

**ASSESSMENT STANDARD 12.2.1: Evaluate environmental, social and economic factors impacting on sustainable and responsible tourism development.**

This assessment standard will be challenging but enjoyable and will enrich your knowledge of important issues in tourism today. Before I proceed unpacking the assessment standard you have to have an understanding of the concepts,

**Responsible and Sustainable Tourism**

**Sustainable tourism** according to UNWTO (UNITED NATIONS WORLD TOURISM ORGANISATION), is meeting the needs of the present tourists and host destinations while protecting and enhancing the destination and environment for the future generations.

**Responsible tourism** is a tourism management strategy that includes planning, management, product development and marketing to bring about positive economic, social, cultural and environmental impacts.

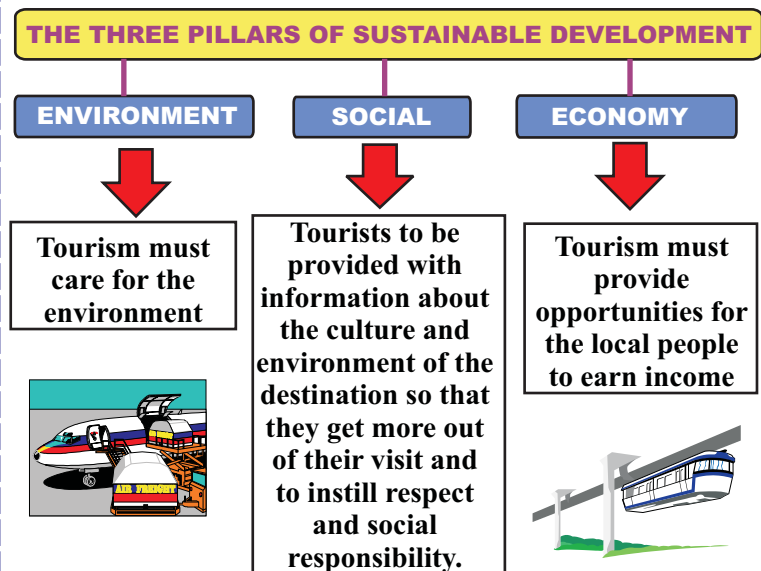
The rapid expansion of the tourism sector has resulted in great pressure being exerted on the existing and emerging tourism destinations on their natural, cultural, social and economic environment. Uncontrolled growth in tourism can have a negative impact, harming the environment and local communities, and destroying the very basis on which tourism is built and thrives.

**The challenge is to make sure that we reduce the negative impacts by practising responsible tourism.**

**Why Responsible Tourism?**

Responsible tourism practices simple make good business sense - from providing cost savings to increasing economic stability and ensuring the long-term appeal of a destination.

Since the mid 1990s there has been a shift towards defining economic performance in terms of the "triple bottom line" growth that is economically, socially and environmentally sustainable. Responsible Tourism addresses this shift by giving equal weight to the economy, society and the environment the three pillars of sustainable development.



**THE ROLE OF GOVERNMENT**

The Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism (DEAT) developed **The Responsible Tourism Guidelines** which encourages tourism businesses to grow whilst providing social and economic benefits to local communities and respecting the environment.



The major points of the **The Responsible Tourism Guidelines** are summarized next.

**Economic Guidelines**

- Buy locally-made goods and use locally provided services.
- Encourage customers to spend money in the local economy by providing them with opportunities to purchase locally made goods.
- Ensure communities are involved in and benefit from tourism.
- Provide support and advice to local enterprises and entrepreneurs.

**Social Guidelines**

- Involve local communities in planning and decision making
- Assess social impacts of tourism activities
- Respect social and cultural diversity
- Help create staff and community awareness of health issues, such as HIV Aids
- Contribute to the development of the local community.

**Environmental Guidelines**

- Reduce environmental impacts when developing tourism.
- Use natural resources sustainably.
- Maintain biodiversity

The **Imvelo Awards** are awarded to tourism businesses that show their commitment to responsible tourism by showcasing their economic, social and environmental achievements.