

## STRATEGIC PLANNING IN TOURISM: THE USE OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY TOOLS FOR TERRITORIAL ANALYSIS AND DECISION-MAKING IN TOURIST DESTINATIONS

PLANEJAMENTO ESTRATÉGICO EM TURISMO: A UTILIZAÇÃO DE FERRAMENTAS DE TECNOLOGIA DA  
INFORMAÇÃO PARA ANÁLISE TERRITORIAL E TOMADA DE DECISÃO EM DESTINOS TURÍSTICOS

PLANIFICACIÓN ESTRATÉGICA EN TURISMO: EL USO DE HERRAMIENTAS DE TECNOLOGÍA DE  
LA INFORMACIÓN PARA EL ANÁLISIS TERRITORIAL Y LA TOMA DE DECISIONES EN DESTINOS  
TURÍSTICOS

**Mario Carlos Beni<sup>1</sup>** ([beni@usp.br](mailto:beni@usp.br))   
**Geslayne Franz Ferreira<sup>2</sup>** ([geslayne\\_ferreira@yahoo.com.br](mailto:geslayne_ferreira@yahoo.com.br)) 

<sup>1</sup>Universidade de São Paulo – USP, São Paulo, SP, Brasil

<sup>2</sup>Instituto Mario Beni, São Paulo, SP, Brasil

### ABSTRACT:

**Objective** – To analyse the relevance of strategic planning for the sustainable development and organization of tourist destinations, considering the systemic perspective of SISTUR and its articulation with information technologies, digital platforms and territorial intelligence systems.

**Design/methodology/approach** – The article adopts a theoretical-reflective approach, based on SISTUR – Tourism System, relating strategic planning to the use of territorial diagnoses, statistical panels, databases and monitoring systems applied to public and private tourism management.

**Results** – The analysis demonstrates that the integration between strategic planning, reliable data and technological tools allows the identification of potentialities, weaknesses, structural bottlenecks and development opportunities. This articulation favours more assertive decisions and strategies that are more appropriate to the characteristics of the municipalities and tourist regions.

**Practical implications** – The results can contribute to the elaboration and improvement of public policies, municipal tourism plans, territorial diagnoses and competitiveness strategies, supporting public and private managers in the planning and monitoring of destinations.

**Originality/value** – The study brings SISTUR's systemic approach closer to the current tools of information technology and territorial intelligence, showing how this integration can qualify tourism planning in the face of the growing complexity of the territories.

**Limitations of the research** – Because it has a theoretical-reflective character, the article does not present the empirical application of the tools and methodologies discussed in specific destinations. Future studies may test the approach in different municipalities and tourist regions.

**Keywords:** Strategic Planning. Tourism. Information Technology. Territorial Intelligence. SISTUR. Digital Platforms.

### Editorial Information:

Double Blind Review

**Submission:** 29/07/2026

**Sent for Review:** 05/08/2026

**Accepted for Publication:**  
05/09/2026

### Editor:

Luiz Carlos da Silva Flores

### Section Editor:

Ana Paula Sohn

### Data Availability:

The research data is in the body of the article. The data can be requested from the authors.

**RESUMO:**

**Objetivo** – Analisar a relevância do planejamento estratégico para o desenvolvimento sustentável e a organização dos destinos turísticos, considerando a perspectiva sistêmica do SISTUR e sua articulação com tecnologias da informação, plataformas digitais e sistemas de inteligência territorial.

**Desenho/metodologia/abordagem** – O artigo adota uma abordagem teórico-reflexiva, fundamentada no SISTUR – Sistema de Turismo, relacionando o planejamento estratégico à utilização de diagnósticos territoriais, painéis estatísticos, bases de dados e sistemas de monitoramento aplicados à gestão pública e privada do turismo.

**Resultados** – A análise demonstra que a integração entre planejamento estratégico, dados confiáveis e ferramentas tecnológicas permite identificar potencialidades, fragilidades, gargalos estruturais e oportunidades de desenvolvimento. Essa articulação favorece decisões mais assertivas e estratégias mais adequadas às características dos municípios e das regiões turísticas.

**Implicações práticas** – Os resultados podem contribuir para a elaboração e o aprimoramento de políticas públicas, planos municipais de turismo, diagnósticos territoriais e estratégias de competitividade, apoiando gestores públicos e privados no planejamento e no monitoramento dos destinos.

**Originalidade/valor** – O estudo aproxima a abordagem sistêmica do SISTUR das atuais ferramentas de tecnologia da informação e inteligência territorial, evidenciando como essa integração pode qualificar o planejamento turístico diante da crescente complexidade dos territórios.

**Limitações da pesquisa** – Por possuir caráter teórico-reflexivo, o artigo não apresenta a aplicação empírica das ferramentas e metodologias discutidas em destinos específicos. Estudos futuros poderão testar a abordagem em diferentes municípios e regiões turísticas.

**Palavras-chave:** Planejamento Estratégico. Turismo. Tecnologia da Informação. Inteligência Territorial. SISTUR. Plataformas Digitais.

**RESUMEN:**

**Objetivo:** Analizar la importancia de la planificación estratégica para el desarrollo sostenible y la organización de los destinos turísticos, considerando la perspectiva sistémica del SISTUR y su articulación con las tecnologías de la información, las plataformas digitales y los sistemas de inteligencia territorial.

**Diseño/metodología/enfoque:** El artículo adopta un enfoque teórico-reflexivo, basado en el SISTUR (Sistema de Turismo), que relaciona la planificación estratégica con el uso de diagnósticos territoriales, paneles estadísticos, bases de datos y sistemas de monitoreo aplicados a la gestión pública y privada del turismo.

**Resultados** – El análisis demuestra que la integración entre la planificación estratégica, los datos confiables y las herramientas tecnológicas permite identificar potencialidades, debilidades, cuellos de botella estructurales y oportunidades de desarrollo. Esta articulación favorece la toma de decisiones más acertadas y estrategias más adecuadas a las características de los municipios y las regiones turísticas.

**Implicaciones prácticas** – Los resultados pueden contribuir a la elaboración y el perfeccionamiento de políticas públicas, planes municipales de turismo, diagnósticos territoriales y estrategias de competitividad, apoyando a los gestores públicos y privados en la planificación y el monitoreo de los destinos.

**Originalidad/valor** – El estudio acerca el enfoque sistémico del SISTUR a las herramientas actuales de tecnología de la información e inteligencia territorial, poniendo de manifiesto cómo esta integración puede mejorar la planificación turística ante la creciente complejidad de los territorios.

**Limitaciones de la investigación** – Al tener un carácter teórico-reflexivo, el artículo no presenta la aplicación empírica de las herramientas y metodologías discutidas en destinos específicos. Estudios futuros podrían poner a prueba el enfoque en diferentes municipios y regiones turísticas.

**Palabras clave:** Planificación estratégica. Turismo. Tecnología de la información. Inteligencia territorial. SISTUR. Plataformas digitales.

**INTRODUCTION**

In contemporary times, tourism increasingly requires management processes based on technical information, reliable data, and methodologies capable of understanding the territorial complexity of tourist destinations. Strategic planning has therefore become fundamental to the organisation of the sector, especially in the face of constant economic, social, environmental and technological changes that directly impact tourism activity.

According to Pereira (2002), strategic planning is a systematic process of analysis and decision-making that aims to enable organisations to adapt to changes in their external environment.

Currently, the territory is highly complex. Accelerated urban growth, overloading of natural resources, increased tourist numbers, changes in digital and consumer behaviour, and the growing need for sustainability present new challenges to public management and territorial planning.

In this context, tourism is no longer just a supplementary economic activity; it is beginning to play a strategic role in local and regional development, urban dynamics, job creation, cultural appreciation, and the sustainability of territories. However, tourism expansion itself highlights a recurring contradiction: many destinations grow economically without developing their structural, environmental, social and institutional capacity in the same proportion.

The consequences are well-known: infrastructure overload, territorial imbalances, loss of cultural identity, environmental pressure, weak governance and a reduction in the quality of life of the local population.

These issues demonstrate that tourism cannot be approached in an unorganised way. A tourist destination is the result of complex, interdependent relationships between the economy, society, infrastructure, culture, the environment, mobility, security, health, education and public management. As Beni (2019, p. 37) states, 'Tourism should be understood as an open system in which the various subsystems maintain permanent relations of interdependence'.

As recommended in SISTUR – Tourism System, tourism should be understood as an open, complex, interdependent system in which its various elements, such as infrastructure, demand, tourist supply, governance, superstructure and environmental relations, interact continuously. This systemic understanding demonstrates that the system influences and is influenced simultaneously, hence the need for organisation and planning. This systemic perspective shows that tourism planning cannot be carried out in isolation, intuitively or in a way that is disconnected from the territorial reality. The systemic approach proposed by Beni (2019) challenges reductionist interpretations of tourism, broadening our understanding of it as a multidimensional phenomenon.

In view of this scenario, information technology (IT) tools have begun to play a strategic role in producing territorial diagnoses, monitoring indicators, analysing tourist flows, and developing prospective scenarios. Using digital platforms, georeferencing systems, statistical panels and official databases enables us to gain a more accurate understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of tourist destinations. Nascimento and Silva (2026) emphasise that intelligence and knowledge management systems play a pivotal role in formulating and evaluating public tourism policies.

This article therefore discusses the importance of strategic planning in tourism in relation to technological tools for territorial analysis, emphasising how data intelligence can help identify bottlenecks and opportunities for the sustainable development of tourist destinations.

## STRATEGIC PLANNING AND THE SYSTEMIC VIEW OF TOURISM

Strategic planning in tourism is an ongoing process involving analysis, organisation and the definition of guidelines aimed at the sustainable development of tourist destinations. In other words, it cannot be static; it needs to be constantly analysed and reviewed to stay up to date. It is more than just an administrative instrument; it is also a territorial management tool capable of guiding public policies, investments and competitiveness strategies. According to Pereira (2002, p. 52), 'strategic planning seeks to establish guidelines capable of guiding present decisions in consideration of future scenarios'.

Historically, tourism has often been interpreted in a sector-specific way, limited to hotels, transport, tourist attractions, and promotional activities. This reductionist approach has, over time, generated fragmented policies, low institutional integration and discontinuous planning. Acerenza (2003) notes that, for many years, tourism was primarily considered from an economic and operational standpoint, overlooking its territorial and social complexity.

However, tourism is a deeply transversal phenomenon. SISTUR anticipated this systemic understanding when it recognised that tourism does not act in isolation, but as an integrated element in the functioning of the territory.

By structuring tourism as an open system, Beni (2019) demonstrated that its impacts extend beyond the traditional boundaries of the sector, directly affecting environmental, economic, social, cultural and political structures.

This systemic logic is particularly relevant in the current context, which is characterised by hyperconnectivity, rapid urban transformation and the requirement for data-driven public policy. Tourism is an interdisciplinary and holistic sector, and a comprehensive understanding of the sector requires an integrated approach.

From our perspective, tourism should be analysed using the SISTUR (Tourism System), which is conceived as a set of interdependent relationships connecting economic, social, cultural, environmental, and institutional elements. In this approach, strategic planning must consider not only tourist attractions, but also urban infrastructure, mobility, sanitation,

accessibility, governance, load capacity, professional qualifications, sustainability, and hospitality, as well as territorial competitiveness. These attributes are fundamental for making more assertive and direct decisions, as well as identifying areas that require attention, corrections, and realignment.

This conception greatly expands the scope of tourism planning, moving it away from improvised practices and towards technical methodologies based on evidence and indicators. Liberato and Vieira (2021) emphasise that contemporary tourism planning must incorporate technical instruments for territorial diagnosis and social participation.

As stated by Liberato and Vieira (2021), tourism planning at any level should start with a territorial diagnosis involving an analysis of tourist flows and demand profiles. It should also use methodologies such as the SWOT matrix (or FOFA in Portuguese — a strategic tool for evaluating the internal and external scenarios of a business by focusing on strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats) with the participation of local stakeholders.

Therefore, contemporary tourism planning depends directly on the production and interpretation of reliable territorial data, allowing for more precise decision-making. Reliable data enables more assertive actions and coherent decision-making.

## INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY AND TERRITORIAL INTELLIGENCE IN TOURISM

Digital transformation has profoundly changed, or should change, the way tourist destinations are analysed, planned and managed. Information technology has become essential for constructing more complete and dynamic territorial diagnoses, enabling the integration of different databases and monitoring systems.

In an increasingly connected world where the circulation of data and information, and the transfer of experiences, directly influence tourists' choices, it is essential that these same technologies be used for the planning and management of the territory for residents and tourists.

A tourist city cannot depend exclusively on its attractions. Its quality of life depends on urban mobility, public safety, basic sanitation, health, digital connectivity, environmental preservation, professional qualifications, institutional governance and the ability to organise economic and social flows.

Before it can be good for tourists, a city needs to be efficient for its residents. If citizens feel welcomed and cared for in their own city, they will understand and accept the presence of visitors.

Rather than merely publicising Instagram-worthy places, technology must play a central role in helping public managers, entrepreneurs and sector professionals to make more reliable diagnoses and quick decisions, solve problems and anticipate the need for corrections along the path of development, aligning efficiently with the transformations and demands of the market.

From this perspective, the fusion of Information Technology and Territorial Intelligence reinforces the systemic vision of tourism, further emphasising the ideas we developed in the context of SISTUR. Tourism is now understood as a set of interdependent relationships between demand, supply, infrastructure, territory and management. In this environment, technology is presented not only as an operational innovation, but also as a fundamental instrument for promoting strategic regional development planning, sustainability and competitiveness.

However, it should be noted that IT tools aimed at territorial planning do more than simply follow trends. These systems consolidate information from a variety of sources, which must be reliable. They enable the preparation of automated reports that can identify tourism potential, priority areas for investment, infrastructure deficits, seasonality, accessibility bottlenecks, a lack of professional qualifications, environmental impacts, social vulnerabilities and market trends.

Furthermore, when used effectively, digital tools allow the construction of strategic maps and territorial indicators that are extremely relevant for tourism-related territorial planning.

This information significantly strengthens tourism governance and contributes to more technical decision-making, reducing practices based exclusively on subjective perceptions, immediate political interests, guesswork and improvisation, which often lead to mistaken visions of the territory.

In tourism, territorial analysis must consider the multiple relationships between geographic space, infrastructure, economic dynamics, cultural heritage, the environment, and social organisation.

In this context, technological tools enable a more comprehensive interpretation of tourist territories, leading to more accurate and objective diagnoses.

As I have argued throughout my academic career, tourism planning must necessarily integrate the economic, environmental, social and institutional dimensions that constitute the territory, avoiding fragmented actions that are disconnected from local reality. SISTUR was conceived from this systemic understanding of tourism, enabling the analysis of relationships and interdependencies between its components. When correctly understood and applied, its methodology provides a solid foundation for making diagnoses, lending greater credibility and reliability to the results that inform the planning and management of tourism.

IT tools applied to tourism should therefore not be understood merely as technological instruments; in association with SISTUR, they become governance mechanisms, providing territorial intelligence and strategic support for public and private management.

## FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

In contemporary times, strategic planning has become indispensable for the efficient, effective and sustainable management of tourist destinations. The growing complexity of tourism activities requires decision-making processes based on technical data, territorial analysis, and reliable, integrated management methodologies.

Decades before the need for digital transformation became so evident, SISTUR anticipated this vision by structuring tourism as an open system of interdependent relationships that influences and is influenced by its environment.

In this context, information technology tools play a pivotal role in facilitating continuous monitoring of tourist areas, integrating official statistical databases, and providing more accurate insights into potential opportunities, challenges, and development prospects.

Using digital platforms and territorial intelligence systems significantly strengthens tourism governance, allowing for greater efficiency in formulating public policies and regional development strategies that consider the territory as a whole.

As I have argued from a systemic perspective, tourism should be understood as a complex, integrated and multidimensional phenomenon. Its management requires continuous planning, strategic vision and the ability to coordinate the different sectors of society. Its complexity stems from the multiple structural and operational relationships that constitute it, as well as the interdependencies it establishes with other systems. For this reason, tourism cannot be analysed in isolation or in fragments, but must necessarily be understood and worked on from an interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary perspective. The future of territorial planning will depend not only on producing more data, but also on the ability to interpret complex relationships, integrate structures, and transform information into informed decisions.

This is precisely the essence of SISTUR – the Tourism System.

In order to transform, facilitate and interpret this set of complex relationships, we are developing SISTUR ERP, a platform representing the digitalisation of territorial systemic intelligence and meaning the Mario Beni Institute.

It can therefore be concluded that the combination of strategic planning, territorial intelligence and information technology is one of the most promising ways to promote sustainable, competitive and socially responsible tourism in Brazilian municipalities and tourist regions.

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## AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

Mário Carlos Beni: Conceptualization and writing of the original manuscript

Geslayne Franz Ferreira: Writing - proofreading and editing.