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# Guest editorial: Transitioning from unsustainable to sustainable: What are the solutions for tourism industry stakeholders in North Cyprus?

Guest editorial

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The United Nations agency with responsibility for the promotion of responsible and sustainable tourism (The World Tourism Organization, commonly known as UNWTO) provide at their website (<https://www.unwto.org/sustainable-development>) a succinct summary of the challenges that must be addressed in the quest for sustainable development. This is a pressing issue and especially for small island developing nations who typically have limited resources to devote to the preservation and protection of their national infrastructure. In this context, I hope that readers will be encouraged by this theme issue as it profiles key action steps needed to facilitate sustainable tourism development in North Cyprus. I would like to thank Theme Editors Hale Ozgit and Ali Öztüren and their writing team for their commitment to this cause and for producing a fascinating blueprint as to how sustainability can be achieved.

*Worldwide Hospitality and Tourism Themes (WHATT)* aims to make a practical and theoretical contribution to hospitality and tourism development, and we seek to do this by using a key question to focus attention on an industry issue. If you would like to contribute to our work by serving as a WHATT theme editor, do please contact me.

**Richard Teare**  
*Managing Editor, WHATT*

## **Transitioning from unsustainable to sustainable: What are the solutions for tourism industry stakeholders in North Cyprus?**

North Cyprus is known for its service sector even though it has political problems and has to function in the context of international embargoes as an unrecognised country. Despite the fact that political instability impedes the country's development, tourism largely depends on the efforts of tourism practitioners. In this issue, we explain why stakeholders with a say in the development and management of the country must establish a common goal for sustainable growth. If not, a slew of issues will arise regarding the efficient use of available resources, stakeholder collaboration, and negative impacts on social, economic, environmental and cultural development.

Managing Small Island Developing States (SIDS) is a complex task given the changing characteristics of destinations and the behavioural characteristics of tourists. The development challenges that SIDS must face are multifaceted because resource conservation via sustainable development is the duty of society and commerce, as well as governments and politicians. As a result, the heart of the task ahead is to establish approaches that include a broad range of stakeholders in a process that fosters consensus around shared objectives. Additionally, more can be done to share best practice amongst regions, cities, and countries and to enhance



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collaboration between local and central government and the tourism sector in order to protect cultural heritage and the environment. Achieving a sustainable structure for all is possible by identifying impediments to resource efficiency and by adopting scientific indicators to monitor local, cultural, natural, environmental, economic, technological and social resources that contribute to the tourism product.

This theme issue aims to persuade practitioners and academics of the need to collaborate in the quest for sustainable development in North Cyprus and more widely in other small island developing states. The specific task is to develop solutions that will facilitate a transition to sustainable tourism development. To guide our overarching strategic question, we formulated a number of sub-questions: (1) How should small island developing states manage technological influencers in the new era? (2) What should be the role of stakeholders in developing sustainable resource use? (3) How should small island developing states manage resource conservation for sustainable tourism development? We hope that these questions will stimulate a wider debate and that this theme issue and its recommendations will help to facilitate a transition to sustainable development that will benefit all tourism stakeholders now and in the future.

**Hale Özgit and Ali Öztüren**  
*Theme Editors*

**About the Theme Editors:**

Hale Özgit is an Associate Professor, School of Tourism and Hotel Management at Cyprus International University. Hale has published in peer-reviewed journals, attended a number of international conferences and is an editorial board member of several international journals. Her PhD focused on the evaluation of tourism education in higher education from a strategic management perspective. Her research interests are tourism management, sustainability, tourism education, organisational behaviour and human resources management in tourism and hospitality organisations.

Ali Öztüren is a Tourism Management Professor and the current Vice Dean in the Faculty of Tourism at Eastern Mediterranean University. Ali teaches various tourism and hospitality subjects and supervises master degree and PhD students. His research interests include sustainable tourism management, service operations and tourism and hospitality management. He is an executive board member of various national and international academic projects and events, an editorial board member for international and national journals, and an advisory board member for a number of academic and social organisations.

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