

Net Positive Hospitality Podcast transcript

Reflections and projections for 2025

14th January 2025

Glenn Mandziuk (the Alliance) 00:10

My name is Glenn Mandziuk, CEO of the World Sustainable Hospitality Alliance. I'm here to reflect on 2024 and the exciting things that are going on at the World Sustainable Hospitality Alliance and provide some insights on 2025.

Glenn Mandziuk (the Alliance) 00:30

The reflections I have when it comes to the World Sustainable Hospitality Alliance, it has been a real continuation of its transition into a major contributor to the conversation globally. We were able to be fully engaged with COP16 and biodiversity and Cali Colombia, with our partners at UN tourism and WTTC on Nature Positive, and we had some very meaningful conversations that will, I think, really position the industry in the bigger picture when it comes to biodiversity in a very progressive and an engaged way and I think, you know, we continued on from that, you know, we were engaged with the United Nations Sustainability Council of Ministers around the world and being able to provide expert support and advice. We were directly involved with destinations and destination development through a global network of leading destinations on sustainability and again, we can't do our work without being engaged at the destination level as well, and so we've been able to take a very bold step in that regard.

Glenn Mandziuk (the Alliance) 01:44

We were able to make a bold contribution to COP29 this year, for the very first time, being able to support our industry's message, and for the very first time on the main stage. And you know, we've now begun conversations in a very significant way with organizations like the World Economic Forum and showcasing how our hospitality industry can again affect change globally.

Glenn Mandziuk (the Alliance) 02:20

I think the bigger picture is that we're being consulted, and we're also leading the conversation at the same time, which I think is very imperative. We were able also, and I think this is really imperative, is to provide a real structured framework for training and development through our World Academy for Sustainable Hospitality, this is a bold effort - it took a lot of work, lot of engagement, lot of understanding of how business operates and what the opportunity is to provide training, lots of pilot testing, and we were able to launch it at our Summit in Texas this past year, and I think this over time, will have engagement in the millions when it comes to those that will be trained through it. And so, you know, to have that kind of opportunity, to have that impact and contribution into the future is a tremendous asset for us.

Glenn Mandziuk (the Alliance) 03:23

We were able to come together on a set of metrics, on Universal Criteria for Sustainability. We took a lot of time, again, making sure that all the companies were aligned on how we measure carbon, water, waste, energy. If we're all talking the same language and we're approaching things the same way, we will have collective impact, and we're comparing apples to apples, and that's going to be an exciting thing, because now the foundation is there, as we build out the tools and update all our tools in 2025 to support that.

Glenn Mandziuk (the Alliance) 03:58

And we were able to establish the framework for a Global Impact Fund, to establish investment into companies that need to scale to support the industry's transition on energy, food systems and nature positive.

Glenn Mandziuk (the Alliance) 04:25

These are really exciting times, and we as an industry can really provide a role in that. And the way I look at it, 2024 was really building on the momentum coming out of our Strategy that we launched in late 2023 and now we're into full implementation mode. And so 2025 looks so exciting as we lead into COP30 by the end of the year, when we think about the building out of the tools that are leading and future-proofing the industry to address everything from what the regulators are looking for, what our customers are looking for, and transparency, but also from a greenwashing perspective - we were tackling these issues head on. And you know, one of the things that was exciting to see is that all the industry commonly invested in tackling these issues, and they all did, and they are continuing to do that. And you know, we came together as an industry for two big Summits, both in Nice and in Texas, San Antonio.

Glenn Mandziuk (the Alliance) 05:35

This coming year, though, we're going to be going through a bit of a transition how we engage the industry through a series of roundtables in key markets all over the world. So expect that transition of how we engage with industry. We want to hear more from the ground. Basically, we want to hear from those that are actually doing the work on the ground, together with the work at the corporate and company level, and really bridging that gap for action. And I expect that we're going to see a lot of that. We're going to see a lot of opportunities for us to engage together with solutions on fundamental systems change that we as a sector, we all know we need to do in order to hit our targets for 2030 and 2050 and for that to happen, we have to make some, some bold efforts. And so building on 2024 through into 2025 and I think, quite frankly, we'll have lots of exciting progress to talk about at COP30 in Brazil a year from now you.