Global tourism carbon footprint: toward decarbonisation

Topic:
Author: Futu FATURAY

The global tourism sector exhibited remarkable growth, with an annual increase of 5.5 percent from 2009 to 2019, which was twice as fast as the global GDP growth rate during the same period. This significant economic expansion in the tourism industry over recent decades has not come without an environmental cost. The tourism sector has emerged as a substantial contributor to global carbon emissions, accounting for approximately 8 percent of global emissions. As the global tourism sector now recovers and indeed thrives post-covid, the environmental footprint of tourism is expected to expand accordingly. In light of the global objective to achieve net-zero carbon emissions by 2050, there is an increasingly urgent need for continuous monitoring and comprehensive analysis of carbon emissions associated with tourism. This research aims to provide a meticulous examination of the carbon footprint left by global tourism. We employ the input-output framework to analyse not only the direct emissions resulting from tourism activities but also the indirect emissions generated through the supply chains and interdependencies of the tourism sector. Our comprehensive study spans over 150 countries and evaluates each country's progress in reducing carbon emissions within the tourism sector since 2009.