

Mountains, with its diversity of unique resources and ecosystems, have always been a popular destination for tourism, especially for those seeking to enjoy pristine landscapes, nature, adventure, sport and the numerous cultural assets offered by mountains destinations. Although, mountain tourism has significantly benefited many of the world mountain regions, climate change, growing demand for water and ecosystem degradation due to tourism activity are the main challenges faced by mountain destinations. Snow cover and pristine mountain landscapes are not only the principal attractions for tourism in these regions but also the most vulnerable features to climate change. The World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) promotes specific climate change mitigation and adaptation measures, such as to stimulate product and seasonal diversification and raise awareness among tourists about the impacts of global environmental change on Alpine landscape, among others. If well managed, tourism can play an important role in environment conservation, cultural heritage enhancement and in benefiting mountain people and their communities. UNWTO has developed a set of indicators in order to assist managers to make informed decisions regarding issues of particular concern to mountain environments, for example loss or degradation of flora and fauna, erosion, impacts of activities on water quality, seasonality and the economic benefits of tourism activity. Through seminars and workshops on Sustainable Tourism and Destination Management, like the one held in the mountain resort Hotel Bianca in Kolašin, Montenegro (25-27 April 2007), UNWTO encourages the use of indicators of sustainable development to ensure the long-term sustainability of the tourism mountain destinations.