



Meaningful Tourism

Introduction and Services

May 2026



Why Meaningful Tourism matters

Tourism is facing critical challenges:

- Climate change destroying established business models
- AI offering new opportunities and challenges
- Changing traveller demographics changing demands
- Geopolitical tensions reshaping travel flows

Meaningful Tourism provides a practical holistic solution for a sustainable tourism providing benefits and satisfaction for ALL stakeholders.



Meaningful Tourism

The Meaningful Tourism paradigm defines six main stakeholders in tourism and hospitality.

All six need to receive *objective* benefits and *subjective* satisfaction from tourism and hospitality activities to support the sustainable development of destinations, companies and organisations, to mitigate and adapt to climate change and to successfully perform transformative processes within a fast-changing world.



The six Stakeholders of Meaningful Tourism

1. Visitors/Guests
2. Host Communities
3. Tourism Employees (including tourism, hospitality, transport, retail, attractions)
4. Tourism and Hospitality Service providing companies
5. Governments on different levels
6. Local and Global Environment

SMART GOALS

- S** SPECIFIC
- M** MEASURABLE
- A** ACHIEVABLE
- R** REALISTIC
- T** TIMELY



Meaningful Tourism approach

- Meaningful Tourism is a practical holistic approach to sustainable tourism development, which includes all key stakeholders. It involves aligning benefits and satisfaction with measurable SMART Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for continuous improvement.
- The Meaningful Tourism approach includes sustainable practices along the whole production chain, from financing and hotel construction to waste management.
- Meaningful Tourism is based on principles of Positive Psychology, creating both meaningful rational behaviour as well as emotional Wellbeing.



Meaningful Tourism Tools

Meaningful Tourism offers:

- A tool to **analyse** and understand the situation of a destination / company
- A tool to mitigate contradictions between stakeholders and **align** interests
- A tool to develop a holistic sustainable development **strategy**
- A tool to develop SMART KPIs to **monitor** progress
- A tool to **compare** destinations / company in an Meaningful Tourism index
- A tool to support integrate the Meaningful Tourism paradigm into academic and vocational **education** and **training**
- A tool to **integrate AI** into a Meaningful Tourism Economy
- A tool to support public tourism **discourse** by providing transparent SMART KPI measurements and data



Meaningful Tourism Development

The development of Meaningful Tourism paradigm is a result of

- The limits of tourism **growth** reached end of 2010s decade (Overtourism, Flygsham)
- The **pandemic** of the early 2020s (mobility as a threat)
- The increasingly dramatic results of **climate change** 2026ff (for tourism: end of skiing, end of beach holidays, tourism moving indoors, less leisure tourists)
- The switch of the public image of tourism from provider of **joy and peace** to source of unnecessary **pollution** since 2018



- The lack of **staff** and the decrease in the number of tourism students post-pandemic
- The continuing dominance of **arrival numbers** as the main KPI used by governments and industry
- The proliferation of **partial solutions** (EVs, tourism tax, de-marketing)

Meaningful Tourism 2021 - 2026



Timeline of Meaningful Tourism development

- 2021 Establishment of Meaningful Tourism Centre by Prof. Dr. Wolfgang Georg Arlt
- 2022 Start of annual Meaningful Tourism Awards (Singapore, Doha, Kathmandu)
- 2022/23 Publication of chapters Meaningful Tourism in Buhalis (ed): *Encyclopedia of Tourism Management and Marketing* , and in Morrison/Buhalis (eds): *Routledge Handbook of Trends and Issues in Tourism*
- 2023 Publication of Arlt (ed.): *Meaningful Tourism Index 2023*, Arlt (ed): *Best Practice Examples for a Sustainable Tourism Future* and start of *Meaningful Tourism Weekly*
- 2024 Establishment of Meaningful Tourism Centre Ltd. (UK), HQ in Kathmandu
- 2024 Start of Meaningful Tourism Transformational Game Workshops
- 2025 PATA approval of new Vision Statement: *A Meaningful Pacific Asia Tourism Economy*
- 2025/26 Creating of global network of Certified MTC trainer around the globe
- 2026 Establishment of Meaningful Tourism Innovation Labs

Meaningful Tourism, not Travel



- Meaningful Tourism is not Meaningful Travel, as the latter focuses on the experience of the travellers only.
- Meaningful Tourism is not concentrating only on higher yields, as the number of affluent travellers is limited and solutions have to be found for the whole industry, not just for the rich or for the environmentally conscious travellers.
- Meaningful Tourism includes non-leisure travel for Business Travel, MICE, VFR, Health and Wellbeing tourism, Education, etc.
- Meaningful Tourism provides more successful tools than non-holistic approaches like Responsible Tourism or Regenerative Tourism



Meaningful Tourism is necessary

Meaningfulness, as a concept of Positive Psychology and Wellbeing, is open for different cultural interpretations based on the common understanding of activities beneficial for oneself, for others and for the future of mankind.

Adopting Meaningful Tourism as a strategy is not a “nice-to-have” issue, but necessary for all destinations and service providers to proactively react in a Schumpeter sense of *Creative Destruction* to the effects of changed customer demands, technological development, geopolitical tensions and climate change to survive.



Meaningful Tourism Centre

The MTC Meaningful Tourism Centre is a non-profit organization based in London, with its headquarters in Kathmandu and partners and trainers around the world. MTC leads the development of Meaningful Tourism as a practical tool for a holistic sustainable tourism development, and includes also the COTRI China Outbound Tourism Research Institute since, a leading research and consulting unit established in 2004.

MTC provides research, training, and consulting services to companies, organizations and institutions globally. Its founder and director, Prof. Dr. Wolfgang Georg Arlt FRGS FRAS, has extensive experience in international tourism and has been involved in the field for nearly five decades as a consultant, trainer, publisher, event organizer and university professor.



Prof. Dr. Wolfgang Georg Arlt
Founder and Director MTC
"PROF M"



Prof. Dr. Wolfgang Georg Arlt FRGS FRAS

- Born 1957 in West-Berlin, M.A. and PhD FU Berlin, studies in Taiwan and Hong Kong
- First visit to People's Republic of China in 1978, first FIT travel in China 1981
- 1991-1999 owner of Inbound Tour Operator China -> Europe
- Since 2004 Founder and CEO COTRI China Outbound Tourism Research Institute
- Since 2021 Founder and CEO Meaningful Tourism Centre
- 2002 – 2020 Professor for International Tourism Management at German Universities
- 2007 – 2019 Visiting professor at universities in China, United Kingdom and New Zealand
- Since 2003 Research Fellow Japanese Society for the Promotion of Science (Tokyo)
- 2003 Research project Sustainable Tourism Development in Japan (Tsukuba)
- Since 2012 Fellow Royal Geographical Society (London)
- Since 2015 Fellow Royal Asiatic Society (London)
- Since 2015 Member of UN Tourism (formerly: UNWTO) Expert Panel (Madrid)
- Since 2015 Member of Expert Committee of WTCF World Tourism Cities Federation (Beijing)
- Since 2017 VP Western Europe (2024: South Asia) ITSA International Tourism Studies Association (London)
- Since 2017 Fellow of International Association of China Tourism Studies (Guangzhou)
- Since 2022 VP EU China Commission (Brussels)
- Since 2024 Living in Kathmandu/Nepal

MTC Structure



Certified MTC trainer in
over 50 countries

Meaningful Tourism
Innovation Labs, HQ Nepal
Organised by MTC trainers
in different countries /
regions

Meaningful
Tourism Centre
HQ Kathmandu

Strategic partners,
partners, memberships, including
Tourism Institute, AIROI, I:Stem,
TDN.asia, Tanneri Chaso,
Pathway, UN Tourism, PATA,
WTCTF, WTTC, ETOA, EUCNC,
WSHA, PTM, GITF

Meaningful Tourism
Movement members
Level 1-3



Meaningful Tourism Innovation Labs

The MTC Meaningful Tourism Innovation Labs are the local centre for the practical application of the Meaningful Tourism tools.

The MTILs are offering trainings, round-table talks, workshops and Implementation Services for local, regional and national organisations as well as companies and destinations.

MTILs are currently established in a rising number of countries and offer a network to exchange Best Practice examples around the globe.



Certified Trainers of Meaningful Tourism Centre



Meaningful Tourism Centre Products and Services



- Meaningful Tourism products are ranked according to three levels of Certified Meaningful Tourism Movement Membership
- Membership can be reached by participating in Meaningful Tourism trainings and other activities and/or using MTC services as described below
- Entry level 1 can be reached for less than 100 USD cost by participating in self-assessment process or in online Certification courses.

MTC does not issue static certifications, but supports and certifies the participation of companies, organisations and destinations in different steps of the journey towards a Meaningful Tourism Economy.

MTC Products Level 1

Certified Meaningful Tourism Movement Member

- Participation in Self-Assessment (open only to individuals and companies/organisations up to 20 employees)
- Participation in MT and AI online short Certification course
- Participation in MTC organised tourism fair stand (customised fee)
- Winner of Meaningful Tourism Award
- Participation in offline Meaningful Tourism Innovation Lab Half-day Workshop

MTC Products Level 1 – Self Assessment

Available only for companies or organisations with up to 10 employees

- Company/organisation does self-assessment based on $4 \times 6 = 24$ SMART KPIs provided by MTC
- Company/organisation chooses two KPIs for improvement within one year with Indicator results at beginning and goal at end of one year with description of planned actions to reach KPI result improvement
- Assessment and commitment evaluated by MTC, if accepted, recognition as Meaningful Tourism Movement Member
- After six months 30 minutes online consulting with MTC included
- After one year report submitted, evaluated by MTC
- Possibility to renew with same process or upgrade with other activities

Services and Pricing

Included services:

- Provision of materials for self-assessment including 24 SMART KPIs
- Evaluation of self-assessment and commitment
- If accepted, for one year recognition as Meaningful Tourism Movement Member (Logo, listing on MTC website, in MT Weekly)
- After 6 months: Online consultation on progress (30 min.)
- After 12 months: Evaluation of documentation, if accepted first time recognition as Certified Meaningful Tourism Movement Member for second year

Cost: 99 USD

MTC Products Level 1 – Meaningful Tourism and AI

Online short Certification course

- Self-administered online certification course, 8 lectures with four subchapters each, total time 8x45 minutes
- Participants will gain practical knowledge of Meaningful Tourism and AI concepts through structured online learning and interactive expert guidance.
- Weekly interactive Zoom call for Q&A open to all current participants
- WhatsApp group for all members of monthly cohort for networking
- Online certification ceremony per cohort
- To be finished in maximum 90 days

Services and Pricing

Included services:

- Complete online Certification course including
 - Participation at own chosen speed up to 90 days
 - Additional training materials
 - Certification of Participation
 - Weekly live online session with MTC trainers
 - Inclusion in participants WhatsApp group
 - Participation in online Certification ceremony

Cost: 99 USD per person

MTC Products Level 1 - MTC tourism fair stand

Included services:

- MTC organises joint Meaningful Tourism stands at fairs and in accompanying conferences
- Companies and organisations can join MTC stand to showcase their sustainable tourism products and projects
- Participants will be invited to over presentations and join panel discussions

Cost: According to specific fair and sqm required

MTC Products Level 1 - Offline Meaningful Tourism Innovation Lab Half-day Workshop



Services included:

- Offered in countries with a Meaningful Tourism Innovation Lab
- Half-day Innovation workshop, topics according to specific needs of participants

Cost: 99 USD per Person

MTC Products Level 1 – Winner Meaningful Tourism Award

Included services:

- MTC organises every year since 2022 the Meaningful Tourism Award, celebrating Best Practice examples in sustainable tourism

Cost: No fee, application for 2026 before August 15, 2026

CERTIFICATE



This certificate is presented to

Prakriti Farm and Resort

In recognition of being certified as a:
Certified Meaningful Tourism Movement Member (Level 1)

Certified Meaningful Tourism 
Movement Member

Issued on: June 15th, 2026

Valid till: June 15th, 2027

Issued by:

Meaningful Tourism Centre

Prof. Dr. Wolfgang Georg Arlt
Executive Director Meaningful Tourism Centre

MTC Products Level 2 - Advanced Certified Meaningful Tourism Movement Member

- Renewed Self-Assessment
- Participation in Meaningful Tourism and AI online intensive Certification course
- Participation in offline full-day Meaningful Tourism Transformative Game Workshop
- Participation in offline or online Source Market Full-day Workshop
- Participation in offline Meaningful Tourism Innovation Lab Full-day Workshop
- Participation in Carbon Credit online or offline Trading Full-day workshop

MTC Products Level 2 – Renewed Self-Assessment

Available only for companies or organisations with up to 10 employees

- Company/organisation does new self-assessment based on 4x6 = 24 SMART KPIs provided by MTC
- Company/organisation chooses two different KPIs for improvement within one year with indicator results at beginning and goal at end of one year with description of planned actions to reach KPI result improvement
- Assessment and commitment evaluated by MTC, if accepted, recognition as Meaningful Tourism Movement Member
- After six months 30 minutes online consulting with MTC included
- After one year report submitted, evaluated by MTC
- Possibility to renew with same process or upgrade with other activities

Services and Pricing

Included services:

- Provision of materials for self-assessment including 24 SMART KPIs
- Evaluation of self-assessment and commitment
- If accepted, for one year recognition as Meaningful Tourism Movement Member (Logo, listing on MTC website, in MT Weekly)
- After 6 months: Online consultation on progress (30 min.)
- After 12 months: Evaluation of documentation

Cost: 99 USD

MTC Products Level 2 -Meaningful Tourism and AI online intensive Certification course

- Self-administered online certification course, 24 lectures with four subchapters each, total time 24x45 minutes
- Including Best Practice examples, toolboxes, detailed AI implementation processes etc. in a comprehensive and structured learning experience
- Weekly interactive Zoom call for Q&A open to all current participants
- WhatsApp group for all members of monthly cohort for networking
- Online certification ceremony per cohort
- To be finished in maximum 90 days

Services and Pricing

Included services:

- Complete online Certification course including
 - Participation at own chosen speed up to 90 days
 - Additional training materials
 - Certification of Participation
 - Weekly live online session with MTC trainers
 - Inclusion in participants WhatsApp group
 - Participation in online Certification ceremony

Cost: 299 USD per Person

MTC Products Level 2 -Offline full-day Meaningful Tourism Transformative Game Workshop

- Roleplay-based innovative workshop to understand the tools and possible implementation steps of Meaningful Tourism for a specific company or destination
- Including Introduction of Meaningful Tourism paradigm and tools, distribution roles of personas of six stakeholder groups to participants, development of strategy with aligned benefits and satisfaction
- Development of specific SMART KPIs and timeline for next steps
- Duration one day, suitable for groups between six and 30 participants

Services and Pricing

Included services:

- Organised in cooperation with company, local DMO, NTO or other organisation or by Meaningful Tourism Innovative Lab
- Conducted offline by local trainer in local language covering a pre-agreed specific topic
- All materials including descriptions of roles for roleplay
- Certification of participation
- Maximum number of participants: 30

Cost: 1,500 USD per workshop plus travel expenses for trainer

Online participation by MTC Executive Director Prof Dr Arlt possible for additional fee according to length of time





MTC Products Level 2 - Offline Meaningful Tourism Innovation Lab Full-day Workshop

Services included:

- Offered in countries with a Meaningful Tourism Innovation Lab
- Full-day workshop, topics according to specific needs of participants
- Closed workshops with customised offer also available

Cost: 299 USD per Person for open workshops, customised offers for closed workshops for company or organisation

Fee for closed workshops refunded if Implementation support agreement reached, open workshop participants who did the Short online course get participation fee for online Certification course refunded

MTC Products Level 2 – Carbon Credit Trading Full-day Workshop



Services included:

- Offered online, in countries with a Meaningful Tourism Innovation Lab also offline
- Full-day workshop, introducing the benefits of CCT Carbon Credit Trading within a Meaningful Tourism Economy with Best Practices examples
- Step-by-Step implementation process explained

Cost: 299 USD for open workshops, customised offers for closed workshops for company or organisation

Fee refunded if CCT agreement reached

MTC Products Level 2 – Source Market Full-day Workshop



Services included:

- Offered online, in countries with a Meaningful Tourism Innovation Lab also offline
- Full-day workshop, introducing the specific structure and demands of selected tourism source markets, including China, Western Europe, Eastern Europe, Middle East, South Asia
- With Best Practices examples and Step-by-Step implementation of Product adaptation and marketing

Cost: 299 USD for open workshops, customised offers for closed workshops for company or organisation

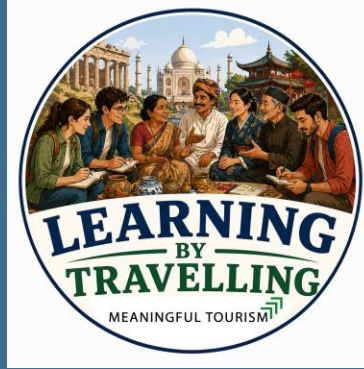
Fee refunded if Implementation support agreement reached

MTC Products Level 3 - Distinguished Certified Meaningful Tourism Movement Member

- Participation in Long Online Certification course by at least three staff members of company/organization
- Participation in Full-day offline Meaningful Tourism Transformational Game Workshop by at least three staff members of company/organisation
- Participation in offline Meaningful Tourism Innovation Lab workshop by at least three paying staff members of company/organisation
- Carbon Credit Trading agreement reached
- Meaningful Tourism Implementation support agreement reached

Products outside Meaningful Tourism

Membership levels:

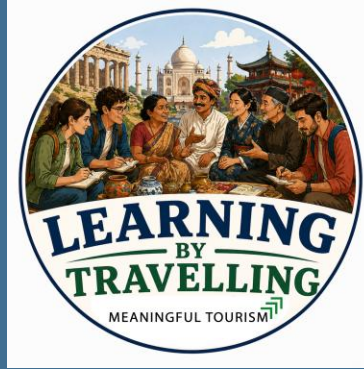


Learning by Travelling (LBT)

The “Learning by Travelling (LBT)” program by the offers transformational field trips for tourism and hospitality students in destinations such as Nepal and India. The program combines academic learning, intercultural exchange, and community-based projects to help students develop practical skills in Meaningful Tourism.

Through hands-on experiences, collaboration with local communities, and real-world projects, students gain deeper insights into sustainability, culture, tourism development, and global challenges while universities strengthen international partnerships and innovative learning opportunities.

Benefits of the Learning by Travelling offer



For Students

- Transformational personal and professional experience
- Practical skills in sustainable tourism & community engagement
- Intercultural competence and networking
- Introduction to Meaningful Tourism

For Universities

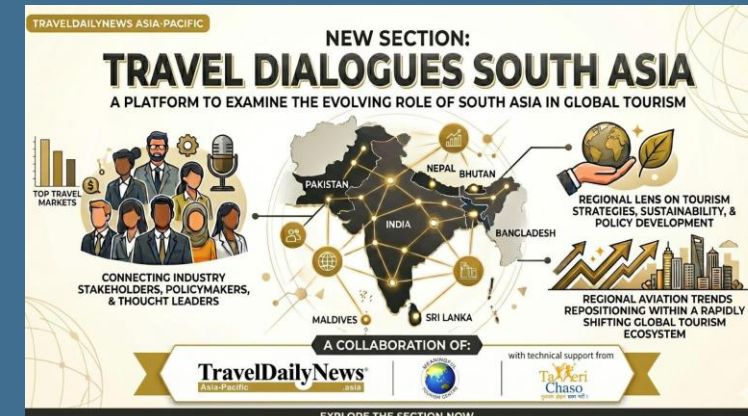
- Innovative, experience-based teaching format
- Academic quality control by local Higher Education Institution
- Stronger international profile & partnerships
- Opportunities for joint research & publications



Products outside Meaningful Tourism Membership levels:

Travel Dialogues South Asia Podcast

- Weekly podcast series organized by MTC in cooperation with traveldailynews.asia
- Expert-led, knowledge-based podcasts on tourism across South Asia (Pakistan, India, Maldives, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Bhutan, Bangladesh)
- Broadcasted on traveldailynews.asia, MTC Youtube channels, LinkedIn and Instagram
- More than 10,000 viewers per podcast
- Production cost fee: 350 USD



Please contact Meaningful Tourism Centre



• Whatsapp: +49 1525 3526044



• Email info@meaningfultourismcentre.org



• Website: <https://meaningfultourismcentre.org>



• Newsletter: <https://meaningful-tourism-weekly.ghost.io/>
<https://www.linkedin.com/newsletters/cotri-weekly-7016436130313031681/>



• Podcast: <https://www.traveldailynews.asia/tag/travel-dialogues-south-asia/>