# **Wellness Policy Series**

# Wellness Policy Toolkit: Wellness in Tourism

March 2024



## **Wellness Policy Series**

# Wellness Policy Toolkit: Wellness in Tourism

March 2024



### **Copyright © 2024 by the Global Wellness Institute**

Quotation of, citation from, and reference to any of the data, findings, and research methodology from this report must be credited to "Global Wellness Institute, Wellness Policy Toolkit: Wellness in Tourism, March 2024." For more information, please contact research@globalwellnessinstitute.org or visit www.globalwellnessinstitute.org.

## Contents

Preface: About the Wellness Policy Series		
Background: What Is Wellness Policy?	5	
Defining wellness	5	
Defining wellness policy	7	
Wellness Policy Toolkit: Wellness in Tourism	9	
Making the case for wellness policy: Wellness in tourism	10	
Three levels of policy action: Wellness in tourism	13	
Who can champion wellness policy for wellness in tourism	14	
Policy actions for wellness in tourism	16	
1: Expand the reach and impacts of wellness tourism	19	
2: Integrate the local economy with the wellness tourism economy	27	
3: Improve the wellness of the tourism workforce	33	
4: Embed equity and sustainability in wellness tourism development and stewardship		
<b>5:</b> Support wellness tourism with up-to-date wellness market knowledge and regulations	47	
6: Ensure that technology enhances wellness for travelers	53	
Industry Research Sponsors	63	

### **About the Authors**

### **About the Global Wellness Institute**

The Global Wellness Institute (GWI), a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, is considered the leading global research and educational resource for the global wellness industry and is known for introducing major industry initiatives and regional events that bring together leaders and visionaries to chart the future. GWI positively impacts global health and wellness by advocating for both public institutions and businesses that are working to help prevent disease, reduce stress, and enhance overall quality of life. Its mission is to empower wellness worldwide.

www.globalwellnessinstitute.org

### **About the Authors**

Wellness Policy Toolkit: Wellness in Tourism was prepared by Ophelia Yeung, Katherine Johnston, and Tonia Callender. As GWI's principal researchers, they are the team that defines and measures the size of the global wellness economy. Their academic and professional background is in public policy and international development, and Ms. Yeung, Ms. Johnston, and Ms. Callender received post-graduate degrees from Princeton, Georgetown, and Harvard Universities, respectively. Together, they bring many decades of experience conducting research, impact assessments, and strategy development for countries, regions, industry consortia, companies, and nonprofit institutions.

# Preface About the Wellness Policy Series

### Why is GWI releasing a Wellness Policy Series?

Since its inception, the Global Wellness Institute (GWI) has embraced the vision of "empowering wellness worldwide." Even as we study and advocate for the multi-trillion dollar wellness economy, we also recognize that the private wellness market and consumer action alone cannot bring about wellness for all. Widespread adoption of preventive approaches and healthy lifestyles is essential if we are to address our mounting global health crises and spiraling economic costs. And yet, not everyone has the resources, motivation, knowledge, or enabling environment to do so. Public policy is essential to fill these gaps. This realization is the genesis of GWI's Wellness Policy Series.

### Who is the Wellness Policy Series for?

When we talk about policy, the implication is that we are speaking to governments, but this series is not just for government stakeholders. Policies to advance the cause of wellness for all require the attention, participation, and cooperation of public, private, and nonprofit/community stakeholders. In fact, the separate development streams and "siloes" across consumer/business wellness, public health systems, and preventive health/medicine have impeded us from making greater strides toward this goal.

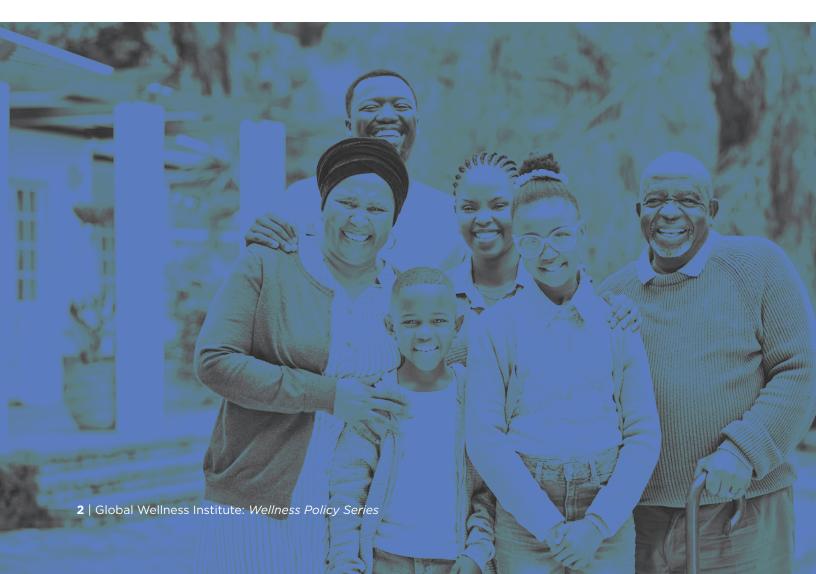
GWI's Wellness Policy Series was created to support anyone who would like to leverage policy as a tool to promote better human health and well-being. Whether you are a government leader, policymaker, public servant, private business, nonprofit, or concerned citizen, this series will provide you with cross-cutting and actionable ideas for policies, programs, collaborations, and advocacy efforts to address gaps, meet the needs of different population groups, and expand access to wellness for all.

### What is covered in the Wellness Policy Series?

The Wellness Policy Series is a compilation of nine reports, which aim to define wellness policy, articulate why it is needed, and provide a framework and set of strategies for implementing wellness policies across many domains of wellness. The series includes the following reports:

- Defining Wellness Policy (November 2022)
- Health, Happiness, and the Wellness Economy: An Empirical Analysis (January 2023)
- Seven Wellness Policy Toolkits (2023-2025)
  - Healthy Eating
  - Physical Activity
  - · Mental Wellness
  - Traditional & Complementary Medicine
  - Wellness in the Built Environment
  - Wellness at Work
  - Wellness in Tourism

Access all reports in the GWI Wellness Policy Series at: https://globalwellnessinstitute.org/wellness-policy-series/.



### What are the Wellness Policy Toolkits?

The Wellness Policy Toolkits are a core part of GWI's Wellness Policy Series. The toolkits focus on seven domains of wellness (see table below). Each toolkit addresses both the why and how of wellness policy: What is the rationale and need for wellness policy action in each domain? How can stakeholders (governments, businesses, communities, nonprofits) take action to address important issues and gaps?

### Wellness Policy Domains Covered in GWI's Wellness Policy Toolkits

### **Wellness Activities and Lifestyles**

- Healthy Eating
- Physical Activity
- Mental Wellness
- Traditional & Complementary Medicine

### **Wellness-Supporting Environments**

- Wellness in the Built Environment
- Wellness at Work
- Wellness in Tourism

Some of the domains covered in the toolkits already have a massive body of research, literature, strategies, and action plans behind them (e.g., physical activity, healthy eating), while other domains do not (e.g., mental wellness, wellness in tourism). A major new contribution of the Wellness Policy Toolkits is to consolidate and codify all of the domains and policy actions that fall under the large umbrella of "wellness policy." In addition, the toolkits emphasize the numerous areas of intersection across the seven wellness domains and how policy actions in one domain can have impacts across other areas. For example, policies focusing on the built environment can affect our individual behaviors related to physical activity, mental wellness, and healthy eating. Policies that encourage physical activity can have an impact on mental wellness.

The Wellness Policy Toolkits are intended to spark thinking, conversations, analyses, advocacy, and concrete efforts that will promote access to wellness modalities and deliver well-being outcomes for people across all demographic groups and regions. The toolkits are designed to be modular and general enough that they can be applied across many different political, geographic, and demographic contexts. They are a starting point that provides a menu of possible actions and can be used in many different ways.

- Some readers may use the toolkits as inspiration for developing their own comprehensive strategy or action plan to target the specific wellness needs of their city, region, or country.
- · Some readers may use the toolkits to identify one or two very specific areas where they can contribute or take action within their own job, professional field, or organization.
- · Those who are not already immersed or working in these wellness domains can use the toolkits as a quick-start guide to understanding the issues, opportunities, and where to find more information.
- Wellness industry stakeholders can use the toolkits to spark new ideas on building partnerships to expand wellness offerings, as well as advocacy efforts to encourage governments to prioritize wellness services/businesses as essential public services.

- Business leaders can use the toolkits to identify areas where they can take action and contribute to improving wellness for their employees, clients, constituents, communities, and stakeholders (without waiting for the government to mandate it).
- Individuals can use the toolkits to lobby their government leaders for specific policies and programs that expand access to wellness in their own communities, cities, and countries.

Much more work needs to be done in wellness policy to ensure that it is embedded in all policymaking and government investment decisions, and to help us understand which kinds of policies are most effective across different settings and populations. We hope that this *Wellness Policy Series* will spark a wellness policy movement that can be championed by any interested stakeholder groups. We invite all stakeholders in the public, private, nonprofit, and academic communities to join in this movement.

# Background What Is Wellness Policy?

Note that the content presented in this section is condensed from GWI's November 2022 report, Defining Wellness Policy (the first report in the Wellness Policy Series). For a more in-depth discussion of these topics, see: https://globalwellnessinstitute.org/industry-research/2022-defining-wellness-policy/.

### Defining wellness.

To understand wellness policy, we must first understand wellness. The Global Wellness Institute (GWI) defines wellness as: the active pursuit of activities, choices, and lifestyles that lead to a state of holistic health.

There are two important aspects to this definition. First, wellness is not a passive or static state, but rather an "active pursuit" that is associated with intentions, choices, and actions as we work toward an optimal state of health and well-being. Second, wellness is linked to holistic health - that is, it extends beyond physical health and incorporates many different dimensions that should work in harmony (see figure).

Wellness is often confused with terms like health, well-being, and happiness. While there are common elements among them, wellness is different in that it is not associated with a static state (i.e., being happy, in good health, or a state of well-being), but rather an active process of being aware and working toward optimal holistic health and well-being.

### Wellness Is Multidimensional



### Wellness is both behavioral and environmental.

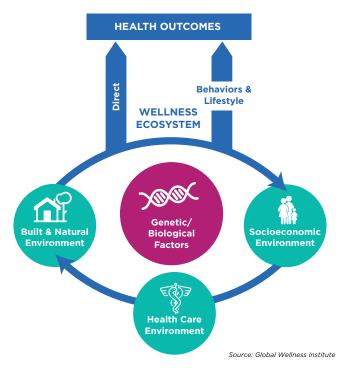
Wellness is an individual pursuit based on self-responsibility, but it is also significantly influenced by the physical, social, and cultural environments in which we live. Research on the determinants of health indicates that environmental, socioeconomic, and lifestyle factors can account for 80-90% of our disease risks and health outcomes. Those who are very young, elderly, disabled, or poor are particularly vulnerable to these external factors.

A complex web of factors (access to healthcare, socioeconomic factors, and our natural and built environments) form a "wellness ecosystem" that can augment or mitigate our genetic disposition for disease. Our wellness ecosystem has a *direct* effect on our health by transmitting communicable and environmental diseases. It also *indirectly* affects our health by influencing our behaviors and lifestyles, which can lead to noncommunicable diseases.

### Public policies shape our wellness ecosystems.

Governments public policies and exert enormous influence on our wellness ecosystem - from economic and social policies, to urban planning and transportation infrastructure, to environmental regulations, and much more. They can create wellness-supporting environments, establish incentives for adopting healthy behaviors and lifestyles, reduce costs, and expand access to wellness modalities and facilities for underserved populations. In these areas, wellness policy fills critical gaps and complements existing healthcare systems and public health policies. Wellness policy is essential to help us stay physically and mentally well, to stave off preventable disease, to become resilient, and to move us closer to the goal of wellness for all.

Up to **80-90%** of our health outcomes depend upon the external and environmental factors in our wellness ecosystem



<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Magnan, S. (2017). Social Determinants of Health 101 for Health Care: Five Plus Five. *NAM Perspectives*. Washington, DC: National Academy of Medicine. https://nam.edu/social-determinants-of-health-101-for-health-care-five-plus-five/. See also: Hood, C.M., et al (2016). County health rankings: Relationships between determinant factors and health outcomes. *American Journal of Preventive Medicine*, 50(2), 129-135. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.amepre.2015.08.024.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> See: 1) Braveman, P., et al (2011). *Issue Brief #8: Neighborhoods and Health*. Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. http://www.rwjf.org/en/library/research/2011/05/neighborhoods-and-health-.html. 2) Institute of Medicine and National Research Council (2013). *U.S. Health in International Perspective: Shorter Lives, Poorer Health*. Washington, DC: The National Academies Press. https://doi.org/10.17226/13497.

### Defining wellness policy.

### The Global Wellness Institute defines wellness policy as follows:

Wellness policy is a set of cross-cutting actions that encourage healthy lifestyles and create supportive environments for human health and well-being.

Wellness is a lens through which we can reshape public policy and work toward improving human health, happiness, and well-being outcomes. Wellness policy complements and supports health, public health, and happiness/well-being policies, but it is not the same thing.

### Levels of action for wellness policy.

Public policies can be formulated to shape our wellness at three levels (see further discussion in the Toolkit section of this document):

- 1. Micro-level wellness policy: Encouraging individuals to proactively make healthy choices, establish healthy habits, and live healthy lifestyles.
- 2. Meso-level wellness policy: Creating living environments that support and encourage healthy behaviors and lifestyles.
- **3.** Macro-level policy: Reshaping all policies related to our wider society and economy, with the aim of improving human health and well-being.

In many cases, macro-level policies such as reducing poverty, stopping armed conflicts, or addressing climate change will have a greater impact on our health and well-being than the meso-and micro-level policies targeting individual behaviors and community environments. Macro-level policies – covering the entire range of public policy action – are vitally important to human health and well-being. Addressing these issues is critical, but it requires long-term, systemic changes, as well as political will and compromises, which can be difficult to achieve.

In GWI's Wellness Policy Series, we focus primarily on actions at the micro- and meso-levels. Wellness policies at the micro- and meso-levels complement national-level well-being policy efforts. They can be implemented and have benefits for people immediately, even while we wait for the glacial progress in solving our long-term macro crises and shifting our overarching policy priorities toward well-being.



### Seven wellness domains covered in GWI's Wellness Policy Toolkits.

As noted above, we have identified seven domains in which wellness policy can encourage healthy behaviors and lifestyles and that create wellness-supporting environments. These seven domains do not function independently from one another. They are closely interrelated, and policy actions within one domain can have impacts across other areas. For example, policies focusing on the built environment can affect our individual behaviors related to physical activity, mental wellness, and healthy eating. Policies that encourage physical activity can have an impact on mental wellness. Each Wellness Policy Toolkit will address these areas of intersection wherever they appear. We also address the wellness needs of specific populations and lifespan groups, including underserved and vulnerable groups such as children and older adults, wherever relevant. Stakeholders working in many government functions, industry sectors, and communities can take action across these domains, in both large and small ways, to spearhead bringing wellness to all.

### Wellness Policy Domains Covered in GWI's Wellness Policy Toolkits

### **Wellness Activities and Lifestyles**

Healthy Eating	Expanding access to nutritious diets and encouraging everyone to make healthy eating choices.
Physical Activity	Supporting people of all ages to engage in the recommended levels of physical activity to stay healthy.
Mental Wellness	Improving individual and community resilience, especially to address stress and loneliness.
Traditional & Complementary Medicine	Increasing the safety, quality, and efficacy of T&CM expanding consumer access; and protecting T&CM resources.

### **Wellness-Supporting Environments**

Wellness in the Built Environment	Creating physical environments that support all dimensions of wellness and encourage healthy lifestyles.
Wellness at Work	Enabling everyone to work in an environment that improves rather than reduces their health and well-being.
Wellness in Tourism	Ensuring that all tourism is wellness-enhancing for visitors, destinations, and local communities.

# Wellness Policy Toolkit **Wellness in Tourism**

### Introduction

Tourism is a massive global industry and a well-established field of government policymaking. While tourism brings valuable economic benefits to communities and regions around the world, it can also have downsides, such as damage to the environment and the local way of life when it is not properly managed. The COVID-19 pandemic brought enormous challenges to the tourism industry - disrupting visitor flows, decimating revenues, shrinking the labor force, and increasing business costs. After more than a decade of rampant growth, the pandemic also delivered a pause that spurred many to rethink their approach to tourism. On the supply side, many destinations and governments refocused their priorities toward responsible and sustainable tourism over mass tourism. On the demand side, travelers began to reflect on their intentions, values, habits, and priorities during travel, especially regarding health and wellness. Both of these developments point toward a growing convergence between wellness and tourism.

This toolkit addresses tourism as a domain of wellness policy. It advocates for policy approaches that ensure wellness and tourism will be mutually reinforcing: How can wellness support tourism? And, how can tourism support the wellness of travelers, destinations, and local residents? Even though wellness tourism has been a rapidly growing segment within tourism for more than a decade, it is still not well-understood by destinations and policymakers, and it is often viewed narrowly as visiting luxury spas and attending yoga retreats. This toolkit is NOT a wellness tourism development strategy that focuses on developing high-end resorts and destination spas and attracting high-spend tourists. Rather, the aim is to unite the concepts of wellness and tourism in the broadest sense, and to present policy ideas that can help everyone - from visitors to residents to businesses - reap more benefits from tourism.

Wellness tourism is sometimes conflated with sustainable and responsible tourism, or with other niches such as ecotourism. While wellness tourism often overlaps with these segments, they are not the same thing. The strength of wellness tourism is linked to the wellness of the destination. When wellness tourism is done the right way, it should enhance the quality of place for tourists and the quality of life for local residents. As such, wellness tourism can be a useful entry point to align the interests and values of many different stakeholders, including businesses, governments, local residents, and communities. Bringing more wellness to tourism will strengthen the overall tourism sector while simultaneously protecting its assets and its sustainability.

### Who should use this toolkit for wellness in tourism?

This toolkit is intended to assist anyone who is interested in policy approaches that embed wellness broadly into tourism, placemaking, and local development. The policy options presented here cut across wellness tourism, sustainable and responsible tourism, equitable wellness, quality of life, placemaking, and placekeeping. As such, they can be pursued by those working in tourism businesses, tourism promotion, destination management, economic development, or representing the well-being of workers and the community. Ultimately, the success of wellness tourism depends on the wellness of the destination and the people who live and work there. Therefore, some of the topics discussed in this toolkit overlap with other wellness policy domains, such as physical activity, built environment, traditional and complementary medicine, and wellness at work (topics that are covered in depth by other policy toolkits in this series).

### Making the case for policy: Wellness in tourism.

# Wellness tourism is a powerful and enduring travel trend that will accelerate and reshape the global tourism industry.

Tourism has been one of the fastest growing global industries over the last decade, accounting for 10% of all jobs and 10% of global GDP prior to the COVID-19 pandemic. Tourism is also the lifeblood of many countries and regions, contributing vital investments, new businesses, jobs, foreign exchange, and tax revenues. Within the travel and tourism industry, wellness tourism is one of the fastest growing segments. According to the Global Wellness Institute's (GWI's) estimates, the global wellness tourism market was growing 50% faster than the overall tourism industry between 2017-2019, and it peaked at \$720 billion in 2019, before the pandemic travel shutdowns. <sup>11</sup>



### What is wellness tourism?

The Global Wellness Institute (GWI) defines wellness tourism as travel associated with the pursuit of maintaining or enhancing one's personal well-being." With so much unwellness embedded in today's travel, wellness tourism brings the promise of combating those negative qualities and turning travel into an opportunity to maintain and improve our holistic health.

There is a common misconception that wellness travelers are a small, elite, and wealthy group of leisure tourists who visit destination spas, health resorts, or yoga and meditation retreats. In fact, wellness travelers comprise a much broader and more diverse group of consumers with many motivations, interests, and values. GWI identifies two types of wellness travelers:

- · Primary wellness traveler: A traveler whose trip or destination choice is primarily motivated by wellness.
- Secondary wellness traveler: A traveler who seeks to maintain wellness while traveling or participates in wellness experiences while taking any type of trip for leisure or business.

Importantly, primary and secondary wellness travel can be done by the same person on different trips, and these two types of wellness travel reinforce one another.

While global travel has yet to fully recover from the COVID-19 disruptions, wellness tourism is clearly emerging as a winner within the tourism industry. If travelers were interested in wellness before the pandemic, they are much more intentional about it now. Mental wellness is top of mind for many travelers, as is recovery and increasing physical and mental resilience. The growth of remote work, the digital nomad lifestyle, workcations, bleisure travel, and holding meetings and conferences in wellness settings are all increasing demand for wellness amenities and opportunities, both within and outside conventional hospitality settings. At the same time, an aging population across the world is interested in wellness modalities that support longevity, prevention, and chronic disease mitigation. This shift in traveler lifestyles and priorities will reshape all aspects of the tourism industry for years to come.

### Wellness tourism supports overall tourism development and can bring multiple benefits to communities.

Wellness tourism is an attractive tourism niche because of its promise to diversify the market, raise visitor spending, improve seasonal fluctuations, and bring investments and economic benefits to rural and less developed areas. Many destinations had already turned their attention to wellness tourism before the pandemic, promoting their high-end resorts, retreats, spas, and opportunities for self-care and rejuvenation. Increasingly, travelers are bringing their wellness lifestyles and habits on the road with them, wanting to address stress, burnout, sleep, exercise, healthy eating, and other lifestyle concerns during their time away from home. Wellness tourism can also encompass a much richer and varied experience, including opportunities for visitors to partake in the wellness modalities, food, nature, culture, spaces, and attractions that are part of the destination's local community and traditions. Since nature is a very important setting and "amenity" for wellness-minded tourists, wellness tourism can provide important incentives for governments and communities to protect their natural assets and enhance their sustainability efforts.

### Wellness tourism offers a powerful value proposition to improve the local quality of life and the wellness of the destination.

Destinations that invest in their local wellness infrastructure, quality of place, and quality of life will inevitably improve their appeal to wellness travelers. In recent decades, both cities and rural areas have competed to attract and retain high earners and knowledge workers by focusing on placemaking and amenities that appeal to the "creative class." Regional and urban planning increasingly emphasize the quality and design of public spaces, arts and culture, and small businesses and entrepreneurship, in order to attract and retain a vibrant and diverse population. In a post-pandemic world, more and more people are interested in pursuing a healthy lifestyle, and they are demanding that their neighborhoods and communities make wellness activities accessible and convenient, such as sports and fitness facilities, urban greenways, trails, bike lanes, parks, and other outdoor recreational activities. Many of the amenities that are central to the wellness of a community - from food, music, and the arts, to green spaces and walkable/vibrant streetscapes - will simultaneously make a place more attractive to tourists. Thus, wellness for local residents and wellness tourism can and should be mutually reinforcing.

This toolkit highlights policy approaches that integrate wellness tourism into local development strategies, with the aim of bringing wellness to all stakeholders. The toolkit addresses several key barriers that are currently preventing wellness tourism from delivering broader-based health and well-being benefits to local destinations and residents alongside tourists.

### Summary of key issues for wellness in tourism

- 1. Many businesses, governments, communities, and travelers have a narrow understanding of wellness tourism and its potential.
- 2. Wellness tourism offerings are often siloed and separated from local consumers, businesses, and communities.
- **3.** The people who work to improve the wellness of others are not well themselves.
- 4. Destinations and local communities are often the collateral damage of the tourism economy, including wellness tourism.
- 5. Rapidly evolving wellness sectors challenge governments and policies to keep up.
- 6. Technology is pervasive in tourism, but it does not always enhance the wellness or experiences of tourists.

### Three levels of policy action: Wellness in tourism.

There are many factors that determine whether tourism brings wellness to visitors, local residents, and the surrounding community. Public policies can help embed wellness in tourism at three different levels (see figure below).



- Source: Global Wellness Institute
- Micro-level policies: Whether we are traveling or staying at home, we all engage in choices and behaviors that can be good or bad for our health, including where we go, what we eat, whether we exercise, or how much sleep we get. As individuals, we can be nudged toward wellness-enhancing activities and choices by micro-level policies that aim to increase the options, visibility, convenience, and affordability of healthy choices, both when we are at home or traveling.
- Meso-level policies: Environmental factors (including built environment, natural environment, and social environment) have a major influence on our health and well-being during travel. Public investments can create spaces and destinations where travelers can rest and relax, feel awe and wonder, and enjoy nature, and can access these offerings safely and equitably. Policy and planning must protect the environment and the integrity of the local community, in order to ensure that they are not exploited, their voices are heard, and they share in the economic benefits of tourism.
- Macro-level policies: All of the broad, macro-level factors that affect our physical and mental wellness also impact travelers and residents within the context of tourism. Key macro issues include climate change, geopolitical conflicts, political environments, immigration policies, inequality and discrimination, crime and safety, local healthcare, and so on. Clearly, any global, national, and local government actions that mitigate these issues will have a profound impact on people's health and well-being, whether they are residents or visitors.

We acknowledge that macro-level policies - covering the entire range of public policy actions are vitally important to human health and well-being. In many cases, macro-level policies (such as reducing poverty, stopping armed conflicts, or addressing climate change) will have a greater impact on wellness than the meso- and micro-level policies targeting individual behaviors and community environments. Top-down policy approaches are critical, but they require long-term, systemic changes, as well as political will and compromises, which can be difficult to achieve. In this toolkit, we focus primarily on micro- and meso-level policies, which can be implemented and have benefits for people immediately, even while we wait for the glacial progress in solving our long-term macro issues.

# Who can champion policy for wellness in tourism.

Since this toolkit focuses on tourism, one may get the impression that policy actions for wellness in tourism are the domain of the tourism ministries, destination management organizations, and other government departments that are responsible for tourism and economic development. The government role is important, because governments make investments in tourism infrastructure and promotion, and they set regulations in many areas that affect travel and tourism. At the same time, tourism is mostly a private sector activity. Individual consumers make decisions on where they go and how to spend their money, and they rely on businesses to deliver these services and experiences. All these activities affect the destinations and the people who live and work there. As individuals, we are all travelers whenever we leave our hometowns, and people come to visit the places where we live. Therefore, all of us participate in tourism and are affected by it in some form. We don't have to be in the tourism business to have a stake in improving wellness tourism. As long as we understand our role in these activities and take a broad perspective of wellness tourism, we can champion policies that will enhance wellness for all.

### If you are a national/regional government leader or policymaker:

Governments can lead the charge to promote a broader understanding of wellness tourism – that it is predicated on the wellness of the people, community, and environment of the destination. Governments can educate all stakeholders on the strong business case to strengthen and protect these assets, so all parties can reap higher and more sustainable benefits from tourism. Clearly, governments are responsible for policies that protect the environment and local culture, ensuring that the economic gains from tourism do not come at the expense of the local community and its quality of life. Governments can make wellness infrastructure investments – in nature preserves,



city parks, bike trails and greenways, publicly accessible recreational facilities, public art, etc. which improve the quality of life of residents and also make a destination more appealing to wellness tourists. It is important to recognize that many wellness businesses that cater to local residents (e.g., gyms and yoga studios, health food stores, specialty restaurants and retail, complementary health practitioners, etc.) are also part of the wellness tourism economy. Governments can support these businesses through small business financial assistance, entrepreneurial training and mentoring, technical assistance and quality assurance, and promotion.

Governments have a responsibility to ensure the safety, quality, and efficacy of the wellness services and products offered to their residents and visitors, and to protect the intellectual property rights of the local and indigenous peoples who originate many of these wellness therapies and modalities. Governments play a key role in enacting and enforcing laws that protect the wellness and tourism workforce from unsafe work conditions, exploitation, abuse, and human trafficking. Finally, governments need to monitor the wellness market with vigilance, in order to develop up-to-date regulations for emerging and evolving wellness offerings (e.g., nootropics, psychedelics, and other novel therapies and products), and to communicate with local consumers and visitors about regulations and risks.

### If you are a local/community leader or nonprofit organization:

The sustainability of tourism destinations ultimately depends on the wellness of the destination. Communities and residents who are the beneficiaries of tourism must also be their own champions and stewards. Organizations representing the interests of local residents, native peoples, labor, and the environment can participate in tourism planning and destination stewardship, alongside businesses and destination management organizations, to set priorities, plan, and develop appropriate policies and strategies that balance the economic benefits with the costs of tourism. Importantly, the community can be asked to define what wellness and wellness tourism mean for them. They can articulate the case for investing in wellness infrastructure and quality of life improvements that will serve both residents and tourists. As tourists increasingly seek out authentic and unique experiences, local communities have the opportunity to create the story of their destination, in order to showcase their history, heritage, and perspectives, and to educate travelers on how to engage with this heritage respectfully. Local communities include native and indigenous peoples, as well as the marginalized populations who are often made invisible in the process of gentrification. As the stewards of local and indigenous wellness knowledge and intellectual property rights, local communities can advocate for resources to identify and protect intangible heritage (such as local spiritual/worship traditions, herbal medicine, healing arts, music and arts, culinary heritage, etc.), as well as the natural resources that are the basis of traditional and indigenous medicine and wellness modalities.

### If you are a business leader or employer:

Beyond spas and wellness resorts, many businesses are part of the wellness and wellness tourism economy - from food and beverages to locally-produced personal care and beauty products, and from indigenous healers to personal trainers and yoga teachers. Even "generic" tourism and hospitality businesses, such as accommodations and transportation, can add value by incorporating wellness elements. Businesses have the opportunity to recognize wellness tourism as a high-yield, fast-growing segment where there are many opportunities for local business to participate. As part of the post-pandemic "reset," business leaders can lead the charge to take tourism in a healthier direction. Travelers and consumers increasingly care about who they do

business with, not only in terms of their own experiences, but also how companies treat other people and the planet. There are many opportunities for businesses to incorporate sustainability and responsible tourism practices into their operations, while providing more value to their customers and enhancing their business reputation. Businesses can also educate and train their employees to understand the value of all customers (including local customers) and the importance of inclusiveness, as well as recognize unconscious biases that may impact customers.

The travel and tourism industry (hotels, restaurants, attractions, spas, events and conventions, etc.) is one of the largest employers in the world. A renewed focus on employee wellness - such as compensation, benefits, working conditions, and workplace initiatives that focus on both physical and mental wellness - can help to reduce turnover, boost productivity, and improve customer experiences and the bottom line. Employers can work with training and educational institutions to support career laddering for tourism, spa, hospitality, and other wellness industry workers, and to promote a positive and professional image of industry occupations and advancement opportunities in the wellness tourism sector.

### Policy actions for wellness in tourism.

This section of the toolkit outlines a wide array of policy actions that different stakeholders can pursue in order to promote wellness in tourism. For each item, we describe the objective or "problem" it is trying to address, elaborate on the different policy actions that can be deployed, and provide a list of sample policy tools. Our aim in this toolkit is to address some of the major obstacles that are currently preventing wellness tourism from delivering broad-based health and well-being benefits to local destinations and residents and tourists alike. This toolkit focuses not just on those directly involved in the wellness tourism economy, but more broadly on everyone who is affected by tourism - tourists, workers, local residents, and the community. The policy approaches can support not only wellness tourism, but also sustainable and responsible tourism, equitable wellness, and quality of life improvements for everyone. Some of the policies discussed here may overlap with other wellness policy domains, such as physical activity, traditional and complementary medicine, and wellness at work (topics that are covered in depth by other toolkits in this series).

### Summary of key policy objectives and actions: Wellness in tourism

POLICY OBJECTIVES		ACTIONS
1	Expand the reach and impacts of wellness tourism.	Action 1: Promote a broader understanding of wellness tourism and its potential among all stakeholders.  1.1. Expand the narrative on what businesses and assets are part of a destination's wellness tourism offerings.  1.2. Integrate wellness tourism with broader tourism and regional/community development, for the benefit of both locals and visitors.  1.3. Use clear language and marketing approaches to differentiate offerings for wellness tourism, medical tourism, and hybrid medical wellness, in order to reduce consumer confusion.
2	Integrate the local economy with the wellness tourism economy.	Action 2: Increase local business and consumer participation in the wellness tourism economy.  2.1. Strengthen local business participation in the wellness tourism value chain.  2.2. Support and welcome local consumers at wellness tourism establishments.
3	Improve the wellness of the tourism workforce.	Action 3: Protect workers from harm and support their holistic wellbeing at workplaces. 3.1. Enforce labor and human rights protection. 3.2. Educate and engage employers to elevate worker well-being. 3.3. Support workforce development.
4	Embed equity and sustainability in wellness tourism development and stewardship.	Action 4: Protect environmental, socioeconomic, and cultural assets in wellness tourism development.  4.1. Engage all stakeholders to develop and implement a responsible destination stewardship strategy.  4.2. Take the opportunity to craft a unique and authentic story of the destination.  4.3. Protect local and indigenous wellness assets.
5	Support wellness tourism with up-to-date wellness market knowledge and regulations.	Action 5: Collect and track important metrics, market information, and scientific research to inform policymaking for dynamic wellness sectors.  5.1. Educate wellness travelers on the regulatory and safety issues for hallucinogenic and cognitive enhancing drugs.  5.2. Update regulations and follow international best practices for regulating health and safety at thermal/mineral springs bathing establishments.
6	Ensure that technology enhances wellness for travelers.	Action 6: Use technology wisely to support wellness tourism and the wellness of tourists. 6.1. Employ technology to improve communications, promote healthy behaviors, and enhance visitor interactions with the destination. 6.2. Protect the digital well-being of tourists.



# Expand the Reach and Impacts of Wellness Tourism

### THE ISSUE

Many businesses, governments, communities, and travelers have a narrow understanding of wellness tourism.

The way that wellness tourism is currently portrayed and marketed by tourism businesses and promotional organizations often conveys a very narrow view of what it is. When prospective travelers do a search for "wellness trips" or "wellness" in conjunction with any destination, they will

Much of wellness tourism is secondary wellness travel, where the traveler's wellness values and lifestyle shape decisions throughout the trip.

mostly turn up luxury seaside resorts, spas, and sometimes yoga and meditation retreats. Similarly, when the travel industry and destinations want to attract wellness travelers. they often highlight their "top ten wellness retreats," spa resorts, or other specific types of properties. Indeed, these experiences fit GWI's

definition of primary wellness travel: where wellness is the main purpose and the motivation for the trip. However, that is not the only form of wellness tourism. Less understood is secondary wellness travel, where wellness may not be the primary travel objective, but the traveler's wellness values and lifestyle shape decisions throughout the trip. Examples of secondary wellness travel are business or leisure travelers who actively seek out healthy accommodations, food, and fitness options during a trip for work or visiting friends/family. According to GWI estimates, secondary wellness travel accounted for 88% of all wellness trips and 85% of wellness tourism spending in 2022. Out of the \$651 billion in wellness tourism expenditures in 2022vi, only a portion was spent on luxury resorts and spa treatments. In fact, a large portion of these expenditures are on other types of lodging, food, shopping, entertainment, and excursions that are not considered to be part of the wellness industry. Market surveys since the COVID-19 pandemic are pointing to a rising consumer interest in health and wellness during all types of travel, with more intentional focus on mental wellness, sleep, exercise, healthy food, nature, wonder, and authentic interactions with local culture and communities. As consumers increasingly filter all of their travel decisions and spending through a wellness lens, all tourism stakeholders – travel businesses, service providers, and policymakers – need to shift their understanding of wellness tourism to reflect a more expansive focus that encompasses both primary and secondary wellness travel, alongside the local wellness economy.



88%

According to GWI estimates, **secondary** wellness travel accounted for 88% of all wellness trips and 85% of wellness tourism spending in 2022.

### THE ACTION

Promote a broader understanding of wellness tourism and its potential among all stakeholders.



Governments can promote a better understanding of wellness tourism and its potentially wide-ranging benefits to all stakeholders in the tourism economy and the local economy. As the understanding of wellness tourism broadens, some regions no longer see it as an isolated niche tourism offering for a small segment of wealthy tourists, but rather as an opportunity to bring widespread benefits to local economies and populations. In some places, wellness tourism development is starting to be integrated with local and regional urban planning, economic development, and community development initiatives - an approach that expands the benefits of health and wellness offerings to visitors and locals alike.

# 1.1: Expand the narrative on what businesses and assets are part of a destination's wellness tourism offerings.

A destination's wellness tourism brand and offerings should not be confined to a list of spas and wellness resorts that serve only the primary wellness tourist market. Through expansive and creative destination development and promotional strategies, travelers can be guided to many opportunities outside the "bubble" of their hotels/resorts to maintain and improve their wellness during their trip - such as local gyms, yoga studios, healthy food stores and markets, traditional healers, and other wellness practitioners. Other businesses in non-wellness sectors (such as transportation, food, lodging, excursions, arts and crafts, museums, attractions, and events) are also part of a destination's wellness tourism offerings and can benefit from wellness tourism growth. There are numerous opportunities to infuse wellness into all of these amenities and services, which can help businesses differentiate themselves, connect with their customers, provide more value, and capture higher spending by wellness travelers. Examples include: airport spas that target wellness travelers in transit; wellness-centered hotels that provide better sleep, healthy food, exercise opportunities, and mental wellness support; specialty restaurants serving healthy, organic local cuisine; transportation companies that use clean fuels or low-/zero-emission vehicles; cultural excursions that showcase indigenous healing modalities and plants; or gift shops that sell products connected with local heritage and wellness traditions.

In addition to businesses, various types of public infrastructure – including parks, playgrounds, multi-use trails, green spaces, recreational facilities, waterfront areas, and other amenities – are also a critical part of the wellness tourism offerings in many regions. For example, the High Line in New York City, built initially as a community amenity, quickly became a major tourist attraction supporting all kinds of healthy activities (walking, exercises classes, meditation spaces, contact with nature, social interactions) for locals and tourists alike. The project has inspired dozens of similar projects around the world.



In order to broaden the range of wellness offerings available in a destination, businesses and governments can be presented with the value proposition that wellness tourism brings much higher-than-average revenue. GWI estimates that in 2022, international wellness tourists spent 41% more than the average international tourist, while domestic wellness tourists spent 175% more than the average domestic tourist.vii An expansive and diversified approach to wellness tourism growth can bring all of the economic benefits that the segment promises (business revenues, tax revenues, less seasonality, new investments), alongside expanding the range of wellness offerings and amenities available to the local community.

### 1.2: Integrate wellness tourism with broader tourism and regional/community development, for the benefit of both locals and visitors.

Governments have the opportunity to encourage tourism authorities and destination management organizations to embed wellness into all tourism development and regional/community development efforts, whether there is an explicit wellness tourism strategy or not. Destinations that have built a strong local wellness culture and infrastructure (such as healthy/local food offerings, a pristine natural environment or healthy built environment, a traditional healing culture, facilities for sports and recreation, spas, etc.) can offer these assets to visitors as well. Costa Rica, for example, has long understood the connection between the local and visitor wellness economy. Over more than six years, the Costa Rica Tourism Board has developed its "Wellness Pura Vida" campaign, which emphasizes the wellness of its people, culture, and nature more than specific spas or wellness resorts in its destination promotion and development strategies.viii Singapore has recently launched a major wellness tourism initiative that seeks to establish the city-state as an urban wellness destination, by embracing many facets of the wellness industry, while aggressively promoting and supporting its citizens to adopt a healthy lifestyle. According to the head of the Singapore Tourism Board, "Singapore cannot establish a reputation as an urban wellness destination if we don't have a baseline of domestic advocates and domestic demand... (Hence) it's crucial that we build something that appeals to locals because, without it, it would be an inauthentic experience for foreigners."ix

In an even broader approach, regions can also connect wellness tourism with broader development of a wellness industry cluster that can grow local business and employment opportunities. For example, Austria's Tirol region was an early pioneer in marketing wellness tourism over two decades ago, launching an Alpine wellness concept and developing wellness hotels that would combat the seasonality of its mainstay ski tourism. In the early-2000s, the region expanded on this success by creating the "Cluster Wellness Tirol" initiative to cultivate other economic opportunities and innovation around wellness. Today, over 100 wellness-related businesses in the region are part of this cluster network, ranging from telemedicine, to food production and nutrition, to spa equipment and technology, to workplace wellness, and much more. These are the types of "winwin" wellness tourism approaches that will benefit tourists, local residents, and local businesses simultaneously.

### 1.3: Use clear language and marketing approaches to differentiate offerings for wellness tourism, medical tourism, and hybrid medical wellness, in order to reduce consumer confusion.

Even within the primary wellness tourism segment, the opportunities for the participation of new businesses and development of new offerings are broadening. Travelers' expectations for wellness immersion have expanded far beyond spas, fitness bootcamps, yoga retreats, and detox treatments. The pandemic experience has sparked consumer interest in issues such as preventing and addressing chronic disease, drastic lifestyle change, recovery from long COVID, and healing from trauma. In response, spas and wellness resorts are increasingly offering medical-type services such as executive physicals, gut microbiome assessments, sleep analysis, blood analysis, genetic testing, MRI scans, musculoskeletal assessments, oxygen therapy, immunotherapy, bioelectric therapy, etc. Outside of the wellness industry, some hospitals and medical centers are beginning to incorporate wellness as part of post-surgery recovery and rehabilitation, adding offerings like yoga, medication, exercise, nutrition, energy healing, body work, etc. While many of these new services specifically target medical and wellness tourists, these developments also expand the preventive health and wellness offerings available to local residents living at the destination.

These intersections between medicine and wellness - sometimes called "medical wellness" may increase the marketing confusion that often exists between medical tourism and wellness tourism. Medical tourism typically involves patients traveling to another place for specific medical treatments or enhancements, such as cosmetic surgery, orthopedic surgery, cardiac surgery, and dental procedures. In contrast, wellness tourists are seeking activities and destinations that extend their wellness lifestyle and help them proactively maintain and improve their health and well-being. As noted above, the blending of certain types of medical and wellness activities at spas and health centers is likely to increase. Therefore, it is important for businesses, governments, and destination promotion organizations to understand and use precise terminologies when describing their various tourism offerings and assets, so that patients seeking overseas hospitals for surgery and consumers shopping for wellness resorts are presented with the appropriate options.

### Sample policies to expand the reach and impact of wellness tourism

- Educate stakeholders on the business case for wellness tourism that it not only brings economic benefits (e.g., business revenues, tax revenues, less seasonality, new investments), but can also bring health and wellness benefits to the local community.
- Promote wellness tourism as the concept of enabling visitors to continue their healthy lifestyle habits during travel and to explore new and unique wellness modalities and activities at the destination. Expand the perception of wellness tourism beyond spas, springs, retreats, and luxury resorts, to connect to diverse local wellness sectors and businesses, such as physical activities, healthy eating, mental wellness, nature, art and cultural activities, and local heritage and events.
- Invest in local wellness infrastructure and amenities, such as parks, playgrounds, multi-use trails/greenways, green spaces, recreational facilities, waterfront areas, sporting facilities, attractive/walkable streetscapes, etc. These important wellness offerings can serve both residents and tourists. They also support an overall general culture of wellness - developed through deliberate public policy and community participation - which can enhance the perception, brand, and appeal of a destination in wellness tourism.
- Promote an understanding that the wellness of the local people, community, and environment is the key asset of wellness tourism - via community education and outreach, media campaigns, and cross-sectoral partnerships between tourism and wellness businesses and nonprofits that represent labor, environmental, and community interests.
- Embed wellness as a component in all tourism and economic development strategies, not only in the context of promoting wellness tourism.
- In tourism promotion strategies, link wellness to purpose-driven travel, such as personal growth, volunteerism and giving back, seeking meaning and transcendence, protecting nature and all life, well-being for all, and peace and justice.
- · Use precise language to promote health and wellness services to tourists, in order to avoid confusion among patients seeking medical treatment and procedures, versus guests who are seeking wellness experiences. If destinations are promoting "medical wellness" that blends wellness modalities with preventive medicine, recovery, rehabilitation, and treating chronic conditions, they need to be clear and unambiguous about what they are offering to visitors.



# Integrate the Local Economy with the Wellness Tourism Economy

### THE ISSUE

Wellness tourism offerings are often siloed and separated from local consumers, businesses, and communities.

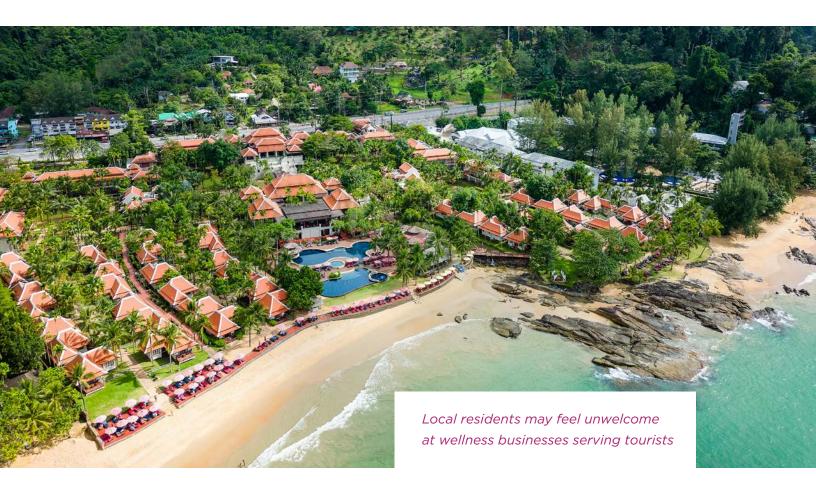
In many regions around the world, the tourism industry (including wellness tourism) does not have strong connections or backward linkages to local communities, businesses, and consumers. As a result, tourism spending may not stay with or directly benefit the local economy and its residents. Research studies estimate that 20-50% of tourism revenues could be "leaked" outside

The local economy does not always benefit from tourism: 20-50% of tourism revenues may flow to outside the community.

the local economy to pay for imported products, imported labor, international franchising fees, and repatriation of interest and capital and this leakage tends to be larger in poorer countries.\* Wellness tourism has an advantage in this regard, because a large portion of wellness tourism spending is typically in

services, potentially benefitting local businesses and providers. Even so, a visitor to a hotel spa in an international chain is often offered the same products, services, and protocols that they could find anywhere in the world (e.g., the same imported branded products, and the same types of Swedish or Thai massage). Customers in international and chain hotel/resort spas pay a markedup "international price," while the spa therapists (like all the other locally hired workers) earn local wages. Depending on the country/region, spa therapists and wellness practitioners may be imported as well. This leakage not only reduces the benefits of wellness tourism to the local economy, but it also limits the opportunity for visitors to benefit from the unique, local wellness experiences, products, and knowledge of the destination they are visiting.

In many places, local customers are alienated from tourist-oriented wellness businesses by discrimination. Misperceptions, biases, stereotypes, prejudice, and a lack of understanding among businesses and providers can create a terrible customer experience. One of the 2021 Global Wellness Trends, "Adding Color to Wellness," described how people of color often face discrimination in spaces where wellness is delivered, including in the hospitality sector.xi Local residents may feel unwelcome at wellness businesses serving tourists, because staff or management convey the impression that they are not valued, or they don't belong there. This experience tends to happen overwhelmingly to customers of color (Black, Brown, Asian, etc.) at high-end resorts in developing countries that cater to an international, wealthy, and often White clientele. Not only are these practices distasteful and wrong, but they also discourage some customers from patronizing these businesses and deprive them of wellness experiences. Businesses may not realize they are losing out on a potentially valuable clientele who can help improve their bottom line and resilience, and can also strengthen their connections to the local community.



### THE ACTION

Increase local business and consumer participation in the wellness tourism economy.



When regions have a very narrow view of what wellness tourism is (i.e., high-end spas and wellness resorts serving wealthy and international primary wellness tourists), it can lead to a siloed wellness tourism industry that brings little benefit to the local community. Therefore, the policy initiatives discussed in Action 1 and those discussed in this section go hand-in-hand to build a more expansive, inclusive, and locally beneficial approach to wellness tourism.

### 2.1: Strengthen local business participation in the wellness tourism value chain.

Local business participation in the tourism value chain is imperative for communities to reap the economic benefits of tourism. It also enriches the wellness tourism infrastructure and creates a unique visitor experience. Regions can differentiate themselves and increase their appeal to wellness tourists when they connect visitors to local foods and culinary traditions; products that are derived from local plants and materials; and wellness practices that are based on indigenous medicine, culture, and spiritual traditions. There are many barriers that can limit local business participation in the wellness tourism value chain. Multinational hospitality businesses often default to offering customers what they are used to at home or at other global destinations. Wellness travelers may not know what kinds of unique and authentic local experiences and products to seek out. Local small businesses may not have the capability to serve tourists if they lack investment capital or knowledge/training in customer service, product development, branding, merchandising, supply chain management, fulfillment, and quality control. Local wellness practitioners, healers, and therapists may lack a formal credentialing or business licensing system to indicate legitimacy, or they may not have digital infrastructure to connect with customers (e.g., e-booking platforms, electronic payments). In places where traditional knowledge is not formally systematized and where intellectual property protection is weak, commercialization of indigenous wellness and healing practices could lead to misappropriation, exploitation, and a lack of authenticity.

There are many policy tools that can help to address these barriers and assist small/local businesses to participate in the wellness tourism economy. These include financial assistance such as loans and grants; mentoring and entrepreneurial training; and technical assistance in product development, quality assurance, marketing, and staff training. All stakeholders should understand that wellness tourism is a fast-growing segment where there are many opportunities for local businesses to participate – from food and beverages to locally-produced personal care and beauty products, and from indigenous healers to personal trainers and yoga teachers. Destination marketing





organizations should highlight the unique wellness offerings available in their local community/ region and engage these businesses and providers. In communities rich with indigenous wellness/ healing knowledge and practices, it is important to protect intellectual property, respect cultural and spiritual traditions, and protect the rights of ownership through appropriate policies and support, and through documentation of knowledge and evidence of efficacy. To promote the quality, safety, and efficacy of these indigenous wellness experiences, it may be necessary for governments to develop proper systems of training, certification, registration, and licensing for local practitioners and products.

### 2.2: Support and welcome local consumers at wellness tourism establishments.

Local customers should be part of the market landscape for wellness tourism, fully engaged in all of the wellness services and modalities offered in their community/region - including those that are developed to attract tourists. In any tourism destination, local residents should have the prerogative to choose whether they would visit or avoid "touristy" establishments; they should never feel unwelcome or excluded from these businesses. Having a diverse customer base, including local customers, is also a useful strategy for improving the seasonality and resilience of the tourism industry, as many hospitality establishments discovered during the pandemic travel bans and border closures. For example, Thailand and Japan offered travel subsidies and discounts of 20-50% to their citizens for domestic travel to support their tourism sectors while international travel was restricted. The Italian government offered every adult living in Italy a €200 spa voucher to spend at an accredited thermal spa in the country.xii Similar types of incentives, such as during low seasons, can increase the engagement of local customers and residents in wellness tourism offerings, make them feel welcome and valued, and promote a shift in mindset toward valuing local clientele and minimizing unconscious bias and discrimination.

# Sample policies to integrate the local economy with the wellness tourism economy

- Educate hospitality businesses on the value of integrating local products into their wellness
  offerings (e.g., locally produced personal care and spa products, herbal and traditional
  medicine products, and specialty food and beverages) and incentivize them to do so.
- Support the capacity of local producers/suppliers and their ability to connect with tourists and tourism/hospitality businesses through small business loans and grants, mentoring, technical assistance, technology investments, and quality assurance and certification programs.
- Support the local Traditional & Complementary Medicine sectorxiii:
  - Promote awareness of the evidence for local and indigenous healing and Traditional & Complementary Medicine (T&CM) modalities where it exists, including data collection/ surveying/cataloguing of indigenous healing traditions and herbs/products, and dissemination of scientific evidence from credible sources.
  - Ensure the safety, quality, and efficacy of local T&CM products through standards and regulations for safety, labeling, marketing, and claims, along with monitoring and enforcement of such standards.
  - Support the education, training, accreditation, licensing, and registration of T&CM practitioners to ensure safety, quality, and efficacy of wellness services and practitioners.
- Hold public awareness campaigns to help hospitality establishments and wellness businesses understand the value of local customers, the importance of inclusiveness, and the national/ local laws on consumer discrimination.
- Train hospitality workers to understand the value of local customers, and to recognize attitudes and behaviors related to unconscious bias.
- Organize periodic wellness events or participate in global wellness events (e.g., Global Wellness Day, World Wellness Weekend) that can engage local residents, and encourage hospitality establishments to participate.
- Encourage wellness tourism/hospitality businesses to provide discounts and develop packages for local residents, which can help to diversify their customer base and improve seasonality.
- Provide vouchers or other financial incentives for local/regional individuals/families to offset their out-of-pocket expenditures when patronizing wellness tourism/hospitality businesses, as some countries/destinations have done to promote tourism and business recovery during the COVID-19 pandemic.



# Improve the Wellness of the Tourism Workforce

### THE ISSUE

The people who work to improve the wellness of others are not well themselves.

Wellness and hospitality are primarily service businesses. The plight of low-wage service workers, who typically lack job security and social protections, came under the spotlight during the pandemic. Even as tourism recovers in the aftermath of the pandemic, the hospitality industry is tremendously understaffed, exacerbated by high turnover and a shortage of hospitality workers

Employers are starting to recognize that caring for worker well-being is the right thing to do and also good for business.

worldwide. From the kitchen to the front desk to housekeeping to spas, workers in all aspects of tourism (including wellness tourism) are feeling the strain. Unfortunately, this is now the reality for much of the service industry workforce across the world, even outside of tourism and hospitality. Many workers are demanding better working conditions, higher pay, and benefits amid

inflation and tight labor markets. In many cases, employers are starting to recognize that caring for the health and well-being of their workers is not only the right thing to do, but is also good for their business and their bottom line.

### THE ACTION

Protect workers from harm and support their holistic well-being at workplaces.

### **ACTION 3.1**

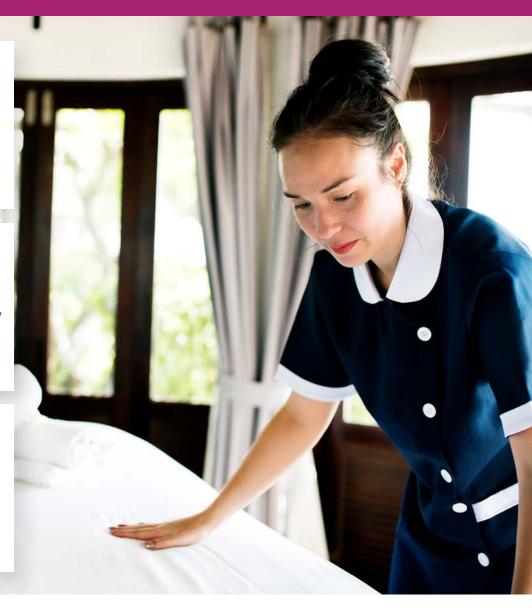
Enforce labor and human rights protections for tourism, hospitality, and wellness workers.

### **ACTION 3.2**

Educate & engage employers in tourism, hospitality, and wellness sectors to elevate worker well-being.

#### **ACTION 3.3**

Support career development for tourism, hospitality, and wellness workers.



There are many policies that can help to enhance workforce wellness in any industry sector; these are addressed in depth in the Wellness Policy Toolkit: Wellness At Work, which is part of GWI's Wellness Policy Series. We encourage you to access the information available in that report. In this section, we focus on policies and government approaches that are particularly relevant to the health and well-being of the labor force working in the hospitality, tourism, and wellness sectors. The wellness tourism industry has the opportunity to lead by example and walk the talk when it comes to workforce well-being. It is challenging and even disingenuous to provide an authentic service supporting the wellness, rejuvenation, and health of wellness tourism customers, when the staff providing these services are not well themselves.

# 3.1: Enforce labor and human rights protections for tourism, hospitality, and wellness workers.

Most countries have labor protection and occupational health/safety laws on the books, but the enforcement of these laws is often uneven and inadequate. At a minimum, governments and policies need to protect workers from harm while on the job - not only from physical harm but also from workplace discrimination, mistreatment, and abuse. Outside of the management ranks, hotels and restaurants are generally staffed by low-wage workers with high turnover. The tourism and hospitality industry is characterized by a large number of small-, medium-, and micro-sized enterprises, as well as a large share of low-paid, low-status, shiftwork, seasonal, part-time, and temporary jobs. As a result, the industry employs a disproportionate number of women, youth, immigrants (legal and undocumented), and people from disadvantaged demographic groups.xiv For example, in 2019, 54% of all workers in tourism were women (as compared to women representing only 39% of workers in the overall global economy).xv It is estimated that foreignborn workers account for 25% of total employment in the hospitality sector in OECD countries. In Latin America-Caribbean, 61% of restaurant workers and 25% of hotel workers work informally, while in Asia-Pacific, 75% of tourism jobs are informal.xvi

All of these demographic groups are the most vulnerable to discrimination, exploitation, harassment, abuse, and trafficking; the collapse of tourism during the pandemic has only increased the challenges faced by these workers. According to the International Labour Organization, "The crisis has exacerbated global inequalities in the labour market in the tourism sector, disproportionally

affecting women, young people, migrants and workers in the informal economy, who are often among the most vulnerable groups of workers. This presents a serious challenge to an inclusive, sustainable and resilient future of work, as many tourism workers are at risk of suffering long-term consequences throughout their working lives, including in terms of labour market participation and career development. However, the rebuilding

Governments can help educate tourism and hospitality workers to know their rights, address grievances, and seek help.

process also provides an opportunity to build a fairer and more sustainable future of work for all workers in the sector."xvii In addition to setting and enforcing protective policies, governments can help educate tourism and hospitality workers to know their rights, to know how to address grievances, and to discover where to seek help. Tourism, hospitality, and wellness businesses can be partners with governments in this regard, by voluntarily setting and exceeding standards and regulations for protecting the health and well-being of their workforce.

# 3.2: Educate and engage employers in tourism, hospitality, and wellness sectors to elevate worker well-being.

Many wellness travelers are values driven. Increasingly, travelers and consumers are considering how a business treats its employees, the community, and the planet when they decide where and how to spend their money. At the same time, ESG (Environment, Social, and Governance) investing is on the rise, pushing more companies to adopt ESG performance metrics and pay more attention to their social and environmental responsibility, including the well-being of the workforce. While governments cannot mandate employers to prioritize worker well-being, they can make a strong business case to hospitality and wellness businesses for doing so, especially given the current labor shortages and the high costs of turnover. Workforce wellness efforts can start with physical health and extend to mental and financial wellness. A well workforce is a more motivated and loyal workforce, who will deliver a much better experience to customers, will help to improve the business's bottom line, and will enhance the business's brand and reputation.

One leading example of a company caring for worker well-being in the hospitality and tourism industry is The Breakers, a family-owned, 127-year-old luxury hotel in Palm Beach, Florida. The company employs 2,300 people, and its brand is built on a culture of health and wellness for both its guests and its employees. Over the years, The Breakers has created many employee wellness initiatives that extend far beyond the typical fitness and nutrition programs.xviii Employee wellness programs include an on-site wellness clinic, a mobile dental clinic, a dermatology clinic, and a mental wellness program for all staff. In 2019, The Breakers conducted a diversity study, which found that employees of color had shown lower engagement levels in the hotel's wellness programs. As a result, it launched a wellness program specifically for team members of color, led by an integrative medicine physician of color. The pilot program includes a confidential biometric screening at the clinic, followed up by a private consultation with the doctor who then customizes a wellness plan for each participant. It also includes group discussions of topics such as nutrition, mental health, exercise, and sleep.xix The initial program was so successful that it was expanded to more team members after the first three months. The Breakers Hotel credits its exceptionally low staff turnover - an 80% average retention rate - to their employees' satisfaction at work. In 2023, The Breakers was named one of the Fortune 100 "Best Companies to Work For."



### 3.3: Support career development for tourism, hospitality, and wellness workers.

A good workplace starts with paying people fairly and treating workers with dignity and respect. It can also take a step further to support and empower workers to realize their aspirations for purpose and advancement. Governments and policies can support the education, training, and credentialing of workers who want to pursue a career in the tourism, hospitality, and wellness industries, in order to support their long-term career prospects, advancement, and job security. Governments can also promote a better understanding of the career prospects in wellness and tourism, especially in places where such jobs do not command community or family respect. For example, in some communities, hospitality and spa workers may be stereotyped or misunderstood as working in the sex industry, and it is important for local governments and the business community to engage in education, awareness, and promotion to combat these negative perceptions.

### Sample policies to improve the wellness of the tourism workforce

- · Rigorously enforce existing laws against human trafficking, modern slavery, and sexual exploitation, as well as laws against discrimination and harassment based on race, gender, religion, nationality and country of origin, sexual orientation, etc. - and expand protections where needed.
- · Educate workers on their rights, the prevailing laws and practices, and best practices that protect them, as well as the channels for reporting labor violations.
- Support organizations that advocate for workforce health and well-being.
- Support campaigns that emphasize employee health and well-being as a top ESG priority for hospitality and wellness businesses.
- · Increase awareness that employee well-being is central to enterprise competitiveness, profitability, and business/brand reputation.
- · Encourage employers to promote employment stability, pay, and benefits as integral to employee financial and mental wellness.
- · Support training and credentialling programs for tourism, hospitality, and wellness workers (either through direct support of education and training institutions and nonprofit groups, or through grants to individuals) - especially for local workers and for disadvantaged groups (women, minorities, disabled people, etc.).



# **Embed Equity and Sustainability** In Wellness Tourism Development and Stewardship

### THE ISSUE

Destinations and local communities are often the collateral damage of the tourism economy, including wellness tourism.

It is well-understood that overtourism or poorly managed tourism can bring harm to a community's social, cultural, and natural environment, while also degrading travelers' experiences and enjoyment of their trips. High-volume and high-density tourism can overload local infrastructure for transport, energy, water, and sanitation, and can threaten wildlife, biodiversity, and the ecosystem. In the worst cases, overcrowding and over-commercialized tourism can leave both travelers and local residents feeling less well. Visitor experiences are greatly diminished, while their visits may put at risk some of the world's most beloved cultural and natural treasures.\*\* When a destination becomes overrun by tourists, tourism-focused businesses may drive up rents and property prices, displacing local residents and services. These are not easy issues to resolve, and the vast challenges became especially evident during the pandemic, when travel bans decimated tourism businesses and tourism dependent communities across the world. However, the tourism pause also created an opportunity for a reset.

There is also growing discussion and scrutiny of who owns and controls the valuable natural, historical, and cultural assets that underpin tourism, and how the benefits derived from them can be equitably distributed. As discussed in *Action 2*, tourism can often change the character of a community and their way of life, while bringing limited direct benefits to local residents. Sometimes, the indigenous peoples who had long been the stewards of the land and cultural/historical assets are displaced or marginalized by the development and growth of the tourism industry. The indigenous residents may be the ones providing the "local flavor" in the attractions, goods, and services marketed to tourists, but the bulk of the profits may be transferred to large/multinational tourism businesses or even the government. The general strike that shut down Machu Picchu in early 2023 is a good example of how community anger and desperation over such issues can boil over and even shut down the economic lifeblood of a region.<sup>xxi</sup>



### THE ACTION

Protect environmental, socioeconomic, and cultural assets in wellness tourism development.



Wellness tourism is sometimes conflated with sustainable and responsible tourism, or with other niches such as ecotourism. While wellness tourism often overlaps with the interests and values of these segments and their target visitors, they are not the same thing. In many places, wellness tourism businesses can and do develop at the expense of community and planetary wellbeing, but there is also great potential to leverage wellness tourism to simultaneously develop sustainable and responsible tourism. Now is an especially opportune time to do so, as wellness traveler interests are extending far beyond a narrow focus on spa resorts and massages. Wellness travelers are increasingly interested in nature, curative waters, outdoor exercise, local healthy cuisines, and indigenous healing arts and products, as well as the overall healthiness, culture, and authenticity of the destination. Protecting all of these assets strengthens a destination's appeal for wellness tourism.

# 4.1: Engage all tourism stakeholders to develop and implement a responsible destination stewardship strategy.

As a high yield category that attracts a larger portion of high-income visitors, wellness tourism can be an antidote to mass tourism and overtourism. Because wellness travelers tend to be high-spenders and favor experiences that are authentic and unique, there is less pressure for destinations to engage in a "race to the bottom" strategy that competes on price and quantity. Wellness tourism also provides destinations with an opportunity to reduce the seasonality of visitor flows. For example, ski destinations can attract wellness travelers interested in hiking and other outdoor activities in the summertime, while beach destinations can appeal to travelers who are looking for a more tranquil environment to destress or take a retreat in the wintertime.

Wellness tourism has the potential to spread tourism to less traveled destinations; bring economic benefits and innovations to rural areas; and increase the incentives to protect local culture,

Wellness tourism has the potential to distribute economic benefits to less-visited destinations.

biodiversity, and the environment. The values and interests inherent in wellness tourism are well-aligned with those of sustainable and responsible tourism. A region's key assets for developing and promoting wellness tourism extend beyond its hospitality and wellness businesses, and include the well-being of its people, the integrity of its culture, and the quality of its natural environment. As

shown by the examples of Costa Rica, New Zealand, and Bhutan, sustainable tourism policies and strategies can help protect key assets and foundations while creating a successful and competitive wellness tourism destination.

The tourism pause during the pandemic has created a reset opportunity for regions to engage all stakeholders in crafting and implementing a responsible destination stewardship strategy, bringing equitable benefits to the local community and its ecosystem, and enhancing the appeal of the destination. The sustainable and responsible tourism development movements have been around for some time, championed by organizations such as the Global Sustainable Tourism Council and the Center for Responsible Travel, as well as multilateral development organizations such as the Word Bank, UNDP, and UNESCO. As such, there are already many existing tools and comprehensive frameworks for policymakers and destinations to draw upon.xxiii Tourism destinations can coalesce stakeholders in wellness tourism, ecotourism, cultural tourism, and other tourism segments to work together on responsible and sustainable tourism strategies that will cultivate and protect their regional assets for the long-term benefit of all.

### 4.2. Craft a unique and authentic story of the destination.

The pandemic gave both travelers and destinations time to reflect on what travel and tourism means to them. Across global tourism, there is a significant shift in the direction of wellness not only visiting wellness resorts and destination spas, but also spending time outdoors and in nature, for mental respite, healing, growth, and finding awe and wonder. Gone are the days when a wellness vacation meant hiding out in the bubble of a luxury resort and doing sunset yoga on the beach. Travelers are increasingly aware of the environmental and social footprints of their trips. They are also becoming more purposeful, wanting to engage with the place they are visiting and to connect with local people in a less commercial and more authentic way.

Globally, there is growing interest in indigenous travel, xxiii which is creating new opportunities for destinations to craft authentic stories that showcase their unique history, heritage, and perspectives, as well as to shape how travelers will experience them. For some destinations, this could mean the chance to highlight indigenous healing modalities, native plants and products, and the cultural heritage behind these practices. In cities, there is the opportunity to showcase the local urban culture (arts, food, music, commerce, and history of the population) and to educate visitors about the marginalized people who were made invisible through gentrification. For example:

- · In New Zealand, the "If You Seek" campaign rebrands the country's tourism with an emphasis on the Māori culture of hospitality and values of environmental stewardship. The campaign positions New Zealand's natural and cultural attractions as an immersive experience for the curious and those seeking personal growth.xxiv
- In 2020, the Indigenous Tourism Association of Canada (ITAC) launched the "Original Original" campaign, to promote indigenous travel experiences/attractions throughout the country and to ensure that indigenous communities are controlling and profiting from them. In 2021, ITAC created the "Original Original" brand mark, which accredits Canadian businesses that are at least 51% indigenous-owned and that adhere to a set of responsible tourism standards.xxv
- In 2022, Uganda launched its new tourism brand "Discover Uganda: The Pearl of Africa" with a two-minute video. Instead of showcasing the stereotypical safari animals, the promotion focused on images of Ugandans talking to each other, eating, dancing, hiking, ziplining, and enjoying the diverse food, city life, nature, and culture that the country has to offer.xxvi

These kinds of promotional campaigns and stories not only appeal to visitors who are seeking unique and authentic experiences, but can also engage, educate, and motivate visitors to practice responsible and sustainable tourism. In Africa, this approach has the potential to free tourism from the predominant white tourism perspective and embrace the renewed interest in African heritage by the global Black diaspora. It is an opportunity to connect with Afro-descendent tourists searching for history, heritage, and cultural roots, and to promote and facilitate greater domestic and regional tourism by Africans within the continent. While this kind of renewed, indigenouscentered narrative extends far beyond wellness tourism, the approach should be integrated and embraced in wellness tourism development strategies and can help increase the participation of native and indigenous peoples in wellness tourism businesses.



### 4.3: Protect local and indigenous wellness assets.

The majority of modern wellness modalities – including mind-body practices, bodywork, energy healing, herbal medicine, aromatherapy, nootropics, psychedelics, etc. – have their roots in traditional and indigenous healing practices from all around the world. However, many of these modalities (e.g., yoga, meditation, reiki, ayurvedic treatments, etc.) are now practiced in ways that are largely divorced from their roots and the larger context and systems from which they originate. For the practices that are now mainstream and commonplace in spas/wellness establishments around the world, it is too late to argue for intellectual property (IP) ownership or compensation to the originating communities. However, the scientific, medical, pharmaceutical, and wellness sectors continue to actively scout for traditional remedies, native plants, and indigenous wellness practices in remote communities (especially in developing countries), looking for new products and services to commercialize. Beyond the concerns about IP protection and benefits-sharing, the "discovery" and over-harvesting of local plants and resources can also threaten the self-healthcare that many indigenous communities still depend upon. At the same time, much of this indigenous knowledge, often passed down orally from the elders within families, is also under threat of extinction, as the younger generation becomes less interested in learning it and passing it on.

There are many ways for governments to help protect and safeguard these important indigenous and local wellness assets. First, governments and policymakers need to fully acknowledge and respect the traditional and spiritual use of rituals, plants, and substances in indigenous practices, as well as recognize the critical need to protect these traditions while balancing broader wellness tourism and business interests. This is the foundation for forming a respectful partnership that recognizes indigenous communities as the caretakers of this knowledge.

Next, governments need to develop capacity for conducting international research on indigenous practices, issues related to IP protection, and prevention of possible misappropriation and exploitation within their domain. Additionally, they can provide resources and support to document and catalogue traditional and indigenous medical knowledge. Investment in indigenous medicine research can spur innovation and new opportunities, which in turn may provide incentives to preserve and advance this knowledge among the younger generation, as well as to protect the natural and biological resources associated with these practices.

Finally, governments can work with communities to identify and catalog the natural and biological resources that are associated with indigenous medicine practices, and they can align wildlife, conservation, biodiversity, and forest management policies to protect these resources and ensure their sustainable cultivation, harvesting, and continued use by local communities.

Even more challenging is the fundamental question of who has ownership and control over the development and protection of these kinds of natural assets and the land on which they reside. In some cases, governments have decided to return the land that they took from indigenous peoples, along with the stewardship and management of natural assets and tourism development in those areas. For example, in 2022, Australia returned 20,000 square kilometers (or nearly half) of Kakadu National Park, as well as 362,000 hectares of the Cape York peninsula, to their traditional Aboriginal owners.xxvii Many native peoples - from the Americas to Asia to Africa to Australia - have land stewardship practices that date back hundreds or thousands of years, rooted in their spiritual beliefs and relationship to nature. Stewardship of these resources by indigenous peoples may improve the cultural and biological sustainability of these lands, while also creating new economic opportunities of direct benefit to local communities. Concurrently, it would be important to support this stewardship with training and technical assistance for indigenous communities on topics such as entrepreneurship and sustainable tourism practices.

### Sample policies to embed equity and sustainability in wellness tourism development and stewardship

- · Promote the "business case" for responsible and sustainable tourism to local communities and businesses.xxviii
- Engage local stakeholders and communities (i.e., residents, native peoples, businesses, destination management organizations, NGOs, etc.) in priority setting, tourism planning, and developing appropriate policies that balance stakeholder needs and impacts, policy and project implementation, and impact monitoring.
- Incorporate comprehensive environmental sustainability components in destination stewardship, including:
  - Visitor management, including emerging "behavior-smart" strategies that leverage behavioral science and best practices to nudge behavior change toward wellness and sustainability.xxix
  - Wildlife and ecosystem protection.xxx
  - Water and energy management.
  - Waste management and recycling.
  - Greenhouse gas emissions and climate change mitigation.
  - Low impact transportation.
  - Light and noise pollution.

- Support local business and indigenous community participation in the wellness tourism economy and ensure benefits sharing xxxi (see Action 2).
- Improve the health and well-being of the tourism workforce (see Action 3).
- Provide tax incentives, grants, and loans to support businesses and destinations developing responsible tourism.
- · Encourage and promote sustainable tourism certifications by hospitality destinations, establishments, and tour operators.xxxii
- Engage local communities and indigenous peoples to create an authentic and unique story/ narrative for destination branding and marketing.
- · Give visibility to less-known destinations and their communities if they are ready for developing wellness tourism.
- Develop programs and activities for visitors to engage and give back to the local community (in both time and material contributions).
- Safeguard cultural assets through documentation, evaluation, rehabilitation, and conservation.
- · Identify and protect intangible heritage, including local traditions, spiritual/worship traditions, healing arts, music and arts, culinary heritage, etc.
- · Protect the intellectual property rights for local healing modalities and traditional health knowledge to prevent misuse and misappropriation. Ensure local and indigenous communities and practitioners receive due respect, credit, and share in the economic benefits.
- · Ensure access for local communities and indigenous peoples to natural and cultural sites, and to the biological resources needed for their indigenous medicine practices.
- Transfer ownership and stewardship of the natural and biological assets to native peoples. Support such stewardship with training and technical assistance in entrepreneurship and sustainable tourism practices.



# Support Wellness Tourism with **Up-to-Date Wellness Market** Knowledge and Regulations

### THE ISSUE

Rapidly evolving wellness sectors challenge governments and policies to keep up.

Wellness is an extremely diverse industry, encompassing sectors as wide-ranging as real estate, food, spas, thermal/mineral springs, and traditional & complementary medicine. These are all dynamic sectors, with new modalities, healing practices, protocols, substances, foods, and supplements continuously entering the market, fueled by emerging research, wellness entrepreneurship, and consumer demand. The proliferation of wellness offerings and modalities at spas and wellness resorts encourages people to try all sorts of therapies for the first time when they travel - including everything from extreme diets and punishing workouts to extreme temperatures (e.g., saunas, steam rooms, hot springs, cold plunges, cryo chambers), and from IV drips and oxygen treatments to guided psychedelic trips. When it comes to some of these complementary and traditional/indigenous wellness modalities, scientific evidence often lags far behind consumer adoption and business offerings, and businesses and consumers do not always utilize these modalities with the necessary precautions.

It is very challenging for governments to monitor market developments, keep regulations up to date to ensure efficacy or safety, or give guidance to wellness consumers and travelers who are susceptible to the widespread influence of celebrities and social media. For increasingly popular mental wellness practices like shamanic healing, crystal healing, energy healing, prayer, spiritual work, and psychic practices, asking for scientific evidence is almost antithetical to the very nature of spirituality and beliefs. Policymakers need to decide which of these areas deserve the most attention for regulation, and in which areas a policy of caveat emptor ("let the buyer beware") would suffice.

### THE ACTION

Collect and track important metrics, market information, and scientific research to inform policymaking for dynamic wellness sectors.



As the wellness market rapidly evolves and expands, governments and policymakers face many challenges in staying current with the latest offerings and fads. Better information and research are needed in order to develop the most appropriate policies that can support the growth of wellness sectors and wellness tourism, and that can balance many competing needs and demands: the drive for business entrepreneurship and innovation, the rights of consumers to experience and benefit from a multitude of wellness modalities, and the imperative to protect people's safety and health. There is no one-size-fits-all policy in any of these wellness sectors. Every country and jurisdiction must navigate this landscape based on the realities of their unique wellness economy; the nature of their consumer and tourist markets; and the social, cultural, religious, and historical contexts of their society. With the ongoing and rapid expansion of the wellness economy, governments need to invest adequate resources in their capacity to monitor the market, including developing and collecting important metrics, as well as monitoring scientific research, to inform policymaking.

Every sector within the wellness economy has need for better monitoring, management, and policy by governments. Regulatory issues for specific areas (e.g., food and supplements, traditional & complementary medicine, built environment, etc.) are discussed within their respective toolkits in GWI's Wellness Policy Series. In this toolkit, we focus on two diverse areas that are especially fastgrowing and popular within the wellness tourism industry: hallucinogenic and cognitive enhancing drugs, and thermal/mineral springs.

# 5.1: Educate wellness travelers on the regulatory and safety issues for hallucinogenic and cognitive enhancing drugs.

One area where governments around the world are especially grappling with appropriate policies and regulations is hallucinogens (e.g., cannabis, psilocybin, mescaline, and other psychedelic drugs) and cognitive enhancers (e.g., nootropics, smart drugs, neuroenhancers). With the rise of recreational and wellness uses of these substances, some countries and regions have pursued decriminalization (i.e., it is no longer illegal to carry or use cannabis or psilocybin), but without formally legalizing the production, distribution, and sale of these substances or the products that contain them. Other countries have taken a hardline approach. For example, in 2022, Hong Kong followed the lead of China and banned all CBD products, shutting down CBD shops and cafes across the city in 2023.

One example of the regulatory and consumer challenges is the explosion of the CBD market and the proliferation of CBD products in the United States, from food and beverages and supplements to personal care and pet products, following U.S. federal legalization in 2018. In the United States, each individual state is left to regulate the CBD and cannabis market based on its own criteria for different substances (e.g., cannabis- or hemp-derived, THC content, etc.), different types of

products, different uses (medical versus recreational use), sales outlets and licensing requirements, etc.xxxiii Meanwhile, marijuana remains illegal at the federal level (even though it has been legalized by many states). Consumers are often not aware of the rules regarding traveling with these products (i.e., it is legal to transport CBD across state lines but not marijuana). Early in 2023, the U.S.

The uneven international regulatory landscape has enabled some destinations to position themselves for psychedelic and cannabis tourism.

Food and Drug Administration (FDA) determined that the existing framework designed to govern the sale of food additives and dietary supplements is not appropriate to regulate CBD products or to ensure their health claims and safety. It is exploring new regulatory pathways for CBD products, creating tremendous uncertainty for both consumers and businesses in this market.xxxiv

The uneven international regulatory landscape for all types of hallucinogenic and cognitive enhancing drugs has enabled some destinations to position themselves for psychedelic and

cannabis tourism (e.g., cannabis tours in Las Vegas, Canna Cruise in Amsterdam, Ayahuasca retreats in Costa Rica and Peru, psilocybin retreats in Jamaica and Spain).xxxv However, the countries that have more permissive policies may not want to develop a reputation for attracting drug-seeking tourists or deal with the consequences of widespread recreational drug use. For example, just months after Thailand completely decriminalized cannabis (the whole plant) in 2022, the Minister of Health declared that pot-smoking tourists are not welcome.xxxvi Even Amsterdam, which has long attracted tourists for marijuana consumption, decided to ban public marijuana smoking in the city center in 2023. According to the statement from its city council, "Residents of the old town suffer a lot from mass tourism and alcohol and drug abuse in the streets... Tourists also attract street dealers who in turn cause crime and insecurity."xxxviii

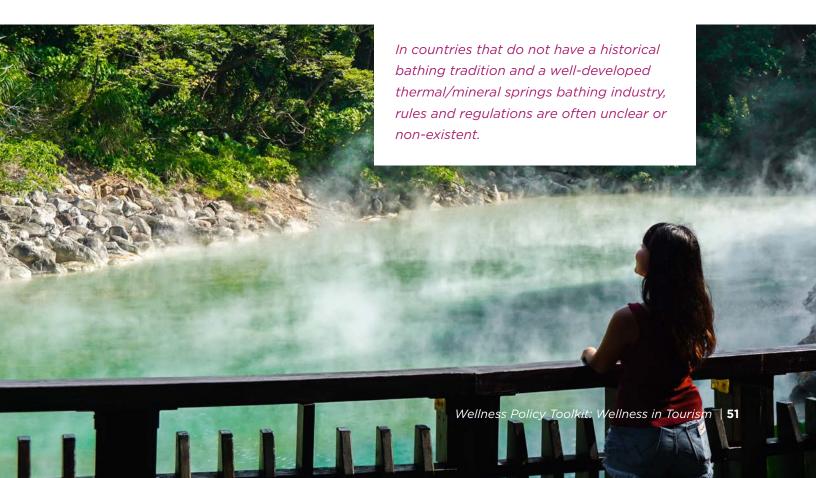
When cannabis, psychedelics, nootropics, and other traditionally banned substances are used in wellness tourism offerings, the regulatory and safety issues can be particularly challenging. In the countries and jurisdictions where policies on cannabis/CBD and psychedelics are more relaxed, consumer/traveler naivete can subject them to grave risks when they travel from one destination to the next without being aware of the dramatic differences in the laws governing these substances. For example, in some Asian and Middle East countries, possession of cannabis even in small amounts is punishable by long prison sentences, and the production and import of controlled substances can be a capital offense. Therefore, it is important for countries to not only clarify regulations on these substances, but also promote consumer/traveler education and awareness of cross-border differences. In addition, consumers need education on the current status of scientific evidence for various wellness modalities and therapies, how to understand risks, and how to identify and select reputable providers, including when they are traveling to far-flung wellness resorts and retreats. (See GWI's Wellness Policy Toolkit: Traditional & Complementary Medicine for more discussion on this topic.)

# 5.2. Update regulations and follow international best practices for regulating health and safety at thermal/mineral springs bathing establishments.

Another popular wellness sector related to wellness tourism is thermal/mineral springs, which has been growing rapidly due to consumer interest in the healing power of water/nature and the social/communal aspects of public bathing. As this sector expands, there are growing concerns with outdated, inappropriate, and/or inconsistent regulations applied to natural thermal/mineral waters across the world. Every country and region sets its own standards on issues such as water treatment and sanitation, water usage and circulation, information to customers, etc. In countries with longstanding and well-developed springs/bathing industries (e.g., Europe, Japan, Taiwan) the sector may be highly regulated, while in other countries there may be a complete lack of regulations or guidance.

For example, in Japan, where the hot springs bathing tradition dates back over 2,000 years, there are extensive laws governing hot springs that have evolved since the country's first Hot Spring Law was enacted in 1948. Natural springs must contain designated amounts of certain chemical/mineral compounds (10 official classifications based on chemical composition) or be over 25 degrees Celsius (4 official classifications based on temperature), to be considered an onsen. Additional criteria designate onsen that are able to provide medical treatments (specialist physicians are not required in every facility), and the Japanese health insurance system does not cover onsen therapy. There are many rules to ensure water quality (e.g., how it is delivered to bathing tubs/pools, mixing of spring water with public water, heating/cooling of water), safety (e.g., additives and sterilization methods, filtering, flushing/circulation/recycling of water, testing), and information to customers (e.g., naming the water source and characteristics, sharing testing results).xxxviii Across Europe, the countries with long traditions of thermal bathing and balneotherapy have similarly extensive laws and regulations – especially in countries where the national health system covers bathing treatments for certain medical conditions – but standards are fragmented and inconsistent across different countries.xxxix

In countries that do not have a historical bathing tradition and a well-developed thermal/mineral springs bathing industry, rules and regulations are often unclear or non-existent. Some bathing establishments do not even provide transparent information to customers about whether they are using naturally sourced thermal/mineral waters, or just heated tap water. Poor sanitary practices can lead to issues with Legionella bacteria, cyanobacteria, or other pathogens, even in regions that have strict regulations and water testing requirements. Some popular thermal springs regions have experienced challenges due to unpermitted, overextraction, or unsustainable use of groundwater (e.g., Laguna Province in the Philippines<sup>xl</sup>, Dead Sea region in Israel<sup>xli</sup>). In places that lack springs-specific regulations, thermal/mineral springs operators often default to the most conservative option of water disinfection with chlorine (e.g., following the rules governing public swimming pools) – even though such practices can diminish the wellness benefits of bathing in natural waters or may jeopardize the health of staff who work in an enclosed environment (e.g., developing allergies or asthma from exposure to chlorine).



In countries where thermal/mineral springs represent an important or emerging sector, it would be prudent for governments to consult with the industry and the scientific community to develop appropriate springs-specific regulations. More research and sharing of international research and best practices can help to inform policymakers on how to set standards on bather load and flow rate, and the use of alternative disinfectants such as ozone or UV, while reducing the use of chlorine.xiii The aim should be to protect the integrity and the wellness benefits of these activities – thus promoting both wellness and tourism – without compromising public health and safety. For example, in the United States, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) publishes a set of voluntary guidelines called the *Model Aquatic Health Code* (MAHC), which is updated every few years based on scientific data and best practices gathered through a strong partnership between public health and aquatics industry experts. While the MAHC is backed by the CDC, unlike legislation, it is voluntarily adopted wholly or in part because of strong industry buy-in. In addition, policy can support and promote bather education and healthy bathing behaviors in spas, thermal/mineral springs, and other public waters.

# Sample policies to support wellness tourism with up-to-date wellness market knowledge and regulations

• Invest in the capacity of policymakers and regulators to study and track the scientific evidence, efficacy, safety issues, risks, etc. for novel and fast-growing wellness services, treatments, and products in the marketplace.

#### Hallucinogenic and Cognitive Enhancing Drugs:

- Set clear regulations and safety standards for the use of hallucinogens (e.g., cannabis, psilocybin, mescaline, and other psychedelic drugs) and cognitive enhancing drugs (e.g., nootropics, smart drugs, neuroenhancers) for wellness purposes.
- Educate tourists and consumers on risks, safety, and laws related to hallucinogens and cognitive enhancers, especially when crossing borders.
- Educate tourists and consumers on the current status of scientific evidence for hallucinogens and cognitive enhancers and how to identify and select reputable providers.

#### **Thermal/Mineral Springs:**

- Set clear classifications and standards and provide comprehensible information to tourists and consumers on the types, status, and benefits of thermal/mineral springs bathing offerings.
- Implement and/or upgrade regulations on the use of thermal/mineral springs waters, as well as safety/sanitation in these establishments, and follow international best practices.
- Monitor and set standards to manage the environmental impacts of using thermal/mineral springs waters for recreational purposes.



# **Ensure That** Technology Enhances Wellness for Travelers

### THE ISSUE

Technology is pervasive in tourism, but it does not always enhance the wellness or experiences of tourists.

Just like in our daily lives, technology is ubiquitous in tourism. When we travel, we encounter tech at every step of our journey, including booking websites/apps, travel reviews and ratings websites/ apps, travel influencers and vlogs, self-check-in kiosks, in-room and in-flight entertainment, appbased self-guided tours, interactive map apps, translator apps, and so on. While technology has vast potential to improve the experiences of tourists and the efficiency of tourism providers, it also has many downsides. The spillover of technology-related stress from everyday life into travel can often erode the rejuvenation and wellness experiences that tourists are seeking - for example, digital distractions pulling our attention away from meaningful real-time experiences, information overload during travel, depersonalization of experiences through digitization/automation, social media-driven FOMO, visual and noise pollution, poor connectivity or technology failures causing stress, and so on. Wellness providers and hospitality/tourism businesses that are quick to adopt the latest technologies for efficiency or service delivery can sometimes forget the human side of their customers' experiences. These kinds of challenges will only grow as the tourism and hospitality industry gradually integrates "industry 4.0" technologies (e.g., the metaverse, augmented/virtual reality, artificial intelligence, the Internet of Things, blockchain, etc.). xiiii

### THE ACTION

Use technology wisely to support wellness tourism and the wellness of tourists.



From mobile apps to augmented/virtual reality to artificial intelligence, technology is rapidly transforming how businesses engage with consumers and deliver value - whether it's comparison shopping, personalization, on-demand delivery, customer feedback, or building communities around a brand. Governments are also leveraging information and communications technology to deliver better public services and solutions, addressing issues such as traffic and congestion, public utility infrastructure, environmental sustainability, and public health and safety. There are many opportunities to deploy technology to support wellness tourism development, but governments and policymakers need to take caution to ensure that technology is not eroding the wellness of their visitors.

## 6.1: Employ technology to improve communications, promote healthy behaviors, and enhance visitor interactions with the destination.

In the tourism industry, a new concept of "smart tourism destinations" has evolved out of the "smart cities" movement, focusing on the use of advanced technologies to simplify or elevate visitor experiences, streamline tourism operations and service delivery, improve sustainability, and gather data for real-time decision-making.xliv There are many opportunities to deploy technology to engage visitors and businesses, improve communication and awareness of wellness tourism, improve data collection, promote healthy behaviors, and enhance visitor interactions with the destination. For example:

In wellness tourism (as well as in tourism overall), many of the businesses and service providers are sole proprietorships or small-/micro-enterprises with limited resources or expertise to adopt the latest software or tech solutions. Governments can upgrade their region's wellness tourism offerings by supporting small and local wellness service providers in adopting technologies that will help them market themselves, engage with their visitors, and enhance their offerings (e.g., everything from websites, booking platforms, electronic payments, and enterprise management software, to AR/VR and sensory-based services, sleep-enhancing technologies, etc.).



- Governments can support tourism attractions and tourism/hospitality/wellness businesses in
  deploying built environment technologies and solutions that enhance visitors' environmental
  health and awareness (e.g., air quality sensors, improved ventilation/HVAC systems, drinking
  water purification, natural light, healthy/circadian lighting systems, good thermal control,
  nontoxic building materials, etc.) and also improve planetary health (e.g., water usage meters,
  dark sky lighting, etc.).
- At the regional or destination level, governments and tourism officials can invest in technologies (e.g., apps, podcasts, digital tokens, gamification, etc.) that encourage visitors to be more physically active, mentally engaged, or relaxed, in order to harness the health and wellness benefits of their trips. Similarly, these technologies can be deployed to incentivize sustainable behaviors and cultural/environmental stewardship of the destination.
- Al offers many new opportunities and applications in the tourism sector, such as trip planning and travel bookings, customer service, facial recognition and security, language assistance, and deciphering information and opinions on social networks. Al can potentially deliver many labor-saving applications and can even create new content, value, and experiences for travelers. At this moment, governments across the world are struggling with how to properly regulate Al and the many cross-sectional issues raised by its expanding usage, including privacy and personal data protection, potential prejudice and misuse, and the ethical issues of replacing labor or violating creative ownership. In the tourism sector, governments need to monitor the application of Al and adapt policies to protect both residents and visitors.
- Technology is radically altering the delivery of healthcare (e.g., telemedicine, wearables/digital sensors/biotelemetry, remote patient monitoring, smart textiles, etc.). These major shifts are transforming the demand and supply for health services while simultaneously increasing patient mobility (both virtually and physically), thereby generating many new opportunities for governments, regions, and businesses to develop new offerings and partnerships in the areas of wellness, medical, and "medical wellness" tourism, including pre-/post-operative care, virtual rehabilitation, telehealth-based consultations and follow-up, digital/wearable-based monitoring and preventive services, and much more.xiv

In spite of these immense opportunities, in many ways the tourism and hospitality industry lags behind other industries in its adoption of emerging technologies.xivi Likewise, much of the discussion of "smart tourism destinations" is just conceptual right now. One example of a region that is taking action is Slovenia, which launched its "Tourism 4.0" initiative in 2018. As a partnership among the high-tech company Arctur, the three largest Slovenian universities, the Association of Slovenian Municipalities, and many other regional tourism organizations and businesses, the project aims to use technology to facilitate positive environmental, social, and economic impacts and collaborations among all stakeholders in the tourism ecosystem. Efforts include using big data analytics, real-time data, and blockchain technology to provide personalized recommendations to tourists, manage tourist behaviors/flows, track energy consumption in tourism, and provide incentives for doing things that are beneficial to the local community and environment.xivii

### 6.2: Protect the digital well-being of tourists.

It is critical to use technology in a careful and balanced way in tourism, in order to support the digital well-being of tourists, protect the authenticity and integrity of tourist experiences, and maintain the restorative benefits of travel.xiviii Governments, tourism organizations, and wellness/hospitality/tourism businesses all need to recognize the importance of digital well-being in the tourism context and incorporate responsible technology use into tourism development strategies and planning. "Smart tourism destination" strategies should be careful to deploy technologies in a human-centered and unobtrusive way, and not simply latch on to the latest tech fads or gadgets, which may or may not be beneficial for visitors.xiix One approach for supporting digital well-being in tourism is to create "tech-scarce" and disconnected travel experiences (for example, phone-free zones in restaurants or wellness establishments, no-selfie destinations, banning selfie sticks, digital detox experiences, etc.) and to use "calm ICT design" strategies in hospitality establishments and tourism attractions. Another approach is to promote responsible technology use and digital well-being to tourists. For example, in 2021, New Zealand launched a promotional campaign to encourage travelers to stop mindlessly copying the photos they see on social media or "traveling under the social influence," and to do something new instead.<sup>II</sup>



### Sample policies to ensure that technology enhances wellness

- Create "smart tourism destinations" with technologies that simplify or elevate visitor experiences, streamline tourism operations and service delivery, improve sustainability, and gather data for real-time decision-making.
- Support small and local wellness service providers (via grants, tax incentives, etc.) to
  adopt technologies that will help them market themselves, engage with their visitors, and
  enhance their offerings (e.g., websites, booking platforms, electronic payments, enterprise
  management software, to AR/VR and sensory-based services, sleep-enhancing technologies,
  etc.).
- Support tourism attractions and tourism/hospitality/wellness businesses (via grants, tax incentives, etc.) to deploy built environment technologies and solutions that enhance visitors' environmental health and awareness and also improve planetary health.
- Invest in technologies (e.g., apps, podcasts, digital tokens, gamification, etc.) that encourage visitors to engage in healthy and sustainable behaviors and that promote cultural/environmental stewardship of the destination.
- Ensure that tourism technologies are deployed in a human-centered way; use "calm ICT" design and practices in tourism/hospitality/wellness businesses and visitor attractions.
- Develop tech-free visitor experiences and attractions.
- Communicate with visitors about healthy and sustainable use of technology during travel; encourage visitors to reduce tech-usage during their trip.



#### **ENDNOTES**

- World Travel & Tourism Council (n.d.). Economic Impact Reports. https://wttc.org/Research/Economic Impact. Accessed 27 June 2023.
- <sup>ii</sup> Yeung, O., and Johnston, K. (2021, Dec.), *The Global Wellness Economy: Looking Beyond Covid,* Miami, FL: Global Wellness Institute. https://globalwellnessinstitute.org/industry-research/the-global-wellnesseconomy-looking-beyond-covid/.
- For more information on wellness tourism, see: Yeung, O., and Johnston, K. (2018). Global Wellness Tourism Economy. Miami, FL: Global Wellness Institute. https://globalwellnessinstitute.org/industry-research/globalwellness-tourism-economy/.
- <sup>iv</sup> See: Florida, R. (2002). The Rise of the Creative Class and How It's Transforming Work, Leisure, Community and Everyday Life. Basic Books: New York.
- <sup>v</sup> Johnston, K., Yeung, O., and Callender, T. (2023). *Global Wellness Economy Monitor 2023*. Miami, FL: Global Wellness Institute. https://globalwellnessinstitute.org/the-2023-global-wellness-economy-monitor/.
- vi Ibid. Consistent with the convention for calculating international tourism statistics, this figure includes local transportation within a country (by land and air) but not international transportation expenditures (e.g., airfare).
- vii Ibid.
- viii See, for example: 1) "Wellness Pura Vida": Wellness Tourism in Costa Rica. 6 August 2022. *The Costa Rica* News. https://thecostaricanews.com/wellness-pura-vida-wellnesstourism-in-costa-rica/. 2) Costa Rica, A Country Suitable For Wellness Tourism. 25 Sept. 2022. The Costa Rica News. https://thecostaricanews.com/ costa-rica-a-country-suitable-for-wellness-tourism/. 3) Wellness tourism is the new strategy of Costa Rica. 12 June 2017. Hosteltur. https://www.hosteltur.com/lat/110800\_turismo-bienestar-es-nueva-estrategia-costa-
- ix See, for example: 1) Raguraman, A. (2022, June 3). Wellness will be key component of Singapore's tourism offerings in next 5 to 10 years: STB chief. The Straits Times. https://www.straitstimes.com/singapore/ consumer/wellness-will-be-key-component-of-singapores-tourism-offerings-in-next-5-to-10-years-stb-chief. 2) Wellness Listings. Tourism Information & Services Hub, Singapore. https://tih.stb.gov.sg/content/tih/en/ tourism-information/wellness-listings.html.
- <sup>x</sup> See, for example: 1) Kariyapol, T. and Agarwal, R. (2020). Economic Benefits and Consequences of Tourism in Developing Countries: A Case of Thailand. Sripatum Review of Humanities and Social Sciences, 20(1), 180-192. https://so05.tci-thaijo.org/index.php/spurhs/article/view/227537. 2) Rylance, A. and Spenceley, A. (2017). Reducing economic leakages from tourism: A value chain assessment of the tourism industry in Kasane, Botswana, Development Southern Africa, 34(3), 295-313. https://doi.org/10.1080/0376835X.2017.1308855. 3) Boz, M. (2012). Leakages and Value Added in International Tourism Revenues; Tourism Satellite Account as a Measurement Method. International Journal of Business and Social Science, 2(24), 198-206. https://www. researchgate.net/publication/312472298 leakages.
- xi Callender, T. (2021). Adding Color to Wellness, Moving From Optics to Substance. Global Wellness Trends 2021. Miami, FL: Global Wellness Summit. https://www.globalwellnesssummit.com/trends-2021/adding-colorto-wellness/.
- xii See: 1) Cyelbar, L.K., et al (2021), Holidays for all: Staycation youchers during COVID-19, Annals of Tourism Research Empirical Insights, 2(2), 100019. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.annale.2021.100019. 2) Benoza, K. (2023, Mar. 9). Japan to extend domestic travel subsidy program beyond April. The Japan Times. https://www. japantimes.co.jp/news/2023/03/09/national/domestic-tourism-subsidy-extension/. 3) Whitby, M. (2021, Aug. 13). Italian Government injects economy with €53m stimulus package to support thermal spa industry's recovery. Spa Opportunities. https://www.spaopportunities.com/spa-news/Italian-Government-injectseconomy-with-53m-stimulus-package-to-support-thermal-spa-industrys-recovery/348297.
- For more discussion of this topic, see: Yeung, O., Johnston, K., and Callender, T. (forthcoming). Wellness Policy Toolkit: Traditional & Complementary Medicine. Miami, FL: Global Wellness Institute. https:// globalwellnessinstitute.org/wellness-policy-series/.
- xiv For more information on the employment of these vulnerable groups in tourism, see: 1) ILO Sectoral Policies Department (2017). ILO guidelines on decent work and socially responsible tourism. Geneva, Switzerland: ILO. https://www.ilo.org/sector/activities/sectoral-meetings/WCMS 546337/lang--en/index. htm. 2) ILO Sectoral Policies Department (2022). The future of work in the tourism sector: Sustainable and safe recovery and decent work in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. TMSRTS/2022. Geneva, Switzerland: ILO. https://www.ilo.org/sector/Resources/publications/WCMS 840403/lang--en/index. htm. 3) UNWTO (2019). Global Report on Women in Tourism - Second Edition. Madrid: UNWTO. https:// doi.org/10.18111/9789284420384. 4) Dempster, H. and Zimmer, C. (2020). Migrant workers in the tourism industry: How has COVID-19 affected them and what does the future hold? Washington, DC: Center for Global Development. https://www.cgdev.org/publication/migrant-workers-tourism-industry-how-has-covid-19-affected-them-and-what-does-future. 5) WTTC (2021). Travel & Tourism as a Catalyst for Social Impact.

- https://wttc.org/Portals/0/Documents/Reports/2021/Travel%20and%20Tourism%20as%20a%20Catalyst%20for%20Social%20Impact.pdf.
- \*\* UNWTO (2019). Global Report on Women in Tourism Second Edition. Madrid: UNWTO. https://doi.org/10.18111/9789284420384.
- xvi ILO Sectoral Policies Department (2022). *The future of work in the tourism sector: Sustainable and safe recovery and decent work in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic.* TMSRTS/2022. Geneva, Switzerland: ILO. https://www.ilo.org/sector/Resources/publications/WCMS\_840403/lang--en/index.htm.
- xvii Ibid.
- www.corporatewellnessmagazine.com/article/the-breakers-palm-beach-case-study. 2) The Breakers Palm Beach (n.d.). The Breakers Continues to Enrich Award-Winning Workplace with an Abundance of Meaningful Programs. *Press Release*. https://www.thebreakers.com/press-resource-center/press-releases/enriching-workplace-programs/. 3) The Breakers Palm Beach (n.d.). Raising the Bar on Personalized Employee Wellness. *Press Release*. https://www.thebreakers.com/press-resource-center/press-releases/team-member-wellness-programs/.
- xiix See: Cloutier, M.M. (2022, June 17). The Breakers expands wellness program for employees. *Palm Beach Daily News*. https://www.palmbeachdailynews.com/story/news/local/2022/06/17/breakers-resort-palmbeach-expands-health-parenting-wellness-programs-workers/7489058001/.
- \*\* WTTC and McKinsey (2017). *Coping with Success: Managing Overcrowding in Tourism Destinations.* https://www.mckinsey.com/industries/travel-transport-and-logistics/our-insights/coping-with-success-managing-overcrowding-in-tourism-destinations.
- xxi Schmidt, S. (2023, Jan. 26). They depend on Machu Picchu to survive. They shut it down anyway. *The Washington Post.* https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/2023/01/26/machu-picchu-closed-peru-protests/.
- xxii For more information and frameworks to develop responsible and sustainable tourism, see: 1) Global Sustainable Tourism Council (2019). GSTC Destination Management Criteria Version 2.0. https://www.gstcouncil.org/wp-content/uploads/GSTC-Destination-Criteria-v2.0.pdf. 2) UNESCO World Heritage Convention (n.d.). Sustainable Tourism Toolkit. https://whc.unesco.org/en/sustainabletourismtoolkit/.
- xxiii See: 1) Global Wellness Summit (2023). Wellness Tourism's Next Wave: Indigenous Travel. *Future of Wellness: 2023 Trends*. https://www.globalwellnesssummit.com/blog/wellness-tourisms-next-wave-indigenous-travel/. 2) Kelso, S. (2023, July 2). The era of Indigenous tourism has (finally) arrived. *Fast Company.* https://www.fastcompany.com/90895538/indigenous-tourism-cultural-travel.
- xxiiv See: 1) Habtemariam, D. (2022, Sept. 8). New Zealand Embraces Its Aotearoa Identity in New Marketing. Skift. https://skift.com/2022/09/08/new-zealand-embraces-its-aotearoa-identity-in-new-marketing/.
  2) Herrmann, M. (2022, Aug. 23). Tourism New Zealand Launches First Campaign In Two Years That's Aimed At Enriching Experiences. Forbes. https://www.forbes.com/sites/micheleherrmann/2022/08/23/tourism-new-zealand-launches-first-campaign-in-two-years-thats-aimed-at-seekers/.
- xxv See: https://destinationindigenous.ca/. See also: Kelso, S. (2023, July 2). The era of Indigenous tourism has (finally) arrived. *Fast Company*. https://www.fastcompany.com/90895538/indigenous-tourism-cultural-travel
- xxvi Grima, L.L. (2022, Feb. 2). Uganda Breaks Away from the Safari Narrative With New Tourism Marketing. Skift. https://skift.com/2022/02/03/uganda-breaks-away-from-the-safari-narrative-with-new-tourism-marketing/.
- xxvii Karnikowski, N. (2022, Dec. 14). How Australia's Historic Landback Efforts Are Reshaping Travel—On a Global Scale. *Condé Nast Traveler*. https://www.cntraveler.com/story/australia-indigenous-landback-future-of-travel.
- xxviii See: Center for Responsible Travel (2017). *The Case for Responsible Travel: Trends and Statistics 2017.* https://www.responsibletravel.org/resources/responsible-travel/.
- xxiix Nikolova, M.S. (2020, Oct. 9). Chapter 6: Best practices and approaches using behavior-smart thinking in 10 tourism industry scenarios. In *Behavioral Economics for Tourism* (pp. 211-248). London: Elsevier. https://doi.org/10.1016/B978-0-12-813808-3.00006-X. See also: BehaviorSMART™ Sustainable Tourism Solutions, https://behavior-smart.com.
- xxx See: 1) World Bank (2020). *Tools and Resources for Nature-Based Tourism*. Washington, DC: World Bank. http://hdl.handle.net/10986/34433. 2) Twining-Ward, L., et al (2018). *Supporting Sustainable Livelihoods Through Wildlife Tourism*. Tourism for Development. Washington, DC: World Bank. http://hdl.handle.net/10986/29417.
- see: World Bank (2021). Banking on Protected Areas: Promoting sustainable protected area tourism to benefit local economies. Washington, DC: World Bank. http://hdl.handle.net/10986/35737.

- xxxiii See, for example, the certifications offered by the Global Sustainable Tourism Council, https://www. gstcouncil.org.
- xxxiii Laurence, E. (2023, Jan. 23). Your Guide To CBD Legalization By State. Forbes Health. https://www. forbes.com/health/body/cbd-legalization-by-state/.
- xxxiv U.S. Food and Drug Administration (2023, Jan. 26). FDA Concludes that Existing Regulatory Frameworks for Foods and Supplements are Not Appropriate for Cannabidiol, Will Work with Congress on a New Way Forward. FDA Statement. https://www.fda.gov/news-events/press-announcements/fda-concludes-existingregulatory-frameworks-foods-and-supplements-are-not-appropriate-cannabidiol.
- xxxv Chappell, K., and Ellsworth, B. (2022, Nov. 24). Psychedelic mushrooms expand Jamaica tourism beyond sunshine and reggae. Reuters. https://www.reuters.com/world/americas/psychedelic-mushrooms-expandjamaica-tourism-beyond-sunshine-reggae-2022-11-24/.
- xxxvi Setboonsarng, C. (2022, Aug. 17). Pot-smoking tourists not welcome in Thailand, says health minister. Reuters. https://www.reuters.com/world/asia-pacific/pot-smoking-tourists-not-welcome-thailand-sayshealth-minister-2022-08-17/.
- xxxvii Frost, R. (2023, Feb. 15). Amsterdam to ban cannabis smoking in public to curb 'grim' tourist behaviour. Euronews. https://www.euronews.com/travel/2023/02/15/amsterdam-to-ban-cannabis-smoking-in-publicto-curb-grim-tourist-behaviour.
- xxxviii See: 1) Japanese Onsen Association, What is onsen?, https://www.spa.or.jp/en/onsen/. 2) Serbulea, M., and Payyappallimana, U. (2012). Onsen (hot springs) in Japan - Transforming terrain into healing landscapes. Health & Place, 18(6), 1366-1373. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.healthplace.2012.06.020.
- xxxiix See: 1) Valeriani, F., et al (2018). Recreational Use of Spa Thermal Waters: Criticisms and Perspectives for Innovative Treatments. International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health, 15(12), 2675. https://doi.org//10.3390/ijerph15122675. 2) de Oliveira, N., et al (2023). Comparative analysis of balneotherapy in European public health systems; Spain, France, Italy, and Portugal, International Journal of Biometeorology, 67(4), 597-608. https://doi.org/10.1007/s00484-023-02438-y.
- xl See: 1) Dabu, F. (2018, June 11). Are Laguna's hot springs losing steam? Research and Breakthroughs: University of the Philippines. https://up.edu.ph/are-lagunas-hot-springs-losing-steam/. 2) Jago-on, K., et al (2017). Hot spring resort development in Laguna Province, Philippines: Challenges in water use regulation. Journal of Hydrology: Regional Studies, 11, 96-106. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ejrh.2015.11.020.
- xii See: 1) Gounon, C. (2021, Nov. 3). Sinkholes on receding Dead Sea shore are 'nature's revenge,' not easily appeased. The Times of Israel. https://www.timesofisrael.com/sinkholes-on-receding-dead-sea-shore-arenatures-revenge-not-easily-appeased/. 2) Gabison, Y. (2017, May 5). That Sinking Feeling: A Receding Dead Sea Saps the Life Out of a Legendary Kibbutz. Haaretz. https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/2017-05-05/ ty-article-magazine/.premium/that-sinking-feeling-a-receding-dead-sea-saps-the-life-out-of-a-legendarykibbutz/0000017f-f30c-dc28-a17f-ff3f612b0000.
- xiii See: 1) Varga, C. (2019). To treat or not to treat? Misbeliefs in spa water disinfection. *International Journal* of Biometeorology, 63, 1135-1138. https://doi.org/10.1007/s00484-019-01722-0. 2) Valeriani, F., et al (2018). Recreational Use of Spa Thermal Waters: Criticisms and Perspectives for Innovative Treatments, International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health, 15(12), 2675. https://doi.org//10.3390/ijerph15122675.
- xiiii See: Stankov, U. and Gretzel, U. (2020). Tourism 4.0 technologies and tourist experiences: A humancentered design perspective. Information Technology & Tourism, 22, 477-488. https://doi.org/10.1007/ s40558-020-00186-y.
- xiiv See, for example: 1) Koo, C., et al (Eds.) (2019). Special Issue: Smart Tourism and competitive advantage for stakeholders, Tourism Review, 74(1), https://www.emerald.com/insight/publication/issn/1660-5373/ vol/74/iss/1. 2) Jasrotia, A., and Gangotia, A. (2018). Smart Cities to Smart Tourism Destinations: A Review Paper. Journal of Tourism Intelligence and Smartness, 1(1), 47-56. https://dergipark.org.tr/en/download/ article-file/530727. 3) Panyadee, C., et al (2023). Smart Wellness Technology for tourism Destination Basedon Evolving Tourist Expectation Mode. TEM Journal, 12(2), 1218-1226. https://doi.org/10.18421/TEM122-68.
- xiv See: 1) Wong, B., and Hazley, S. (2020). The future of health tourism in the industrial revolution 4.0 era. Journal of Tourism Futures, 7(2), 267-272. https://doi.org/10.1108/JTF-01-2020-0006. 2) Baran, Z., and Karaca, S. (2023). Next-Generation Technologies in Health Tourism. In O. Doğan (Ed.), Global Perspectives on the Opportunities and Future Directions of Health Tourism (pp. 138-164). Hershey, PA: IGI Global. https://doi. org/10.4018/978-1-6684-6692-6.
- xivi See; 1) Dawes, J. (2023, June 28), Hotels are Way Behind on Tech, These Brands Are Trying to Change That. Skift. https://skift.com/2023/06/28/hotels-are-way-behind-on-tech-these-brands-are-trying-tochange-that/. 2) Schap, J. (2019, May 16). Why is Hotel Technology Lagging Behind the Rese? Hospitalitynet. https://www.hospitalitynet.org/opinion/4093372.html. 3) Fox, L. (2023, March 29). Can we hardwire happiness into hospitality tech? PhocusWire. https://www.phocuswire.com/hospitality-technology-guestfriction.

- xivii See https://tourism4-0.org/. See also: 1) Urbančič, J., et al (2020). Expansion of Technology Utilization Through Tourism 4.0 in Slovenia. In E. Celtek (Ed.), Handbook of Research on Smart Technology Applications in the Tourism Industry (pp. 229-253). Hershey, PA: IGI Global. https://doi.org/10.4018/978-1-7998-1989-9. 2) Peceny, U.S., et al (2019). Tourism 4.0: Challenges in Marketing a Paradigm Shift. In M. Reyes (Ed.), Consumer Behavior and Marketing, IntechOpen. https://doi.org/10.5772/intechopen.84762.
- xiviii See: 1) Stankov, U., and Gretzel, U. (2021). Digital well-being in the tourism domain: mapping new roles and responsibilities. Information Technology & Tourism, 23(1), 5-17. https://doi.org/10.1007/s40558-021-00197-3. 2) Gretzel, U., and Stankov, U. (2021). ICTs and well-being: Challenges and opportunities for tourism. Information Technology & Tourism, 23(1), 1-4). https://doi.org/10.1007/s40558-021-00198-2.
- xiix See: 1) Coca-Stefaniak, J.A. (2020). Beyond smart tourism cities towards a new generation of "wise" tourism destinations. Journal of Tourism Futures, 7(2), 251-258. https://doi.org/10.1108/JTF-11-2019-0130. 2) Young, R.F., and Lieberknecht, K. (2019). From smart cities to wise cities: Ecological wisdom as a basis for sustainable urban development. Journal of Environmental Planning and Management, 62(10), 1675-1692. https://doi.org/10.1080/09640568.2018.1484343.
- See: 1) Stankov. U., et al (2019). Calm ICT design in hotels: A critical review of applications and implications. International Journal of Hospitality Management, 82, 208-307. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijhm.2018.10.012. 2) Case, A. (2016). Calm Technology: Principles and Patterns for Non-Intrusive Design. Sebastapol, CA: O'Reilly Media.
- <sup>II</sup> Picheta, R. (2021, Jan. 27). New Zealand tells tourists to stop copying other people's travel photos. CNN. https://edition.cnn.com/travel/article/new-zealand-tourist-photos-campaign-scli-intl/index.html.



333 S.E. 2nd Avenue, Suite 2048 Miami, FL 33131

### WWW.GLOBALWELLNESSINSTITUTE.ORG