

How can sustainability and the UN sustainable development goals be applied to hospitality?

How can the hospitality industry increase corporate value aligned with sustainable development goals? Case examples from Hilton, Meliá and Sun

Victoria Matteucci

Corporate social responsibility in hospitality: are sustainability initiatives really sustainable? Case examples from CitizenM, Lefay and Six Senses

Virginia Maria Stombelli

Corporate social responsibility and consumerism: Case examples from Hyatt, Scandic and Walt Disney

Sylvie-Cécile Luiten

Action and progress on sustainability challenges: Case examples from Marriott, Booking and Soneva

Tomer Landau

Embracing sustainability in the drive from ordinary to outstanding: Case examples from Emirates, Jumeirah and Rotana

Sabina Stanojevic

Learning from sustainability practice: Case examples from Accor, Scandic and Atlantica

Nikos Onoufriou

Exploring the applicability of sustainable development goals in Costa Rica: Case examples from Mastatal and Conchal

Juan M. Kandler

Sustainable development and the circular economy in Greece: Case examples from TEMES and Grecotel

Dimitra Christopoulou and Justin Darayus Khodaiji

Sustainable development: An adaptive re-use solution for the hospitality industry

Tonglin Chelsea Ling and Elena Wong

Conclusion: A direction for sustainability and research notions after 2030

Dimitrios Diamantis and Annick Darioly

Reflections on the theme issue outcomes

Theme Editors Dimitrios Diamantis and Annick Darioly share their reflections on the significance and outcomes of the theme issue with WHATT Managing Editor Richard Teare.

Editorial

A re-occurring theme in recent and forthcoming issues of the journal is the concept and practice of sustainable development. Given its current and future importance, I am delighted that this issue features the work of Master of Business Administration (MBA) students who have used their analytical skills to compile 22 case examples and gather opinions from specialist practitioners. I should like to thank them and theme editors Dimitrios Diamantis and Annick Darioly for providing an extensive review of current sustainability initiatives and useful insights on how sustainability is and will continue to influence the development agendas of hospitality and tourism firms.

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



How can sustainability and the UN sustainable development goals be applied to hospitality?

Since the World Commission on Environment and Development Report, commonly known as the Brundtland Report in 1987, (WCED, 1987) sustainability has been advancing as a developmental strategy concept in a number of destinations and organisations. Further, the United Nations established sustainable development goals (SDGs) to guide progress towards sustainability by 2030 (UN, 2019), and it is in this context that the issue showcases current hospitality and tourism-related practice.

The hospitality industry has been engaged with sustainability since the early 1990s, drawing on environmental initiatives, the triple bottom line (TBL) concept and corporate social responsibility (CSR) practices among others (Martinez and Nishiyama, (2019); Kim, Woo, Uysal and Kwon (2018), Diamantis, 1999). In this theme issue, we gather together a collection of articles that were researched and written by Global Hospitality Management students at Les Roches, Switzerland after attending an MBA course on sustainability. The purpose is to illustrate in one journal issue, progress towards the SDGs from a global perspective and to pinpoint the challenges ahead and most importantly the trade-offs that need to occur between the different goals.

The concept of trade-offs has been outlined in many of articles and mainly reflects the notion of “compromising”, “benefits” and “implications” as attributes of their success (Morrison-Saunders and Pope (2013); Hanh, Figgie, Pinkse and Preuss, 2010, p.220). Further, in a recent UN report (UN, 2019), trade-offs are viewed as a basis for agreements that need to occur (p.28). Given the need to develop thinking and practice related to sustainability challenges (p.125), this theme issue contains the following articles:

- Victoria Matteucci explores how CSR can be integrated with the UN SDGs to enhance corporate value drawing on case examples from Hilton Worldwide Holdings Inc., Meliá Hotels International and Sun Limited. Sustainability endeavours for SDG goals 8, 12 and 17 are analysed and opportunities for inter-sectoral partnerships or trade-offs are highlighted.
- Virginia Maria Stobelli draws on case examples from CitizenM, Lefay Resorts and Six Senses to analyse the influence of the TBL concept and integration with SDGs practices. This article considers the interrelationships between SDG goals and poses thought-provoking questions about the future of sustainability.
- Sylvie-Cécile Luiten illustrates with reference to case examples from Hyatt Hotels Corporation, Scandic Hotels AB and the Walt Disney Company linkages between the TBL concept and current sustainable development practices. The article highlights the challenges ahead as well as the balances that need to be achieved between the SDG goals and the needs and expectations of different stakeholders.
- Tomer Landau explores current sustainability issues with reference to case examples from Marriott International, Booking Holdings and The Soneva Group. The article examines differing perspectives in the context of a framework for sustainability to review the challenges posed by the SDG goals and the difficulties and constraints that arise.

- Sabina Stanojevic profiles three Middle Eastern-based companies (Emirates Airline, Jumeirah Group and Rotana Group) and highlights the different challenges posed by the SDGs for airlines and hotel operators respectively. The article also considers the strategic role that public and private sector partnerships can play in building sustainable cities as a current and future response.
- Nikos Onoufriou explores the concept of CSR with reference to case examples from Accor Hotels, Scandic Hotels and Atlantica Hotels. The article illustrates the concept of trade-offs between addressing individual SDGs and the development of a more holistic, integrated approach to sustainable business development.
- Juan Kandler's article focusses on cases examples from Rancho Mastatal and Reserva Conchal in Costa Rica. Costa Rica is playing a leading role in tourism sustainability and the cases profile a management company (Conchal) and a small, independent company (Mastatal). The examples include reference to climate change initiatives and efforts to integrate the SDGs with hospitality practices.
- Dimitra Christopoulou and Justin Darayus Khodaiji review two hotel case examples from Greece: that of Costa Navarino (TEMES S.A) and Grecotel (Lux Me) on the island of Rhodes. The cases highlight the growing importance of the circular economy as a strategic response to the SDGs and a way of reducing both operating costs and waste.
- Tonglin Chelsea Ling and Elena Wong explore how adaptive re-use (AR) could be better used in the hospitality industry as a viable strategy to help achieve the SDGs. AR can be used both as a framework for achieving the SDGs but equally as a circular economic sustainable action. The latter concept is explored through a series of interviews with practitioners.

We hope that this collection of work illustrates that hospitality can be a driver of change and an agent for sustainable advancement. The theme issue also highlights the fact that collective action and circular economic type thinking is prompting sustainable action and in so doing, paving the way for future generations to advance and secure more equitable and sustainable development.

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About the authors

Dimitrios Diamantis is the Dean of Graduate Studies and a Professor, Les Roches, Switzerland, and has more than 20 years of hospitality research and teaching experience. Dimitrios began his academic career in 1998 as an Associate Lecturer at Bournemouth University. The following year, he joined the faculty of Les Roches Switzerland, where supervised the launch of the institution's first MBA programme. In 2007, Dimitrios returned to the UK to teach tourism management at Sheffield Hallam University. He returned to Les Roches, Switzerland, in 2010, where he teaches and oversaw the development of Les Roches' current Postgraduate Diploma and MBA programmes. Dimitrios holds a PhD in Consumer Involvement and Ecotourism from Bournemouth University.

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