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***Low footprint wellness tourism
attached to responsible travelling***



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Tourism trends

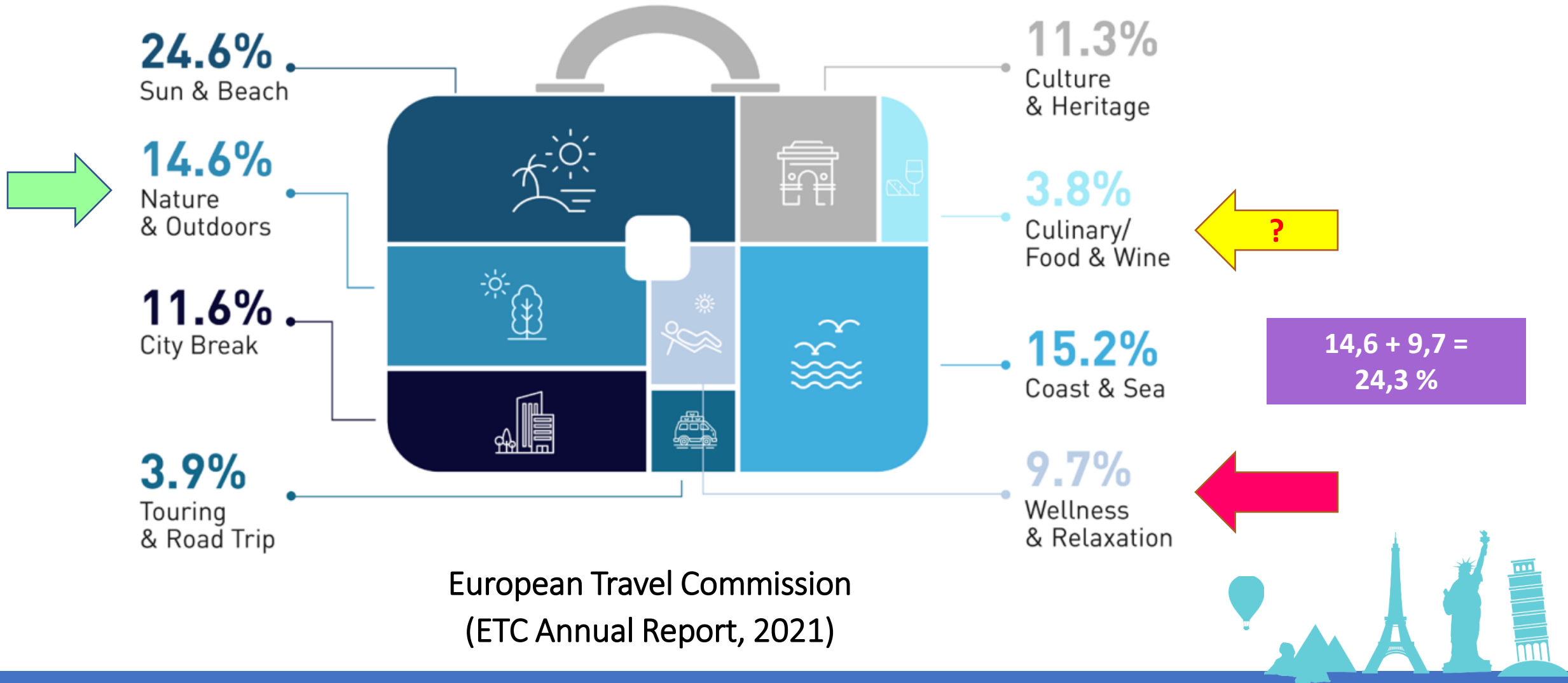
- **Travelling** is widely accepted as part of the path leading to **well-being**.
- During the pandemic, levels of anxiety, stress and depression increased and the pursuit of a better **quality of life** became hugely important.
- Due to the mandatory distance and contact restrictions, simply **being in nature** seemed to be a good enough solution.
- More and more people are recognizing and get familiar with the value of the "green" label as well as **ecological practices** and **sustainable products**.



Tendency to develop and create **new travel experiences** attached to **wellness** and a **healthy lifestyle**



Preferred type of leisure trip for respondents most likely to travel in the next 6 months



Background

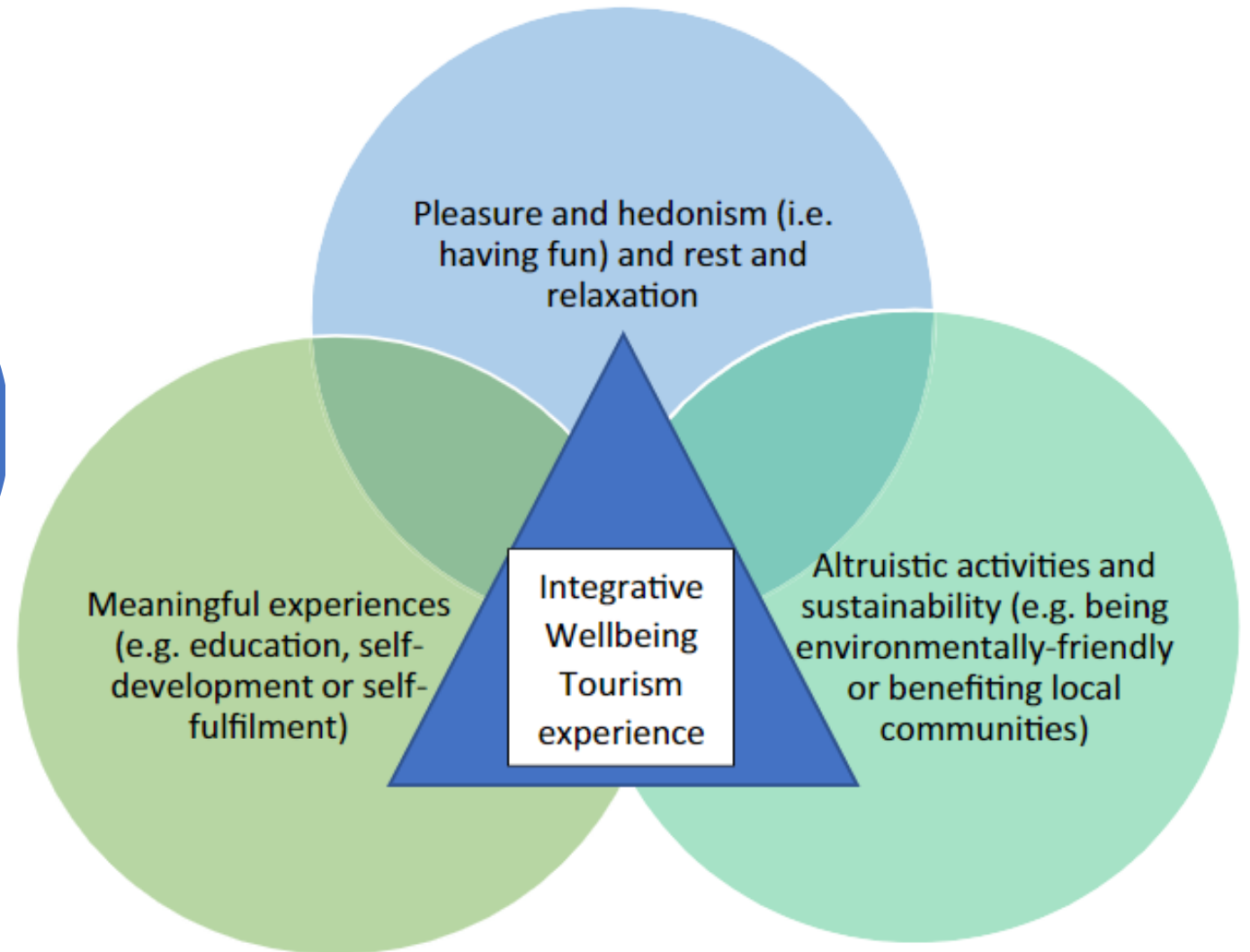
Wide confusion in the literature about the **concepts** of wellness and well-being; different interpretation and use of the words amongst the countries and the different cultures (wellness of a destination as for prosperity and human well-being)

- ✓ The Global Wellness Institute defines **wellness** as the active pursuit of activities, choices and lifestyles that lead to a state of holistic health (prevention)
- ✓ **Well-being** is a multidimensional “state of being” describing the existence of positive health of body, mind and soul; although an individual issue, manifests only in (parallel) with the well-being of the surrounding environment and community (Hjalager, A-M & Flagestad, A., 2011; Dilette et al., 2021)

What is wellness tourism?

- According to the executive summary of ETC/UNWTO (2018), wellness tourism is a type of tourism activity which aims to **improve and balance** all of the main domains of human life including physical, mental, emotional, occupational, intellectual and spiritual.
- The **primary motivation** for the wellness tourist is to engage in preventive, proactive, lifestyle enhancing activities such as fitness, healthy eating, relaxation, pampering and healing treatments.





Wellness tourism

- It is obvious that there is a number of ways to reach wellness and well-being during a trip, e.g. luxurious resorts, spa/massage and other expensive services from well-trained staff, costly cuisine from famous chefs...

while at the same time...

- There is an option to avoid crowds, find peace by connecting with nature, experience activities without any cost just by being outdoors, like relaxing at the beach or listening to the birds, get to know the culture and people of a place by volunteering and participating in local festivals...



Aim

- Narrow the ample ways of pursuing wellness in an attempt to enclose the responsible way of travelling.
- Evaluate the specific type of special interest tourism (SIT) in terms of sustainability.



Responsible Tourism

Broad concept with its roots attached to **sustainability**, hence referring to a type of tourism activity and tourist behavior that **benefits** the environment, economy and society of the visiting destination.

Luxury Tourism

General lack of consensus on a precise definition. The concept is more often related to **specific infrastructures** that are mainly associated with **intensive use of resources**. It is based and built on a number of **services** (tangible and intangible) which lead to desired emotions such as **pleasure** and **fulfilment**.

Hypothesis

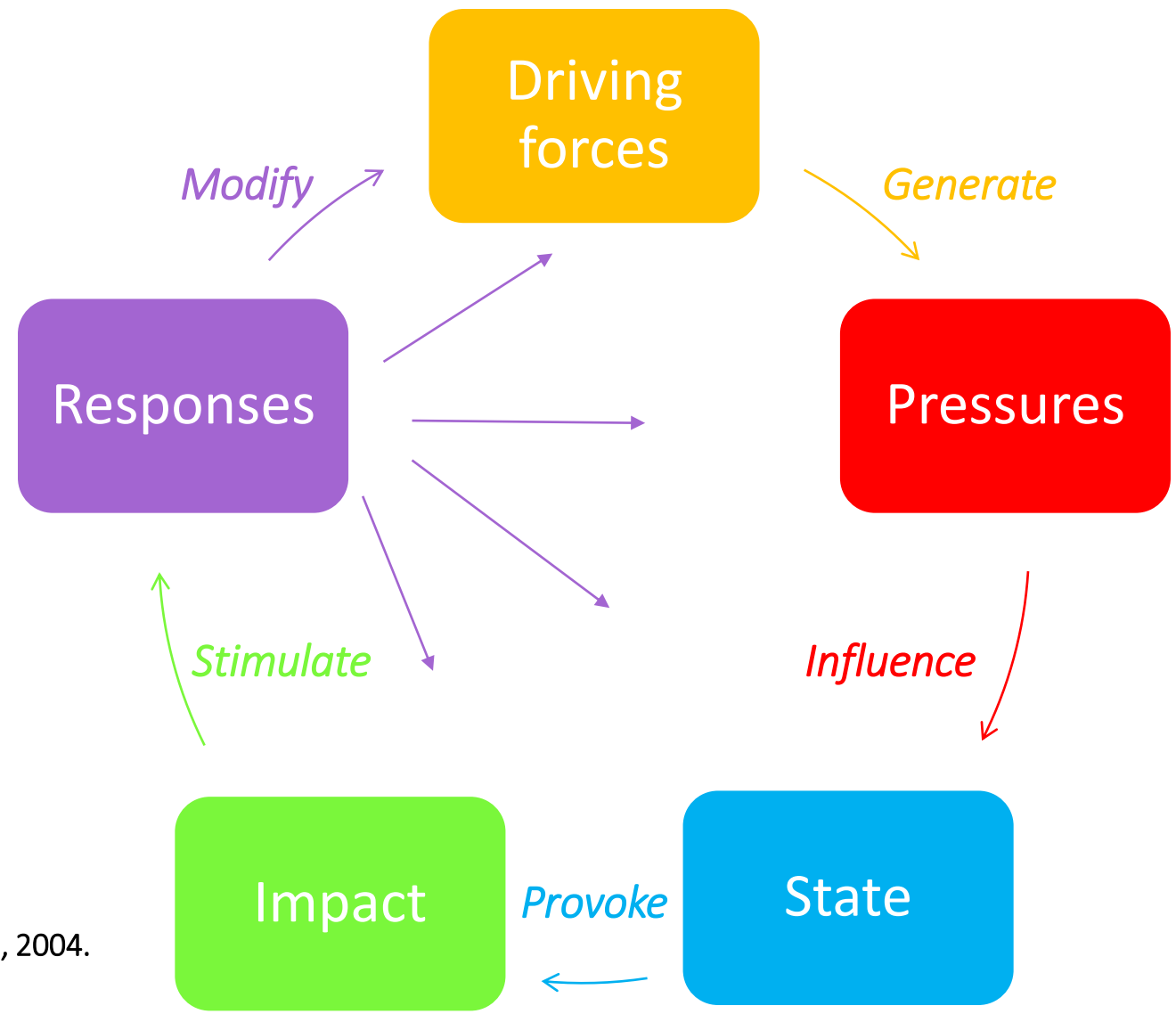
- This type of wellness tourism is more sustainable because it can result in a **better impact**, meaning:
 - **Smaller** environmental footprint
 - **Greater** social and economical effect
- In the islands, given the dominance of 3s (sea, sand, sun) tourism, problems of unsustainable development are recorded.

Methodology

Application of the **DPSIR framework** (European Environment Agency, 1999) in order to evaluate the effects of the type of tourism on the three pillars of the island's sustainable development:

- Environment
- Society
- Economy

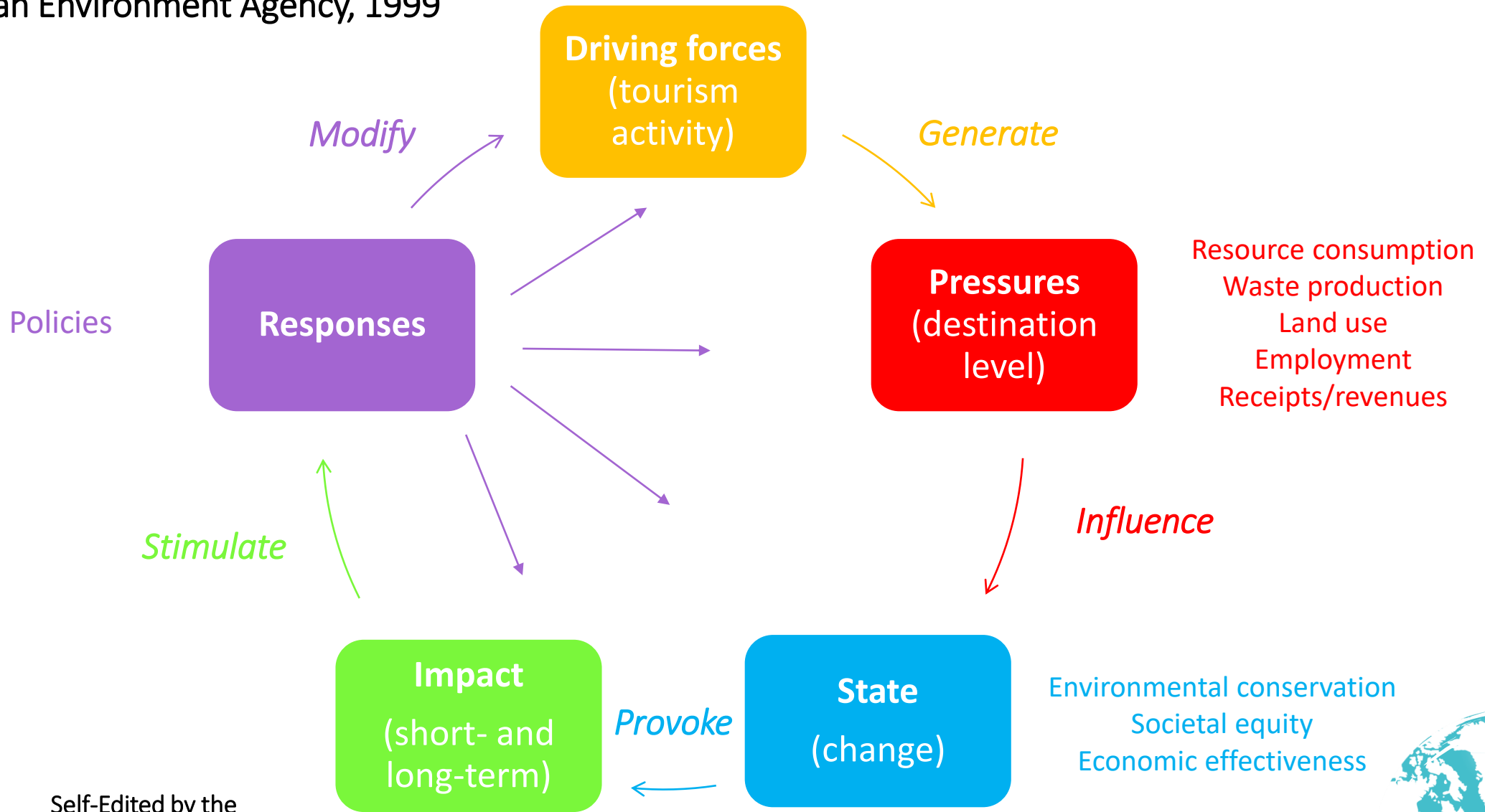




Source: Adapted from Kristensen, 2004.

“The DPSIR Framework”,

National Environmental Research Institute, Denmark



Questionnaire

1st set (14)

Destination related

(where, why, how, satisfaction, duration, accommodation, activities, cost)

2nd set (14)

Tourism and sustainability

Environmental behavior and lifestyle preferences and characteristics of tourists

3rd set (7)

Perceptions and views on the concept of wellness as well as the ideal destination for such a trip

4th set (12)

Socio-demographics and other information (e.g. age, origin, gender, education level, travelling habits such as trip organizing)

Sample

A. Questionnaire

Tourists

B. Interviews/ Focus groups

Businesses operating
in the tourism sector
(North Aegean)

Field Research
Greek Island Destinations

Have you recently visited a Greek island?

I invite you to complete the questionnaire



<https://wellnesstourism.limesurvey.net/389827?lang=en>

email: elalexiou@env.aegean.gr



Every Destination Has Something Unique to Offer



Source: Global Wellness Institute



**Thank you for
your attention**