, &amp; Hint, 2018)</li><li>39. Sustainability as a Corporate Strategy: A Performance Comparison of Green and Non-green SME Hotels (Teruel-Gutiérrez, 2020)</li><li>40. Determination of Managers' Attitudes Towards Eco-Labeling Applied in the Context of Sustainable Tourism and Evaluation of the Effects of Eco-Labeling on Accommodation Enterprises (Yusuf Yılmaz, Engin Üngüren and Yasar Yigit Kaçmaz, 2019)</li><li>41. Environmental management practices for sustainable business models in small and medium sized hotel enterprises (Buffa, Franch, &amp; Rizio, 2018)</li><li>42. Innovative Recycling Solutions to Waste Management Challenges in Costa Rican Tourism Communities (Little, 2017)</li><li>43. Measuring the Choice of Environmental Sustainability Strategies in Creating a Competitive Advantage: An Analysis of North American Hotels (Walsh &amp; Dodds, 2017)</li><li>44. Pilot Study to Assess the Readiness of the Tourism Industry in Wales to Change to Sustainable Tourism Business Practices (La Lopa &amp; Day, 2011)</li></ol>
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## 8.2 Grey literature

FIELD OF APPLICATION	NUMBER OF DOCUMENTS	REFERENCES
International	8	UNCTAD (2020); UNWTO (2018a, 2018b, 2019,2020); URBAN- WASTE (2017a, 2017b,2019)
EU	6	Tippett, Ytterdal, & Strand (2020); European commission (2013, 2016, 2017, 2018); Centre for Regional and Tourism Research, Denmark (2018);
Spain	6	SEGITTUR (2019): Azcárate, Benayas, Nerilli & Justel / REDS (2019); Government of Spain (2019); ECOACT project (2018); Hotel Institute of Technology of Spain (2016); IEEP (2017)
France	3	ADEME (2020); ADT Acteurs du tourisme durable (2020); AREC ÎdF (2019); ARENE Île-de-France / ADEME Île-de-France (2013)
Slovenia	2	CircE (2020); ECOACT project (2018)
Turkey	2	ECOACT project (2018)
South East Asia	1	Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) (2016)
Central America	1	UNWTO (2019)
Italy	1	ISPRA (2016)
Germany	1	ECOACT project (2018)
Thailand and Philippines	1	International Labour Organization (ILO) (2016)





BEST PRACTICE	TITLE OF DOCUMENT (REFERENCE)	TYPE: SUSTAINABLE/CIRCULAR	LEVEL
<b>Environmental Management System</b>	Best Environmental Management Practice in the Tourism Sector, EU (European Commission, 2013).	Sustainable	Micro
	Destination: A circular tourism economy, EU, South Baltic Region (Centre for Regional and Tourism Research, Denmark, 2018).	Circular	Micro
	Sustainable tourism and sustainable development in Central America, UNWTO, 2019.	Sustainable	Macro
	Tourisme et changement climatique un enjeux mondial et local, France (ADT - Acteurs du tourisme durable, 2020).	Sustainable	Micro
	Informe sobre economía circular aplicada al turismo, Spain (SEGITTUR, 2019).	Circular	Micro
	Expert Group on Green and Circular Economy in the Outermost Regions, Outermost Regions (ORs: Guadeloupe, French Guiana, Martinique, Mayotte, Reunion Island, Saint-Martin, the Azores, Madeira and the Canary Islands) (IEEP, 2017).	Sustainable	Macro
<b>Destination Management</b>	Best Environmental Management Practice in the Tourism Sector, EU (European Commission, 2013).	Sustainable	Micro
	Tourism for Development – Volume II: Good Practices, UNWTO, 2018.	Sustainable	Macro/Meso/Micro
	Sustainable tourism and sustainable development in Central America, UNWTO, 2019.	Sustainable	Macro
<b>Tour Operators' and Travel Agents' Activities</b>	Best Environmental Management Practice in the Tourism Sector, EU (European Commission, 2013).	Sustainable	Micro
	Ecotourism Action Plan, ECOACT project, 2018.	Sustainable	Macro/Meso/Micro
<b>Accommodations</b>	Best Environmental Management Practice in the Tourism Sector, EU (European Commission, 2013).	Sustainable	Micro
	Destination: A circular tourism economy, EU, South Baltic Region (Centre for Regional and Tourism Research, Denmark, 2018).	Circular	Micro
	Action Plan, Slovenia (CircE, 2020).	Circular	Macro
	Compendium of Best Practices in Sustainable Tourism, Wei, (United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 2013).	Sustainable	Macro/Meso
	Sustainable & Socially Responsible Business Practices in the Hotel Industry Enhancing Workplace Conditions and Relations (Greener Business Asia Project), (Greener Business Asia Project), Thailand and Philippines (ILO, 2012).	Sustainable	Micro
	Tourism for Development – Volume II: Good Practices, UNWTO, 2018.	Sustainable	Macro/Meso/Micro
	Sustainable tourism and sustainable development in Central America, UNWTO, 2019.	Sustainable	Macro
	Ecotourism Action Plan, ECOACT project, 2018.	Sustainable	Macro/Meso/Micro
	Modelo de Sostenibilidad Hotelera, Spain (Hotel Institute of Technology of Spain (ITH), 2019).	Sustainable	Micro



<b>Kitchens/Local food</b>	Best Environmental Management Practice in the Tourism Sector, EU (European Commission, 2013).	Sustainable	Micro
	Destination: A circular tourism economy, EU, South Baltic Region (Centre for Regional and Tourism Research, Denmark, 2018).	Circular	Micro
	Action Plan, Slovenia (CircE, 2020).	Circular	Macro
	Compendium of Best Practices in Sustainable Tourism, Wei, (United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 2013).	Sustainable	Macro/Meso
	Handbook of successful and innovative practices for a sustainable tourism inside, CEETO, 2018.	Sustainable	Meso
	Sustainable & Socially Responsible Business Practices in the Hotel Industry Enhancing Workplace Conditions and Relations (Greener Business Asia Project), (Greener Business Asia Project), Thailand and Philippines (ILO, 2012).	Sustainable	Micro
	Tourism for Development – Volume II: Good Practices, UNWTO, 2018.	Sustainable	Macro/Meso/Micro
	Ecotourism Action Plan, ECOACT project, 2018.	Sustainable	Macro/Meso/Micro
<b>Mobility</b>	Best Environmental Management Practice in the Tourism Sector, EU (European Commission, 2013).	Sustainable	Micro
	Action Plan, Slovenia (CircE, 2020).	Circular	Macro
	Handbook of successful and innovative practices for a sustainable tourism inside, CEETO, 2018.	Sustainable	Meso
	Tourism for Development – Volume II: Good Practices, UNWTO, 2018.	Sustainable	Macro/Meso/Micro
	Ecotourism Action Plan, ECOACT project, 2018.	Sustainable	Macro/Meso/Micro
	Tourisme et changement climatique un enjeux mondial et local, France (ADT - Acteurs du tourisme durable, 2020).	Sustainable	Micro
	Modelo de Sostenibilidad Hotelera, Spain (Hotel Institute of Technology of Spain (ITH), 2019).	Sustainable	Micro
	Informe sobre economía circular aplicada al turismo, Spain (SEGITTUR, 2019).	Circular	Micro
<b>Waste/Water/Energy</b>	Best Environmental Management Practice in the Tourism Sector, EU (European Commission, 2013).	Sustainable	Micro
	Action Plan, Slovenia (CircE, 2020).	Circular	Macro
	Destination: A circular tourism economy, EU, South Baltic Region (Centre for Regional and Tourism Research, Denmark, 2018).	Circular	Micro
	Compendium of Best Practices in Sustainable Tourism, Wei, (United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 2013).	Sustainable	Macro/Meso
	Sustainable & Socially Responsible Business Practices in the Hotel Industry Enhancing Workplace Conditions and Relations (Greener Business Asia Project), (Greener Business Asia Project), Thailand and Philippines (ILO, 2012).	Sustainable	Micro



	Tourism for Development – Volume II: Good Practices, UNWTO, 2018.	Sustainable	Macro/Meso/Micro
	Sustainable tourism and sustainable development in Central America, UNWTO, 2019.	Sustainable	Macro
	Ecotourism Action Plan, ECOACT project, 2018.	Sustainable	Macro/Meso/Micro
	Tourisme et changement climatique un enjeux mondial et local, France (ADT - Acteurs du tourisme durable, 2020).	Sustainable	Micro
	Modelo de Sostenibilidad Hotelera, Spain (Hotel Institute of Technology of Spain (ITH), 2019).	Sustainable	Micro
	Informe sobre economía circular aplicada al turismo, Spain (SEGITTUR, 2019).	Circular	Micro
	Guidelines for City Managers and Policy Makers, International (URBAN-WASTE, 2019).	Circular	Macro
	Compendium of waste management practices in pilot cities and best practices in touristic cities, (URBAN-WASTE, 2019).	Circular	Macro