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Sustainable tourism implementation in urban areas: challenges and opportunities

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Chapter 2. Sustainable tourism implementation in urban areas: challenges and opportunities

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Abstract

This chapter focuses on challenges and opportunities faced by urban destinations in their efforts to implement sustainable tourism measures. It starts by highlighting the importance of the sustainability concept and discusses how it can help policy makers better manage the impacts of tourism in a destination. A brief overview is then offered on the published literature on sustainable tourism development in cities. This shows that despite the recent popularity of the topic among researchers and policy makers, and the inclusion of the sustainability concept in many tourism policy documents, the progress is slow when it comes to implementing sustainable tourism principles in urban destinations. The chapter continues with a discussion on several key challenges faced by city destinations, including debates around definitions and interpretations of the sustainability concept; planning and managing sustainable tourism in cities; the importance of adopting new technologies and smart solutions; the structural changes brought by the sharing economy; challenges faced by tourism managers in maintaining a well trained and experienced workforce; and the threats posed by climate change. The last part of the chapter discusses several future trends in sustainable tourism development in urban destinations and highlights the actions that need to be taken by policy makers and the industry if tourism is to become more sustainable. Emphasis is put on the role cities and tourism play in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

Keywords: sustainability, sustainable tourism, urban tourism, world tourism cities, challenges, opportunities