

FROM VULNERABILITY TO ADAPTATION: SUSTAINABLE TOURISM AS A LEVER FOR TERRITORIAL RESILIENCE

Ecotourism, geotourism, responsible tourism...

International Multidisciplinary Symposium

May 26-27, 2026

Goris, Armenia

Call for Papers

With the emergence of new social and environmental concerns, tourism is increasingly confronted with the question of its compatibility with the development of local communities and environmental protection. In a context of accelerated global change, tourist destinations are now facing the urgent need for transformation, revealing their vulnerabilities (overcrowding, ecosystem degradation etc.). The mass tourism model is crumbling in favour of more environmentally responsible forms of development, leading to the growth of alternative, sustainable tourism.

According to UN Tourism (formerly UNWTO), sustainable tourism is “tourism that takes full account of its current and future environmental impacts, meeting the needs of visitors, specialists, the environment, and local communities.” It must respect the way of life of local communities, optimize the use of environmental resources while preserving them, and ensure viable long-term economic activity. One of the challenges facing tourist destinations is no longer simply to be attractive, but to adapt in order to build territorial resilience. Sustainable tourism can take many forms, including ecotourism, which, according to the International Union for Conservation of Nature, “is travel undertaken in nature with the deliberate aim of understanding the natural and cultural history of the environment, taking care not to alter the integrity of the ecosystem but creating economic opportunities that will make the preservation of natural resources financially viable for the local inhabitants.”

Ecotourism projects systematically involve local stakeholders (local authorities, residents, associations), which promotes cooperation at various levels, citizen participation, and sustainable socioeconomic and environmental development that is sensitive to the needs of the territories. It's essential to develop a tourism strategy compatible with the natural heritage and based on key indicators such as territorial carrying capacity, water resources, drinking water consumption, pollution, and ecosystem degradation. This also allows for the implementation of educational activities for local stakeholders and visitors regarding geological resources and environmental preservation, while contributing to a better understanding of societal and environmental issues, fostering more responsible behavior towards nature (responsible tourism), and valuing local knowledge and skills. The involvement of local populations in environmental preservation is essential for the sustainability of actions and development projects undertaken, which is integral to the sustainable and inclusive development of the region.

Emerging some twenty years ago, the concept of geotourism has joined the ecotourism movement. The appreciation and conservation of geological features of diverse natural sites are increasingly taking its place within the landscape of sustainable tourism. Understanding geological and geomorphological heritage (e.g. landscapes, fossil geosites, sedimentary

patterns, volcanoes, lava flows, tuffs, caves, etc.) is increasingly essential in the development of new tourism practices ("preserving by enhancing"), particularly in the exploration of the Earth and the interpretation of landscapes.

This call for papers aims to examine ecotourism and geotourism as key drivers of territorial resilience, understood not merely as a capacity for resistance, but as a dynamic and adaptive process of transformation. To what extent do geo/ecotourism projects contribute to the diversification of balanced and inclusive local economic development, strengthen the identity of target territories, often isolated, contribute to job creation (hotels, restaurants, crafts, guides, tourist services), and generate socioeconomic benefits? How can the "intelligent" use of biodiversity (flora and fauna) foster the autonomy of local communities, the preservation of resources, and adaptation to climate change? Can ecotourism be sustainable over time without simply becoming mass tourism?

This interdisciplinary symposium aims to bring together specialists from various fields – geology, archaeology, geography, biology, history, economics, law, and marketing – around the same theme to shed light on the issues related to territorial resilience through the development of sustainable tourism. In line with the spirit of the UN Conference on Biodiversity (COP 17), which will take place in Yerevan in October 2026, and the UN's 2030 Agenda, this symposium aims to explore sustainable solutions for territorial development.

Main themes:

- 1. Ecotourism and the diversification of tourism offerings**
- 2. Ecotourism and strengthening local governance**
- 3. Ecotourism and civil society (NGOs, associations, cooperatives, etc.)**
- 4. Ecotourism and mobility**
- 5. Geotourism and nature protection**
- 6. Education and raising awareness of environmental issues**
- 7. Smart technologies, innovations, and the future of sustainable tourism**

Proposals for presentations of 250 words, in French and English, accompanied by a brief CV of the author (maximum 150 words), should be submitted no later than **March 10, 2026**.

- For international participants: to Garik Galstyan (garik.galstyan@univ-lille.fr)
- For Armenian participants: to Garik Galstyan (garik.galstyan@univ-lille.fr), Naira Safaryan (nairasaf66@gmail.com) and Luiza Vardanyan (luizavardanyan211@gmail.com)

The scientific committee will notify participants of the acceptance of selected proposals before **March 15, 2026**. Participants will then be able to confirm their participation in writing before **April 1, 2026**.

The working languages are French, English, and Armenian.

The participation fee is €50 (for international participants) and 15 000 AMD (for Armenian participants). The fee covers registration and publication costs for a selection of papers.

Travel and accommodation expenses are the responsibility of the participants.

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