



**ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND TECHNOLOGY
IN TOURISM AND HOSPITALITY**

Sustainable Tourism

**Entrepreneurial Trends,
Opportunities, and
Strategic Insights**

VOLUME 2

Edited by

**Dr Manpreet Arora
Dr Anukrati Sharma
Dr Che-Jen Su**

Sustainable Tourism

ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND TECHNOLOGY IN TOURISM AND HOSPITALITY

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Sustainable Tourism: Entrepreneurial Trends, Opportunities, and Strategic Insights (Volume 2)

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INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

To our beloved parents, whose unconditional love, wisdom, and sacrifices have shaped our journey.

To our families, whose unwavering support, encouragement, and belief in us have been our greatest strength.

This book is a tribute to your endless love, guidance, and inspiration.

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Foreword

It is with immense pride and pleasure that I pen this foreword for the edited book *Sustainable Tourism: Entrepreneurial Trends, Opportunities, and Strategic Insights*, a collaborative effort led by the distinguished editors, Dr Manpreet Arora, Dr Anukrati Sharma, and Dr Che-Jen Su. This work is a testament to their collective vision and commitment to advancing academic discourse and practical insights in the vital intersection of sustainability and tourism entrepreneurship.

The book assembles a diverse collection of chapters contributed by scholars from across the globe, including Germany, South Africa, Zimbabwe, Egypt, Macau, Greece, India, Portugal, and Mexico. This international representation not only enriches the volume with varied perspectives but also underscores the universal significance of sustainable tourism in addressing global challenges. By addressing emerging topics such as surf tourism, experiential tourism-based entrepreneurship, sustainability assessment processes for tourism, innovation, and smart tourism, night tourism, film tourism with a sustainability focus, and smart technologies for sustainable tourism development, this book offers a comprehensive exploration of contemporary issues and strategies in the field.

Tourism is both a driver and beneficiary of sustainable development, with the potential to create economic opportunities, preserve cultural heritage, and protect natural resources. However, achieving this balance requires a nuanced understanding of the interplay between entrepreneurship and sustainability, as well as innovative approaches to leveraging technology and emerging trends. This volume provides a roadmap for scholars, policymakers, and practitioners to navigate this complex terrain, presenting actionable strategies and thought-provoking insights.

The editors of this book are eminent academics with distinguished careers. Dr Manpreet Arora, Senior Assistant Professor at the Central University of Himachal Pradesh, India, has established herself as a thought leader in management and sustainability. Dr Che-Jen Su, Distinguished Professor at Fu Jen Catholic University, Taiwan, brings a wealth of expertise in hospitality and tourism management. Dr Anukrati Sharma, Associate Professor at the University of Kota, India, and an advocate for skill development and gender equity, adds her profound knowledge of commerce and management to this volume. Together, their combined expertise ensures the academic rigour and practical relevance of this book.

As the Vice-Chancellor of the Central University of Himachal Pradesh, I take pride in witnessing the contribution of our academic community to global dialogues on sustainability. This book represents not just an academic milestone but also a valuable resource for creating sustainable and entrepreneurial solutions to the challenges faced by the tourism industry worldwide.

I congratulate the editors, contributors, and publishers for their dedication to this endeavour and for bringing this timely and impactful book to fruition. I am confident that *Sustainable Tourism: Entrepreneurial Trends, Opportunities, and Strategic Insights* will be a significant reference for students, researchers, and industry professionals striving to build a sustainable and resilient future for the tourism sector.

Sat Prakash Bansal

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Preface

Tourism entrepreneurship plays a crucial role in driving economic growth while promoting sustainability. As global travellers become increasingly aware of environmental and social concerns, there is a growing demand for responsible tourism practices. Sustainable tourism entrepreneurship focusses on balancing economic viability with environmental conservation and social inclusivity, ensuring that tourism development benefits local communities without compromising natural resources. Entrepreneurs in this sector have unique opportunities to integrate sustainable practices into their business models, addressing challenges such as climate change, resource depletion, and cultural preservation.

One of the significant opportunities in sustainable tourism entrepreneurship lies in eco-tourism and nature-based tourism. Businesses that emphasize eco-friendly accommodations, conservation-oriented travel experiences, and responsible wildlife tourism can attract a growing segment of conscious travellers. Sustainable lodgings such as eco-resorts, green hotels, and community-based homestays have gained popularity, offering tourists a chance to experience local cultures and biodiversity while minimizing their carbon footprint. Moreover, digital platforms and technology-driven solutions enable entrepreneurs to innovate in eco-tourism, offering virtual experiences, smart waste management, and energy-efficient operations.

Further community engagement is another key strategy for sustainable tourism entrepreneurs. Collaborating with local communities to promote cultural tourism, handicrafts, and traditional cuisines ensures economic benefits reach grassroots levels. By empowering local artisans and service providers, tourism businesses can foster inclusive growth while preserving indigenous traditions. Responsible tourism entrepreneurs also focus on fair wages, ethical sourcing, and capacity-building programmes, ensuring that local stakeholders actively participate in and benefit from tourism development. Technology and innovation play a pivotal role in advancing sustainability in tourism entrepreneurship. The adoption of artificial intelligence, big data analytics, and blockchain technology can enhance sustainable practices by optimizing resource usage, reducing wastage, and ensuring transparency in supply chains. Additionally, digital marketing and online travel platforms enable sustainable tourism entrepreneurs to reach wider audiences, educating travellers about responsible tourism choices and eco-friendly destinations.

Despite the opportunities stated above, sustainable tourism entrepreneurs face challenges such as high initial investment costs, regulatory hurdles, and market

competition. Overcoming these barriers require strategic partnerships with government bodies, NGOs, and international sustainability networks. Policy support in the form of incentives for green businesses, subsidies for eco-friendly infrastructure, and clear sustainability guidelines can help tourism entrepreneurs navigate the complexities of sustainable development.

Thus, sustainability in tourism entrepreneurship is not just a trend but a necessity for long-term industry viability. By leveraging opportunities in eco-tourism, community engagement, technological innovation, and policy support, tourism entrepreneurs can create profitable yet responsible businesses. A commitment to sustainability ensures that tourism remains a driver of economic prosperity while safeguarding the planet for future generations. This edited volume, *Sustainable Tourism: Entrepreneurial Trends, Opportunities, and Strategic Insights*, offers an in-depth examination of emerging trends, innovative strategies, and significant research influencing the sustainable tourism sector.

This volume compiles academic contributions from various researchers and practitioners, providing insights into the sustainable tourism sector. The chapters encompass a diverse array of subjects, including the influence of sustainability on surf tourism and the economic ramifications of peer-to-peer accommodations, nocturnal tourism, and cinematic landscapes. This book offers a comprehensive understanding of sustainability-driven tourism entrepreneurship by merging theoretical perspectives with empirical evidence.

Every chapter in this volume emphasizes a distinct facet of sustainable tourism development. Chapter 1 offers a comprehensive examination of the relationship between surf tourism, sustainable practices, and marketing strategies within the framework of surfing culture. The study examines the distinctive centrality of surfing in lifestyle and its impact on surfers' dedication to sustainable practices, as well as how these principles can be utilized to formulate effective marketing strategies for promoting sustainable tourism at surf locations.

Chapter 2 seeks to emphasize the emergence and significance of experiential tourism worldwide. This chapter proposes design thinking as a methodology for conceptualizing and developing successful experiential tourism start-ups, given that creating experiences is a complex and creative endeavour. The design thinking framework is amalgamated with the entrepreneurship framework as a problem-solving skill to provide explicit guidelines for entrepreneurs to develop experiential tourism-based ventures.

Chapter 3 examines innovative marketing strategies for tourism entrepreneurs in the peer-to-peer accommodation (P2P) sector, emphasizing its transformative impact within the sharing economy. The chapter discusses the increasing demand for sustainable tourism practices. The discourse encompasses the progression of tourism marketing, the rise of P2P accommodation, and the prospects and obstacles confronting hosts as micro-entrepreneurs. The chapter offers practical strategies for hosts to improve customer satisfaction and operational efficiency. It concludes with prospects, highlighting the significance of technology and inclusive practices in fostering the sustainable development of P2P platforms.

Chapter 4 offers a comprehensive examination of the evolution of tourism sustainability in Africa, with a particular emphasis on the influence of these

perspectives on Zimbabwe. The investigation in the chapter examines the actions taken by governments to promote tourism sustainability and the methods that have been implemented to establish policies and procedures that are sustainable in Africa. The research aims to address the current sustainability assessment processes used in literature and how effective they are in promoting sustainable practices by investigating the trends, challenges, and opportunities associated with sustainability tourism practices in a variety of African countries.

Chapter 5 examines the cutting-edge technological advancements that are revolutionizing the tourism industry's entrepreneurship, with a particular emphasis on the concept of Smart Tourism. The integration of advanced technologies, including artificial intelligence (AI), machine learning, big data, the internet of things (IoT), and augmented/virtual reality, defines the concept of Smart Tourism. This chapter delineates the fundamental elements of smart tourism and the manner in which these technologies are transforming the development and operation of tourism enterprises. The chapter also discusses the opportunities and challenges that entrepreneurs encounter when adopting these technologies. The authors have attempted to address the practical strategies for identifying market opportunities, developing innovative products, implementing sustainable business models, and utilizing digital marketing tools to attract and retain customers. Furthermore, the authors have highlighted the significance of sustainability and social responsibility in the context of smart tourism is investigated, emphasizing the positive effects of sustainable practices on the environment.

Chapter 6 is a bibliometric study conducted to examine the trends in the intersection of tourism entrepreneurship and emerging trends and technologies, as evidenced by publications in Scopus databases. The study analysed 1859 articles to provide insights into the evolving landscape and identify key themes, influential authors, and prominent journals, thereby contributing to a better understanding of this dynamic field.

The tourism industry is gradually freeing itself from the constraints of traditional time and space constraints as technology continues to advance. By means of case studies, Chapter 7 provides readers with a novel viewpoint on the night-time economy and tourism sector. The authors conducted a multi-group analysis to investigate the impact of night-time tourism on the duration of tourists' stays and their visits to comparable destinations. The research offers valuable insights into both tourism management and night tourism.

In the present era, community-based tourism is a critical strategy for promoting economic development and empowering local communities, thereby advancing sustainable tourism. It makes a substantial contribution to the preservation of cultural heritage, thereby guaranteeing that the tourism industry benefits all stakeholders and promotes economic growth. Chapter 8 is an endeavour to identify effective methods for incorporating community participation in the conservation of the environment and the preservation of cultural heritage in order to promote the overall development of sustainable tourism practices. A thorough literature review has been done in the chapter to conduct this investigation. It investigates equitable revenue-sharing models, participatory planning frameworks, and capacity-building initiatives that enhance community ownership of tourism

enterprises. Through a critical examination of these issues, the findings emphasize the importance of community participation, environmental protection, cultural heritage preservation, and economic empowerment.

Chapter 9 reviews the quantitative empirical literature on the economic impact of short-term rental accommodation (STRs) on tourist destinations. The review identifies three primary research themes: the performance of the hotel industry, the employment of the tourism industry, and the impact of housing prices and rents. It also demonstrates a consensus regarding the latter two themes. In addition, a framework for research on the impact of STRs is provided, with a particular emphasis on the investigation of its impact on the performance of the hotel industry. The review also identifies gaps in the literature that pertain to the impact of enhanced compliance on the growth of the STRs market and government revenue.

The utilization of intelligent technologies in the travel industry has emerged as a new trend. This is done in order to improve the quality of the visitor experience and increase their level of enjoyment. The present initiative is designed to enhance the quality of visitors' experiences and increase their level of enjoyment through the implementation of innovative technology. In Chapter 10, the author conducted exploratory factor research to identify the numerous dimensions of satisfaction and the attribute levels that are correlated with them in a variety of Romanian tourist establishments. The purpose of this investigation was to ascertain whether the tourist regions under investigation offer varying degrees of pleasure and whether other groups of individuals who visit for a variety of reasons exhibit varying degrees of contentment.

In the contemporary world, entertainment is no longer a one-dimensional experience. The thresholds of impact have been challenged by its multifaceted scope. Films serve as a resource for productive escape for individuals, providing them with opportunities for vicarious experiences. Film tourism is the result of the extension of this phenomenon to the tourism industry. It has been promoted as a valuable asset in the context of filming locations. The influence of cinema and literature as soft power is a broader spectrum, as they have always been the forerunners of the creative industries that are prominent in capturing the attention of the global audience. Chapter 11 explores this interesting dimension of the tourism industry. The chapter's objective is to demonstrate that the allure of cinematic landscapes in the form of film tourism is one of the most significant soft powers that a nation can possess, with a particular emphasis on the Indian context. The chapter distinguishes itself from the existing literature by introducing a novel conceptualization of film tourism, soft power, and sustainability. It argues that film tourism can yield even greater benefits if it is treated as sustainable film tourism, thereby enhancing India's soft power.

Finally, in Chapter 12, in order to investigate the current state of knowledge regarding women entrepreneurs in the tourism industry and to identify potential trends for future research, this chapter conducts a comprehensive literature review. It is crucial to comprehend the experiences, challenges, and contributions of women in order to promote economic empowerment, as they continue to play an increasingly significant role in the entrepreneurship landscape, particularly

within the dynamic field of tourism. The review synthesizes the results of numerous published articles collected from Scopus, elucidating critical themes such as the role of technology, the impact of social and cultural factors, women's access to resources, and gender-specific challenges in the tourism sector. The article not only synthesizes the existing literature but also critically evaluates the gaps and limitations in the current research, thereby establishing the foundation for future investigations. This article contributes to the ongoing discourse on women entrepreneurs in the tourism industry by synthesizing and analysing the literature. It also serves as a valuable resource for scholars, policymakers, and practitioners who intend to promote the understanding and support of women's economic empowerment in this sector.

Thus, this book offers a comprehensive understanding of sustainability-driven tourism entrepreneurship by merging theoretical perspectives with empirical evidence. Every chapter in this volume emphasizes a distinct facet of sustainable tourism development. The discourse on design thinking, smart tourism, film-induced tourism, and women's entrepreneurship highlights the multifaceted essence of sustainability in tourism. Furthermore, bibliometric analysis and systematic literature reviews provide essential frameworks for prospective research and policy implications. This book is anticipated to be a significant resource for academics, industry professionals, policymakers, and entrepreneurs aiming to align their tourism initiatives with sustainability objectives. This volume seeks to enhance the tourism industry by promoting knowledge exchange and interdisciplinary dialogue, thereby fostering responsibility and innovation. We express our appreciation to all contributors for their thorough research and perceptive insights. We extend our gratitude to the readers who interact with this work, anticipating it will stimulate innovative concepts, research avenues, and pragmatic solutions for sustainable tourism entrepreneurship.

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Chapter 1

The Impact of Centrality to Lifestyle on Surfers' Sustainable Behaviour: A Marketing Implication on Surf Tourism

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Abstract

This chapter explores the interplay between surf tourism (SST), sustainable behaviours, and marketing strategies within the context of surfing culture. The research focusses on how the unique centrality to lifestyle that surfing holds influences surfers' commitment to sustainable behaviours and how these values can be leveraged to develop effective marketing strategies promoting sustainable tourism at surf destinations. Data for the study were collected through a globally distributed questionnaire, offering a comprehensive view of surfers' purchasing behaviours across diverse cultural backgrounds. The findings demonstrate a strong link between the surfing lifestyle and environmentally friendly behaviours.

Keywords: Centrality to lifestyle; surf tourism; sustainable tourism; sustainable behaviour; marketing strategies

1. Introduction

Surfing may be seen as a pastime, to some people; however, it has gone through significant changes over time and become more than just a hobby, it's a way of life that's closely connected to cultural norms and societal beliefs, about the environment, and social responsibility too. Surfing is more than catching waves; it's

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a lifestyle that nurtures a bond with the sea and encourages surfers to appreciate the beauty of nature while taking on a responsibility to protect it.

The deep bond with nature plays a role in the surfing cultures identity. Surfers form a sense of admiration for the ocean and its ecosystems through their visits to coastal areas (as mentioned by [Borne, 2017](#)). This admiration leads them to get involved in environmental protection initiatives and incorporate eco habits into their daily routines. However, surfers encounter obstacles when trying to practice sustainability despite their inclination towards environmental stewardship. The difficulties frequently arise from the clash between the values upheld by the surfing community, such as freedom and self-expression. The need for sustainability measures that call for unity and compliance with set guidelines ([Ruttenberg & Brosius, 2017](#)).

The world of surfing includes brands, surfboard makers and sellers, media companies, and event planners. It has an impact on how surfers act and think. This industry doesn't just offer the gear and venues for surfing. Shapes the stories that portray the essence of being a surfer. Hence, the surfing industry wields an influence in encouraging surfers to adopt eco-friendly practices. By endorsing products and supporting green initiatives while emphasizing the crucial role of sustainability in their promotional efforts, businesses can greatly influence the choices individuals make. Shaping not only their personal lifestyles but also their interactions within the community at large.

Surfing's impact goes beyond those who surf regularly. Its culture of freedom and connection with nature appeals to a broad range of people who may never have even tried surfing themselves. Its influence is evident in the popularity of surf-themed media and products that embody the spirit of the surfing lifestyle.

In publications, like surf magazines and social media posts. Even in movies and books about surfing culture, it influences people's beliefs about the sport as a way to connect deeply with nature. Surfers are often portrayed as guardians of the environment due to their perceived awareness and lifestyle, which aligns with the world ([Ford & Brown, 2005](#); [Kampion, 2003](#); [Laderman, 2014](#)). The surfing scene is commonly viewed as an escape from norms and a retreat into the arms of nature ([Kampion, 2003](#)). Surfing and the surf industry could potentially have an impact on changes by promoting living practices that encourage public awareness of environmental issues and influence the development of policies supporting sustainability initiatives.

This research focusses on delving into the link between the surfing culture and friendly actions. It delves into how surfers' strong bond with nature and their active participation in the community affect their buying patterns and their position as champions for sustainability. By investigating this interaction, the study aims to provide an understanding of how the principles and behaviours of the surfing lifestyle can be used to advance eco-tourism and encourage responsibility on a larger scale.

2. Theoretical Background

2.1. Surf Tourism

SST is defined as a type of travel where individuals are motivated primarily or secondarily by surfing, whether to actively participate or simply enjoy and observe the sport and its associated events. Surfing, a sport requiring specific coastal

conditions for wave formation, ties its practice uniquely to certain geographic locations. This territorial specificity offers unique opportunities for regions to attract travellers seeking both the thrill of surfing and the beauty of coastal settings. As surfing grows in prominence through international competitions, media coverage, and professional endorsements, iconic surf spots around the globe are showcased, drawing surfers to experience once-in-a-lifetime waves in diverse international waters.

SST not only encapsulates the adventurous spirit of its participants but also plays a significant role in the socio-economic dynamics of coastal communities worldwide. As this niche market continues to expand, its impact on local economies, cultural exchange, and international cooperation offers a promising wave of opportunities for regions ready to capitalize on the global appeal of surfing.

2.2. Evolution of Surf Culture and Its Influence on Tourism

The evolution of surf culture from a niche, coastal pastime to a global phenomenon has significantly shaped the tourism industry over the past few decades. In the 1970s, towards the end of the 20th century, the increasing popularity of board sports marked the beginning of the commercialization of the surf industry. [Guibert \(2007\)](#) notes that this period represented a pivotal shift as surfing transitioned from being a primarily beach-based activity to a trendy urban phenomenon, captivating audiences far beyond traditional coastal areas. The rapid expansion of the surf industry during these decades created numerous job opportunities and contributed billions of dollars in annual revenue, transforming surfing from an elite pursuit into a mainstream recreational activity and a major draw for tourists in various global destinations.

However, the increasing popularity of surfing has also led to challenges similar to those seen in other forms of niche tourism. [Davis and Tisdell \(1995\)](#) discuss issues of overcrowding in scuba diving tourism, which parallel those in SST. The quest for uncrowded, high-quality waves drives surfers to remote areas, mirroring the preferences of scuba divers who seek pristine and less congested sites. [Ponting \(2015\)](#) argues that this pursuit of unspoiled surfing spots impacts not only the sustainability of natural resources but also significantly influences the socio-economic dynamics of host communities. When tourists, particularly surfers, visit these distant places, they introduce various economic and environmental pressures, which can lead to both positive and negative outcomes for the local population.

The demographic makeup of surfers as a highly mobile and international group further underscores their influence on tourism. Their travel patterns, often involving frequent trips to remote surfing destinations, highlight a strong interest in travel and tourism that exceeds the average rate among other tourists ([Barbieri & Sotomayor, 2013](#)). Unlike the broader tourist population, surfers frequently choose to visit developed but less typical tourist destinations, driven by the allure of uncrowded waves and unique surfing experiences. [Teixeira \(2017\)](#) suggests that these unique travel preferences and the high mobility of surfers result in substantial economic, cultural, and environmental impacts on the areas they frequent.

The presence of surfers in these regions can drive local economic development, but it also presents challenges related to cultural integration, environmental degradation, and the management of natural resources.

Lazarow et al. (2008) argued that the deep engagement of surfers in surf-related travel reflects broader trends seen in lifestyle sports, where participants not only engage in physical activities but are also actively shaped by the cultures and economies of their chosen destinations. This interaction between lifestyle choices, travel experiences, and economic effects demonstrates how a niche activity like surfing can significantly influence tourism trends. The impact of surf culture on tourism provides a unique perspective for exploring contemporary issues related to tourism practices, sustainability efforts, and the balance between cultural preservation and economic development.

The evolution of surf culture from a localized, elite activity to a global phenomenon has had profound implications for tourism. While the growth of SST has brought economic benefits and increased global awareness of surfing, it has also introduced challenges related to sustainability and cultural integration (Fox et al., 2021). The ongoing influence of surf culture on tourism highlights the need for a balanced approach that maximizes the positive impacts of SST while mitigating its potential downsides.

2.3. The Relationship Between Surf and Sustainability

The link between surfing and the ocean setting underlines the pressing need for sustainability in this sport, according to Ponting et al. (2005) and Larson et al. (2018). SST as they posit, must find a mix between preserving nature and fostering development. This equilibrium is especially vital in safeguarding the charm of surf spots that often comprise habitats prone to damage from excessive human activity and environmental harm. The study highlights the importance of maintaining a balance to preserve the charm that draws both surfers and tourists to these areas intact.

Promoting this perspective are academics, such as Borne and Ponting (2015) along with Towner (2015) who support a SST model aimed at enhancing the benefits for communities while reducing its impact to a minimum extent possible. They suggest that finding this equilibrium necessitates the implementation of thoughtful strategies and management techniques that take into account the sustainability limits of specific regions. This involves giving precedence to the lasting welfare of local residents, over immediate profits derived from higher visitor counts. When trying to increase the number of visitors, SST development efforts should concentrate on improving the overall tourist experience by highlighting environmentally friendly practices like using sustainable surfing equipment, supporting local businesses, and incorporating educational programmes that promote awareness about local conservation projects.

Surfers are often seen not as sports enthusiasts but as caretakers of the environment in various writings and studies like the one by Laviolette (2019). It is highlighted that surfers' strong bond with the sea and nature makes them more aware of concerns and actively involved in conservation efforts. The dedication to

causes is now evident in the way surf spots are supervised and advertised. Numerous surf camps and schools have begun integrating eco methods into their activities by using energy sources and adopting recycling and composting practices while also providing educational initiatives to inform surfers about regional environmental issues and ways to tackle them.

The connection between surfing and sustainability is not straightforward. The surf community is increasingly embracing measures; however, the effects of SST on ecosystems and communities are still a topic of discussion. On the one hand, according to Borne and Ponting (2015), SST has the potential to trigger improvements by raising awareness about conservation issues and offering financial motivations for local communities to safeguard their environment. Without handling and supervision, the arrival of visitors can result in harm to nature, cultural upheaval, and a loss of the charm that defines these locations. Studying how surfing and sustainability are connected shows how surfers and the surf industry can raise awareness and embrace practices simultaneously. Research by Ponting et al. (2005) and Larson et al. (2018) underscores the impact that regulated SST can have on conservation initiatives and local societies. This strategy aligns with the aims of tourism development to harmonize environmental preservation with social and economic prosperity. Exploring the connection between surf culture and sustainability offers insights into how surfing can impact and be impacted by sustainability initiatives.

2.4. Surfing As a Non-ecological Sport

Surfing, often romanticized as a harmonious interaction with nature, paradoxically contributes significantly to environmental degradation. Guibert and Pickel-Chevalier (2017) highlight that surfers, traditionally seen as protectors of the ocean, face a difficult reality when it comes to the sport's ecological footprint. As winter approaches in regions like France, many surfers either invest in extensive gear to withstand cold temperatures or travel to warmer destinations globally. Both choices, intended to keep surfing year-round, come with considerable environmental costs – either through the carbon emissions associated with travel or the environmental impact of manufacturing and disposing of surf gear.

Wheaton (2020) further explores this contradiction, pointing out the inconsistency between the surfer's self-image as an environmental steward and the actual practices within the sport. While surfers often claim to support sustainability, the industry that sustains their passion, including SST, equipment production, and international competitions, contributes significantly to environmental harm. Wheaton argues that the surf culture, which prides itself on a deep connection to nature, must grapple with the reality that it is part of a highly polluting industry. Although technological advancements and innovations in sustainable development are emerging, Wheaton notes that they are not progressing quickly enough to fully mitigate the sport's environmental impact. The evolution of surfboards reflects a quest for innovation while raising significant environmental challenges. Historically, the heavy wooden boards used by the Polynesians held strong cultural and symbolic value. However, with the introduction of modern materials,

such as balsa wood, polyurethane foam, and advanced composites, surfing has been transformed, particularly with the emergence of the shortboard in the 1960s, which brought greater agility and performance. Guibert and Pickel-Chevalier (2017) point out that today's surfboard manufacturing, often centred in Asia, depends on materials like polyurethane or polystyrene for the foam core, combined with fibreglass. Laviolette (2019) describes modern surfboards as 'a toxic cocktail of plastics, resins, glues and fibreglass'.

Patagonia is one of the few brands actively working to create sustainable wetsuits using ecological materials that are safe for the environment, particularly with their Yulex wetsuits. Patagonia has garnered academic attention for its pro-environmental practices and commitment to 'green consumerism'. Founded by climber, the company has consistently aimed to develop products aligned with Chouinard's own environmental ethics.

Similarly, Soóruz (2013) has made significant advancements in producing eco-friendly wetsuits by incorporating materials, such as Bamboo, recycled polyester. Although Limestone, a fossilized limestone material, reduces the use of petrochemical products, its extraction remains energy-intensive and non-renewable. Guibert and Pickel-Chevalier (2017) and Wheaton (2020) emphasize that the surf industry's reliance on these polluting materials, alongside the slow pace of adopting sustainable alternatives, underscores a broader issue: the need for a cultural shift within the surfing community. While the community prides itself on its connection to the ocean, the environmental reality of surfing reveals a gap between this ideal and the actual practices. Addressing this contradiction, as both sets of authors suggest, will require not only technological innovations but also a more profound commitment from the surfing culture to align their lifestyle with sustainable practices.

2.5. Surf Culture and Its Social and Health Aspects

Surf culture, often perceived through various lenses, has undergone significant transformations since its early days. In his book, *The First Era of Surfing in France: A Socially Exclusive Sport*, Guibert (2005) explores the challenges faced by surfers in France during the 1960s. According to Guibert, surfers at that time were frequently depicted by the media as outcasts or rebels, associated with nonconformity and, at times, substance abuse. This portrayal painted a negative image of the sport and its participants, contributing to the marginalization of surfing within mainstream society. Contrasting with this early perception, surfing gradually gained acceptance in Europe, largely due to efforts by individuals from the social elite who sought to redefine the sport's image. Joel de Rosnay, a French scientist and author, was a key figure in this transformation. Guibert (2005) notes that de Rosnay's advocacy, particularly through media channels, was instrumental in promoting surfing as a legitimate and respected activity. His efforts led to establishing surf schools and clubs, fostering a sense of community and embedding values, such as respect and camaraderie within the sport. This shift in perception is evident today, where surfing enjoys widespread popularity, especially in regions like Aquitaine and the Basque Country, supported by over 180 clubs.

While Guibert (2005) focusses on the social evolution of surfing, others emphasize the sport's broader social and health benefits. For instance, Land and Joe Taylor's (2010) study, which involved offering surfing lessons to a group of 20 individuals under the guidance of a clinical psychologist, demonstrated significant improvements in participants' self-confidence, self-esteem, and overall psychological health within six weeks. This research attracted attention from healthcare professionals and media outlets like the *Daily Mail*, *The Telegraph*, and the BBC, highlighting the therapeutic potential of surfing.

The concept of 'Surf Therapy' has since gained traction, expanding the understanding of surfing beyond a recreational activity. The Surfriider Association describes surf therapy as more than just riding waves; it involves a range of seaside activities that cater to people of all ages and skill levels, emphasizing the sport's mental health benefits. This perspective is supported by Orams and Towner (2012), who argue that surfing, as a human activity dependent on natural capital like wave breaks and environmental features, such as water quality, can be studied as a cultural ecosystem service (CES) that contributes to human mental and physical health.

Further underscoring the therapeutic value of surfing, the formation of the International Surf Therapy Organization (ISTO) in 2017 has played a crucial role in coordinating research and initiatives aimed at helping various communities, including survivors of domestic violence, marginalized youth, veterans, and individuals with disabilities. Barucq and Guillaume (2014) highlight how surf therapy is not only an emerging field of research but also a practical tool for social inclusion and healing, as seen in community projects like the Clinique d'Amade in Bayonne, where surfing is used as a therapeutic intervention for those facing significant challenges. These developments illustrate the evolution of surfing from a sport once very niche to a powerful instrument for social and therapeutic engagement. While Guibert (2005) portrays the early struggles of surf culture in gaining social acceptance, the work of Land and Taylor (2010) and organizations like ISTO showcase how the sport has transcended its original image, becoming a vehicle for promoting mental health, social cohesion, and community healing. The narrative of surfing today is one of inclusivity, recovery, and empowerment, extending far beyond the confines of the surf community itself.

3. Sustainable Tourism and Destination Management

3.1. Sustainable Tourism

The concept of sustainable tourism has broadened over time, now encompassing various approaches, such as responsible travel, ethical tourism, and solidarity-based tourism. Each of these approaches emphasizes travel that respects both the local residents and the travellers, preserves cultural heritage, and safeguards the environment. The importance of sustainable tourism is not merely theoretical but crucial in the context of the growing global tourism industry (Arora et al., 2023) and its potential environmental repercussions. The French NGO 'ATD' reinforces the idea that sustainable tourism seeks to balance three core principles: optimizing the use of environmental resources, preserving the socio-cultural authenticity of host communities,

and ensuring the long-term economic viability of tourism operations. These objectives are designed to uphold essential ecological processes, protect natural resources and biodiversity, and promote intercultural understanding and tolerance.

This discourse around sustainable tourism becomes particularly significant when applied to SST, where tourists are in direct and frequent contact with natural environments. The interaction between surfers and the natural settings they visit places a unique responsibility on the SST industry to manage these interactions sustainably. Unlike more passive forms of tourism, surfing demands active engagement with the environment, making the need for sustainable practices even more critical. As the literature suggests (Carvalho, 2018; Ponting, 2015), the challenge for SST is to develop strategies that ensure the activities of visiting surfers contribute positively to environmental conservation rather than causing harm to the ecosystems they enjoy. The principles of sustainable tourism must be integrated into the development and management of surf destinations to preserve these natural environments for future generations.

This strong emphasis on sustainable tourism principles provides a foundation for further examining how SST aligns with broader sustainability goals. It sets the stage for a deeper exploration of the interplay between surfing, sustainable practices, and community impacts, which will be discussed in subsequent sections. By understanding surfing as not just a sport but a form of expression that is intimately tied to nature, the importance of sustainable tourism in this context becomes even more apparent. Although many outdoor sports take place in natural environments, the relationship between surfing and the ocean remains singularly unique. This study focusses specifically on surfing's profound connection to nature, omitting comparisons with other nature or water sports to highlight the distinct environmental and cultural dimensions inherent to the surfing experience.

3.2. Sustainable Tourism Development

The growth trajectory of global tourism has proven to be remarkably resilient, even in the face of the global COVID-19 pandemic that disrupted economies and societies worldwide from 2020 to 2022. Initial predictions suggested that the pandemic might permanently alter travel behaviour, leading to a decline in international tourism and offering a much-needed respite for overcrowded destinations. Contrary to these expectations, recent data from 2023 indicate a rapid rebound in international tourism, with numbers quickly approaching pre-pandemic levels (UNWTO, 2023). This resurgence underscores a critical shift in focus from merely limiting tourism expansion to managing it wisely, a principle that lies at the heart of sustainable tourism development.

Sustainable tourism development is simply a reactionary approach but a comprehensive strategy aimed at balancing the multifaceted impacts of tourism on the economy (Arora & Dhiman, 2024), society, and the environment. It advocates for the sustainability of all forms of tourism across all destinations, ensuring that growth is managed in a way that benefits both present and future generations. This concept transcends simple categorization and requires a nuanced understanding of the complex dynamics at play. UNWTO defined sustainable tourism