The VNR in a Nutshell – National Strategies for SDGs.

Maldives

Capital Male’
Population 338,434
Area (in sq.km) 115
Languages Dhivehi. English widely spoken
Poverty rate 2% of population is living below the international poverty line (2016)
15% of the population living below the national poverty line
Per capita income USD 11,282.8
International Tourist Arrivals (2015) 1,234,000
Sources: UNDP, World Bank, VNR, UNWTO

The recognition of the role of tourism in sustainable development and the emphasis placed in the SDGs on the development of public policies for sustainable tourism is a landmark breakthrough that provides a unique opportunity for all governments to create a sound and favourable policy foundation.

The first two years of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda have shown that countries are making headway in aligning national strategies, adapting institutional frameworks and adjusting policies to realize the SDGs.

The countries’ efforts have been reported in the Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs), presented by UN Member States during the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF) in 2016 and 2017.

**Title of VNR:** Voluntary National Review for the High Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development 2017

**Presenter for VNR:** Ms. Abdullahi Majeed, Minister of State for Environment and Energy

**National Thematic Focus:**

The thematic focus of the current review will be on the substantive progress the country has made in the areas of health, education, gender, water and sanitation, energy, infrastructure, climate change and marine resources.

**Institutional Arrangement:**

The National Ministerial Coordination Committee (NMCC) provides overall political support and policy guidance for the implementation of the SDGs. It is composed of all Cabinet Ministers.

For technical expertise, the Technical Committee on SDGs brings together experts from government offices, state agencies, and civil society, and provides support to the Ministerial Coordination Committee. The Technical Committee is broken down into five clusters, each of which is responsible for a number of SDG goals.

Inter-ministerial coordination: The SDGs Division at the Ministry of Environment and Energy coordinates implementation, monitoring, and reporting of the SDGs. It also serves as Secretariat for each of all the SDG Committees.
Implementation of the SDGs is conducted through the relevant line ministries, government agencies, civil society organizations, and independent institutions. A lead agency had been assigned for each goal.

SDG Incorporation to National Framework:

The Maldives are currently identifying national priorities for the 2030 Agenda. This process will be informed by national consultations with implementing agencies, civil society, and the private sector. Several sectors, including health, education, energy, waste management, fisheries, and water and sanitation, have already incorporated the SDGs into their policy plans.

Tourism Ministry /NTA portfolio:

*Ministry of Tourism* Tourism and SDG in Maldives:

**Opportunities**

- **Employment creation**
  
  - Public administration accounts for the largest employer in the capital, whereas in the outer atolls, the majority of people are employed in the manufacturing, agriculture and fisheries with rapid expansion of the tourism sector, more than a fifth of the employed are engaged in this industry.  
  
(p. 13 Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all.)

- **Sustainable consumption and production**
  
  - The tourism sector in the Maldives serves as a model for sustainable tourism. From its very early stages of development, environmental considerations had been integrated to the sector through relevant laws and regulations. The private sector has also been critical in adopting sustainable consumption and production principles in the tourism sector.  
  
(p. 15 Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns.)

- **Economic development**
  - Marine and coastal protection

  - Thematic analysis in the Maldives shows that fisheries and high-end tourism are the main economic drivers in the country; both of these sectors are reliant on the sustainable management and protection of marine and coastal ecosystems. Maldives was an advocate for a stand-alone goal on oceans in the formulation of the Sustainable Development Goals as the country’s prosperity is dependent on conserving and protecting the oceans at a global level.

- **Biodiversity and Ecosystem protection**
  - Partnerships

  - The government is continuously engaging with the tourism sector in promoting environmental protection and stewardship. Given that the house reef of resort islands are highly well managed areas,
the government is collaborating with various resorts in examining the modalities in which these areas can contribute to the network of protected and managed marine areas

**Threats**

- **Climate change**

  - The *effects of climate change* on industries such as agriculture, tourism and other industries are of major concern and need to be taken into consideration. Efforts are underway to integrate climate change into development projects. In this regard, the Tourism Adaptation project (TAP) is aimed at identifying the climate change adaptation measures that will be required for the tourism sector in the coming years.

**Resources and Useful Links**

Maldives VNR 2017