Tourism and recreation is one of the world's major industries and fastest growing economic sectors. It is an important component of the economic health of coastal regions and a reflection of how well the natural features that attract tourists are preserved. This goal uses proxy information to estimate the number of people who visit coastal and marine areas and attractions for leisure purposes and the quality of their experience. The economic benefits gained from such visits is assessed separately and reported in the Coastal Livelihoods & Economies goal.

HOW WAS IT MEASURED?

In 2012 the status of this goal was estimated by measuring the number of international tourists arriving by airplane to coastal regions, adjusting these values to the region's population density to allow comparability across regions, and accounting for their average length of stay.

The method was changed in 2013. The new method uses data from the World Bank and the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC) to compute the proportion of the total labor force (corrected for unemployment) that is directly employed in the travel and tourism as an indicator of the number of people engaged in coastal tourism and recreation activities. This assumes that the number of employees in hotels, travel agencies and other affiliated professions will increase or decrease with changing tourism demand—both international and domestic–within different regions.

Data from the World Economic Forum's Tourism Competitiveness Index (TTCI) are used to estimate sustainability of the tourism industry.

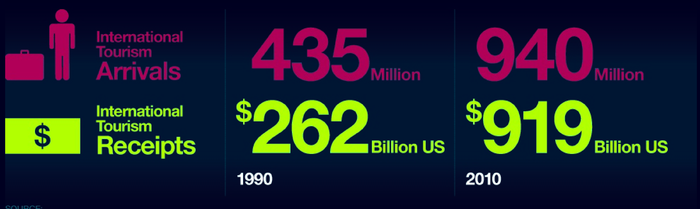
Increases in the proportion of the labor force employed in the tourist industry or in the sustainability of tourism and recreation will increase status scores for this goal.

Some regions may have more direct measures for this goal than are available globally, permitting more precise estimates for status. For example, data for participation in 19 coastal recreational activities were available for use in a regional Ocean Health Index assessment of the U.S. West Coast (Halpern et al. 2014).

See Raw Data

WHY ARE THESE FACTORS IMPORTANT?

INTERNATIONAL TOURISM ARRIVALS



SOURCE:
World Tourism Organization (UNWTO)

DOWNLOAD INFOGRAPHIC

ECOLOGICAL IMPACT

In addition to any local impacts from tourism-related development or pollution, 5.4% of global CO_2 emissions can be attributed to the tourism industry; transport makes up the majority of these emissions.

- 53% of international arrivals travel by air.
- Transport contributes up to 82-90% of CO_2 emissions; Air travel makes up 54-75% of the total transport emissions.
- Only 2.2% of all trips are 'long haul' (i.e. traveling outside a local geographic region); 16% of CO_2 emissions from the tourist industry can be attributed to long haul trips.

(UNWTO-UNEP 2008)

HUMAN HEALTH IMPACT

No direct impacts known.

ECONOMIC IMPACT

Domestic and International tourism can benefit economies through revenue and job production.

The U.S. Travel Association notes that the U.S. received 59.7 million international arrivals in 2010, supporting nearly one million jobs with wages totaling US $24.7 billion (numbers exclude domestic travel benefits) (U.S. Travel Association 2011).

The United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) estimates that export income generated by inbound tourism was greater than US $1 trillion in 2009.

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