

How to govern for sustainable tourism? An evaluation of the Dutch governance approach to sustainability

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Research questions:

1. What is the **extent and adequacy** of incorporating the governance principles of sustainable development in the Dutch domestic tourism sector?
2. What are the **perceptions and governance preferences** of the key stakeholders for the incorporation of sustainability principles in tourism governance?



Analytical framework research question 1

3 features of governance structure

- **National-level actor structure**
- **Strategies and policy instruments**
- **Cross-scale coordination**

Reference model for sustainable tourism

governance: UNEP-WTO (2005) recommendations:

“Making Tourism More Sustainable: A Guide for Policy-Makers”.



Answer research question 1: limited and symbolic governance innovation for sustainable tourism:

1) the new national coordination platform for tourism and recreation has no powers

2) Strategies and instruments:

- tourism and recreation policies still not integrated;**
- 1995 Policy Agenda for Tourism Recreation and Environment = symbolic policy**
- 2006 Sustainable Tourism Policy = symbolic**

3) no coordination across governance scales



Findings on research question 2:

- 1) opinions differ greatly about what kind of national coordination structure would be desirable, if any
- 2) preferences diverge about the need for integration across policy domains
- 3) many agreed sub-national authorities should be supported by national authorities in policy making across domains; **but**: only with soft instruments



Conclusion:

- **neo-liberal principles** are widely cherished as main governance principles but some extent of voluntary coordination is still acknowledged to have added-value;
- **actors do not really know** if more direct regulation instruments and stronger central-level coordination would indeed help the cause of promoting sustainable development.



Recommendations:

- **More policy-oriented research**
- **Effective knowledge diffusion mechanisms**
- **More social and political debates**





Thank you for your attention