Almatourism

Journal of Tourism, Culture and Territorial Development

_____

Responsible Tourism - Divergences Between the Principles of Sustainability and the Actions of the Tourism Sector in Brazil

Dotto, D.M.R.[*]
Universidade Federal de Santa Maria (Brasil)
Slongo, L.A.[†]
Universidade Federal do Rio Grande do Sul (Brasil)

ABSTRACT

Sustainability in tourism assumes the balance among the economic, environmental, cultural, and social dimensions that intervene in its activities to optimize its benefits, without any prejudice to society and the environment. In this sense, there is a worldwide movement to make the tourism sector agents aware, with the intention of broadening sustainable and practical actions. With this perspective, this study aimed to verify the current state of the activities performed by the tourism sector in Brazil regarding the determinations (criteria, principles and goals) developed by national and international institutions. Through descriptive research with a quantitative approach, stakeholders linked to the Brazilian tourism sector participated in this study. The results showed that in Brazil there is still a need for more involvement and cooperation among residents, tourists and tourism operators linked to the tourism sector, with a commitment to sustainably balance the economic, environmental, cultural and social dimensions of its activities. It was also found that the environmental dimension was portrayed as having the least compliance with sustainability, that is, the activities of the Brazilian tourism sector are the ones that are the most deficient and require the largest investment.

_____

Keywords: Responsible Tourism; Sustainability; Tourism in Brazil; Criteria, Principles and Goals in Tourism; Sustainable Practices of Tourism

[*] E-mail address: dalvadotto@gmail.com
[†] E-mail address: luiz.slongo@ufrgs.br

23

Introduction

This study aims to verify the current state of activities carried out by the tourism sector in Brazil, in relation to the determinations (criteria, principles and goals) of sustainability developed by national and international institutions. Thus, this study intends to advance in the discussions on the meaning of sustainable tourism and propose a reflection to the experts in the field, as to identify which sustainable actions are more often practiced in Brazil and, also, in what aspects are more incisive attitudes still required to move forward. The relevance of this study contemplates the perspective of researching the topic of sustainability in the tourism sector in Brazil, thus contributing to the expansion of the analyses about its importance and of the actions that effectively are and/or should be practiced. More broadly, the results of the study may be used to provide to policymakers information to align the limited resources with the most relevant factors that need to be considered and to increase awareness of the importance and contribution of sustainable tourism to the development of the regions and the country.

The tourism sector is a complex productive activity whose organization is carried out by several agents and institutions of different instances, which include the service provider organizations, the community, and the public power (SOUZA and GIL, 2015). In this context, tourists seek to satisfy their needs and desires, organizations aim to profit, the community attempts to generate employment and cultural exchange, and the public sector aims the increase in wealth and the development of the region. Broadly, the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) defines tourism as "a social, cultural, and economic phenomenon that implies the displacement of people to countries or places outside their usual environment for professional, personal, or business purposes". Moesch (2002, p. 9) complements this by denominating tourist products as the interaction of "a culturally-based social practice, with historical heritage and a diverse environment of natural cartography, with social relations of hospitality and exchange of intercultural information" that results in a "complex combination of interrelationships between production and services", which in turn culminates in a "phenomenon filled with objectivity/subjectivity, consumed by millions of people."

The reasons for traveling are diverse and have changed over time. Nowadays, the motives have been enlarged and, more than a way to do business or seek moments of leisure, tourism represents an activity of great importance that moves the economy of many localities, possibly being a lever for the development of a region or country (ROSE, 2002). It is noteworthy that the demand derived from the consumer's desire to get to know what a destination has to offer configures as one of the primary components of a sightseeing trip, with tourists craving something unusual, different, and that provides new and surprising pleasures (COOPER et al., 2007; URRY, 2001). For Montejano (2001), the primary motivations of tourists are the need for rest, fun, and leisure, in addition to getting to know and interact with new cultures. According to the

author, to serve consumers better, one might segment tourists as (a) individual tourism, (b) mass tourism, (c) itinerant tourism, and (d) stay or residential tourism.

The relationship between tourist activity and the development of the regions in which they are inserted is considered positive and, according to Rose (2002), tourism collaborates with the development of areas through the improvement of the quality of life and the generation of currency for the community, in addition to the preservation of the heritage and the promotion of cultural exchange. For Umbelino and Silva (2010), tourism is a currency-producing instrument responsible for investments in other productive segments, which impacts the generation of employment and income, with growing participation in the Gross Domestic Product. Dias (2005) also asserts that tourism consolidates and presents itself as one of the sectors most relevant to the development of many countries, causing substantial social, economic, and cultural changes in many societies and, in recent years, through the Internet and surrounded by new technologies, the choice and decision possibilities to get to know other spaces and cultures may be simplified, with a simple online navigation. Zambón and Schenk (2005, p. 98) corroborate, stating that a tourism rout "could allow the reactivation of local economies because it constitutes itself, in a definitive way, in a new economic activity, which does not need major investments that need to be thought of as attractive resources for the tourist".

Tourism as a growing and globalized productive activity is the result of the increase of the liberalization of world trade, the incorporation of new technologies, the horizontal and vertical integration of tourism companies, the territorial diffusion of consumption, and the flexibilization of work in the diverse productive sectors. The sector has a large representativeness, both regarding the number of people who travel and the economic relevance (in 2019, tourism accounted for 10.3% of global GDP, one in every ten jobs, and 6.8% of the global exports) (BENI, 2003) (WTTC, 2020).

In this context, there emerge initiatives of national and international institutions that seek to take advantage of tourism's positive contribution, aggregating practices related to sustainable development, seeing that this growth in tourism-related activities "also produces pressures in terms of greenhouse gas emissions, economic losses, resource management, and negative impacts on local communities and cultural assets", which affects the need that there must be a better management of these actions "to help preserve the natural development and the cultural heritage assets upon which tourism depends, training the host communities, generating commercial opportunities, and promoting peace and intercultural understanding" (UNWTO/UNDP 2017, p. 10).

In this way, sustainable tourism permeates the activities of the sector, seeking a balance so that the benefits that come from it are optimized, without prejudice to the society and the environment (Fons e Fierro, 2011; Goeldner e Ritchie, 2012; Assante, Wen, & Lottig, 2012; Lansing, & De Vries, 2007; Girard e Nijkamp, 2009; Moyle et al., 2013; McIntyre, 1993, mentioned in Yu, Chancellor, & Cole, 2011). To disseminate precepts of adjustment of the tourism sector's actions with practices that are considered sustainable, international and national organizations have developed guidelines containing criteria, principles and/or goals that may be used by the agents

involved in the process as performance references aiming at sustainable tourism, such as the Tourism and Sustainable Development Goals – Journey to 2030 published by the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) and the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), the Global Criteria of Sustainable Tourism developed by the Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC), and the 'Tourism and Sustainability" guide prepared in 2016 by the Brazilian Ministry of Tourism (MTur).

To carry out this study, the methodological procedures adopted were descriptive analysis, with the execution of a research classified as quantitative, in a non-probabilistic convenience sample in which were approached stakeholders of these two segments: (a) specialists, represented by teachers / undergraduate and graduate researchers in courses in the field of Brazilian tourism and (b) government agencies, represented by public agents who work in State Tourism Departments.

The structure of this article is distributed as follows: in section 1, there is a presentation of the objectives of the study and general aspects on the topic addressed; in section 2, the theoretical foundation is found, which includes content on sustainable tourism in the world and in Brazil, with description of the criteria, principles and goals on sustainability in the tourism sector used by national and international entities; in section 3, are described the methodological procedures ; in section 4 are the results of the research, with its respective analyzes; in section 5, the final considerations and, in section 6, the bibliographical references.

1. Contextualization of sustainable tourism

The World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) was instituted with the purpose of promoting and developing the tourism sector at a global scale: it is a specialized agency of the United Nations (UN) which acts as a forum for issues of tourism policies and as a source of practical knowledge about tourism, with its primary attribution being to promote responsible, durable, and all-accessible tourism, with particular attention to the interests of developing countries. In the Brazilian scenario, the federal government regulates tourism, planning and defining the criteria for its development, whereas in the state and municipal scopes occurs the dissemination and implementation of the tourism actions. Specifically to serve the sector, in 2003 the Ministry of Tourism (MTur) was created in Brazil, which represented a leap forward regarding recognizing its relevance in the social and economic development of the regions.

Several initiatives have been articulated aiming to increase the tourist activity in the country so to strengthen the sector and make it economically and socially relevant. Among the numerous actions, the MTur performed the identification of different types of tourism that are in vogue and being practiced in the national territory: social tourism, ecotourism, cultural tourism, study and exchange tourism, sport tourism, fishing tourism, nautical tourism, adventure tourism, sun and beach tourism, business and events tourism, rural tourism and health tourism (MTUR, 2017).

The management of the productive chain of Brazilian tourism, according to the MTur, needs to be shared, that is, the planning and management of tourist development stems from Regional Governance Instances and must be the result of social participation and cooperation between the public entities and the local actors, so there is co-responsibility in the elaboration, control and, also, execution of public policies in specific cases (BRASIL, 2009). Considered a reference of public policy for tourism in the country, the National Tourism Plan, which refers to the period of 2018 to 2022, includes five lines of action: (i) planning, management, and monitoring, which is intended to strengthen the decentralized management of tourism, support integrated tourism planning, improve the legal and normative environment, expand and enhance studies and research in tourism, and strengthen and improve the monitoring of touristic activity in the country; (ii) structuring of Brazilian tourism aiming to improve the infrastructure at the destinations, promote and facilitate the attraction of investments, and improve the national touristic offer; (iii) formalization and qualification in tourism, with the purpose of broadening the formalization of tourist service providers and intensifying qualification in tourism; (iv) encouraging responsible tourism, aiming to stimulate the adoption of sustainable practices in the tourism sector, promote the integration of the local production to the chain, enable democratic access of the priority public to the touristic activities, and intensify the fight against the violation of rights; and (v) marketing and supporting commercialization through the increase in the national and international promotion of Brazilian touristic destinations and products, the definition of the strategic positioning of Brazil as a tourist product, and the intensification of actions to facilitate the obtaining of visas to enter the Brazilian territory (BRASIL, 2018).

Among the lines of action, there is emphasis on the concern with responsible tourism, which predicts the stimulus to adopt sustainable practices in the Brazilian tourism sector by promoting "sustainability as a differential of the Brazilian tourist destinations, valuing tourist products that promote and encourage the maintenance of natural and cultural assets of the locations" (BRASIL 2018, p. 122), with the actions contemplating government agents, businesspeople, and tourists, with directives and guidance. The primary initiatives refer to the increment so to give relevance to the tourism actors with destinations and to companies that have responsible tourism as their competitive edge. To stimulate the adoption of sustainable practices in the tourism sector, there is the proposition of awards and the dissemination of good practices in sustainable tourism, as well as the intensification of awareness campaigns for conscious consumption as challenges for state, district, and municipal governments and their strategic partners – public and private –, the instances of regional governance, the promotion of the development of policies for responsible tourism (BRASIL, 2018).

Sustainable tourism is defined as "tourism that takes into account the current and future impacts on the economic, social, and environmental aspects, addressing the needs of visitors, industry, environment, and host communities" (UNWTO/UNDP 2017, p. 15). Considered as a multi-dimensional concept, sustainable tourism assumes a holistic approach on all its dimensions, which maximizes the benefits to the parts that

integrate the process, with financial balance regarding the market requirements, serving the needs of local society and tourists, without prejudice to the environment in which these activities occur (Goeldner e Ritchie, 2012; Assante, Wen, & Lottig, 2012; Lansing & De Vries, 2007; Girard e Nijkamp, 2009; Moyle et al., 2013). In brief, McIntyre (1993), cited in Yu, Chancellor, & Cole (2011) states that sustainable tourism must preserve the environment and, at the same time, positively interfere on the quality of the lives of people involved in the activity and the tourist's experience.

As premises of the model of sustainable tourism, Fons and Fierro (2011) include (i) social equality, with benefits for the local community (employment, income, quality of life, public participation, respect for sociocultural values, and personal development); (ii) economic efficiency (viability of tourism in the destination area and of the companies, and demand satisfaction); and (iii) preservation of the environment (preserving the biodiversity, with rational use and conservation of natural resources for later generations). According to the authors, the interconnection among the premises promotes the economy based on the local community, preservation with equity, and the integration of the economy with the environment.

Because of the peculiarity of its features, sustainable tourism, according to Swarbrooke (1998), involves several stakeholders in the development of the activities, namely: (a) the host community (those involved directly and indirectly in tourism and local entrepreneurs); (b) government agencies (international, national, regional, and local); (c) tourism companies (operators of the tourism sector. owners of touristic attractions, transport operators, hospitality companies, and travel organizers); (d) tourists (mass tourism and ecotourism); (e) pressure groups related to the environment, wildlife, human rights, and worker rights; (f) voluntary sector (NGOs and protective entities); (g) experts/technicians (professors/researchers of education institutions - academia- and consultancies); and (h) means of communication (magazines specialized in tourism and news agencies).

In order to promote practices related to sustainability in the tourism sector, the UNWTO, as the primary UN agency for the tourism sector, developed cooperation partnerships with its agencies in the UN system, the private sector, and other stakeholders and, along with representations of these other entities, has established schedules with goals and indicators of sustainable practices such as the Global Code of Ethics for Tourism (GCET), the Sustainable Tourism – Eliminating Poverty (ST-EP) Initiative, the International Network of Sustainable Tourism Observatories (INSTO), the Steering Committee on Tourism and Development (SCTD), in addition to aiding the countries, through technical assistance, to develop and implement their national sustainable resources in the tourism strategies, policies, programs, and projects (UNWTO/UNDP, 2017). Among the initiatives of international institutions that aim at increasing the sustainability in the tourism-related activities, and with the objective to highlight the contribution of tourism to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the document entitled Tourism and Sustainable Development Goals – Journey to 2030, published by the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) and the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) stands out. These institutions, along with partners, have

joined together to examine the current state and the actions taken by the major tourism stakeholders - governments, the private sector, and cooperation agencies for the development -, and the document aims to broaden the knowledge, train, and inspire the parties interested in the tourism sector to take the necessary measures in order to accelerate the change so the activities of the tourism sector become more sustainable, aligning policies, commercial operations, and investments with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and, more specifically, with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) present in this Agenda (UNWTO/UNDP, 2017). We emphasize that the seventeen Sustainable Development Goals - SDGs were listed under the legacy of the Millennium Development Goals, are integrated and indivisible, and balance the three dimensions of sustainable development: the economic, the social, and the environmental. They were created with the purpose of stimulating actions for the following fifteen years in areas of crucial importance to humanity and the planet: people, planet, prosperity, peace, and partnership. To achieve the SDGs established in this document, the cooperation of all the actors involved will be necessary:

governments will need to develop effective and robust policy frameworks for sustainable tourism development; the private sector will need to demonstrate its full commitment to sustainability in core business models with enhanced action; and the international community will need to pursue a more favorable and holistic approach to financing for tourism so as to realize its full potential as a driver of sustainable development and the achievement of the SDGs (UNWTO/UNDP 2017, p. 18).

In this way, the tourism sector should have proper management to minimize the adverse effects and contribute to materialize the seventeen SDGs. For this purpose, correlations were developed between the public policies and business actions of the productive chain of tourism, with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), with the sector being able to contribute especially in five key areas: sustainable economic growth; social inclusion, employment, and poverty reduction; resource efficiency, environmental protection, and climate change; cultural values, diversity, and heritage; and mutual understanding, peace, and security (UNWTO/UNDP, 2017).

Another significant international document related to sustainable tourism was developed by the Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC), an organization legally registered in the USA as a non-profit organization that represents a diversified and global association, including UN agencies, NGOs, national and provincial governments, major travel companies, hotels, tour operators, individuals, and communities that represents an independent and neutral organization (GSTC 2016). This Institution listed the Global Criteria of Sustainable Tourism, whose primary goals regard developing international standards for sustainability in tourism, serving as the accreditation body for sustainability in travel and tourism, making the destinations sustainable, promoting market access and growing knowledge. According to the GSTC (2016, p. 1) "the Criteria of the Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC) were created to provide a common

understanding within the world of sustainable tourism and are the minimum that any tourism business should aspire to reach." The Criteria contemplate the directives of the Code of Default Configuration of the ISEAL Alliance, an agency recognized for providing guidance on international norms for the development of sustainability standards in all sectors and which has four primary themes: effective sustainability planning, maximization of social and economic benefits to the local community, promotion of cultural heritage, and reduction of negative impacts on the environment, all of which are applicable by the tourism industry (GSTC, 2016).

In Brazil, there are some important initiatives related to the increase in actions that contribute to the sustainable development of the sector such as sustainability certifications represented by the ABNT norms: (a) NBR 15401:2014, directed to the System of Sustainability Management in Lodging Means; (b) NBR 15635:2015, which contemplates the good hygiene and sanitary practices requirements and the operational controls essential for food services; and (c) NBR ISO 21101:2014, which establishes safety management systems and conditions for the activities of adventure tourism (BRASIL, 2016).

The MTur also recommends compliance with the World Code of Ethics for Tourism published by the UNWTO in 1999, and participates in the Green Passport campaign, the result of a global initiative of the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP), which was launched in Brazil in 2008 with the goal of stimulating sustainable consumption and production practices in tourism (BRASIL 2016).

Regarding awards, we mention the Braztoa sustainability award, which is considered the highest honor for Brazilian sustainable tourism and is awarded since 2012 through a partnership between the MTur and the Brazilian Association of Tourism Operators, with the seal of the Global Alliance for Sustainable Tourism of the UN. This award "recognizes the best practices and gives visibility to the companies and their sustainable actions, stimulating the tourism chain to act in a manner that is environmentally responsible, socially fair, and economically viable" (BRASIL, 2016, p. 28). The objectives are: (a) to stimulate the tourism chain to act in a manner that is environmentally responsible, socially fair, and economically viable; (b) to encourage the trade to offer sustainable products and services and enable good initiatives to be multiplied; (c) to foster the corporate culture of Sustainability Management in the tourism sector; (d) to recognize the best practices and give visibility to the companies and their sustainable actions; and (e) to contribute to the promotion of sustainable development of destination Brazil (BRAZTOA, 2017).

Those who may participate in this award are associates with Braztoa (tourism operators, representatives, employees, and guests), travel agencies (companies that commercialize touristic products and services directly to the end customer), lodging facilities (hotels, resorts, farm hotels, bed & breakfasts, inns, flats, among others such as hostels and campsites), tourism partners (tour operators not associated with Braztoa, airlines, car rental companies, foundations, third sector associations and organizations, as well as the governmental institutions, among others, not including travel agencies or lodging facilities, which have an exclusive category), and innovative

projects (projects submitted by groups of students representing institutions of technical and higher education) (BRAZTOA, 2017).

More recently, in 2016, the Brazilian Ministry of Tourism published the 'Tourism and Sustainability' guide with the intention that, with the expansion of knowledge about sustainable tourism, the people involved in the productive chain of the sector could become "agents and multipliers of practices that benefit the environment, local communities, and destinations" (BRAZIL, 2016, p. 6). The guide is intended for "all who perform activities that impact on the tourism chain and have an interest in contributing to the sustainable development of the sector" " (BRAZIL, 2016, p. 6) and has a list of sustainability principles that include (a) environmental sustainability, which involves the control of the environmental impacts and the conservation of natural areas and their biodiversity; (b) sociocultural sustainability, which refers to the entrepreneur's commitment with the local community, their employees, customers, and suppliers in an effort to incorporate the interests of all in the planning and execution of the activities; (c) economic sustainability, as it assumes the guarantee of efficient touristic growth with the conciliation between the creation of jobs with satisfactory income levels and the control of the costs and benefits of the resources, which ensures its continuity for future generations; and (d) political–institutional sustainability, whose principle provides the solidity and continuity of the partnerships and commitments established between the government and the civil society (BRASIL, 2016).

Under the scope of sustainability, in 2020 the Brazilian Ministry of Tourism, on its website, presents the item referring to Sustainability and Responsible Tourism from two perspectives: (a) institutional articulation with strategic partners and (b) Programs and Actions. About the institutional articulation, it is mentioned (a.1) the Braztoa Sustainability Award; (b) the map of Sustainable Tourism in Brazil, which presents the winners of the Braztoa Sustainability Award; (a.3) the Clean Seas Campaign, which provides institutional support to the UN; and (a.4) translation of the World Tourism Organization document "Sustainable Development Goals" to Portuguese. As Programs and Actions, are mentioned (b.1) the Brazil Code of Conduct, which is an instrument "of commitment, of free adhesion, which guides and establishes standards of ethical behavior of companies and tourism service providers, so that they adopt preventive actions and tackle the sexual exploitation of children and adolescents"; (b.2) the Guidelines for the Development of Social Tourism in Brazil, which contains a set of guidelines for "promoting tourism for all, both from the point of view of demand and of tourist supply"; and (b.3) the Accessible Tourism Program, which proposes measures to "promote social inclusion and access for people with disabilities to the benefits of tourism" (MTUR, 2020).

2. Methodology

This study has a descriptive nature and employs a quantitative approach (MALHOTRA 2011). The sample is characterized as non-probabilistic by convenience, and, to verify

the current state of the activities carried out by the tourism sector in Brazil regarding the practices considered to be sustainable by national and international organizations, we approached 103 stakeholders from two segments: (a) experts, represented by 93 Brazilian undergraduate and graduate professors/researchers of courses in the area of tourism and (b) governmental agencies, represented by ten public agents who work in State Tourism Offices. The research participants represent the entire Brazilian territory and are geographically distributed in the sample as follows: 12% from the Northern region, 26% from the Northeast, 28% from the Southwest, 10% from the West-Central, and 24% from the South region (Figure 1).

Figure 01: Map of Brazil with regions - 2020
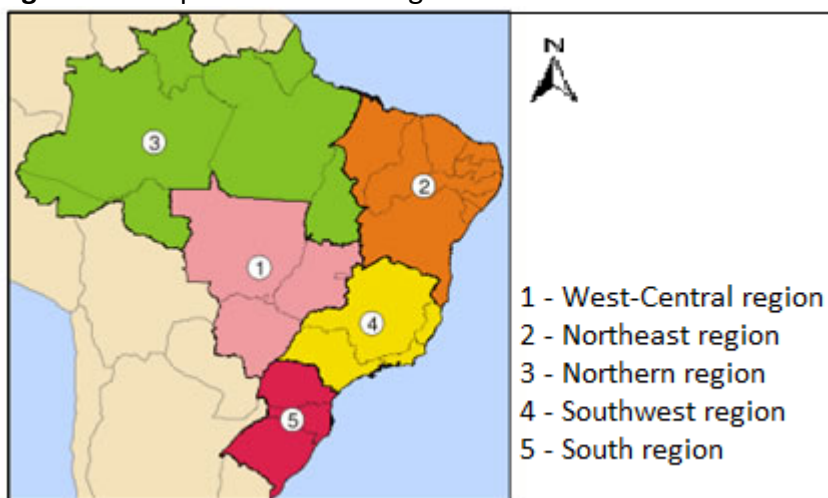
Source: Adapted from Brasilescola (2020)

The survey was conducted in 2018 and the instrument used was a questionnaire whose questions were based on three documents, with their respective variables (principles, goals, and criteria): (a) the principles of sustainability, according to the 'Tourism and Sustainability' guide published by the Brazilian Ministry of Tourism; (b) the Goals of Sustainable Development (SDGs) from the Tourism and Sustainable Development Goals – Journey to 2030 document; and (c) the global sustainable tourism criteria, listed by the Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC) (MTUR, 2016; UNWTO/UNDP, 2017; GSTC, 2016).

To gather the opinions of the research participants, we presented a semantic scale (MALHOTRA, 2011) in which the participant, considering the current situation (2018) in Brazil, indicates the degree to which the activities linked to tourism conform with the criteria of sustainable tourism described in the categories mentioned. On the scale, one (1) meant no compliance and five (5) meant total compliance. We sent the questionnaires through the system of the Center of Studies and Research on Administration (CEPA), which is an ancillary body linked to the School of Administration of UFRGS and, after collection, the data were processed and analyzed statistically with the use of the SSPS Software.

3. Findings and discussion

Considering initially the principles of sustainability listed by the Brazilian Ministry of Tourism, which contemplate environmental sustainability (rational use of water, energetic efficiency, solid residue management, and waste reduction), sociocultural (accessibility and child protection), economic and political-institutional, we found that, for the stakeholders surveyed, the principle that stands out more positively is the contribution of tourism to the development of the economy primarily through the generation of employment, presenting the highest mean score (3.53) and, also, the lowest standard deviation (0.992). In sequence, in descending order is the principle related to sociocultural sustainability, with average compliance of 2.76. The item that presented the lowest mean, i.e., that in the opinion of the participants has still little implemented sustainable practices, refers to the principle of environmental sustainability, subitem reduction of waste, with a mean of 2.38 (table 01).

Table 01: Means regarding the Sustainability Principles - Brazil – 2018

items	Average	Standard Deviation
Environmental Sustainability	2.55	-
- Rational use of water	2.69	1.103
- Energetic efficiency	2.67	1.132
- Solid residue management	2.46	1.144
- Waste reduction	2.38	1.199
Sociocultural Sustainability	2.76	-
- Accessibility	2.77	1.207
- Child protection	2.75	1.246
Economic Sustainability	3.53	0.992
Political and Institutional Sustainability	2.59	1.080

Source: personal data

Confronted with issues regarding the global sustainable tourism criteria, listed by the Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC) and described as effective sustainable management, maximization of the economic and social benefits to the local community, cultural heritage, and the environment, with minimization of their negative impacts and divided into subitems, the participants attributed the highest assessments of compliance to the positive relation of the activities of the tourism sector in the sense of maximizing the benefits to cultural heritage, and the lowest to the effects of the impact on the environment (table 02).

Table 02: Means regarding the Global Criteria of Sustainable Tourism - Brazil – 2018

Criteria	Average
Maximize benefits for cultural heritage and minimize negative impacts	2.87
Maximize social and economic benefits for the local community and minimize the negative impacts	2.79
Perform an effective sustainable management	2.72
Maximize benefits for the environment and minimize negative impacts	2.56

Source: personal data

Still referring to the global sustainable tourism criteria and considering all the issues presented, the highest average (3.11) was observed for the criterion that contemplates the practice of not selling, negotiating, or displaying historical and archaeological artifacts, unless authorized by local or international law. Other criteria which received mean scores worthy of mentioning are: (i) the preponderant use of local manpower; (ii) the practice of marketing/communication/promotion actions with ethics, accuracy, and transparency; (iii) the offer of information on and interpretation of the natural environment, local culture, and cultural heritage, as well as explanation of the appropriate behavior for visiting natural areas, living cultures, and cultural heritage sites; and (iv) the valuation and incorporation of authentic elements of traditional and contemporary local cultures in their operations, design, decoration, cuisine, or shops, with respect to the intellectual property rights of local communities (table 03).

Table 03: Highest means regarding the Global Criteria of Sustainable Tourism - Brazil – 2018

Criteria	Average	Standard Deviation
To not sell, negotiate, or display historical and archaeological artifacts, unless when authorized by local or international law.	3.11	1.260
Predominantly use local workforce	3.05	1.057
Implement marketing/communication/promotion actions with ethics, accuracy, and transparency.	2.99	1.071
Offer information about and interpretation of the natural environment, local culture, and cultural heritage, as well as an explanation of the appropriate behavior when visiting natural areas, living cultures, and cultural heritage sites.	2.96	1.107
Value and incorporate authentic elements of traditional and contemporary local cultures in their operation, design, decoration, cuisine, or shops, respecting the intellectual property rights of the local communities	2.95	1.158

Source: personal data

Also referring to the global sustainable tourism criteria, the lowest mean scores observed among all the items listed are attributed to the aspects related to the valuation and incorporation of authentic elements of traditional and contemporary local cultures in their operations, design, decoration, cuisine, or shops, with respect to

the intellectual property rights of the local communities and the not selling, negotiating, or displaying of historical and archaeological artifacts, except when allowed by local or international law.

Among the lowest mean score we also have to include the effects on the environment, particularly on the criteria of (i) reduction and/or compensation of the emission of greenhouse gases; (ii) treatment and safe release of wastewaters, reduction of waste, and reuse or recycling of solid waste; (iii) minimization or reduction of the use of harmful substances; and (iv) reduction of pollution (noise, light, runoff, erosion, and substances that destroy the ozone and contaminate air, water, and soil). Also with low means are the criteria related to the performance of long-term planning under legal compliance, considering the environmental, social, cultural, economic, quality, human rights, health, safety, and risk and crisis management, as well as to the encouraging of continuous improvement and acquisition of rights to land, water, and legal ownership, fulfilling the local and indigenous communal rights, including their free, prior, and informed consent, not requiring involuntary resettlement (table 04).

Table 04: Lowest means regarding the Global Criteria of Sustainable Tourism - Brazil - 2018

Criteria	Average	Standard Deviation
Reduce and/or compensate greenhouse gases emissions; treat and safely release residual waters; reduce waste, and reuse and recycle solid residues; minimize or reduce the use of harmful substances; reduce pollution (noise, light, draining, substances that destroy ozone and contaminate air, water, and soil).	2.30	1.213
Perform long-term and legal planning, considering the environmental, social, cultural, economic, quality, human rights, health, safety, and risk and crisis management issues and encourage their continuous improvement.	2.49	1.200
Legally acquire the rights to land, water, and property, meeting the local community and indigenous rights, including their free, previous, and informed consent, not requiring involuntary resettlement.	2.50	1.180

Source: personal data

The most critical issues in terms of compliance with sustainable practices in the activities developed by the tourism sector in Brazil are found in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) listed in the Tourism and Sustainable Development Goals – Journey to 2030 document (UNWTO/UNDP, 2017).

According to the stakeholders surveyed, the goals that stand out with the greatest difficulty to be achieved are among the following aspects: (i) take urgent measures to combat climate change and its impacts; (ii) reduce inequality within and among countries; (iii) ensure quality, inclusive, and equitable education and promote learning throughout life for all; and (iv) make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable. The goals that reached the highest mean scores for having a

higher propensity to be achieved are: (i) promote continuous, inclusive, and sustainable economic growth, as well as employment and decent work for all; (ii) ensure access to energy services that are affordable, reliable, sustainable, and modern for all; and (iii) strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development.

We emphasize that all the SDGs listed presented means with values below 2.5 (on a range from one to five), with the overall mean of 2.24 and the standard deviation between 1.138 and 1.212. These results demonstrate that the activities related to the tourism sector developed in Brazil are still underperforming compared to the goals of sustainable development proposed for the nations of the world, with the aspiration of being reached by 2030 (table 05).

Table 05: Means and standard deviation regarding the SDGs - Brazil – 2018

SDGs	Average	Standard Deviation
SDG1- No Poverty	2,17	1,147
SDG 2. Zero Hunger	2,22	1,140
SDG 3. Good Health and Well-Being	2,26	1,186
SDG 4. Quality Education	2,08	1,144
SDG 5. Gender Equality	2,27	1,145
SDG 6. Clean Water and Sanitation	2,36	1,187
SDG 7. Affordable and Clean Energy	2,42	1,168
SDG 8. Decent Work and Economic Growth	2,44	1,210
SDG 9. Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure	2,39	1,212
SDG 10. Reduced Inequalities	2,08	1,152
SDG 11. Sustainable Cities and Communities	2,09	1,156
SDG 12. Responsible Consumption and Production	2,23	1,148
SDG 13. Climate Action	2,04	1,093
SDG 14. Life Below Water	2,13	1,186
SDG 15. Life on Land	2,37	1,138
SDG 16. Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions	2,19	1,180
SDG 17. Partnerships	2,40	1,151

Source: personal data

Reviewing the results regarding the four major areas of sustainable tourism, namely economic, environmental, cultural, and social, one may infer that, in Brazil, the tourism activities that stand out as more sustainable are those related to the economic variables, especially in the aspects regarding employment generation and the use of local workforce and suppliers. The second relevant sustainable contribution attributed to tourist activities in the country regards culture, with emphasis on the benefits of the actions for the preservation of the heritage and the historical and archaeological artifacts, in addition to the valuation and incorporation in the operations of authentic elements of local culture (design, decoration, cuisine ...). We found that the practices related to social sustainability are still in their infancy, most prominently regarding the

local infrastructure and the low impact on the social development of the local community.

Environmental sustainability was portrayed as the dimension that receives the smallest contribution from the activities of the tourism sector in Brazil. In this aspect, the carelessness with the proper use of water and emission and/or compensation of greenhouse gases, the ineffective management of solid residues and waste and, also, the insouciance with energy efficiency are determinants of this negative perspective.

Conclusions

Since tourism has a relevant and broad impact on society, the environment, and the economy, there is a concern and expectation for the sector to adopt sustainable practices. In this perspective, many organizations, aiming at positive changes and at increasing the awareness about the contribution of sustainable tourism to development, make tools available with the purpose of mobilizing and helping private and public sector managers.

This study used as a reference three significant markers of sustainable tourism, elaborated by organizations linked to the sector at the national level (Brazilian Ministry of Tourism - MTur) and international level (Global Sustainable Tourism Council – GSTC, the World Tourism Organization – UNWTO, and the United Nations Development Program - UNDP). Comprehensively, considering the totality of the research results, one may infer that there is a predominance of attitudes that may be considered as more sustainable regarding the economic dimension. The greater importance of this aspect of sustainable tourism is corroborated by the authors of studies conducted in other countries, such as Özdemir et al (2015), who found that the stakeholders were interested preferably on the capacity of the tourist product from the point of view of the economic vitality for the destination, while Timur and Getz (2009) stated that the majority of the participants of their research was concerned primarily with the ability of tourism to provide higher profits to the area.

Considering specifically the Tourism and Sustainability, document by the Brazilian Ministry of Tourism, we found that, although it is a document elaborated by the primary public institution that acts on the field in the country, many of the principles contained therein are restricted to the document, with the practical implementation of sustainable actions not being observed. Regarding the global sustainable tourism criteria, listed by the GSTC, low rates of compliance between what is considered sustainable and the performance of the sector in Brazil were also made evident. Considering the SDGs, defined by the UNWTO and the UNDP, there prevailed a predominantly negative perspective. According to the document Tourism and the Sustainable Development Goals – Journey to 2030 (UNWTO/UNDP, 2017), the tourism sector can and should contribute, directly or indirectly, to the realization of the 17 SDGs and, more particularly, with three SDGs: (a) promote continued, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, employment and decent work for all; (b) ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns; and (c) conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development. When checking the results of the research on these SDGs, it was found that Brazilian

stakeholders confirm the statement that the sector is closer to reaching the goal related to economic growth. However, those related to responsible consumption and production and the conservation of the marine environment were considered more difficult to achieve and represented the ninth and thirteenth place, respectively, among the 17 goals listed.

Although this research has revealed many important issues regarding sustainability, we found that sustainable practices in tourism-related activities are still incipient in Brazil, and it became evident that the country still needs a big breakthrough so that more sustainable actions are performed in the activities of the tourism sector. In this sense, authors such as Dodds & Butler (2009; 2010), Liburd & Edwards (2010), Moyle, McLennan, Ruhanen, and Weiler (2014), Sharpley (2009), and Butler (2010) also showed that, although there is interest and enthusiasm in the ideology of sustainability on the part of the public institutions, there is a significant discrepancy between this expectation and the reality of its implementation. For Dwyer & Edwards (2010), cited by Maxim (2015), the complexity of the implementation of sustainability principles in the activities related to the tourism sector is a consequence of the different interests and needs of the primary agents of the process, such as residents, visitors, the public sector, and the tourism industry. Elis and Sheridan (2014) also attest that there are inconsistencies in the theory and practice of sustainable tourism and that these may be largely attributed to the influences of external and internal interested parties involved, that is, according to Teye, Sonmez, & Sirakaya (2002), cited by Elis and Sheridan (2014), external agents who operate outside the communities (academics, industry, and NGOs) theoretically elaborate fundaments of sustainable tourism, defining the 'ideal', without the effective participation of internal agents who act directly within the host communities, which hampers the implementation.

In spite of the difficulties to be faced, attitudes that may contribute to accomplishing the implementation of sustainable tourism policies have been listed by Maxim (2015) in a study carried out in London, initially including the political will to perform the transformations required, in addition to the knowledge and understanding of the specificities of the tourism industry, long-term planning with the definition of policies, strategies, and plans for tourism development, the provision of proper public transport and infrastructure, the adequacy of legislation, the dissemination of good practices, the identification of the limit capacity on the number of visitors, the economic viability with financial contribution, the promotion of education on sustainable tourism, the involvement and support of the community to develop tourism in their localities and, comprehensively, the encouragement and strengthening of the cooperation and partnership among all stakeholders. Holden (2010) complements that, to understand the durability of sustainable development focused on tourism, it is necessary to understand the livelihood aspirations of the local actors and how they use tourism to achieve their own goals, while Elis and Sheridan (2014) ensure that it is necessary to recognize the influences and the effects of all the interested parties in the process of making tourism sustainable, to conciliate the contradictions of those involved, accepting the inevitable and introducing processes that minimize the effects of these differences.

In order to move forward in the implementation of positive practices in the sector at the global level, the UNTW highlights that there exist three pillars that must work

together in support of sustainable tourism, which are: (i) the international community continuing with a favorable and holistic approach to the financing of tourism, (ii) the public power strengthening the political structures effectively and robustly for the development of sustainable tourism, and (iii) the private sector demonstrating a total commitment with business models that prioritize sustainability. For Brazil, there is still a need for more involvement and cooperation among all the stakeholders linked to the tourism sector, with the commitment to sustainably balance the economic, environmental, cultural, and social dimensions of their activities, which will enable making a positive impact, maximizing the benefits, and minimizing the negative effects of their actions, thus transforming the sector into a protagonist in this process to achieve the highest levels of compliance with the principles of sustainability.

References

Assante, L. M., Wen, H. I., Lottig, K. (2012). An empirical assessment of residents' attitudes for sustainable tourism development: a case study of O'ahu, Hawai'i. *Journal of Sustainability and Green Business*, 1, 1-27.

Beni, M.C. (2003). *Análise Estrutural do Turismo*. (8ª ed.). São Paulo: SENAC.

Brasil. (2009). Ministério do Turismo. Coordenação Geral de Regionalização. *Programa de Regionalização do Turismo - Roteiros do Brasil*. MTur, Brasília, DF.

Brasil. (2016). Ministério do Turismo. Turismo e sustentabilidade - *Orientações para prestadores de serviços turísticos*. MTur, Brasília, DF.

Brasil. (2018). *Plano Nacional de Turismo 2018/2022.* MTur, Brasília, DF.

Brasilescola. (2020). Regiões do Brasil. (Access in may 2020). Retreived from https://brasilescola.uol.com.br/brasil/regioes-brasileiras.htm

Braztoa, (2017). *Prêmio Braztoa de Sustentabilidade*. Associação Brasileira das Operadoras de Turismo.

Cooper, C. (2007). *Turismo: Princípios e Prática*. Porto Alegre: Bookman.

Dias, R.D. (2005). *Introdução ao turismo*. São Paulo: Atlas.

Ellis, S., Sheridan, L. (2014). A Critical Reflection on the Role of Stakeholders in Sustainable Tourism Development in Least-Developed Countries. *Tourism Planning & Development*, 11 (4), 467-471.

Fons, S. M., Fierro, J. A. M. (2011). Rural tourism: A sustainable alternative. *Applied Energy,* 88 (2), 551-557.

Girard, L.F, Nijkamp, P. (2009). *Cultural Tourism and sustainable local development*. England: Ashgate Publishing Limited.

GSTC, (2016). *Global Sustainable Tourism Council*. Conselho Global de Turismo Sustentável. Critérios GSTC para a Indústria. Versão 3.

Hall, C. M. (1998). Historical antecedents of sustainable development and ecotourism: new labels on old bottles. *Sustainable tourism a geographical perspective*. London: Longman.

Holden, A. (2010). Exploring Stakeholders' Perceptions of Sustainable Tourism Development in the Annapurna Conservation Area: Issues and Challenge. *Tourism and Hospitality Planning & Development*, 7 (4), 337-351.

Khavarian-Garmsir, A.M., Zare, S.M. (2015). SOAR Framework as a New Model for the Strategic Planning of Sustainable. *Tourism Planning & Development*. 12 (3), 321-332.

Lansing, P., De Vries, P. (2007). Sustainable Tourism: Ethical Alternative or Marketing Ploy? *Journal of Business Ethics*, 72 (1), 77-85.

Malhotra, N. K. (2011)*. Pesquisa de marketing – uma orientação aplicada*. (6ª ed.). Porto Alegre: Bookman.

Maxim, C. (2015). Drivers of Success in Implementing Sustainable Tourism Policies in Urban Areas. *Tourism Planning & Development*, 12 (1), 37-47.

Mcintyre, G. (1993). *Sustainable Tourism Development: Guide for Local Planners.* Madrid: World Tourism Organization.

Moesch, M.M. (2002). *A produção do saber turístico*. São Paulo: Contexto.

Montejano, J. M. (2001). *Estrutura do mercado turístico*. (2ª ed.). São Paulo: Roca.

Moyle, B. D., Mclennan, C. J., Ruhannen, L., Weiler, B. (2013). Tracking the concept of sustainability in Australian tourism policy and planning documents*. Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 22(7), 1037-1051.

MTUR, (2017). *Ministério do Turismo do Brasil*. (Access december 2017). Retreived from http://www.turismo.gov.br

MTUR, (2020). Sustentabilidade e Turismo Responsável. *Ministério do Turismo do Brasil*. (Access may 2020). Retreived from http://www.turismo.gov.br..

Özdemir, G., Yilmaz, M., Yalçin, M., Alvarez, M.D. (2015) Stakeholders' Perception of Istanbul's Historical Peninsula as a Sustainable Destination. *Tourism Planning & Development*, 12 (1), 87-98.

Rose, A. T. (2002). *Turismo: planejamento e marketing, aplicação da matriz de portfólio para destinações turísticas.* Barueri, SP: Manole.

Saarinen, J. (2006). Traditions of sustainability in tourism studies. Annals of Tourism Research, 33, 1121-1140.

Souza, D.A., Gil, A.G. (2015). A Importância da Identidade Regional na Configuração de Clusters Turísticos. *Revista Turismo em Análise*, 26 (2), 475-492.

Swarbrooke, J. (1998). *Sustainable tourism management*. London, UK: British Library.

Umbelino, L. F., Silva, M. D. G. (2010). Um panorama da atividade turística na região Noroeste Fluminense. In Marafon, G. J., Ribeiro, M. A. (eds.), *Revisitando o Território Fluminense III*. Rio de Janeiro: Gramma.

UNWTO/UNDP, (2017). World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). *Tourism and the Sustainable Development Goals – Journey to 2030.*

Urry, J. (2001). *O olhar do turista: lazer e viagens nas sociedades contemporâneas*. (3ª ed.). São Paulo: Studio Nobel.

Wickens, E., Bakir, A., Alvarez, M. D. (2015). Sustainable Destination Development: Issues and Challenges. *Tourism Planning & Development*, 12 (1), 1-5.

WTTC, (2020). Economic Impact Report. (Access may 2020). Retreived from https://wttc.org/Research/Economic-Impact.

Yu, C., Chancellor, H.C., Cole, S.T. (2009). Attitude Scale Measuring Residents' Attitudes toward Sustainable Tourism: A Reexamination of the Sustainable Tourism. *Journal of Travel Research*, 50 (1), 57-63.

Zambón, G.F., Schenk, A.G.R. (2005). Patrimonio industrial y rutas turísticas culturales: algunas propuestas para Argentina. *Cuadernos de Turismo*, 15, 97-112.