



With breaking stories and
newswire products from

UN NEWS CENTRE



UN agency helps set up new observatory for sustainable tourism in China



19 July 2011 –

The United Nations and China have opened a third sustainable tourism observatory in the world's most populous country to monitor the environmental and socio-economic impacts of tourism.

The Zhangjiajie Observatory, located in Hunan province, will gather and report data about the impact of tourism based on sustainable tourism indicators [established](#) by the UN World Tourism Organization (UNWTO).

The observatory is located at the entrance to Zhangjiajie National Park, the first national park in China and a site inscribed on the World Heritage List managed by the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization ([UNESCO](#)).

Zhangjiajie National Park receives as many as 40,000 tourist visitors each day during its high season and is partly responsible for a local boom in wealth and jobs related to tourism.

Taleb Rifai, the Secretary-General of UNWTO, said local authorities are aware of both the economic importance of tourism and the need to manage tourism growth sustainably.

“The observatory represents a vital tool for doing so, providing tourism organizations with the information they need to move forward sustainably,” he said.

The observatory – part of the Global Observatory on Sustainable Tourism initiative established by UNWTO – will be managed by a monitoring centre based at Sun Yat-sen University in Guangzhou, as are the two other observatories already in operation in China.