Futouris
Tourismus. Gemeinsam. Zukunftsfähig.

Futouris Position Paper on Biodiversity

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Intact ecosystems and a diverse range of animal and plant life are key factors in the appeal of tourism offerings. The tourism industry depends to a great extent on attractive natural habitats in destination countries and at the same time bears a special responsibility for their long-term protection and preservation.

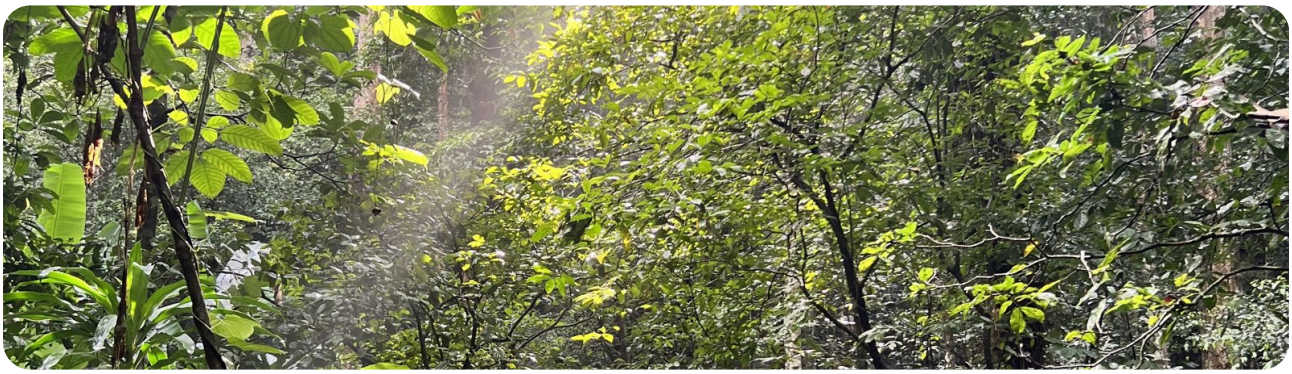
Tourism can endanger biodiversity, but it can also help to preserve it:

Threats:

Land use and loss of natural habitats due to tourism infrastructure and in the supply chain, use of resources (e.g. water and energy), waste and pollution, disturbance of wildlife, souvenir trade, introduction of invasive species.

Potential benefits:

Tourism as a source of income for the conservation of nature and biodiversity, support for regenerative forms of land use, support for the designation of protected areas and the funding of conservation programmes, raising awareness among travellers, and mobilising politics and society.



The tourism industry must therefore minimise the threats to biodiversity and actively contribute to preserving it in the long term and, where possible, regenerating it. The preservation of biodiversity and of ecosystems such as seagrass meadows, mangroves, coral reefs, wetlands, peatlands and forests also plays a key role in climate protection.

The UN Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (2022), which stipulate the protection of 30% of land and sea areas by 2030 and the sustainable management of ecosystems, set a standard here, including for the tourism industry. The sustainability initiative Futouris e.V. and its members expressly commit to the goals of these two global agreements for the protection of nature.

Futouris recommends that its members integrate measures to protect and preserve biodiversity and natural habitats into all areas of their business activities. These include the following measures:

1 Anchoring biodiversity in the corporate and sustainability strategy

- Analysis of the impacts on biodiversity (e.g. land use, resource consumption, etc.) along the company's value chain.
- Development, implementation and monitoring of a company-specific biodiversity strategy, including concrete action plans.

2 Construction, operation and use of accommodation and other tourism infrastructure

- Refraining from construction projects and avoiding accommodation and other tourism infrastructure in ecologically sensitive areas and protected areas.
- Giving priority to the renovation and conversion of existing buildings over new construction.
- Compliance with strict environmental standards in the planning, construction (e.g. minimising soil sealing, nature-oriented design, environmentally friendly building materials) and operation of hotels (e.g. reducing waste and water consumption).

3 Biodiversity-friendly purchasing

- Preferring regional, seasonal and, above all, organically grown food, ideally from regenerative agriculture.
- Avoiding raw materials and products in food & beverage operations (e.g. in hotels and on cruise ships) that are linked to deforestation, overfishing or habitat destruction.
- Purchasing biodiversity-friendly non-food products, nature-friendly cleaning products and natural pest control agents.

4 Souvenirs and species protection

- Excluding souvenirs, giveaways and promotional items made from protected or endangered animal and plant species.
- Offering biodiversity-friendly alternatives from sustainable, local production.

5 Designing activities

- Working with local experts and NGOs to assess the impacts of tourism activities in nature reserves and to exclude activities that put sensitive habitats and species under pressure.
- Excluding activities involving direct contact with wild animals (e.g. petting, bathing, photo sessions).
- Developing and offering activities that actively protect or regenerate local flora and fauna.
- Promoting and, where necessary, ensuring responsible behaviour by guests in natural areas.

6 Tourism use of protected areas

- Making an appropriate contribution to the management of protected areas, for example through entrance fees or donations. Offering customers the opportunity to donate.
- Jointly developing offerings that promote nature conservation and regional value creation in line with conservation goals.
- Supporting projects for the protection of endangered species and habitats.

7 Raising awareness among guests and local partners

- Communicating clear rules of conduct for sensitive areas (e.g. staying on marked paths, avoiding waste, respectful treatment of flora and fauna) and informing about penalties for violations.
- Providing information about the ecological features of the region before and during the trip. Raising awareness of resource-conserving behaviour.
- Providing information on biodiversity risks when buying souvenirs, e.g. with regard to illegal wildlife trade.
- Training tour leaders and guides in the points above; including them in contracts with local partners.

The protection of biodiversity is a necessity and a prerequisite for the future viability of tourism.

Futouris members have therefore been jointly implementing the industry project Biodiversity in Tourism since 2025. The industry project supports Futouris member companies in analysing their own biodiversity impacts, developing concrete measures for biodiversity protection and implementing them in their own supply chains.