

THE END OF COVID-19 AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS BY THE HOSPITALITY SECTOR IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

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Abstract: The World Health Organisation (WHO) declared the end of the COVID-19 pandemic as a public health emergency in 2023. This study aims to review the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on the hospitality sector in Africa in terms of achieving the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. It is based on a review of documentary sources on the nexus between COVID-19, SDGs and the hospitality sector in sub-Saharan Africa. The findings highlight that the COVID-19 pandemic resulted in the closure of hospitality facilities, significant job losses, decline in GDP contribution, financial losses and an increase in poverty which negatively impacted the achievement of various SDGs. This said, the pandemic also brought certain positive impacts including a reduction in carbon emissions and a greater appreciation of domestic tourism. Arguably, in the post COVID-19 period, the hospitality sector in sub-Saharan Africa needs a reset with expanded measures towards the achievement of the SDGs. Correspondingly, African hospitality scholarship must pivot to address relevant research issues around the SDGs.

Key words: COVID-19, hospitality sector, sub-Saharan Africa, SDGs

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INTRODUCTION

On 4 May 2023, the Director General of the World Health Organisation (WHO) announced the end of COVID-19 as a public health emergency (United Nations, 2023). This statement was celebrated by the United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) which called for destinations to start to re-evaluate existing travel restrictions (UNWTO, 2023a). The announcement set the tone for a new trajectory of encouraging destinations to open up fully for international tourist arrivals. The initial data for 2023 is promising in terms of tourism recovery with twice as many people travelling in the first quarter of 2023 as compared to the same period in 2022 (UNWTO, 2023b). One of the key issues surrounding the recovery of the tourism industry post-COVID-19 concerns the linkage of tourism development with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (Gossling et al., 2020; Rogerson and Baum, 2020).

A critical milestone in aligning the recovery of the global tourism industry with SDGs is the outcome of the meeting of tourism ministers of G20 member countries held at Goa, India on 21 June 2023. The ministers affirmed the need to transform the tourism industry post COVID-19 and ensure that it progresses towards contribution to the SDGs (UNWTO, 2023c). Further, the G20 ministers pledged support for five tourism priority areas identified as important by India's G20 Presidency in advancing towards the achievement of the SDGs, namely green tourism, digitalization, skills, tourism small and medium enterprises, and destination management (Tourism Working Group India G20 Presidency, 2023).

Arguably, as the global economy recovers from the COVID-19 pandemic greater consideration must be given to adopting an all-encompassing sustainable approach towards tourism development which involves enhanced commitment to the SDGs (Seraphin and Gowreesunkar, 2021). Moreover, with climate change the next disruptive crisis likely to have a major future impact on the tourism industry, climate adaptation, sustainability issues and the SDGs must be at the centre stage for the transformation of the tourism industry (Dube, 2021).

Jones and Comfort (2020) suggest that COVID-19 resulted in a number of economic, environmental and social challenges impacting significantly upon issues of sustainability. Truppa and Dolezal (2020) concur that the COVID-19 pandemic has considerably affected the prospects of sustainable development, and livelihoods, making urgent the need for a scholarly focus on the SDGs. It is observed that variations exist in the way sustainability has been understood and adopted by the tourism and hospitality industry in different contexts. Indeed, considerable differences exist in the manner that sustainability in the tourism industry is viewed by tourism policy makers and tourism enterprises in the Global North as opposed to the Global South where the actual level of adoption of sustainability principles is often dependent on the target market (Melissen et al., 2018; Khonje and Leonard, 2019).

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The COVID-19 pandemic represents a trigger event for African tourism businesses to readjust their operations moving into the post-pandemic period (Rogerson and Rogerson, 2021a, 2021b). The hospitality sector of Africa as a significant sub-sector of the tourism industry is expected to play a leading role in contributing to the attainment of the SDGs in the post-COVID-19 era (Shereni, 2022). Most existing African tourism studies conducted around the uncertain times of COVID-19 are focused on ramification and destination impacts with only a limited literature dedicated to establishing the connection between COVID-19 and the SDGs (Rogerson and Rogerson, 2021a).

With the pandemic no longer viewed as a public health emergency it is essential that African scholars pivot to address critical policy debates and reflect upon the COVID-19 ramifications for the achievement of SDGs and how the hospitality sector might integrate the SDGs in its recovery strategies. As our geographic focus is the record of sub-Saharan Africa the findings inject a perspective from the Global South on the rising international debates concerning the ability of tourism and hospitality to contribute to the SDGs in the post-pandemic era. The next section looks briefly at the methodological considerations for this paper, then moves to a contextual overview of the impacts of COVID-19 on the hospitality sector of sub-Saharan Africa before unpacking the nexus of SDGs and the African hospitality economy.

METHODS

The research is anchored on a desk-top review of documentary sources and existing scholarship that interrogates the relationship between COVID-19, SDGs and the hospitality sector in sub-Saharan Africa. Insights were drawn from peer reviewed articles, books, book chapters, reports and other relevant materials. The source of literature was from databases such as Scopus, Google Scholar and Web of Science among others; a limitation is that the search was confined to English-language based publications. A wealth of scholarly material exists on how the COVID-19 pandemic affected various facets of life including the implementation of the SDGs. The study investigates how in various countries of sub-Saharan Africa the COVID-19 pandemic affected the implementation of the SDGs in the hospitality sector. Our objectives are informed by the viewpoint that “a review of past research efforts is an important endeavour in all academic research areas” (Nunkoo et al., 2013: 5).

COVID-19 AND THE HOSPITALITY SECTOR IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

The tourism and hospitality economy of sub-Saharan Africa was radically impacted by COVID-19 induced restrictions (Rogerson and Baum, 2020; Chapungu et al., 2023). As is documented in detail by Dube et al. (2023a) despite the fact that the tourism economy of Africa previously had confronted such periodic crises as extreme weather events, civil unrest, the onset of diseases such as Ebola, nothing could have prepared the continent’s tourism stakeholders for the devastation wrought by the pandemic. COVID-19 resulted in the hollowing out of the African tourism economy, the shutting down of popular tourist attractions across various African countries and some destinations transmitting messages encouraging people to stay at home. Airlines to and from destinations in Africa were suspended contributing to the collapse in tourist arrivals and the demise of aviation as a vital support arm of the tourism industry.

For the accommodation services economy, the COVID-19 impacts were devastating. Troughton (2020) highlights that between January and June 2020, average hotel occupancy rates in Africa fell by a massive 79.2% to 16.9%. April 2020 was the worst affected month, recording an average occupancy rate of 12% (Faria, 2021). Overall, Mensah et al. (2023) stress the unprecedented impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic for Africa’s tourism and hospitality economy. It is pinpointed that whilst the African continent recorded the least numbers of COVID-19 infections and deaths, it endured disproportionately the greatest negative impacts of the pandemic on its tourism sector relative to other parts of the world (Mensah et al., 2023). The hospitality sector in Africa suffered crippling losses due to COVID-19 as lockdowns and border closures translated into low hotel occupancy levels and minimal international tourist arrivals (Chapungu et al., 2023; Dube et al., 2023a). The long-term implication of COVID-19 was to threaten and “reverse development gains over the previous decade and deepen the continent’s chronic challenge of poverty” (Rogerson and Rogerson, 2021a, p. 1027).

Beyond this macro-picture for sub-Saharan Africa as a whole, rich material is available from several countries to substantiate the devastating effects of COVID-19 on the hospitality sector. Southern African nations such as Zimbabwe and South Africa mandated the closure of hotels, restaurants and other related hospitality establishments due to the COVID-19 restrictions (Nhamo et al., 2020; Chihwai et al., 2023). In South Africa Rogerson and Rogerson (2020a) report that the country’s leading hospitality groups such as Tsogo Sun and Sun International temporarily closed down their properties in compliance with the government’s lockdown requirements. Thwala and Dube (2023) observe that in Cape Town, one of the prime tourism destinations in Africa, hotel occupancies plummeted to around 10% between April and August 2020 as an outcome of the COVID-19 pandemic. In Ghana, after the pronouncement of the initial COVID-19 regulations, tourism subsectors (including hospitality) suffered a 60% decline in business level (Thams et al., 2020). Small hotels laid off workers while bigger establishments sent their employees on annual leave. Owusu et al. (2023) reveal that the COVID-19 pandemic affected hospitality establishments in Ghana in the areas of supply chain, finances and operational issues. In Zambia, the COVID-19 pandemic adversely impacted every level of the hospitality value chain resulting in the closure of businesses mainly of the smaller establishments (Andrew et al., 2023).

One of the best documented country examples of the pandemic’s impacts is Zimbabwe (Dube et al., 2023b; Mandizvo et al., 2023). For Zimbabwe, detailed data from the national tourism authority (ZTA) shows that the national average hotel occupancy fell from 44% in 2019 to 19% in 2020 returning to pre-pandemic levels only in 2022 (Zimbabwe Tourism Authority, 2022). Victoria Falls, an iconic destination that relies mainly on international tourists, was the worst affected in terms of the collapse of hotel occupancies. The experience of neighbouring Botswana was that at the onset of COVID-19 only a few accommodation facilities catering for essential service providers and those

designated as mandatory quarantine centres remained open whilst the rest closed for a prolonged period (Mogomotsi et al., 2023). From the Namibian context research details a significant downturn in international tourist arrivals which negatively affected job opportunities, foreign exchange earnings, tax contribution, ADR, RevPAR and occupancy rates in the hospitality sector (Kauatuapehi et al., 2023). Although occupancy rates for the hospitality sector across several destinations in Africa subsequently improved following the easing of lockdown measures, the levels were still low as compared to 2019 (Chihwai and Dube, 2023). Chikodzi and Dube (2023) flag that the underperformance of the sector is a contributory factor to the continuing economic crises that afflict both South Africa and Zimbabwe.

A striking set of findings emerged from South African research investigations concerning the uneven geographical impacts within the country of COVID-19 upon the tourism and hospitality sector. In one of the earliest studies, the vulnerability of different spaces to the pandemic impacts was assessed with the key conclusion that its harshest impacts would be experienced by South Africa's most tourism-dependent localities (Rogerson and Rogerson, 2020b).

The landscape of the South African tourism space economy was partially re-moulded as a result of the spread and impress of COVID-19 with its accompanying changes in consumer preferences for travel, most especially for leisure (Rogerson and Rogerson, 2021b, 2021c). In respect of absolute impacts, the greatest losses in tourist trips fell upon the country's largest metropolitan centres and were exaggerated by shifts taking place within the economy of business tourism (Rogerson and Rogerson, 2022a). Not only flows of leisure and business tourists to urban destinations were curtailed by the pandemic. It has been shown that the volumes of VFR travel flows into South Africa's major city destinations were radically curtailed by the pandemic (Rogerson and Rogerson, 2023).

The South African findings demonstrate the highly negative effects of the pandemic upon coastal tourism as a whole with the largest coastal cities experiencing its worst impacts. COVID-19 caused a reversal of trends that had been recorded for the previous two decades for the benefits of coastal tourism to be concentrated in South Africa's largest coastal cities such as Cape Town or Durban (Rogerson and Rogerson, 2022b). Instead, it resulted in the relative improvement of smaller coastal centres and in particular of places well-located for access to the domestic markets offered by large cities. Overall, South African research underscores an improved competitiveness for leisure visitors of geographically accessible small towns and rural spaces close to major metropolitan centres (Rogerson and Rogerson, 2022c). Finally, the tourism geographical research in South Africa demonstrates clearly that in relative terms the hardest hit tourism and hospitality spaces by COVID-19 were the country's peripheral small towns and remote rural areas (Rogerson and Rogerson, 2022c, 2023).

With the international advance of vaccinations, the ebbing of COVID-19 and the re-opening of economies in many African countries improved prospects emerged for the hospitality sector albeit the onset of different COVID-19 variants resulted in only slow recovery. As in 2023 the WHO declared the pandemic to be no longer a public health emergency the hospitality industry necessarily must re-set to changing travel mobilities and build resilience for the post-COVID-19 era. Across African destinations, adjustments are occurring in consumer psyche and travel behaviour. A search for open spaces, re-connection with nature, issues of personal safety and health concerns are viewed as influential factors impacting consumer travel intentions post-COVID-19 (Rogerson and Rogerson, 2021b; Shava and Shava, 2023). These shifts have ramifications for the contribution of the hospitality sector in sub-Saharan Africa to the United Nations SDGs.

THE HOSPITALITY SECTOR AND THE UNITED NATIONS SDGs

Over recent years debates around sustainability in the tourism and hospitality sector have become oriented around the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (Saarinen, 2018; Hall, 2019; Saarinen, 2021). Table 1 provides a summary of the 17 SDGs proposed by the United Nations. The global appeal of the SDGs derives from an agenda that is championed and agreed upon by a wide spectrum of stakeholders led by multi-lateral institutions (Raub and Martin-Rios, 2019; Shereni, 2022). The SDGs and their specific targets afford a basis for strategizing how tourism might contribute to sustainable change in destination communities and environments especially those in the Global South (Saarinen, 2021). Among others, Gössling et al. (2020) point out that post-COVID-19 there is a need for the tourism and hospitality industry to 'do things differently' and align their operations to the SDGs.

Advancing sustainable tourism is viewed in many countries of sub-Saharan Africa as the key to the attainment of SDGs (Saarinen, 2020; Dube, 2021; Shereni, 2022). Saarinen (2021, p. 25) avers that "tourism destination development should be managed for change, and there is a clear need for better destination governance towards SDGs, given the lesson the current crisis has provided us – not to mention the state of relatively near future affairs characterised by increasing globalisation, related economic insecurity and global climate change". Dube and Nhamo (2021) observe that tourism stakeholders in Africa have started to integrate SDGs into their operations in order to ensure improved sustainability. In several countries SDGs have been integrated into existing development plans for the tourism industry, as reported for example in Sierra Leone and Uganda (Allen et al., 2018).

Shereni (2022) emphasizes that prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, many tourism businesses in Africa already were giving some attention to the SDGs. It has been observed that this is potentially because the tourism industry has an ethical and moral duty to prioritise the SDGs as some of the global challenges emanate from tourism activities (Dube, 2020). Scholarly material that focuses on tourism and the SDGs is still somewhat sparse in the African context (Dube, 2020; Saarinen, 2020). For the past three years, tourism academic debates have concentrated around COVID-19 leading to the paucity of studies on SDGs. Certain observers contend little serious attention is accorded to SDGs by the tourism industry in the Global South as compared to the Global North where leading hotel groups have adopted widely the SDGs and are making significant progress in their implementation (Shereni et al., 2022b). Factors that underpin these variations in the adoption of SDGs and sustainability practices between enterprises operating in the Global South as opposed to the more

prosperous environments of countries in the Global North have been isolated. Colonial legacies, differential development, political and business systems as well as different religious beliefs in the Global South are suggested as some of the several factors causing differences in sustainability practices (Melissen et al., 2018; Mzembe et al., 2019).

Table 1. Sustainable Development Goals (Source: UNWTO, 2015:16)

Goal 1	End poverty in all its forms everywhere
Goal 2	End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture
Goal 3	Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages
Goal 4	Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all
Goal 5	Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls
Goal 6	Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all
Goal 7	Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all
Goal 8	Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all
Goal 9	Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation
Goal 10	Reduce inequality within and among countries
Goal 11	Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable
Goal 12	Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns
Goal 13	Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts
Goal 14	Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development
Goal 15	Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss
Goal 16	Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels
Goal 17	Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development.

The hospitality sector, one of the biggest sub-sectors of the tourism economy, is recognised for being resource-intensive and thus posing various sustainability challenges (Dube, 2022; Shereni et al., 2022a). This situation calls for the sector to be cognizant of its impacts on the environment and society. Consequently, sustainability issues particularly SDGs must be at centre stage in researching hospitality operations not only in the African context but globally (Shereni, 2022). The SDGs set a global agenda for development by 2030 to confront challenges faced in both the Global South and Global North contexts (Saarinen, 2020). They set a long-term vision that guides the hospitality sector on the implementation and ultimately the achievement of sustainability targets (Seraphin and Gowreesunkar, 2021). Although the localization of SDGs in the hospitality sector in Southern Africa is still lagging there is mounting evidence of SDGs being integrated into certain hospitality operations (Dube, 2021). Studying Zanzibar Bacari et al. (2021) observe a number of sustainability initiatives pursued by the hospitality sector which are contributing to the achievement of the SDGs. Among these are environmental actions, staff development, offering placement opportunities to local tourism students, buying from local suppliers and supporting health care in the community.

In other African research, the implementation of environment-related SDGs (SDG 6, SDG 12, SDG 7 and SDG 13) was observed as varying according to the grading of hotels with the highest implementation occurring in 5 star hotels (Abdou et al., 2020). In Zimbabwe Shereni (2022) demonstrates that the country's larger hospitality establishments are more likely to implement SDGs at a broader scale as compared to smaller establishments mainly due to financial and knowledge capacity gaps. Dube and Nhamo (2021) indicate that the hospitality sector in Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe is making efforts to reduce carbon emissions variously through the adoption of green and renewable energy, afforestation and environmental education. This has direct implications for the achievement of the SDGs especially SDG 13 on climate action. Eco-certification standards are common in the hospitality sector and contribute significantly to the implementation of the SDGs most especially those aligned to environmental sustainability. Certification schemes are directly aligned to SDG 12 on Sustainable Consumption and Production (Spenceley, 2019). It is acknowledged, however, that across sub-Saharan Africa only a small fraction of hospitality establishments are certified despite the existence of (at least) 18 operational sustainable tourism certification programmes in Africa (Spenceley, 2019). Mensah and Blankson (2014) indicate few hotels in Ghana subscribe to certification standards. Lack of awareness of certification schemes and their benefits is widely attributed to the low adoption of tourism certification and eco-labelling (Motsaathebe and Hambira, 2022). Research findings from Zimbabwe confirm that in the local hospitality sector, there is minimal adoption of internationally recognised certification schemes (Njerekai, 2019; Shereni et al., 2022).

There are numerous drivers and impediments that affect the adoption of SDGs in sub-Saharan Africa. Demand from conscious customers, legitimation, certification schemes, pressure from external stakeholders and the need to operate within a certain policy framework are important drivers for the hospitality sector to adopt sustainable principles critical to the achievement of SDGs (Shereni et al., 2023; Stevens-King and Bello, 2023). Governance issues are also seen to impact the implementation of the SDGs across the hospitality sector in Africa (Siakwah et al., 2020).

Indeed, Dube (2020) avers that governance and misalignment of policies make the integration of SDGs into the tourism industry difficult. Other challenges include knowledge and financial capacity gaps, lack of coordination, skills gaps as well as contextual factors such as the size of the organization and the specific nature of the industry (Shereni et al., 2022a, 2023; Stevens-King and Bello, 2023).

The COVID-19 outbreak resulted in many hospitality stakeholders channelling resources towards ‘flattening the curve’ thereby impacting resource allocation towards the achievement of the SDGs (Nhamo et al., 2020). One of the major areas of concern for hospitality businesses as a result of COVID-19 relates to financial losses (Sucheran, 2022). In the post-COVID-19 period, businesses potentially could reduce their financial support to sustainability programmes as they seek to consolidate their operations (Jones and Comfort, 2020). For hospitality businesses, this means reduced resources and commitments to the achievement of the SDGs. Job losses experienced in the tourism industry due to the COVID-19 pandemic obviously impact the achievement by the hospitality sector of SDG 8, namely decent work and economic growth. Significant employment losses were recorded for several countries in Africa due to COVID-19.

The World Travel and Tourism Council (2022) reported that for the tourism industry across Africa, at least 5.8 million jobs were lost in 2020 because of the pandemic. Such job losses in the hospitality sector impact negatively not only the achievement of SDG 8 but also other SDGs. The majority of employees in the hospitality sector are women and youth and are mainly working in micro, small and medium-sized enterprises in tourism (ILO, 2022). In addition, in Africa rural communities and indigenous peoples are historically marginalized communities which have benefited from tourism and are affected negatively by the COVID-19 spread (Rogerson and Rogerson, 2020a).

The bleeding of job opportunities immediately affects therefore the ability of the sector to contribute to SDG 5 on gender equality as well as SDG 10 on reducing inequality and paying attention to the needs of disadvantaged and marginalized populations. Further the reduced contribution of the tourism and hospitality sector to GDP means inevitably that progress towards SDG 1, no poverty, is retarded across sub-Saharan Africa.

Of concern for sub-Saharan Africa are issues surrounding SDG 12 which relates to Sustainable Consumption and Production and SDG 13 which centres on the need for climate action. In the global context, Gössling et al. (2020) point out the positive impacts of COVID-19 in encouraging airlines to phase out inefficient aircraft, business meetings assuming video conferencing format and consumers showing greater interest in environmentally-friendly products. Nhamo et al. (2020) record that carbon emissions in the tourism industry were cut drastically due to reduced business activities, the grounding of airlines, cruise ships and other modes of transport used to move tourists (Nhamo et al., 2020). All the above have positive outcomes for the achievement of both SDG 12 and SDG 13. The reduced tempo of tourism, the closure of hotels and other tourism services is credited for reducing waste generated by the industry (Musavengane et al., 2022), It is questionable whether such positive outcomes will be sustained post-COVID-19 (Jones and Comfort, 2020). Although certain observers assert the COVID-19 pandemic gave rise to conscious travellers interested in environmental issues an important contribution made by Mkono et al. (2022) offers a caution. This study provides compelling evidence that environmental issues are not high on the agenda in the factors considered by consumers in making current travel decisions beyond the pandemic period.

A further positive trend influenced by COVID-19 has been the boost given to domestic tourism not least for the survival of local hospitality economies (Mogomotsi et al., 2023; Shereni et al., 2023; UNWTO, 2023a). Measures put in place to restrict international travel compelled decision-makers in many nations to accord heightened attention to stimulate domestic tourism. Potentially a boost may be given to encourage destinations in sub-Saharan Africa to appreciate the benefits of encouraging regional tourism. Arguably, such a policy shift can contribute to SDG 10 on reducing inequality by providing opportunities for different localities to benefit from domestic and regional tourists who do not always exhibit the same travel preferences as those of international tourists.

CONCLUSION

The 2023 announcement of the ending of the COVID-19 pandemic as a public health emergency and instead its recognition by WHO as now an ongoing health issue prompted this reflection and review of its ramifications for the hospitality sector in Africa and most especially in terms of achieving the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. Arguably, despite the flood of writings on COVID-19 and tourism only a small literature has interrogated its relationship to the SDGs in the resource-constrained environment of sub-Saharan Africa.

It has been demonstrated that the pandemic presented massive challenges to the hospitality sector across sub-Saharan Africa that hindered contributions to the SDGs. The biggest was job losses, which greatly influenced the ability of the hospitality sector to contribute to SDG 8 on decent employment and economic growth. COVID-19 triggered other challenges that constrained progress for the achievement of other SDGs. These relate most importantly to Goal 1 on no poverty, Goal 5 on gender equality and Goal 10 on reducing inequality.

Overall, the loss of business in the hospitality sector due to COVID-19 resulted in resources being channelled towards survival and reopening of the hospitality sector with few resources remaining to commit to initiatives for contributing towards the achievement of SDGs. Some appreciation must be accorded to the unintended benefits of COVID-19 for the hospitality sector of sub-Saharan Africa. As noted these concern the reduction in greenhouse gas emissions and the initiatives to boost domestic (and regional) tourism. The close of the pandemic era reinforces the imperative for the hospitality sector in sub-Saharan Africa to accelerate its contribution to agenda 2030 of the United Nations. In addition, it underlines the need for African hospitality scholarship to scrutinize in greater detail the pressing research agenda around the nexus of hospitality enterprises and the SDGs.

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