Nataša Đorđević[1]
Snežana Milićević[2]
Suzana Lazović[3]
University of Kragujevac, Faculty of Hotel
Management and Tourism in Vrnjačka Banja

ECO-FRIENDLY TOURISM DESTINATIONS: STRATEGIES FOR IMPLEMENTING SUSTAINABLE TOURISM PRACTICES

Abstract

In response to increasing environmental concerns, the global tourism industry is at a critical crossroads, requiring a shift to sustainable practices for long-term viability. This paper explores the concept of eco-friendly destinations. Using detailed global case studies of Slovenia and its capital Ljubljana, Gothenburg (Sweden) and Costa Rica, successful sustainable tourism strategies and their impact on the complex interplay of social, ecological, and economic factors are examined. The study also underlines the central role of sustainability in urban destinations and highlights the comprehensive approaches of Ljubljana and Gothenburg, which are recognized as successful in sustainability. The findings underline the global importance of sustainable tourism practices and highlight the challenges, opportunities and the need for collaboration between different stakeholders. The practical implications and originality of the paper lie in providing insights and recommendations that can help destinations worldwide in pursuing a balanced and sustainable tourism model. In light of ongoing management challenges, the paper highlights increased collaboration between residents, the public and private sectors, and other stakeholders as essential to promoting sustainability. The tourism industry is facing a crucial phase where environmentally friendly strategies are not only a moral obligation, but also a strategic imperative for the durable competitiveness and resilience of destinations. The paper strives to give a complete overview and recognize that sustainable practices are not only ethical, but also essential for the future success of tourism.

Keywords: *sustainable tourism, strategies, eco-friendly tourism destinations, stakeholders*

JEL classification: *L83, Z30, Z32*

ЕКО-ТУРИСТИЧКЕ ДЕСТИНАЦИЈЕ: СТРАТЕГИЈЕ ЗА ИМПЛЕМЕНТАЦИЈУ ПРАКСИ ОДРЖИВОГ ТУРИЗМА

Апстракт

Као одговор на све већу забринутост за очување животне средине, туризам на глобалном нивоу се налази на критичној раскрсници, која захтева прелазак на

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[1] natasa.djordjevic@kg.ac.rs, ORCID ID 0000-0002-3630-6867

[2] snezana.milicevic@kg.ac.rs, ORCID ID 0000-0002-1972-9585

[3] suza.borovic@gmail.com, ORCID ID 0000-0002-1654-4366

одрживе праксе зарад постизања дугорочне одрживости. Овај рад истражује концепт еколошких дестинација. Детаљне студије случаја о одрживом развоју туризма у Словенији и њеном главном граду Љубљани, Гетеборгу (Шведска) и Костарики описане су зарад испитивања успешних стратегија одрживог туризма и њиховог утицаја на сложену међусобну интеракцију еколошких, друштвених и економских фактора. Рад између осталог подвлачи централну улогу одрживости у урбаним дестинацијама и истиче свеобухватне приступе Љубљане и Гетеборга, чије су стратегије одрживог развоја препознате као успешне. Резултати рада наглашавају глобални значај праксе одрживог туризма и истичу изазове, могућности и потребу за сарадњом између различитих заинтересованих страна. Практичне импликације и оригиналност рада леже у пружању увида и препорука које могу помоћи дестинацијама широм света да следе балансиран и одржив модел туризма. У светлу текућих изазова управљања у туризму, овај рад истиче сарадњу између локалног становништва, приватног сектора, јавног сектора и других заинтересованих страна, која је од суштинског значаја за промовисање одрживости. Туризам се суочава са кључном фазом у којој еколошки прихватљиве стратегије нису само морална обавеза већ и стратешки императив за дугорочну конкурентност и опстанак дестинација тржишту. Рад има за циљ да пружи свеобухватан преглед и препозна да одрживе праксе нису само етичке, већ и суштински важне за будући успех туризма.

Кључне речи: *одрживи туризам, стратегије, екотуристичке дестинације, стејкхолдери*

1. Introduction

Tourism is a fast-growing industry (Marić et al., 2022), but in an era marked by the escalating urgency of environmental concerns, the global tourism industry finds itself at a pivotal crossroads. According to Lazarević and Stanišić (2022), nearly all tourism organizations characterize the success of tourism as an increase in tourist numbers. Higgins-Desbiolles (2018) notes that a critical challenge within the tourism sector is the "addiction to growth", where the focus of tourism strategies is on increasing tourist numbers. This highlights a wider concern about the industry's propensity for constant expansion, potentially overlooking the sustainable aspects of tourism development. Monbiot (2012) contended that the concept of sustainability has undergone a semantic transformation, evolving from "sustainable development" to "sustainable growth" and eventually reaching the term "sustained growth". On the other side, if sustainability holds any meaningful significance, it fundamentally opposes the notion of sustained growth. Furthermore, the pursuit of perpetual growth on a finite planet is inherently unsustainable. This context sets the stage for the addiction to growth within the tourism industry.

However, the paradigm shift towards sustainable tourism practices has become not only a moral imperative but also a strategic necessity for destinations seeking long-term viability. Moreover, there is an immediate requirement for sustainable competitiveness. A successful blueprint for sustainable tourism should prioritize the development of robust

adaptive capacities while fostering continuous engagement from all involved parties (Tao & Wall, 2009). Incorporating the internal public into the development and marketing of tourism destinations contributes to the conservation of the natural environment and the cultural identity of the destination (Vodeb, 2012; Krstić et al., 2017).

The term "eco" widely recognized for denoting environmentally friendly products has permeated various sectors, including the tourism industry. Notably, the tourism sector has embraced this "green" trend by incorporating the prefix "eco" into travel-related products, such as travel packages and destinations. This has given rise to the concept of eco-friendly travel destinations or ecotourism (Amendah & Park, 2008). This paper delves into the dynamic realm of eco-friendly destinations examining the pivotal role these strategies play in fostering environmental preservation, community empowerment, and economic growth.

As international travel continues to burgeon, so does the imperative for destinations to re-evaluate their approach to tourism. Unbridled tourism growth, if unchecked, can lead to detrimental effects on ecosystems, cultural heritage, and local communities. Recognizing this, an increasing number of destinations are embracing eco-friendly initiatives that seek to balance the allure of tourism with responsible and sustainable practices. Sustainable tourism practices not only provide financial support to a destination but also contribute to its social infrastructure, employment opportunities, conservation of nature, adoption of innovative work methods, and the rejuvenation of underdeveloped rural areas (Coroş et al., 2017).

Sustainable development and its extension into sustainable tourism, despite their appeal and widespread adoption by international organizations, numerous governments, and legislative bodies, have faced considerable criticism due to their vague definitions and the challenges encountered in their practical implementation (Wall, 2002). It is therefore crucial to clarify the relationship between social, ecological and economic factors that shape the sustainability of tourism destinations. From policy frameworks to community engagement initiatives, from innovative infrastructure development to marketing strategies, each facet contributes to the overarching goal of creating destinations that not only endure the passage of time but thrive in harmony with their surroundings. The question guiding this study is: What effective strategies promote sustainable tourism development in destinations? Therefore, this paper attempts to explore the multi-layered system of sustainable tourism and the strategies that destinations employ to walk the fine line between welcoming tourists and preserving the essence that attracts them. A comprehensive exploration of successful case studies should distil key lessons and recommendations that can guide destinations worldwide in their pursuit of a balanced and sustainable tourism model. Case studies include Slovenia, Ljubljana, Gothenburg (Sweden), and Costa Rica, as destinations that are all widely recognized as exemplary destinations in terms of sustainable tourism practices (Global Destination Sustainability Movement, 2024; Global Sustainable Tourism Council, 2022; Kuščer et al., 2017).

2. Literature review

The definition of a sustainable destination depends on sustainable tourism development, and as Lee (2001) stated, the term "sustainable destination" in a precise interpretation would only be applicable when the destination has successfully realized the enduring goals of sustainable development. Sustainable development serves as the core principle guiding

progress, with tourism exerting significant economic, ecological, and social influences in the contemporary global context. As such, the advancement of the tourism sector is intricately connected to all three dimensions of sustainability, reflecting a comprehensive approach to balanced and responsible growth (Streimikiene, 2021).

Development of tourism that has a positive impact on overall development or is consistent with the principles of sustainable development and guaranteeing the fulfillment of future generations' needs and aspirations while conserving resources is sustainable tourism development (Radjenović et al., 2022). Consequently, the implementation of sustainable tourism policies, effective destination management and vigilant monitoring play a crucial role in improving community well-being, preventing inappropriate use of natural resources and facilitating a better tourism experience (Khan et al., 2021, Stanišić et al., 2022).

Amerta (2017) offers a comprehensive examination of the fundamental principles of sustainable tourism development, with a specific focus on tourists. The highlighted aspects encompass the preservation of environmental quality, the provision of advantages to both tourists and residents, the maintenance of connections between tourism and the environment, the promotion of harmony between local inhabitants and their surroundings, the establishment of adaptable conditions in line with carrying capacities, and the imperative for all stakeholders to collaborate in pursuit of a shared mission for sustainable development. Sustainable tourism is often associated with safeguarding ecosystems, advancing human well-being, ensuring fairness across generations, and involving the public in decision-making (Popović et al., 2023). The interest in this subject has unquestionably increased over the last four decades. Currently, sustainability is considered a policy objective applicable to various types and sizes of tourism activities and settings (Bramwell, 2015).

Nevertheless, ensuring sustainability in tourism destinations poses a persistent challenge in terms of governance. Achieving sustainability necessitates strengthened collaborations that unite residents, the public and private sectors and other stakeholders. Due to the systemic nature of the tourism industry, the difficulty in pursuing sustainability has become more prominent (Roxas et al., 2020). To pursue sustainable tourism, there is a necessity of involving stakeholders, including both present and future visitors, as well as the present and future host community (Byrd, 2007). Yu et al. (2011) stated that for successful sustainable tourism development, a crucial factor is the involvement and cooperation of the residents. Rivera and Gutierrez (2019) emphasized that the adoption of a multi-stakeholder or value chain approach is mandatory. The most effective models of multi-stakeholder action integrate elements of both international and national intervention, incorporating unique contributions from regions and local communities, whether they are public, private, or mutual (Koscak & O'Rourke, 2017; Roxas et al., 2020).

Sustainability enhances a destination's competitiveness by attracting eco-conscious travelers, building a positive reputation, and differentiating the destination from competitors. Cost savings from sustainable practices, community engagement, and adherence to global standards further contribute to long-term resilience and innovation, ensuring continued appeal in the tourism market. Ultimately, sustainability aligns with evolving consumer preferences, regulatory expectations, and economic efficiency, bolstering a destination's competitive edge. Contrarily, a commonly held belief is that incorporating sustainability measures will increase costs, consequently diminishing destination competitiveness (Bramwell & Lane, 2013).

Developing and producing eco-friendly products and services are crucial for minimizing the environmental footprint of industrial activities within tourism destinations.

Within the tourism sector, there is a growing trend of utilizing eco-labels as tools to enhance the destination image of sustainability. Consequently, a firm's eco-brand, eco-label, and social media advertising play a crucial role in establishing a green market in eco-friendly destinations (Chi, 2021). As per Talalova et al. (2021) the tourism industry requires concerted efforts to address global climate change. The creation of environmentally conscious tourism products, often referred to as green tourism products, will not only enhance competitiveness but also increase the overall attractiveness of the destination.

Sulyok et al. (2022) noted that the emphasis on sustainability is becoming increasingly important in our daily lives. Moreover, amidst the expanding scientific literature both domestically and globally, businesses, interest groups, and municipal bodies are progressively embracing circular and eco-conscious practices within their operations. They are striving to align their activities with the principles of sustainability.

3. Case studies of eco-friendly destinations

Strategic documents are being implemented at various levels in order to align tourism destinations with the goals of sustainable tourism development. Slovenian tourism is staunchly dedicated to sustainable development. For several years, Slovenia has been actively promoting itself as a destination characterized by its commitment to environmental sustainability, emphasis on outdoor activities, and promotion of healthy lifestyles. The advantages of pursuing sustainable development include cost savings, increased appeal of sustainable businesses to investors, enhanced readiness for shifts in environmental regulations, improved guest satisfaction, employee motivation and retention, heightened visibility, and elevated prestige (Republic of Slovenia, 2024). Slovenia is considered the greenest tourist destination in Europe, as around 60% of its territory is forested and 53.6% of its area is designated as a nature reserve − making it the European country with the highest proportion of such areas. Slovenia has 40 parks and reserves with well-maintained hiking trails, where around 20,000 different plants and animals can be seen (Eaglecreek, 2024). Within Slovenia, Olimia Terme stands out with its glamping center called Glamping Olimia Adria Village. This facility offers luxury tented accommodation that is sustainable and uses natural materials such as wood, stone and canvas. The glamping center focuses on healing thermal mineral water used in the pools and is committed to environmental protection through waste separation and the installation of state-of-the-art eco-wastewater treatment plants (My Green Style, 2024).

The Slovenian city of Ljubljana has successfully achieved the status of a green destination through its sustainable development strategy. Ljubljana has set itself the goal of becoming an attractive, green and environmentally friendly destination that ensures a high quality of life for residents and visitors. Ljubljana was named European Green Capital in 2016 and secured recognition for its sustainable tourism efforts as part of the European Smart Tourism Capital competition in 2018. In addition, the city was awarded the Slovenia Green Destination Platinum award, and numerous hotels and tourism agencies have international sustainable development certifications. Around 20% of Ljubljana's natural areas are protected, with a generous 542 m^2 of green space per inhabitant. Environmental protection measures include a ban on driving in the city center since 2008, and tourists have the option of exploring the city by electric

tourist trains or electric vehicles called Kavalir. The city actively promotes sustainable transportation methods, such as eco-friendly public buses that run on methane and an increasing use of bicycles. Payment for public transportation and other services is facilitated by a contactless payment card called Urbana. The city is also promoting the shared use of an electric car by several people to encourage vehicle sharing. Ljubljana has environmentally friendly public buses, many of which run on methane. Bicycles are a common means of transportation, and efforts are being made to make public spaces and city buses more accessible for people with disabilities. For visitors with reduced mobility, there is a mobile app called Ljubljana by Wheelchair. The city has achieved the highest waste segregation rate in the EU, with underground waste containers in the city center. Ljubljana advocates for the utilization of locally sourced food in its hotels and restaurants. Sustainable development is consistently monitored by tracking key sustainability indicators (Visit Ljubljana, 2024).

To promote the implementation of sustainable development, the Global Destination Sustainability Movement has introduced the Global Destination Sustainability Index. This index, as defined, helps destination management organizations to adopt, support and recognize successful sustainable development practices. It assesses four key areas: Sustainable Development Strategy and Infrastructure (Environmental), Social Sustainability Performance, Supplier Support, and Destination Management Strategy and Initiatives. Based on this assessment, a list of the leading sustainable destinations is published annually. In 2023, the Swedish city of Gothenburg was recognized as the best sustainable destination by the Global Destination Sustainability Movement. The city has maintained its position as the leading destination in the Global Destination Sustainability Index for six consecutive years (2016-2021) and earned the title of the European Capital of Smart Tourism in 2020. In 2021, Lonely Planet recognized it as the Best Sustainable City Stay globally. By April 2022, Gothenburg joined the ranks of the EU's 100 climate-neutral and smart cities, actively working towards achieving climate neutrality by 2030. The city has also been honored with the European Capitals of Inclusion and Diversity Awards (Global Destination Sustainability Movement, 2024).

Gothenburg is known for its use of modern technology, which benefits both citizens and tourists. The city has introduced an efficient system for long-term tourism planning and actively promotes public-private partnerships. Gothenburg is also committed to a forward-looking public transportation system with the aim of achieving 100% zero-emission transport by 2030, which meets the needs of all citizens and has dedicated platforms for environmental protection. Even 92% of the city's hotels and 100% of its conference facilities have environmental certificates. Events taking place in the city use a unique tool, the Event Impact Calculator, developed through local technological and scientific collaborations. This tool anticipates the potential environmental impact of events and helps organizers assess events from an economic, social and environmental perspective (European Capitals of Smart Tourism, 2021).

Costa Rica stands out as a destination that exemplifies positive instances of sustainable tourism development (Global Sustainable Tourism Council, 2022). It has garnered international acclaim for its commitment to sustainable tourism. Costa Rica has strategically integrated eco-friendly practices, such as extensive forest preservation, wildlife conservation efforts, and eco-lodges that prioritize environmental responsibility. The country has successfully attracted a growing number of eco-conscious travelers

seeking immersive experiences in nature without compromising environmental integrity. These initiatives contribute not only to the preservation of Costa Rica's rich biodiversity but also to the well-being of local communities, emphasizing the multifaceted impact of sustainable tourism on a global scale. The country is marked by various eco-friendly initiatives, including eco-conscious construction, organic farming, and the active participation of residents in tourism. An illustrative case is the Samasati Nature Reserve, where construction practices involve minimal environmental impact, eschewing heavy machinery and tree cutting, relying on local labor, and channeling profits back into the local community. This reserve is renowned for its focus on ecotourism and adventure tourism. Additionally, the Almonds and Coral Hotel in Costa Rica serves as another noteworthy illustration of effectively applying sustainable development principles. Acknowledged with the highest level of eco-certification, this hotel champions environmental preservation through the incorporation of green construction methods, rigorous recycling practices, avoidance of chemical fertilizers and herbicides, meticulous waste segregation, implementation of a specialized wastewater treatment system, and adherence to a stringent environmental conservation and protection policy (Sustaining Tourism, 2022).

4. Discussion

In general, the literature emphasizes that rural tourism (Lakner et al., 2018), green tourism, ecotourism, soft tourism, agritourism, community tourism (Juganaru et al., 2008), health tourism (Illario et al., 2019) are the types of tourism that can contribute to sustainable development. Timur & Getz (2008) found that comparatively little attention has been paid to sustainability in urban tourism compared to other types of tourism. In contrast, this paper presents detailed case studies of two eco-friendly urban destinations, Ljubljana in Slovenia and Gothenburg in Sweden. Ljubljana's success is attributed to its comprehensive sustainable development strategy, which includes measures for environmental protection, sustainable transportation, waste management and the promotion of local products. Gothenburg's recognition as the best sustainable destination also underlines its commitment to modern technologies, long-term tourism planning and innovative transport solutions. These urban areas are a good example of sustainability and tourism stakeholders' willingness to make a change that can be noticed. Approaches for destinations with lower levels of urban development typically prioritize the conservation of natural and cultural assets by promoting eco-friendly tourist activities, engaging local communities in tourism, and incorporating technology (e.g. national parks, national reserves etc). On the other hand, sustainable tourism strategies in urban destinations primarily focus on alleviating negative effects on the environment, such as minimizing the environmental footprint of transportation and enhancing waste management.

The findings and analyses presented in this paper underscore the critical importance of sustainable tourism practices in the contemporary global landscape. As Talalova et al. (2021) point out even tourists recognize sustainability as a great motivation factor, considering that human life and health are linked to sustainability. Despite achieving minor successes, various fundamental structural and attitudinal challenges hinder numerous enterprises from adopting a more sustainable approach. Widespread ignorance persists, as many industry operators, although genuinely concerned about sustainability, lack a comprehensive understanding of

specific issues such as climate change, adverse environmental effects, and social impacts (Agyeiwaah et al., 2017).

Different authors are addressing the urgency of sustainable tourism from different aspects. As highlighted by Cotterell et al. (2021), conceptualization and mastery of sustainability skills are essential for tourism educators, while Cheer (2019) emphasises the urgency of sustainability indicators. Also, Ali & Frew (2013) suggested that information and communication technology should be applied to reach sustainable tourism. This paper emphasizes the dynamic realm of eco-friendly destinations, examining their role in fostering environmental preservation, community empowerment, and economic growth. Ensuring sustainability in tourism destinations requires addressing persistent governance challenges.

Integrating sustainability principles into the tourism sector presents a greater challenge compared to other industries. This complexity arises from the diverse interests and requirements of key stakeholders. Managing this intricate process involves addressing multiple issues simultaneously, and there is no foolproof formula to ensure successful implementation of sustainable tourism policies in practice (Maxim, 2015). In order to achieve sustainability, increased cooperation with the most important interest groups is essential. The difficulty in pursuing sustainability in the systemic nature of the tourism industry becomes apparent, emphasizing the need for multi-stakeholder or value chain approaches.

Investing in green technologies and fostering green innovations enhances job opportunities and directly contributes to the realization of sustainable development objectives (Jovanović et al., 2023). Digital technology in tourism typically concentrates on marketing, management, assessing ecological effects, improving the tourist experience, planning tourism activities, managing destinations, and promoting sustainable development. However, integrating digital technology into sustainable tourism destinations presents a multifaceted challenge that requires collaboration among diverse stakeholders, including tourism operators, policymakers, local communities, and technology providers (El Archi et al., 2023).

In the area of environmentally friendly destinations, Slovenia and its capital city Ljubljana, Gothenburg and Costa Rica have comprehensive strategies for sustainable tourism. Slovenia and its capital city are characterized by a multi-layered approach that includes environmental protection, advanced waste management, active promotion of sustainable principles, global awards and seamless integration of green initiatives into accommodation and facilities. Gothenburg, on the other hand, relies on cutting-edge technological innovations, transformative public transportation improvements, a commitment to environmental certifications, ambitious carbon neutrality targets and robust multi-stakeholder collaboration, all carefully designed to ensure lasting sustainability. Costa Rica's exemplary instances of sustainable tourism development further enrich our understanding of successful models. The country's commitment to extensive forest preservation, wildlife conservation, and the establishment of eco-lodges demonstrates a holistic approach to sustainable tourism. Notably, the Samasati Nature Reserve showcases environmentally conscious construction practices, local community engagement, and a commitment to channeling profits back into community development. Moreover, the Almonds and Coral Hotel exemplifies effective application of sustainable development principles, earning the highest level of eco-certification through green construction, recycling practices, and a stringent environmental conservation policy. These destinations are prime examples of environmentally conscious tourism destinations, demonstrating how diverse and dynamic sustainable practices are. In general, the case studies underline the crucial importance of sustainable tourism and show the diversity of approaches

that destinations around the world can take. The examples of Slovenia, Ljubljana, Gothenburg, and Costa Rica provide valuable insights and lessons that can guide other destinations in their pursuit of balanced and sustainable tourism models. Given the aforementioned points and the global recognition of sustainable tourism in these destinations, it is reasonable to conclude that they employ effective strategies for sustainable tourism development.

5. Conclusion

This study navigates the complex terrain of sustainable tourism and focuses in particular on the dynamic area of eco-friendly destinations. The urgency of a paradigm shift in the global tourism industry towards sustainability is undeniable. As international travel increases, destinations are faced with the need to balance the attraction of tourism with responsible and sustainable practices to prevent harmful impacts on ecosystems, cultural heritage and local communities.

The case studies of Slovenia, Ljubljana, Gothenburg and Costa Rica provide insightful examples of successful implementation of sustainable tourism strategies. Ljubljana's comprehensive sustainable development strategy, which includes environmental protection, sustainable transportation and waste management, demonstrates a multi-faceted approach that has earned the city recognition as the European Green Capital. Gothenburg's commitment to modern technologies, long-term tourism planning and innovative transportation solutions has earned the city awards as Best Sustainable Destination and European Capital of Smart Tourism.

The multifaceted system of sustainable tourism, which includes policy frameworks, community engagement, infrastructure development and marketing strategies, highlights the intricate interplay of social, ecological and economic factors that determine the sustainability of destinations. This study recognizes the critical role of sustainability in improving a destination's competitiveness, attracting environmentally conscious travellers and building a positive reputation. In addition, sustainability is in line with evolving consumer preferences, legislative expectations and economic efficiency, which strengthens a destination's competitive advantage.

However, the road to sustainability in tourism destinations is fraught with many challenges. The diverse interests and needs of the most important interest groups make the integration of sustainability principles a difficult undertaking. Persistent governance problems, structural and attitudinal barriers and a widespread lack of awareness impede the widespread implementation of more sustainable practices. Besides this, the issue of growth and sustainability of tourism still needs to be studied.

This study adds to the understanding of sustainable tourism by highlighting key findings and recommendations from successful case studies. Increased collaboration between residents, public and private sectors and other stakeholders is seen as essential to achieving sustainability. The findings highlight the systemic nature of the tourism industry, which requires multi-stakeholder or value chain approaches for successful implementation.

Within the dynamic system of sustainable tourism destinations, Slovenia and its capital city, Gothenburg and Costa Rica emerge not merely as illustrations of eco-friendly paradigms but as instrumental models guiding the global tourism industry. Their diverse and dynamic sustainable practices demonstrate the opportunities for destinations worldwide to pursue a

balanced and sustainable tourism model. As the tourism industry is facing a crucial phase, this study underlines the importance of adopting eco-friendly strategies not only as a moral obligation, but as a strategic necessity for the sustainable competitiveness and resilience of destinations in the face of global challenges. Also, as emphasized by Budeanu et al. (2016) seeking durable solutions to sustainability challenges brings about a sense of adaptability and acceptability that can be beneficial for tourism research, but also raise the bar in terms of research ambitions. No significant change within the tourism framework can be decoupled from broader societal changes, and adaptable, sustainable models must creatively address the new challenges. This brings new challenges for future research.

While the case studies on Slovenia, Ljubljana, Gothenburg and Costa Rica provide valuable insights, it is important to recognize that these destinations do not represent all types of destinations worldwide, which is the limitation of this paper. Therefore, the findings of this paper may not be fully generalizable to all destinations, and further research is needed to explore the applicability of sustainable tourism strategies in different contexts. In addition, further research could explore the perspectives and roles of different stakeholders, including residents, tourists, businesses, governments, and non-governmental organizations, in shaping sustainable tourism outcomes.

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