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GENERAL PROGRAMME OF WORK

(a) Report on the implementation of the general programme of work for the period 2004-2005

Note by the Secretary-General

The following document contains a progress report on the implementation of the Organization's general programme of work for 2004-2005 since the 15th session of the General Assembly held at Beijing, China, from 19-24 October 2003.

The structure of the report follows that of the programme dealing successively with Statistics and economic measurement of tourism, Market intelligence and promotion, Sustainable development of tourism; Quality and trade in tourism, Human resource development in tourism; Regional activities, cooperation for development and poverty alleviation, Activities of the Affiliate Members and destinations and Communications, publications and documentation.

The report has been submitted to the 26th meeting of the Programme Committee (Madrid, 25 and 26 May 2004) and has been updated following the said meeting.

Information on the activities of the Affiliate Members including those of its Business Council is reported under item 14 of the provisional agenda.
GENERAL PROGRAMME OF WORK

(a) Report on the implementation of the general programme of work for the period 2004-2005

INTRODUCTION

1. This document records the main information concerning the implementation of the general programme of work for 2004-2005 and more specifically the activities carried out and planned, since the 15th session of the General Assembly.

2. The information is presented according to the programme's main fields of activity, viz.:

(a) Statistics and Economic Measurement of Tourism
(b) Market Intelligence and Promotion
(c) Sustainable Development of Tourism
(d) Quality and Trade in Tourism
(e) Human Resource Development in Tourism
(f) Regional Activities, Cooperation for Development and Poverty Alleviation
(g) Activities for the Affiliate Members and Destinations
(h) Communications, Publications and Documentation

3. In relation to the previous programme covering the years 2002-2003, the general programme of work adopted by the Fifteenth General Assembly in Beijing, reflects continuity, as is normal: continuity in its scope and in a large part of the activities that correspond to the Organization's fundamental mission and on which the programme develops priority work streams in the following fourteen areas that serve as a reference for and underpin the above-mentioned mission.

(a) monitoring megatrends in the global travel and tourism market place and identifying structural changes and their impacts; offering policy guidance and capacity building for local authorities;
(b) Applying the Global Code of Ethics as a policy framework for sustainability and competitiveness;
(c) Promoting indicators and standards of sustainable development; Studying the impact of climate and environmental change on the future; Assisting cultural tourism development and heritage site management;
(d) Facilitating the development of Tourism Satellite Accounts at the national and local levels;
(e) Promoting poverty alleviation through tourism development;
(f) Supporting cooperative efforts in market research, product development and innovation;
(g) Offering advice on the application of information and communication technology in tourism;
(h) Promoting the inter-relation between tourism policies and air transport with special attention to regions that are sensitive in this regard;
(i) Offering advice on safety and security issues with special focus on reduction of the risk of terrorism to tourism and on crisis management and image building;
Offering advice on liberalization issues of importance to the tourism sector and on the incorporation of tourism into the GATS and the Doha agenda of the World Trade Organization;

Developing quality related standards and voluntary certification systems for tourism facilities and services;

Knowledge management, benchmarking and capacity building in human resource development;

Developing regional agendas and action plans to address strategic issues of common interest to regional and sub-regional groupings;

Capacity building in modern communication techniques. Information on WTO’s activities. Website expansion.

4. The programme is also one of renewal in that it seeks to anticipate and reflect more faithfully the rapid changes that the tourism industry is undergoing globally, as a result of three years of variegated crisis and to respond more effectively to the varying needs of governments, tourism destinations and the industry. The programme also emphasizes new activities in the area of trade liberalization, poverty alleviation and destination management, as well as the further regionalization of its outputs.

5. In accordance to the wishes expressed by Members, the programme seeks to position WTO as a relevant and credible catalyst in stimulating and promoting close and efficient public-private sector partnerships both within the different sectors of the Organization’s membership and with organizations and associations outside WTO. It also seeks to promote cooperation between the various levels of a country’s tourism administration – national, regional and local – as well as between ministries responsible for tourism and other ministries responsible for sectors having a direct or indirect impact on tourism.

6. It is a selective programme that concentrates on fewer activities given priority from Members’ perspective and positions WTO as an umbrella organization for world tourism, thereby increasingly providing opportunities for developing networks, strategic alliances and joint ventures with international and regional organizations directly and indirectly interested in tourism.

7. Finally, with the aim of facilitating a result-based management and a systematic evaluation of its implementation, the general programme of work of the Organization for the years 2004-2005 is structured around a set of specific missions that flow from the Organization’s mission statement and conceptually unite each programme section. These missions are developed into expected outcomes, specified on the basis of a causal means-end sequence by listing key result areas with their corresponding activities and outputs and key measures and indicators.

8. In addition to simplifying the programme format, the senior officials at the Secretariat undertook a review project to define the next phase of actions to support the management and measurement of the 2004-2005 programme of work. These include:

(a) Improved scheduling of the programme cycle’s calendar (the “Roadmap”) setting out a timeline for each key activity and meeting.

(b) Strengthening horizontal networks of advisory bodies and steering committees working with each section team, providing input and challenge to the programme

(c) Adopting a standard project and work-stream management discipline setting clear guidelines for project initiation, change control, review and reporting.
(d) Supporting communication with Members, for each section to focus on key initiatives within their overall plan as the prime areas for feedback and reporting.
(e) Improving evaluation with occasional Member / beneficiary surveys.
(f) Improving co-ordination between programme Sections and Regional Representations through bi-monthly meetings of the Senior Officials chaired by the Deputy Secretary-General.

9. These changes which are designed to capture good practice and ensure that there is consistency in project planning, measurement and reporting, will be reflected in the current programme and the benefits will be evaluated over the programme cycle.

A. STATISTICS AND ECONOMIC MEASUREMENT OF TOURISM

A.1 Mission and Objectives

10. WTO’s activities in the field of Statistics and Economic Measurement of Tourism focus on the following objectives:

(a) Provide technical assistance to Member States for the development of tourism statistics and the Tourism Satellite Account (TSA).

(b) Promote international comparability of statistical data, and prepare additional statistical indicators (of a physical or monetary character, not specifically associated with the TSA) to those already published by WTO in its general statistical publications: Yearbook of Tourism Statistics and Compendium of Tourism Statistics.

(c) Analyse the usefulness of additional initiatives for a more widespread implementation of international standards on tourism statistics (the methodological design of the TSA and the 1993 Recommendations for the development of national Systems of Tourism Statistics).

(d) Further these objectives by promoting interagency cooperation (national and international).

A.2 Achievements and work plans

A.2.1 Publications

11. So far as regular statistical publications are concerned, the following have been completed:

(a) The 2004 edition of the Compendium of Tourism Statistics. This publication provides basic statistical indicators on tourism trends in over 200 countries and territories during the period 1998-2002.


12. With a different approach, the publication "Enzo Paci Papers on Measuring the Economic Significance of Tourism" has been designed to provide, on an annual basis, information that includes:
(a) Guidelines being drawn up by WTO for the development of national Systems of Tourism Statistics (STSS) and of the Tourism Satellite Account (TSA);

(b) Some especially noteworthy papers relating to those fields, for the most part published outside the mainstream of the specialist journals;

13. Volumes 1, 2 and 3 of this publication are already available and Volume 4 will be released by July 2004.

A.2.2 Committee on Statistics and Macroeconomic Analysis of Tourism

14. Two basic conceptual frameworks were developed over the period 1990-2000: the UN recommendations on tourism statistics in 1993 and the design of the TSA in 2000. The Committee on Statistics and Macroeconomic Analysis of Tourism serves as a forum for the analysis and monitoring of the development and implementation of these conceptual frameworks.

15. The Committee is also an appropriate forum to present different initiatives taken by the Organization, in cooperation with other international organizations, to develop tourism statistics and the TSA project and to obtain the corresponding feedbacks from Members.

16. The fifth meeting of the Committee was held in Madrid, at WTO Headquarters, on 8-9 March 2004. The Committee elected Canada as President for the period 2004-2007. Canada is represented by Mr. Scott Meis, Executive Director of Research at the Canadian Tourism Commission. Spain (Instituto de Estudios Turísticos) and France (Direction Générale du Tourisme) will serve as Vice-Chairmen.

17. The Committee discussed several issues related to the TSA, including its methodological framework and the organization of the World Conference on TSA, scheduled for 2005.

18. Two working groups were created at the meeting, the first on employment in tourism. It will be chaired by Spain and will try to define actual practices and set standards for a more comprehensive assessment of different types of employment in the tourism industry. The second group, chaired by Canada, will be responsible for the methodological aspects of the TSA. The WTO Department of Statistics and Economic Measurement of Tourism will disseminate a questionnaire to all countries that already have implemented the TSA, in order to clarify the most challenging problems and definitions included in the Accounts. This group will suggest some updates in the revision of the System of National Accounts (SNA93), which just started, and provide a chance to enhance the relation with the TSA methodological framework on aspects such as travel agencies, package tours, etc.

A.2.3 Technical assistance and sub-regional workshops on tourism statistics and the elaboration of a TSA

19. These are technical assistance initiatives through which WTO aims to improve the statistical capacity building in the field of tourism statistics for the participating countries so that their own national technical personnel can carry out two sets of initiatives:
(a) On one hand, to promote the development of the System of Tourism Statistics as a necessary condition in order to make progress in the measurement and analysis of the economic impacts of tourism;

(b) On the other hand, to begin the tasks contemplated in the different stages recommended by the WTO for the development of a TSA.

20. Capacity building workshops on tourism statistics and the elaboration of the Tourism Satellite Account will continue to be organized in the various regions throughout 2004 and 2005.

A.2.4 Technical references for the development of tourism statistics and the TSA

21. The WTO Statistics and Economic Measurement of Tourism Website (www.world-tourism.org/frameset/frame_statistics.html) has been designed with the purpose to serve as a platform for familiarizing tourism statisticians and economic analysts with the Tourism Satellite Account (TSA) Project.

22. Special mention should be given to the research carried out with funding from the Canadian Tourism Commission, the Instituto de Estudios Turísticos (IET, Institute of Tourism Studies, Spain) and the Swedish Tourist Authority, regarding the surveys developed by a group of countries to estimate the corresponding visitor expenditure associated with inbound tourism. Based on these national experiences and those of other countries that have agreed to collaborate in the project (United States, Mexico, Finland, France and Italy), the WTO has developed a proposal for a survey to estimate visitor expenditure associated with inbound tourism, designed in such a way that it can be used not only by national tourism administrations for the creation of tourism promotion policies and as a basic set of tourism-related statistical information, but also by central banks (for use in the preparation of the balance of payments) and national statistical offices (for national accounts).

23. A second phase of the research has been launched recently: it refers to international experiences in the measurement of traveller flows at national borders. Its main objective is to develop a statistical prototype that could improve the measurement of the flows of travellers in a country of reference, as well as to elaborate general guidelines for its implementation.

B. MARKET INTELLIGENCE AND PROMOTION

B.1 Mission and Objectives

24. The objective of the WTO’s Market Intelligence and Promotion Department is to provide the Members of the Organization with the information they need to complete their qualitative and quantitative knowledge of tourism markets and with the most efficient ways of operating in these markets.

25. The execution of the Department’s programme of work is guided by the following principles: (a) Continuity, to develop and expand the tasks that are assigned to it in successive programmes of work; (b) Flexibility, reflected in the production of studies or reports that address specific issues of interest at any given moment in time or region; (c)
Cooperation, given the available resources, the Department seeks to work with other departments of the Secretariat and with other external institutions. At this moment the Department has working agreements with the European Travel Commission (ETC) and is preparing others with: the International Hotel and Restaurant Association (IHRA), the Canadian Tourism Commission (CTC) and the International Air Transport Association (IATA).

B.2 Achievements and work plans

B.2.1 Tourism Recovery Committee

26. The Tourism Recovery Committee has held a meeting on the occasion of the WTO General Assembly in Beijing (October 2003). The main conclusions of this meeting and a summary of the interventions of the different participants are made available in Special Report 25, Fifth Meeting of the Tourism Recovery Committee, Beijing 2003.

B.2.2 Market Trends

27. As part of its permanent activities, the Department will continue to evaluate international tourism trends. This already traditional task of the Department takes concrete form in the publication of the six volumes of Tourism Market Trends, the WTO World Tourism Barometer (three issues a year) and the Tourism Highlights.

28. These three publications will provide users with:

- Data on the structure and evolution of international tourism in their own region and in the rest of the world;
- Information regarding the main factors behind such results;
- Through the WTO World Tourism Barometer, every four months they will provide:
  (a) very recent international tourism data from 130 countries
  (b) an assessment of the preceding four-month period, and
  (c) a forecast of how international tourism will perform over the following four-month period.

The data published are those provided by countries. The assessment of the preceding four-month period and the forecast for the next four months are based on the opinions expressed by a broad panel of experts from the public and private sectors all over the world. The experts also identify the variables that have influenced the results obtained and the forecasts issued.

29. Over the 2004-2005 period, the international tourism long-term forecasts, known as Tourism 2020 Vision will be updated and expanded. This will enable countries to situate themselves in the context of the regional and worldwide trends in international tourism.

30. Through these reports, Members can acquire knowledge regarding the structural characteristics, the profile, and the developmental trends of international tourism in their own country, in other countries and in the rest of the world. This will enable them to carry out benchmarking exercises that can contribute to redefining tourism policies and action programmes based on the evolution of the market.

31. At this time, with the market showing clear signs that it is changing, knowledge of market trends acquires special importance.
32. In order to improve the quality of these reports, Members have been invited to provide the WTO Market Intelligence and Promotion Department with data and information by contributing to the different surveys carried out by the Secretariat. These surveys collect information on:

(a) Tourism results in each country
(b) Factors that have determined such results

B.2.3 Promotion

33. The above-mentioned manual on *Evaluating NTO Marketing Activities* is now available. Full Members, with the support of this Department, can organize seminars or workshops that allow them to measure the effectiveness of NTO promotional activities such as: advertising; public relations and media relations; customer information services; festivals and hallmark events; consumer fairs and events; trade support and events; and website.

34. The Secretariat will submit to the Market Intelligence Committee a proposal for the preparation of a report on *NTO promotional budgets*. This report would provide each of the countries with information regarding the volume and structure of the promotional budgets of other national destinations.

35. Members that have experience in evaluating their promotional activities and those who are interested in hosting Seminars related to this matter have been invited to communicate such experience and/or interest to the Secretariat.

B.2.4 Strategic and Operational Planning of Marketing

36. The Secretariat plans to issue a manual on *Strategic and Operational Planning of Marketing* using for this purpose the best experiences accumulated by different countries. This Manual could help Members in preparing their marketing plans.

B.2.5 Direct Assistance to Tourism Administration

37. This is a new activity in the Section’s programme of work. It entails carrying out, for the benefit of Members, advisory and technical assistance activities that help them in developing market intelligence and improving promotional techniques and which they have identified as priorities.

38. Members have been invited to communicate to the Secretariat their technical assistance requirements in this area. This will allow the Secretariat to prioritise them and to undertake further necessary actions.

B.2.6 Other activities

39. **WTO Website.** The Department takes part in the production of the WTO website. It designed and produced the sections under its responsibility: “Facts and Figures” and “Tourism Recovery Committee”, and updates them regularly.

40. **Information requests.** The Secretariat responds to a large number of information requests from the national tourism administrations/organizations of member
C. **SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF TOURISM**

C.1 **Mission and Objectives**

41. In the area of Sustainable Development of Tourism, the programme focuses on the following objectives:

(a) Raise the level of awareness on sustainability issues in tourism among Member States, Affiliate Members and the tourism industry in general.

(b) Conduct research in order to enhance the know-how available on these issues and disseminate it through different channels.

(c) Promote the adoption, by Member States and the tourism industry, of sustainable tourism development and management policies and specific instruments.

(d) Promote sustainable tourism development policies and programmes with a specific focus on poverty reduction through tourism.

(e) Coordinate with other UN agencies and NGOs joint actions in this field for the benefit of Member States and the tourism industry in general.

(f) Assist Member States, through ad-hoc missions and training seminars upon request, in the implementation of specific policies and other actions aimed at raising the level of sustainability of their tourism sector.

C.2 **Achievements and work plans**

C.2.1 **Priority areas of activity**

C.2.1.1 **Indicators of sustainability in tourism**

42. Following WTO's decade-long involvement in this field, in early 2003 WTO established an international group of experts to **develop a revised guide** on the use of sustainability indicators in tourism development. The new study is based on a comprehensive international review of experiences in this subject. The new guide will aim at providing a practical manual on the definition and application of indicators, and how to build them into tourism planning, policy-making and regulatory processes.

43. Since the initiation of the study, 51 experts from more than 20 countries have been involved. The new publication, to appear during 2004, will contain a general overview of indicator applications worldwide, a procedure to identify indicators at the local destination level, and a range of issues and destination types with suggested indicators and case study examples. The issues and destination sections will be illustrated with specific examples and numerous case studies from all continents.

44. Based on the new guide, **regional programmes** will be initiated to **facilitate the application of sustainability indicators**. Application programmes are currently under preparation for Europe, pending funding approval by the European Commission, and for
the Caribbean, where a joint workshop with the Association of Caribbean States will be held during 2004.

45. Members have been invited to:

(a) Disseminate the upcoming guide among relevant public administrations and the tourism private sector at different levels.

(b) Suggest organizational and financial mechanisms and partners for establishing indicator programmes with WTO technical support.

(c) Indicate if they wish to host a regional or sub-regional indicators workshop.

(d) Indicate if they wish to initiate national indicators programmes with WTO technical assistance.

C.2.1.2 Tourism and poverty alleviation

46. After underpinning the potential of tourism to alleviate poverty at the World Summit on Sustainable Development (Johannesburg, August 2002), when it launched its first publication on Tourism and Poverty Alleviation, WTO has been expanding its activities in this field.

47. At the XV WTO General Assembly (Beijing, October 2003), a Round Table was organized on the issue, in which a number of speakers presented further policy views and specific case studies on successful poverty reduction results from tourism projects in several countries. Furthermore, the Assembly itself gave its approval to the Sustainable Tourism – Eliminating Poverty (ST-EP) initiative and entrusted the Secretary General with the task of securing the necessary funding to implement the initiative. A first financial support to the ST-EP initiative has been announced by the Government of the Republic of Korea, which, together with WTO’s initial contribution, will allow the programme to become operative in the current year.

48. The 2nd ST-EP Forum was successfully organized at ITB, Berlin on 15 March 2004, in order to continue the dialogue on poverty issues. A new WTO publication on the issue of poverty alleviation through tourism was launched, containing detailed Recommendations for Action. It is based on an exhaustive analysis of policy documents, specific projects, research papers, conference reports and case studies concerning poverty reduction through tourism development.

49. Exploratory missions for identifying projects aiming at poverty reduction through tourism were carried out in Jordan, Haiti, Peru, Cameroon and Ethiopia.

50. A series of sub-regional seminars on poverty reduction through tourism has been initiated in Africa, within the Special WTO Programme for Sub-Saharan Africa. The first one was held in Benin, 19-21 May, for West African countries and the next one is planned in Tanzania, 7-9 September, for East Africa.

51. The Government of the Republic of Korea has indicated to the Secretary-General its readiness, in principle, to host the ST-EP Foundation at Seoul and to provide a voluntary contribution of 5 million US dollars for the operation of the Foundation during the period 2004-2005. A draft agreement to this end will be submitted to the Executive Council.
52. The Department Chief was invited by the World Bank to organise a special round table on Tourism and Poverty Alleviation at the Bank’s Annual Conference on Development Economics that took place in Brussels, 10-11 May 2004.

53. A set of recommendations was communicated to Member States to take action in the framework of the International Year of Microcredit, 2005, declared by the United Nations. The recommendations aim at promoting micro-credit schemes for micro, small and medium sized tourism enterprises (SMEs), as a viable tool for poverty alleviation.

54. Members have been invited to:

(a) Disseminate the new WTO publication “Tourism and poverty alleviation – Recommendations for Action”, among the relevant government departments and within the tourism private sector of their countries.
(b) Indicate if they intend to undertake initiatives (e.g. seminars, pilot projects, country projects) aiming specifically at poverty reduction through tourism in their countries and whether they require WTO’s technical support or assistance.

C.2.1.3 Certification of sustainability in tourism

55. Following a decision by the third Meeting of the WTO Committee on Sustainable Development of Tourism, the Department prepared “Recommendations to Governments for supporting and/or establishing national certification systems for sustainable tourism”, sent to all Member States in April 2003 (http://www.world-tourism.org/sustainable/doc/certification-gov-recomm.pdf).

56. At its fourth meeting, the Committee recommended “that WTO should play a more significant role in guiding the development of voluntary certification systems and ecolabel schemes in the tourism industry through the formulation of framework criteria”.

57. In implementation of this recommendation, WTO has launched a series of regional conferences with three main purposes:

(a) to disseminate and further explain the recommendations to governments;
(b) to establish a dialogue between government authorities, certification systems and the hotel and tourism private sectors on how to make better use of certification systems and ecolabels currently available; and
(c) to encourage better coordination among the latter, leading to common criteria, processes and standards.

58. Conferences on certification of sustainability of tourism activities are being organized in the various regions since last year (Americas, Asia-Pacific and Europe). A considerable number of case study presentations on operating and planned certification systems have been delivered at these conferences. Conference Reports are available on the Section’s web page: www.world-tourism.org/sustainable

59. Members have been invited to

(a) Indicate whether they would be interested in hosting certification conferences.
(b) Suggest further activities that could foster the development and operation of national certification systems, networking between certification initiatives at the
regional level, and achieving regionally and internationally harmonized certification standards.

C.2.1.4 Follow-up to the International Year of Ecotourism (IYE) 2002

60. Having successfully completed the International Year of Ecotourism, the Department has continued disseminating the various technical reports prepared during 2002, the recommendations contained in the Quebec Declaration on Ecotourism, as well as the report on the results of IYE, prepared during 2003 for the UN General Assembly. The latter includes a summary description of the activities carried out by 80 WTO Member States during the Year, as well as their evaluation of the activities undertaken by WTO, on the basis of a survey with Member States conducted in 2003. The report is available at: http://www.world-tourism.org/sustainable/IYE/IYE-Rep-UN-GA.htm

61. During the second half of 2003, the Secretariat participated or was represented in a number of ecotourism-related events, among them the most important being the V IUCN World Parks Congress, Durban, South Africa, from 8 to 17 September, 2003.

62. In the framework of the WTO Special Programme for Sub-Saharan Africa, a series of sub-regional seminars on Ecotourism in National Parks and Protected Areas has been initiated. The first one was held in Rwanda, 4-7 August 2003, and the next one is scheduled in Guinea (Conakry) for 1-3 November 2004.

63. Further information on follow up to IYE 2002: http://www.world-tourism.org/sustainable/IYE-Main-Menu.htm

64. Members have been invited to:

(a) Suggest additional activities to promote the sustainable development of ecotourism.
(b) Inform the Secretariat about the progress made in their country in the implementation of the recommendations included in the Quebec Declaration on Ecotourism.

C.2.2 Other activities

C.2.2.1 WTO Committee on Sustainable Development of Tourism

65. The Committee, with its new membership elected at the XV General Assembly, had its annual meeting in Chiang Mai, Thailand, 1-3 March 2004, thanks to the generous invitation of the Government of Thailand. In addition to discussing the WTO programme of work in this field, Committee Members presented activities undertaken in their countries aimed at promoting the sustainable development of tourism. The Report on the Committee Meeting is available upon request.

C.2.2.2 Tourism in Oceans, Coasts and Small Islands

66. The International Network for the Sustainable Development of Coastal Tourism Destinations (www.world-tourism.org/sustainable/coastalnetwork), launched in January 2003 has been in a testing phase during 2003, and open for suggestions, comments and contributions. Based on the feedback received and operational experience, the
Network website is currently being restructured, amplified and transferred to a WTO server.

67. WTO has collaborated with the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) and UNEP in the formulation of a project entitled “Reduction of Environmental Impact from Coastal Tourism through Introduction of Policy Changes and Strengthening Public-Private Partnerships”. The project proposal was submitted to the Global Environment Facility and recently approved for funding. WTO will act as a co-executing agency of this project, which aims at promoting the development of sustainable tourism policies and strategies in coastal areas, while addressing the negative impacts of tourism on the coastal and marine environment. This will be done through the implementation pilot demonstration projects in each of the 8 participating countries: Senegal, The Gambia, Nigeria, Ghana, Kenya, Mozambique, Seychelles and Tanzania.

68. The Organization was again invited to contribute to the Global Conference on Oceans, Coasts and Islands, held in Paris in November 2003, in order to participate in a debate on the contribution that the tourism private sector could make to the implementation of the Johannesburg Summit recommendations regarding the protection of the marine environment from land-based activities.

69. WTO continues collaborating with the Federation for Environmental Education, responsible for the Blue Flag initiative, especially in their efforts to expand the Blue Flag campaign to other regions outside Europe. Thanks to these joint efforts and the support of UNEP, the Blue Flag is now operational, besides Europe, in beach destinations in the Caribbean, South Africa, Canada, Chile and Morocco, while new countries are showing interest in joining the campaign. WTO is also member of the Blue Flag International Jury. More information: http://www.blueflag.org

70. The UN approved a the holding of side event on tourism, to be organized by WTO within the International Meeting for the 10-year Review of the Barbados Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States (Mauritius, 10-14 January 2005).

71. Members have been invited to:

(a) Inform the Secretariat on any initiative in their countries aiming at sustainable coastal tourism, that could be included in the website of the International Network for the Sustainable Development of Coastal Tourism Destinations
(b) Express if they would be interested in participating in the Blue Flag programme

C.2.2.3 Climate Change and Tourism

72. Since WTO convened the First International Conference on Climate Change and Tourism (April 2003, Djerba, Tunisia), the Organization has participated in various events related to climate change and tourism, in order to disseminate the Djerba Declaration on Tourism and Climate change and started to develop a clearinghouse mechanism on this topic.

73. WTO is coordinating with UNEP the preparation of a project proposal on climate change and tourism, to be submitted for GEF funding. The project intends to develop a comprehensive research and dissemination programme addressing both adaptation and mitigation issues in a multi-year timeframe. WTO prepared a preliminary
proposal and an initial positive response was received from UNEP. GEF procedures and requirements are being examined in order to prepare the proposal for submission during 2004.

74. Members have been invited to send to WTO any research papers, project documents, meeting reports, website addresses, containing information related to climate change and tourism in their countries. These documents and references could be useful for the upcoming clearinghouse, the GEF project proposal and other activities in this field.

C.2.2.4 Policies and Tools for Sustainable Tourism

75. WTO has initiated, jointly with UNEP, an international review and analysis of policies and tools for the sustainable development of tourism. To this purpose, WTO conducted a survey among Member States in order to gather relevant policy documents. The publication will be directed to governments with concrete recommendations for policy measures and implementation mechanisms. It is expected to appear during the second half of 2004.

76. Members have been invited to:
(a) Inform the Secretariat, on a continuous basis, of any new policies or other instruments, initiatives and measures in their countries leading to a more sustainable tourism industry;
(b) Indicate their interest in receiving technical support to assist municipal governments in their efforts to establish a Local Agenda 21.

C.2.2.5 Management of congestion at heavily visited destinations

77. A new WTO study is currently underway, following a recommendation of the WTO Business Council. The study, coordinated by the SDT Department and the WTO-BC, will provide guidelines, practical tools and case study examples for congested sites from the demand-, destination- and site-management perspectives. A review meeting with a group of experts and Affiliate Members, representing local authorities, tour operators, transportation companies and site managers, was organized at the WTO Headquarters last January. The publication of this handbook is expected for the second half of 2004.

C.2.2.6 Cultural Tourism

78. The Secretariat has continued its activities in the field of cultural tourism, with a view to assisting members in making better use of their cultural heritage and promoting sustainable practices in tourism activities in and around heritage sites. WTO participated in various conferences organized on this subject:

C.2.2.7 Barcelona 2004, Universal Forum and Tourism Dialogue

79. From May to September 2004 the city of Barcelona, Spain, will host the Universal Forum of Cultures, a new event that aims at celebrating the world’s cultural diversity. Among the many cultural and other events that will take place during the Forum, a Dialogue on Tourism, Culture and Sustainable Development will take place from 14 to
16 July 2004. Upon an invitation of the Spanish government, WTO is collaborating in the organization of this Dialogue, suggesting subjects for discussion and possible speakers.

80. More information about the Forum and the Dialogue can be obtained from the organizers' website: www.barcelona2004.org

C.2.2.8 Tour Operators Initiative (TOI)

81. WTO continues to support the TOI, jointly with UNEP and UNESCO. At present, 25 tour operators from 17 different countries, catering for over 30 million tourists, are members of the TOI. WTO has actively participated in all TOI meetings and events and has hosted the TOI General Annual meeting in November 2003. WTO has also participated in two TOI-Destination workshops, held in Turkey (2002) and in the Dominican Republic (2003) aiming at establishing a dialogue between the outbound tour operators and incoming local stakeholders at destinations (hotels, local authorities, NGOs and service providers) to find joint solutions for sustainability issues.

82. A number of useful and practical publications, designated to help raise the environmental and social sustainability of tour operating companies, have been published by the TOI, often with support from WTO. More information is available at the TOI website: www.toinitiative.org

83. Members have been invited to disseminate the existence and the work of the Tour Operators Initiative among Tour Operators in their countries, inviting them to join it.

C.2.3 Communications

84. An important aspect of the Department’s work is communicating easily with Member States, as well as with a wide range of tourism stakeholders. For these purposes, two specific mechanisms, in addition to the general means of communication used by the Organization, have been established:

85. The audience of the WTO Sustainable Development of Tourism e-bulletin (an electronic news letter on the Department’s activities sent by every 2-3 month) has been continuously expanding. Since its launch in October 2002 many positive feedbacks have been received and more than 6,000 people have subscribed to the mailing list through the on-line form established in the Department’s web site.

86. The Department requested Member States, as well as Affiliate Members to designate focal points on sustainable tourism matters in order to improve communications on technical issues. So far designations have been received from 106 Member States and 59 Affiliate Members.

87. Members have been invited to:

(a) Disseminate information on the WTO Sustainable Development of Tourism e-bulletin as wide as possible among public officials, tourism private sector, NGOs and academic institutions. Free subscription can be made for the e-bulletin on the WTO website at: http://www.world-tourism.org/sustainable/ebulletin.htm
(b) Designate focal points on sustainable tourism matters in the countries where it has not been done so far and communicate contact details to the SDT Department (email: env@world.tourism.org)

D. QUALITY AND TRADE IN TOURISM

D.1 Mission and Objectives

88. It is recalled that the mission of this programme has been defined as "to assist Members in determining and pursuing quality objectives and standards, ethical responsiveness, as well as economic and social accountability in tourism activities, as a contribution to sustainable development and poverty alleviation." Among the expected outcomes an emphasis is made on competition, entrepreneurship, transparency and guidance in the areas of trade, safety and security and standards.

89. The programme focuses on core areas such as liberalization of trade in tourism services, safety and security and quality standards. It is guided by the relevant provisions of the Global Code of Ethics for Tourism and the Plan of Implementation adopted at the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD).

90. The programme is now monitored by the new Quality Support and Trade Committee. Its terms of reference have been modified with respect to the previous Quality Support Committee following the changes introduced to the 2004-2005 work programme. It now focuses more on trade issues and leaves to the consideration of the Sustainable Development of Tourism Committee the issues of social impact of tourism and related specific projects, such as the operation of the Global Code of Ethics for Tourism and its World Committee and the prevention of sexual exploitation of children in tourism networks. The Committee met at headquarters on 15 and 16 April 2004 and provided guidelines regarding the ongoing projects and priorities of the current programme and made recommendations regarding the next programme cycle. The Committee report was transmitted to all members of the Executive Council and to the Programme Committee which met at headquarters on 25-26 May.

D.2 Achievements and work plans

91. As part of the programme implementation, with respect to trade in tourism services, the Secretariat has been encouraging negotiations on tourism services in the World Trade Organization (OMC). WTO contributed two presentations on tourism trade issues at the capacity building seminar on Opportunities and challenges of sustainable development of tourism in ESCWA Member States (UN-ESCWA, Beirut, 11-12 December 2003). The seminar was attended by representatives of National Tourism Administrations from the Middle East and North Africa.

92. With respect to trade in tourism services, in pursuance of General Assembly resolution A/RES/455(XV), the Secretariat has been encouraging negotiations on tourism services in the World Trade Organization (OMC). WTO presentations on trade issues at the capacity building seminar on Opportunities and challenges of sustainable development of tourism in ESCWA Member States (Beirut, 11-12 December 2003) were used in preparing the WTO International Symposium on liberalization and trade in tourism services (Madrid, 22-23 March 2004). It was attended by 30 countries,
Members and non-Members, and 30 national, regional and international organizations. Major conclusions from the symposium included three needs to make liberalization in the tourism sector successful: coordination at government level of general economic, trade and specifically tourism-related policies and measures, including air transport of passengers, adequate domestic regulation regarding sustainability standards and competition issues, and "real" negotiations based on liberalization measures assessment. The symposium documents can be viewed on the WTO internet pages (www.world-tourism.org).

93. In the form of a new WTO position paper on liberalization and the Doha Development Agenda in particular (annex to document CE/73/10) the symposium findings were contributed to the WTO-hosted workshop on Trade, Tourism and progressive poverty alleviation held in Geneva on 27 May 2004 as part of the Public Symposium of the World Trade Organization entitled Multilateralism at a crossroads (25-27 May). The workshop addressed both civil society organizations and trade negotiators through a balanced panel representing various world regions, the public and private sectors and the Geneva negotiating group headed by the Chairman of the Special Session of the Council for Trade in Services. It is expected that trade negotiators in Geneva use both the WTO symposium and workshop findings and recommendations in the ongoing negotiations which have recently received another strong impulse in the agriculture agenda.

94. At the time of drafting this report, the Secretariat was preparing for contributing, through a team of two officials, to the debate at the eleventh session of UNCTAD (UNCTAD XI, Sao Paulo, Brazil, 13-18 June 2004) on tourism trade-related issues including liberalization, competition, market strategies, foreign direct investment and trade assessment, and for addressing the WTO message to trade ministers and development agencies. It is important that NTAs are aware of this action for feedback and liaison with their trade and economic ministers when addressing tourism as part of the national development agenda.

95. As a result of the work done so far, WTO has already the capacity to offer assistance to its Members on trade issues, while the projects underway at the moment include basically three documents: an assessment tool on liberalization and investment, model domestic regulation on competition and a project on "essential air development routes", the latter being prepared in cooperation with ICAO. Quality and Trade in Tourism shares with Statistics and Economic Measurement of Tourism two additional trade-related projects: a handbook on foreign direct investment in tourism and preparations for a TSA world conference in 2005.

96. As services trade negotiations evolve in the World Trade Organization, it will also be necessary to craft a formal cooperation agreement with this organization to address issues of common as well as separate competence, as already envisaged in the Secretary-General report to the General Assembly at its fifteenth session.

97. With respect to safety and security, the Secretariat has been active in three inter-related fields: the drafting of safety and security parameters which have recently been used in three pilot missions in Africa (Nigeria, Senegal and Seychelles), positioning on travel advisories on which a public presentation made at the twelfth session of the ICAO Facilitation Division (Cairo, 22 March – 2 April) and which is internet accessible, and positioning the tourism sector with respect to health advisories and the new International Health Regulations of WHO (IHR 2005) on which consultations are being held with the WHO Secretariat.
98. The results expected from these three activities include: a model work plan for tourism destinations based on objective safety and security criteria, a model code of conduct on travel advisories and the revised WTO document *Health Information and Formalities in International Travel*, to be submitted to the 16th session of the General Assembly in 2005. It may be necessary to convene international and regional consultations on each of these activities.

99. In the field of standards, the Secretariat has completed, in cooperation with the International Hotel and Restaurant Association (IH&RA), a report and study on hotel classification which has taken stock of hotel classification experience in all WTO regions. It was presented at the WTO World Conference on New Trends and Measures in the Hotel Industry, held in St. Petersburg, Russian Federation, from 26 to 27 April 2004 (all documents on WTO internet site). Both the report and the conference substantiated the current work programme project aimed at devising a guiding document (methodology) on hotel classification as an instrument to protect consumer rights and promote fair competition in the tourism sector.

100. This notwithstanding, in the absence of a guiding document, the Organization continues to receive Members' requests of assistance in hotel classification projects (most recently for Centro-American States) which require immediate attention based on the formerly existing documentation, principally the WTO Secretariat-drafted harmonization report of 1988.

101. The Secretariat has been approached by the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) for cooperation in the field of tourism services, in response to consumer demands for standards in this area. The possibilities and scope of cooperation were discussed at the WTO and ISO Secretary-General level on 7 May 2004. These include: hotel classification systems particularly in relation to safety, hygiene and accessibility; pursuing work on signs and symbols related to tourism; and cooperation with a future ISO technical committee to be entrusted with drafting tourism standards. The WTO position in this respect has been prepared by the former Quality Support Committee (2003) which considered feasible the drafting of WTO-sponsored, international standards to consist of both universal and common parameters and, to the extent possible, national, regional or even local referents, thus contributing to the preservation of uniqueness and authenticity as cultural values and competitive advantages. ISO assistance will therefore also be needed with respect to the design of standards.

102. Three member States, Bahrain, Chile and Lithuania, have requested the Secretariat to organize in their respective regions seminars and courses on quality systems in the tourism sector. These are planned for the second half of 2004 and will be based primarily on worksheets on quality supporting systems in tourism companies and local tourism destinations (available on WTO internet site).

103. The Secretariat is also currently engaged in the preparation of "implementation parameters" for the Global Code of Ethics for Tourism with respect to the Code articles pertaining to trade, safety and security and quality standards. The introductory draft was presented to the World Committee on Tourism Ethics at its first meeting in Rome in February 2004 and the new drafts on issues singled out as priority ones are expected to be submitted to the Committee at its second meeting in Madrid in October 2004.
E. HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT IN TOURISM

E.1 Mission and Objectives

104. In accordance with its mission “to build the knowledge capacity of WTO Members providing leadership, initiative and coordination in quality tourism education, training and research through public-private partnerships among institutions and WTO Member States”, the WTO.HRD programme of work for 2004-2005 has as its main objectives to provide: (i) developed strategic knowledge capacity and positioning for WTO Members; (ii) increased tourism competitiveness to WTO Members in tourism education, training and know-how and (iii) innovative programmes in tourism education and training for WTO Members through public-private partnerships.

105. The four priority areas for 2004-2005 under these objectives are:

(a) WTO Network of Government Officials. Through the WTO.Pacticum and the WTO Themis TedQual Practicum officials of the NTAs of WTO Member States undergo training and familiarization with WTO and WTO.HRD products and services, with the objective of forming a horizontal network within their administrations to work closely with WTO.HRD.

(b) WTO Network of quality knowledge, education and training centres. Active participation of recognized quality centres worldwide in WTO through the Education Council.

(c) Direct support to Members through programmes with direct participation of WTO Members designed to upgrade their know-how in tourism and the quality and efficiency of education and training systems as well as to familiarize officials with WTO.

(d) Knowledge, education and training programme development. Design, development and management of programmes to improve the quality and efficiency of tourism education worldwide and, specifically that offered to WTO members by the TedQual certified institutions of the WTO Education council.

E.2 Quality Report

106. In the area of the WTO Network of Government Officials (WTO Practicum and WTO, Themis TedQual Practicum), surveys of total quality (TQ) have been conducted in which participants were asked about issues such as satisfaction with information provided, administrative procedures, the content of the GTAT.TPS courses, the destination management practicum, etc. The average satisfaction rating (TQ) was 90-95/100.

107. In the area of the WTO Network of Quality Knowledge, Education, and Training Centres, periodic consultations have been conducted with members of the WTO Education Council. Also, a survey measuring satisfaction and suggested improvements with the TedQual certification system was conducted. The satisfaction ratings were ca 85-90/100.
108. In the area of programme development and direct support to Members through
TedQual and GTAT programmes, whether in Member Countries or in the WTO.
Scholars programme, overall satisfaction ratings were 90/100, with ratings of 95/100 for
GTAT programmes and 85-90/100 for WTO Scholars programmes.

E.3 Achievements and work plans

E.3.1 Developed strategic knowledge capacity and positioning for WTO
Members

109. The WTO-Themis TedQual Practicum, aimed at familiarizing officials from the
National Tourism Administrations of WTO Member States with the WTO.HRD
programmes and their subsequent implementation at a national level, took place from 21
to 31 March 2004 at the WTO.Themis Foundation in Andorra with a two-day visit to WTO
Headquarters in Madrid. Officials from Botswana, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Egypt,
Jordan, Mauritius, Paraguay, Saudi Arabia and Zambia took part in this Practicum. All
officials taking part in the TedQual Themis Practicum are expected to serve as officials
WTO.HRD liaison officers upon their return to their countries, thus forming a network of
officials specialized in human resource development in Tourism Administrations
throughout the world.

110. The first session of the 2004 WTO Practicum will be held from 18 to 29 April at
WTO Headquarters in Madrid with the participation of officials from the Tourism
Administrations of twenty-five WTO Member States. It is expected that officials from
Argentina, Azerbaijan, Bolivia, Botswana, Bulgaria, Colombia, Czech Republic, Fiji,
Hungary, India, Iraq, Jordan Lithuania, Maldives, Malta, Malaysia, Panama, Peru,
Poland, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Spain, Sudan Tanzania, and Turkey will participate
in this session. Participants will take part in a five-day course on Tourism Policy and
Strategy, recently updated and improved, a technical visit to a Spanish tourism
destination and meetings with WTO officials in charge of the programme and the
regional representations. The Practicum offers these officials a unique opportunity to
familiarize themselves with WTO’s programmes and officials and is intended not only to
provide capacity building to WTO Member States but also to create a horizontal network
of officials within Tourism Administrations so as to foster closer collaboration with
Members.

111. The TedQual Certification of education programmes has now been granted to 70
programmes in 36 institutions, with many requests for information and applications
received from institutions worldwide. As the TedQual Certification scheme grows it is
continuously updated to reflect changes in the tourism industry to ensure that tourism
education, training and research programmes reflect the needs of the industry and
produce human resources to build the capacity of the public and private sectors of
tourism.

112. Within the framework of the XV WTO General Assembly, held at Beijing China
the 7th General Meeting of the WTO Education Council took place on 23 October 2003.
The discussions focused on the following points: (i) the formal consolidation of the
Education Council under its Declaration approved in Beijing by Education Council
Members; (ii) the 2004-2005 programme of work for the Education Council, aimed at
providing added value to WTO Member States; (iii) the mentoring of education
institutions in member countries by Education Council Members to enable those
institutions not up to the WTO.TedQual standard to improve their programmes so that
they can obtain the WTO.TedQual Certification. The holding of a Tourism Policy Forum was also discussed and is presently set for 18-20 October 2004 in Washington D.C.

113. The 8th General Meeting of the WTO Education Council was held on 31 May and 1 June in Madrid. Major issues discussed at the meeting were the expansion of the WTO Education Council; development of a catalogue of member institution research and educational capabilities, research initiatives such as an annual WTO Education Council publication and student research projects in developing countries, a distance education programmes survey, and the upcoming Tourism Policy Forum in Washington, D.C. Following this, the WTO.HRD Conference on Creating Frameworks for Tourism Policy and Destination Management took place in Madrid on 2-3 June with over 150 government officials, destination management experts and knowledge institutions from 35 countries attending. This Conference was supported by the Government of Spain. Keynote speakers addressed different aspects of tourism policy and destination management, focussing on the role of Knowledge in Tourism Policy and Destination Management and laying the conceptual foundation for the parallel sessions where 38 papers were presented which covered specific topics in the areas of Destination Management; Tourism Products; Education and Knowledge; Quality and Competitiveness; Sustainability and Eco-Tourism and Tourism Policy. The discussion in both the joint sessions and parallel sessions of the Conference provided useful insights into the problems facing tourism today, deficiencies in responding adequately to these problems as well as suggestions and recommendations for improving the formulation and implementation of tourism policy at all levels.

114. At the WTO Education Council Conference on The Role of Education in Quality Destination Management also held at Beijing on 23 October, major decision-makers from governments, education institutions and the tourism industry gathered in Beijing, China at the 15th WTO General Assembly on 23 October to address key issues relating to how education, training and research can improve the competitiveness of destinations. The principal outcome of the conference was to highlight the practical work needed (and already accomplished) to raise the quality of human resources in destinations. The conference provided a better understanding of how education, training and knowledge management improve a destination’s quality.

E.3.2 Increased tourism competitiveness to WTO Members in tourism education, training and know-how

115. In addition to the WTO Practicum and the WTO.Themis TedQual Practicum mentioned in paragraphs 109 and 110 above, the following activities are aimed at providing direct support to Member States.

116. Some 30 members of the WTO Practicum Alumni Association, now numbering 280 officials, met at the WTO General Assembly in Beijing to discuss ways in which to make the WTO.PAA a more dynamic association aimed at helping members to share resources and to maintain contact with other WTO.PAA members. The WTO Human Resource Development Department will soon make available a special section in its Web Site to provide this service. Members of the WTO.PAA specifically requested that regional WTO.PAA meetings be held in conjunction with regional WTO events (Commission Meetings, Seminars, etc.).

117. Under the WTO.Scholars programme, longer format GTAT courses have been developed, which offer scholarship assistance to officials from NTAs of WTO member States, and are held at WTO.EdC member institutions. Among these are: the
GTAT.TPS Post Graduate Course, with twenty scholarships provided by the Government of Italy, covering tuition, accommodation, etc.; the WTO.GTAT.TPS PhD at Nebrija University in Madrid, in its third year, offering partial scholarships to officials from WTO member States, the WTO-FEHR-UPV Masters in Advanced Hospitality Management at Polytechnic University of Valencia, in its third year, which also provides partial scholarships to officials from WTO member States and the GTAT.MHTM Masters in Hospitality & Tourism Management developed with Education Council member Le Monde Institute in Greece (January-December 2003).

118. WTO Scholars programmes that took place in the second half of 2003 and to take place in 2004 are: (i) the WTO.GTAT.TPS (DMO) Postgraduate Course on Tourism Policy and Strategy applied to Tourism Destination Organizations (September-December 2003), in Milan, in which the following countries participated: Algeria, Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cameroon, Ecuador, Egypt, Lebanon, Mauritius, Nigeria, Pakistan, Panama, Rwanda and Zimbabwe – (ii) the WTO.TedQual.MQE (Intensive Course on Managing in Tourism Education) sponsored by the Government of Italy, (November, 2003 – English and Spanish sessions), also sponsored by the Government of Italy, which provided scholarships for officials from the NTAs of WTO member States and for educators from WTO member States, in which the following countries participated: Argentina, Azerbaijan, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Egypt, Honduras, India, Indonesia, Iran, Jamaica, Mexico, Peru, Senegal, Seychelles, Slovenia, Swaziland Venezuela and Viet Nam; the WTO and University of Islas Baleares Master in Tourism and Environmental Economics, (academic year 2003-04), starting October 2003, with four tuition grants for public officials from WTO Member States; and a five-day Executive Development Programme for Managers in the Hospitality Industry (WTO.SIS) at the Hong Kong Polytechnic University’s School of Hotel & Tourism Management’s Winter School in 2004. The Government of Mexico has also confirmed that it will again be hosting and providing scholarships for the GTAT Tourism Policy and Strategy course after initially hosting the course in Guanajuato, Mexico, in November 2003. Countries which participated in this course in 2003 were: Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, Costa Rica, Ecuador, El Salvador, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Peru and Venezuela. The Government of Italy has confirmed future WTO Scholars programmes in that country.

119. The Sbest Initiative, a framework for a range of WTO programmes with the common goal of contributing to tourism destination competitiveness and success through excellence in service, has been agreed in three destinations, Galapagos, Cuzco-Machu Picchu and La Palma, and is under discussion in several other destinations. WTO undertakes to promote all successful experiences achieved within this initiative.

E.3.3 Innovative programmes in tourism education and training for WTO Members through public-private partnerships

120. The WTO.HRD Department, the WTO Themis Foundation and the WTO Education Council are working together in the design, development and management of programmes to improve the quality and efficiency of tourism education worldwide, and specifically that offered to WTO Members by the TedQual certified institutions of the WTO Education Council. This is accomplished through partnerships with knowledge and financial partners to produce new materials, concepts and programme contents.

121. An area that is being developed is virtual education courses, making use of new information technology and the Internet. The ongoing Distance Course on Tourism Policy and Strategy available in Internet and CD-ROM formats and developed with the
financial assistance of the Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie (with partial scholarships available) has been running for several years while a distance course on Tourism Policy and Destination Management is being developed in Spanish in partnership with the Open University of Catalonia (in Barcelona) with the collaboration of all other interested Education Council Members. This should be finalized by autumn 2004. Scholarships will be offered for this course to officials from WTO Member States. It is intended to develop a similar course in English with an appropriate partner. English distance courses were offered in the past with Purdue University in the USA.

122. Under the Sbest Initiative, the Tourism Labour Market Observatory (TLMO) is being developed in conjunction with the WTO Education Council, which has given it priority in its programme of work. The TLMO is aimed at exploring and analysing the tourism labour markets.

123. To meet Members' needs, new GTAT courses were developed with and imparted by WTO Education Council institutions under the 2002-2003 programme of work. These include: a short version of the GTAT.TPS on Crisis and Risk Management in Tourism the GTAT.SMT (Snow and Mountain Tourism), the GTAT.HCM (Hotel and Catering Management) the GTAT.ITT (Information Technology in Tourism) and the GTAT.DMET (Destination Management in Tourism). Further GTAT courses will be developed in 2004-2005.

124. Additionally, WTO Education Council institutions periodically hold WTO.SIS short courses, with partial scholarships available to officials of WTO member States, on a variety of subjects such as: Sustainable Tourism Planning and Development, Creation of a Tourism enterprise, eTourism Marketing, Heritage Management, Tourism Destination Development, etc.

125. Publications which have been produced during the 2002-2003 programme of work are: Quantitative and Qualitative Methods of Research in Tourism, Basic Training for Quality in Tourism (Spanish); Fundamental Procedures for Customer Service in Hospitality and Tourism (Spanish); How to Produce Knowledge in Tourism (Spanish). Human Resources in Tourism: Towards a New Paradigm (English-Spanish). Other publications in the planning stage are: Small and medium-sized enterprises in tourism (Spanish), the proceedings of the WTO Conference on The Role of Education in Quality Destination Management (English-French-Spanish); the proceedings of the WTO Conference Creating a Framework for Tourism Policy and Destination Management; Knowledge Management in Tourism (English), Research Methods in Tourism (English).

126. The WTO Education Web Site is presently being overhauled to produce a more dynamic and user-friendly format. Members are urged to use the WTO.Education Web Site to keep abreast of our activities, education institutions collaborating with WTO, scholarships being offered and courses available. The Web Site is continuously updated for the convenience of Members.

127. The 6th edition of the TedQual Magazine focused on the subject of Creating and Disseminating Knowledge in Tourism. This is available on the WTO Education Web Site and is sent to all WTO Members. A 7th edition will be prepared in 2004.

128. On 2 June 2004, the 2nd WTO Ulysses Awards Ceremony will be held in Madrid. The WTO Ulysses Awards for Innovation and Application of Knowledge in Tourism are aimed at granting recognition to benchmarking efforts in different areas of tourism activity. The second WTO Ulysses Prize was awarded to Dr. J.R. Brent Ritchie of the
University of Calgary at a ceremony held at the Chamber of Commerce of Madrid with the support of the City of Madrid Government. On June 3, following the closing of the Conference on Creating a Framework for Tourism Policy and Destination Management, Dr Ritchie delivered the Ulysses Lecture on “Building an Appropriate Competitiveness for Impoverished Destinations: A Framework and Strategy for Ensuring Resident Growth and Well-Being”.

F. REGIONAL ACTIVITIES, COOPERATION FOR DEVELOPMENT AND POVERTY ALLEVIATION

F.1 Mission and objectives

129. Consistent with its policy since its inception and in accordance with its Statutes, the Organization continues to pay particular attention to the problems of countries wishing to promote tourism as a strategic development priority. Under the development assistance programme that it carries out, the Organization strives to ensure that its Members fully benefit from the transfer of technology generated by those activities.

130. To achieve this aim, the programme seeks to enhance the quality and efficiency of WTO’s technical cooperation activities by (a) building national capacities for project management, (b) improving programming and coordination of these activities with those carried out by other agencies under bilateral and multilateral programmes of assistance, (c) developing stronger alliances with international and regional organizations, (d) networking with the travel and tourism private sector and financial institutions and (e) developing and expanding fund-raising and investment promotion activities.

131. It is recalled that the programme links development assistance, carried out mainly with UNDP resources, to operational activities carried out in the various regions with the aim of facilitating the exchange of knowledge and practical experiences and promoting cooperation at the regional level.

132. A greater emphasis is placed on furthering the programme’s implementation at the regional, national and local levels and Regional Commissions are called upon by the General Assembly to play a more proactive role in developing coherent sets of programmes that address the specific requirements of Governments, tourist destinations and the industry, within the different regional groupings.

133. Secondly, the programme includes, under the heading Cooperation for Development, a new work stream on key air transport issues of interest to developing countries with the aim of improving accessibility to destinations in these countries, such as aviation over capacity and cutting off supply to market failure regions, and the impact of low-cost airlines on charter flights and destinations.

134. Thirdly, the programme includes a new heading on poverty alleviation, with the aim of maximizing the contribution of sustainable tourism development programmes and projects by applying the knowledge accumulated by WTO, through research programmes, to specific regional, national and local contexts, by means of relevant advisory missions and technical assistance activities.

135. Additionally, the programme seeks to promote partnerships in tourism development through the provision of information and guidelines on trends in the decentralization of responsibilities for tourism, strengthening the role of parliaments
in shaping tourism policies through awareness-heightening activities and benchmarking on **successful forms of public-private sector partnership** in a variety of areas, such as product development and destination management, health safety and security, marketing, information technology, environmental conservation, and education and training.

F.2 **Achievements and work plans**

F.2.1 **Africa**

F.2.1.1 **Technical cooperation projects**

136. Since the last Council session in Beijing, China, the following technical cooperation activities were carried out or are in progress.

F.2.1.1.1 **Technical cooperation projects completed and under way**

- **Botswana**: Tourism Statistics Development  
  Economic measurement of tourism
- **Kenya**: Economic measurement of tourism
- **Malawi**: Tourism development master plan
- **Morocco**: Sustainable development of tourism in the northern provinces
- **Mauritania**: Support for the creation of a national tourism strategy
- **Nigeria**: Institutional and Capacity Strengthening Support to the Tourism Sector
- **Rwanda**: Priority action plan to boost tourism
- **Sao Tome and Principe**: Strategic plan for tourism development
- **Gambia, Ghana, Kenya, Mozambique, Nigeria, Senegal, Seychelles, and Tanzania**: Reduction of environmental impact from coastal tourism through introduction of Policy changes and strengthening public-private partnerships

F.2.1.1.2 **Technical cooperation projects pending approval**

The following projects are pending approval:

- **Botswana**: Implementation of the strategic development plan
- **Equatorial Guinea**: Ecotourism and Sustainable Development project
- **Mozambique**: Hotel classification system

F.2.1.2 **Sectoral support missions**

F.2.1.2.1 **Missions carried out in 2003 or 2004**

The sectoral support missions planned or carried out in the region are:

- **Eritrea**: Institutional and capacity strengthening support to the tourism sector
- **Cameroon**: Development of sustainable tourism pilot projects for poverty alleviation
Côte d'Ivoire: Measurement of tourism's economic impact and action plan to boost tourism
The Gambia: Assessment on sustainable Development with Special focus on Ecotourism
Mozambique: Hotel classification system
Nigeria: Facilitation and Tourist Safety and Security in Tourism Destinations
Senegal: Facilitation and Tourist Safety and Security in Tourism Destinations
Seychelles: Facilitation and Tourist Safety and Security in Tourism Destinations

F.2.1.2 Missions planned in 2004

The sectoral support missions planned for the region are:

Ethiopia: Elaboration of pilot projects on Sustainable Tourism Development and Poverty Alleviation under the WTO ST-EP Programme
Gabon: Development of ecotourism and training
Kenya: Development of sustainable tourism pilot projects for poverty alleviation
Sudan: Strategic plan for tourism development
Rwanda: Tourism statistics and training
South Africa: Tourism Development Plan
Zambia: Development of sustainable tourism pilot projects for poverty alleviation

F.2.1.3 Regional activities

137. The Secretary-General, the Deputy Secretary-General, the Regional Representative for Africa and other Secretariat officials have made working visits to African countries.

138. In December, the Secretary-General made an official visit to Cameroon, after which the WTO sent a technical mission to the country for the elaboration of sustainable tourism pilot projects in the context of poverty alleviation. This mission falls within the framework of the WTO's ST-EP Programme.

139. In January 2004, the Secretary-General visited Djibouti at the invitation of the country's government to bolster cooperation between the WTO and Djibouti. Among the subjects discussed during this visit and for which the Government requested technical assistance were the need to implement a fluid mechanism and a coordination unit in order to better orient potential investors regardless of their areas of interest and to facilitate the necessary formalities of an administrative or other nature.

140. The Secretary-General also visited Ethiopia where he met with national authorities and the UNDP representation. At the request of the Government, the WTO will send in May/June a technical assistance mission to this country, for the conception of proposals for pilot projects with the participation of the communities of certain localities where there is known tourism potential with a view to poverty alleviation. This mission falls within the framework of the WTO's ST-EP Programme.

141. In February 2004, the Secretary-General participated in the national tourism conference in Casablanca, Morocco, at the invitation of the Government of this country. Three other missions by the Secretary-General are planned in the following countries: Côte d'Ivoire, Tunisia and Seychelles. He will participate in the forty-first meeting of the CAF to be held in Seychelles.
142. In June 2003, the Deputy Secretary-General participated in the World Economic Forum in Durban, South Africa. Within the framework of the implementation of the special programme for the development of tourism in sub-Saharan Africa, the Deputy Secretary-General, accompanied by the Regional Representative, inaugurated seminars, workshops and training courses in July 2003, in particular: in Gaborone, Botswana, on tourism statistics and the elaboration of the tourism satellite account; in August in Kigali, Rwanda on the tourism management of protected areas; in September in Addis Ababa on tourism policy and strategy; in November in Maputo, Mozambique, on new information and communication technology; in December in Dakar, Senegal, on tourism statistics and the elaboration of the tourism satellite account.

143. The Deputy Secretary-General visited Dakar, Senegal, in October to participate in the regional consultation for Africa on the protection of children against sexual exploitation in tourism. In the same month he also went to Gambia on a working visit. In December he participated in the Second Conference on Peace and Tourism in Dar-es-Salaam, Tanzania. At the invitation of the Sudanese Government, the Deputy Secretary-General, accompanied by the Regional Representative for Africa, went on a working visit to Khartoum, Sudan, in April 2004.

144. The Regional Representation for Africa has created a new website (www.worldtourism.org/africa/menu.htm) whose aim is to provide detailed information on activities in the region, and thus improve communication between the Secretariat and the Members. The site, which is available in French and English versions, was launched in December 2002. It contains an abundance of up-to-date information on events, projects and activities by country, on publications, and on the Special Programme of Activities for the Promotion of Tourism Development in Sub-Saharan Africa.

145. A section called "News from Africa" was created on the website and inaugurated in late April. It allows the WTO's African Members to post information regarding the latest tourism developments in their country. The national tourism administrations were informed about the existence of this new site in December 2002. They were invited to designate a person in charge of regularly providing information to the WTO to include in this space. Out of our 48 Members in Africa, only seven have designated a person in charge.

146. In order to obtain the maximum benefit from this space, we urge Members that have not yet designated a person in charge of coordination to do so as soon as possible.

F.2.1.4 Special Programme for Sub-Saharan Africa

147. This programme has been created at the request of the WTO African Members, and is designed to cover the following seven points: Economic Measurement of African Tourism, Global Code of Ethics for Tourism, Facilitation, Protection and Security of Tourism, Ecotourism and Nature Reserves, New Information Technologies, Africa's Image as a Destination, Tourism Development and Poverty alleviation, and Human Resources Development.

148. The programme is structured around four main objectives that complement each other:
(a) To help African countries define a policy and a strategy to ensure the harmonious and sustainable development of the tourism sector.

(b) To develop know-how in the countries of the region in the areas of the design, implementation and management of tourism development programmes inspired by the messages contained in the Global Code of Ethics for Tourism.

(c) To promote wider participation by the citizens of these countries in the management of projects, and in particular by local communities in ecotourism projects, with a view to the creation of jobs for local people and the fight against poverty.

(d) To make the WTO play its role at the international level as the coordinator of the initiatives undertaken by development partners that have targeted tourism as a key sector in their economic development programme and the fight against poverty.

149. The first phase of this Special Programme (2003) was successfully implemented jointly with the Governments of host countries in the region. Up to December 2003, seven seminars have been organized within this framework. More than 550 delegates from 36 African countries participated in these activities, namely:

(a) First Sub-regional Workshop on Tourism Statistics and the Elaboration of a Tourism Satellite Account (for East and Southern African countries), Mahé, Seychelles, 10-12 February 2003

(b) GTAT Course on Tourism Planning and Strategy (GTAT.TPS) Pretoria, South Africa, 10-14 March 2003 (for East and Southern African countries)


(d) Seminar on Ecotourism in National Parks and Protected Areas in Africa, Kigali, Rwanda, 4-7 August 2003 (for Central and West African countries)

(e) GTAT Course on Tourism Planning and Strategy (GTAT.TPS) (for East, Central and West African countries), Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 15-19 September 2003

(f) Sub-regional Seminar on New Information Technologies in Tourism (for East and Southern African countries), Maputo, Mozambique, 24-26 November 2003

(g) Third Sub-regional Workshop on Tourism Statistics and the Elaboration of a Tourism Satellite Account (for Central and West African countries) Dakar, Senegal, 15-17 December 2003

150. The second phase of the programme (2004-2005) is currently under implementation. The twelve following countries have officially expressed their desire to host one of these activities: Benin, Congo, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Ethiopia, Mauritius, Niger, Nigeria, Swaziland, Tanzania, Uganda and Zimbabwe.

151. The first activity of the second phase was the “Seminar-Workshop on Sustainable Tourism Development and Poverty Alleviation” held in Cotonou, Benin.
from 19 to 21 May 2004. Over 150 delegates from 17 countries participated in this seminar-workshop. The other activities planned for this year are the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Dates</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Tanzania</td>
<td>Seminar on Sustainable Tourism Development and Poverty Alleviation</td>
<td>7 to 9 September 2004</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>Ethiopia</td>
<td>Sub-regional workshop on Tourism Statistics and Elaboration of a Tourism Satellite Account</td>
<td>18 to 20 October 2004</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Guinea (Conakry)</td>
<td>Seminar on Ecotourism in National Parks and Protected Areas</td>
<td>1 to 3 November 2004</td>
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F.2.2 Americas

F.2.2.1 Technical cooperation

152. In the area of technical cooperation, the following project is in progress:

**Haiti:** Revision of the Tourism Master Plan of 1996 (HAI/03/008)
The objective is to revise the Plan to determine the appropriate lines of action to render the strategic options operational.

F.2.2.1.1 Technical assistance missions

153. Since May 2003, the following missions have been carried out:

- **Argentina**
  - Assessment and potential of cruise tourism (August 2003)
  - Institutional reinforcement (August 2003)

- **Chile**
  - Design of tourism products (March-July 2003)
  - Rural tourism development (December 2003)
  - Proposal for strategic development of community-based tourism (April-May 2004)

- **Ecuador**
  - Sustainable development and poverty alleviation (August 2003)

- **Haiti**
  - Construction of public policy on cruise tourism (December 2003)
  - Tourism and theme parks (March 2004)

- **Mexico**
  - Organization of the reservation centre of the Paraguay Rural Tourism Association (APATUR) and defining rural tourism promotional and dissemination actions (May 2003)

- **Paraguay**
  - Rural tourism development (July 2003)

- **Peru**
  - 3rd National Ecotourism Congress (April 2004)

- **Uruguay**

- **Central America**
  - Tourism Safety in Central America programme for the Secretariat of Central American Integration (SICA) and the Central American Tourism Council (CCT)
F.2.2.1.2 Missions pending for the second half of 2004

- **Argentina**: Full assessment of the model of the National Parks Administration
- **El Salvador**: Establishment of a strategy for the implementation and promotion of the "Coffee Route"
- **Haiti**: Haitian Farmers' Museum project in the Port Salut region.
- **Central America**: Project on the Tourism Satellite Account in the Mesoamerican Tourism initiative of the Puebla Panama Plan requested by SICA and the CCT.

F.2.2.2 Regional activities

154. Since the fortieth meeting of the Commission and the Seminar on Rural Tourism, held in Asunción, **Paraguay**, in May 2003, the Secretary-General, the Deputy Secretary-General, the Regional Representative for the Americas, as well as other officials and consultants have travelled to the region for different reasons.

155. In October 2003, the 1st Forum Workshop on the Tourism Satellite Account in Central America was held in San Salvador, **El Salvador**. The workshop was preceded by a meeting of Ministers of Tourism who signed the San Salvador Declaration for the establishment of the TSA in the region. This Declaration was also signed by the Secretaries-General of the WTO and SICA.

156. The Secretary-General attended the ITC (International Trade Center) meeting on *Redefining Tourism as an Export and Development Opportunity* held in **Mexico** in September 2003, and the Ministerial Conference of the World Trade Organization held in Cancun. He also visited the country in October 2003 to meet with the Ministry of Tourism.

157. The Secretary-General also visited the **United States of America** on several occasions to discuss the country's re-entry into the Organization.

158. The Deputy Secretary-General attended the Regional Consultation for the Americas on the Prevention of the Sexual Exploitation of Children in Tourism, held in San José, **Costa Rica** in May 2003. He also visited **Cuba** in May to preside the sixth meeting of the Quality Support and Trade Committee.

159. The Regional Representative travelled to the following countries:

- **Argentina**: to take part in the Course for Diplomats given regularly by the country's Ministry for Foreign Affairs (May 2003)
- **Mexico**: Iberoamerican Congress on Cultural Heritage (June 2003)
- **Honduras**: institutional visit (June 2003)
- **Guatemala**: XVII Inter-American Travel Congress of the Organization of American States (June 2003)
- **Brazil**: Mercosur meeting (June 2003)
- **Ecuador**: to meet with the President of the Republic and supervise a cooperation project (July 2003)
- **Bolivia**: III Iberoamerican Conference of Tourism Ministers (September 2003)
- **Argentina**: to meet with the Tourism Secretary (September 2003)
- **Paraguay**: to meet with the new tourism authorities (September 2003)
- **Mexico**: World Tourism Expo (September 2003)
- **Brazil**: Launch of the World Forum on "Peace and Tourism" (November 2003)
160. In Honduras the Seminar on Municipal Tourism Management, organized by the WTO Secretariat, was held in August 2003.

161. The WTO held a seminar on product development in Venezuela in October 2003.

162. The Secretariat sent a consultant to Uruguay to participate in the III National Ecotourism Congress, held in Piriápolis in April 2004.

163. The Secretariat was also present at the following events:

Mexico: National Tourism Business Council and meeting of Parliamentarians (November 2003)
Dominican Republic: Sustainable Tourism Stakeholder Round Table, organized by the Tour Operators Initiative (December 2003)
Cuba: VI Conference on Sustainable Development, organized by the Association of Caribbean States and the Caribbean Tourism Organization (April 2003)
Cuba: XXIV Tourism Convention (May 2003)

164. The Regional Representative, Mr. Carlos Gutiérrez, underwent surgery in mid-January 2004, and has been on sick leave for the past four months. He is expected to resume his functions on 24 May. In the meantime, Mr. Augusto Huéscar, Head of the Market Intelligence and Promotion Department, served as acting Regional Representative. During this time, he carried out the following activities:

Granada,
Spain: Grand Encounter of Latin American Travel Agents (March 2004).
Chile: IATA Conference on air transport for the Americas (April 2004)
Chile: Institutional visit (April 2004)
Argentina: Institutional visit (April 2004)

165. The Regional Representation has enhanced its web-page on the WTO website: http://www.world-tourism.org/regional/americas available in English and Spanish. This page includes information on the activities and events organized by the Regional Representation for the Americas, as well as speeches and presentations delivered at CAM seminars and other events. Tourism officials and professionals in the Americas countries are encouraged to visit the web-page to get useful information.

F.2.3 Asia and the Pacific

F.2.3.1 Technical assistance projects

166. Since the last Commission meeting, the following technical cooperation projects have been completed or are ongoing:

China: Tourism Development and Structure Plan for the Wujin-Taihu Bay Holiday Resort
DPR Korea: Sustainable Tourism Development Master Plan for Mt. Kumgang
Indonesia: Development of Community-based Tourism in Indonesia
Philippines: Institutional Strengthening Support to the Tourism Sector of the Philippines
Vietnam: Sustainable Tourism Development Plan for Phu Quoc

F.2.3.2 Technical assistance missions

167. The technical assistance missions carried out in the region were as follows:

China: Coastal Tourism Structure Plan for Shandong Province
Timor-Leste: Project formulation mission for a Tourism Development Master Plan
Regional project: Tourism Development and Promotion in the Emerald Triangle Area
Vietnam: Development of the terms of reference for drafting Vietnam’s First Law on Tourism

168. The Secretariat expects the following missions and projects to be approved and activities commenced during the next six months:

DPR Korea: Development of human resource development in Mt. Chilbo
DPR Korea: Marketing strategy for Mt. Kumgang
Indonesia: National tourism development plan
Macau SAR: Hotel classification
Macau SAR: Summer exchange programme of the Macau IFT (Institute for Tourism Studies)
Regional Project: Development of tourism along the Heritage Necklace (Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Thailand and Vietnam)
Vietnam: Development of MICE tourism in Ho Chi Minh

169. It should be noted that technical assistance missions are carried out at the specific requests received from the Members.

F.2.3.3 Regional activities

170. The presence of WTO officials in the Asia and the Pacific region has been very marked and has helped maintain a constant flow of communication between the Member States and the Secretariat about the services that the WTO can provide, and is has also helped in the supervision of the project activities being carried out in the region. The following is a summary of the visits made by the Secretariat to the region and of the visits of Asia-Pacific delegations to the WTO Headquarters.

171. The Secretary-General travelled to Thailand in March 2004 to present a plaque to honour H.E. the Prime Minister of Thailand. He also travelled to the Republic of Korea to discuss the WTO/Government collaboration in the ST-EP programme.

172. The Regional Representative for Asia and the Pacific travelled to Shenzhen, China in November 2003 to participate in the First International Forum on China Outbound Tourism and to Guilin in December to attend the WTO Regional Seminar on Tourism Partnerships. He returned to China in March 2004 to attend the Inception meeting of the Wujin-Taihu project. In March, he travelled to Japan to attend the WTO/APTEC Ishikawa Conference on Tourism Resource Management of Regional Culture which was held in Kanzawa City. In April 2004, he returned to China to attend the Suzhou Mayors’ Forum, review meeting of the Wujin-Taihu project and the project formulation mission for the coastal development structure plan for Shandong Province.
173. The Chief for Technical Cooperation travelled to Vietnam in November 2003 to attend the review meeting for the Phu Quoc project. He travelled to China and Thailand in December to attend the WTO Regional Seminar on Tourism Partnerships and a Meeting of the Emerald Triangle Tourism Working Group, respectively. He returned to Vietnam in January 2004 for the presentation of the final report for the Phu Quoc project and then travelled to Timor-Leste for the project formulation mission for a National Tourism Development Plan. In March, he travelled to Japan to attend the WTO/APTEC Ishikawa Conference on Tourism Resource Management of Regional Culture which was held in Kanzawa City. He returned to Thailand in March to accompany the Secretary-General in the presentation of a plaque to H.E. the Prime Minister of Thailand and for the project formulation mission for the Emerald Triangle. He returned once more to Thailand in May 2004 for the second phase of the project formulation mission for the Emerald Triangle.

174. The Chief for Sustainable Development of Tourism travelled to Malaysia in December 2003 to attend the WTO Asia-Pacific Conference on Sustainability Certification of Tourism Activities. He also travelled to Japan in February 2004 to attend the WTO/APTEC Ishikawa Conference on Tourism Resource Management of Regional Culture which was held in Kanzawa City. He then travelled to Hong Kong SAR to attend the UN Asia-Pacific Leadership Forum and proceeded to Thailand for the organization of the meeting of the WTO Committee on Sustainable Development of Tourism.

175. The Chief for Human Resource Development travelled to Australia in February 2004 to visit selected universities and determine their possible collaboration with WTO's HRD programme.

176. WTO also received several visits from its Members at its Headquarters in Madrid, Spain. In November 2003, a 7-member delegation from Jiangsu Province, China and a 2-member delegation from Shandong Province, China visited the Headquarters while in December 2003, WTO received a delegation comprising representatives from various Ministries of the Republic of Korea and the Korea National Tourism Organization. In February 2004, the Additional Director-General of Tourism of Japan visited the Headquarters whereas in March, WTO received a delegation from Dalian, China. In May, an 18-member joint delegation from Fujian Province, China and Macao SAR visited the Headquarters as well as a delegation from Guilin, China. Finally, a delegation from Suzhou, China also visited the Headquarters in May 2004. The WTO Practicum was held in April 2004 which was attended by Fiji.

F.2.3.4 Technical meetings

177. During the period under review, the Regional Representation for Asia and the Pacific organized four technical meetings.

178. A Regional Seminar on Tourism Partnership in Destination Development and Management was held in Guilin, China from 02-04 December 2003, bringing together 150 participants. It was the first time that WTO held a meeting on this subject in the Asia-Pacific region and it presented the findings of three studies conducted by WTO which clearly define the roles to be played by the government (at all levels) and the private sector. Presentations were delivered by both regional and international destinations and the seminar concluded with the adoption of the Guilin Initiative.
179. The Asia-Pacific Conference on Sustainability Certification of Tourism Activities was held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia from 11-13 December 2003 which was attended by over 100 participants from 12 countries. Introductory statements were delivered by WTO, the Rainforest Alliance and the International Ecotourism Society, followed by country presentations from Malaysia, Thailand, Nepal, China, Australia and other international regional and European institutions.

180. The WTO/APTEC Technical Seminar on Tourism Resource Management of Regional Culture, was held in Kanazawa City, Ishikawa Prefecture, Japan from 25-27 February 2004. The main theme of the conference was about managing regional culture as a resource in tourism development and case study presentations from India, Indonesia, Thailand, China, Macao and the Republic of Korea were delivered.

181. The Mayors’ Forum of Tourist Cities was held in Suzhou, China from 16-17 April. Mayors from European and American and Chinese cities attended to discuss the benefits of development tourism as an engine for economic development in a city.

F.2.4 Europe

182. The Regional Representation for Europe focuses its activity on providing services to CEU members, both as regards their common interests and their specific needs, given the large number and heterogeneous nature of the CEU membership. Now that Lithuania’s membership commenced at the General Assembly in Beijing, the CEU numbers 39 members. Latvia’s membership will commence on the 1st January 2005, and Belarus is finalizing its internal procedures in order to formally join the Organization. The Regional Representation is continuing its drive to attract new members in Europe.

183. In this task, the Regional Representation has worked in close contact with the CEU Chairman, WTO programme sections, and of course, with Member Governments. The Regional Representation was in regular contact with CEU States’ permanent representatives to WTO in order to keep them abreast of its activities.

184. Special attention was paid to the implications of the European Union enlargement for intra-European tourism. In this regard, the Regional Representative presented WTO views on this subject at the forum on tourism in Central and Eastern Europe (Sofia, Bulgaria, November 2003), while his Deputy spoke at a conference in Prague on this topic (March 2004).

185. The Regional Representation further developed its programme of seminars on rural tourism, given the importance and prospects of this form of sustainable tourism for European countries. Well-attended seminars on the subject were held in Poland (June 2003) and Ukraine (September 2003), while another one is planned in Romania in autumn 2004. A publication with the proceedings of the first three rural tourism seminars was printed in May 2004.

186. Considering the need to introduce tourism satellite accounts as a tool to measure the economic impact of tourism, a seminar on the subject was held in Bucharest, Rumania, in September 2003. In February 2004, WTO held a workshop on the contribution of statistics and economic analysis to effective destination management strategies, Antibes-Juan les Pins, France.
187. As regards the **human resources development programme**, the generous contribution of the Italian Government should be noted, which has allowed two WTO training programmes to run, at Milan's Bocconi University and at University of Perugia.

188. In the area of **technical cooperation**, the UNDP-funded project in Moldova on sustainable tourism development is nearing completion. Now that the technical cooperation section has been established in the WTO Secretariat, the Regional Representation will closely collaborate with it in order to provide technical assistance to CEU members which may be interested in this form of cooperation. At the same time, national tourism administrations are invited to explore sources of financing tourism development projects following WTO-funded technical support missions. During visits to CIS countries, the Regional Representative and his deputy regularly meet with UNDP, the **European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD)** and World Bank representatives to explore possible cooperation for development with those institutions. Deputy Regional Representative spoke about sustainable tourism benefits at the 12\textsuperscript{th} Economic Forum of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) and explored possibilities with the OSCE Secretariat about further cooperation and coordination of activities in the field of tourism.

189. As regards the **Silk Road Project**, which covers several CEU members, mainly from the CIS, but also Greece, Israel, Italy and Turkey, the WTO Secretary-General has signed an agreement with the Government of **Uzbekistan** regarding the opening and operation of a **Silk Road office in Samarkand**, which will provide technical support for the WTO Silk Road Project. The Regional Representative, who is the WTO Silk Road Project Coordinator, has been receiving countries' inputs for an updated version of the Silk Road Brochure whose initial print will be covered by the WTO budget.

190. In order to ensure the access of Russian-speaking members to WTO knowledge and information, the Regional Representation had developed a **workshop in Russian on global tourism trends and best practices**, the only WTO training course available in Russian. Since the last CEU report, this two-day course was delivered in **Armenia** (November 2003), **Moldova** (February 2004) and **Georgia** (April-May 2004). Each of the six workshops held up to date was attended by over a hundred tourism officials and travel trade professionals from respective countries. The 7\textsuperscript{th} workshop is scheduled in **Uzbekistan** in October 2004.

191. On request of the Russian NTA, the Regional Representation organized in Moscow, on the eve of the **MITT Exhibition** at the end of March, a **seminar on destination marketing**. That event brought together about 50 participants from 20, mainly European, countries. The Regional Representative and his deputy also attended the opening of the MITT exhibition and discussed cooperation with numerous European delegations present at the fair. WTO also had a stand at the MITT.

192. As regards other **tourism fairs**, the Regional Representative or his deputy opened and attended **Holiday World** (Prague, Czech Republic, February 2004), **Vivattur** (Vilnius, Lithuania, March 2004), **UIIT** (Kyiv, Ukraine, April 2004), **AITF** (Baku, Azerbaijan, April 2004) and **KITF** (Almaty, Kazakhstan, April 2004).

193. In November 2003, following a request from the Ukraine State Tourism Administration, the WTO-THEMIS Foundation held a **TEDQUAL seminar** on the premises of the Kyiv University of Tourism, Economics and Law (a WTO Affiliate Member).
194. The Russian NTA hosted in St. Petersburg (April 2004) a WTO international conference on hotel industry trends, which was attended by several CEU member States, which discussed hotel classification issues, quality systems and human resources.

195. Besides all the above-mentioned events and activities, the Secretary-General has attended the following events in the European region since the previous CEU report (May 2003):

(a) Official visit to Bulgaria (September 2003)
(b) World Tourism Day celebrations, Lvov, Ukraine (September 2003)
(c) International Forum on Fair Tourism and Sustainable Development, Marseille, France (September 2003)
(d) Official visit to Moldova / Tourism Council for CIS countries, Chisinau, Republic of Moldova (October 2003)
(e) Intergovernmental Conference for the Safeguarding and Sustainable Development of Angkor and its Region, Paris, France (November 2003)
(f) European Tourism Forum, Venice, Italy (November 2003)
(g) Visit to Bocconi University (Extraordinary meeting of the GTAT-TPS Course (Milan, Italy) (December 2003)
(h) Fifth Tourism Summit, Chamonix, France (December 2003)
(i) 6th International Symposium on Tourism – Tourism in the Alps, Zermatt, Switzerland (February 2004)
(j) 3rd Prime Minister’s Conference for Tourism to Israel, Jerusalem (February 2004)
(k) 1st meeting of the World Committee on Tourism Ethics, Rome, Italy (February 2004)
(l) Salon Mondial du Tourisme, Paris, France (March 2004)
(m) ITB, Berlin, Germany (March 2004)
(n) Second Symposium on Tourism and GATS, Madrid, Spain (March 2004)
(o) European Merit Award Ceremony, Luxembourg (April 2004)
(p) The United Nations Chief Executive Board Meeting, Vienna, Austria (April 2004)
(q) Third Parliamentary meeting on tourism, Paris, France (April 2004)
(r) Official visit to Lithuania and Latvia (May-June 2004)

196. In addition to events, seminars and fairs reported in the paragraphs above, the Regional Representative attended the following events since May 2003:

(a) 40th anniversary of BITS, Brussels, Belgium (June 2003)
(b) Official visit to Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania (June 2003)
(c) OECD’s Tourism Committee meeting, Paris, France (July 2003)
(d) OECD Conference on Innovation and Tourism Growth, Switzerland (September 2003)
(e) European Congress on Rural Tourism, Jaen, Spain (October 2003)
(f) Annual Tourism Day Conference, Dubrovnik, Croatia (October 2003)
(g) Conference on Tourism Modeling and Competitiveness, Cyprus (October 2003)

197. As regards forthcoming events, it is worth noting that Ukraine will host the 5th WTO Forum for parliamentarians and local elected authorities in Kyiv on 25-28 November, and all CEU members are invited to encourage their members of parliament and other elected officials interested in tourism, to attend that important event.

198. The 42nd meeting of the WTO Regional Commission for Europe (CEU), which was held in the Republic of San Marino and in Rimini, Italy from May 19 to 21, brought
together over a hundred high-ranking representatives of 30 Full Members, the Holy See, the Flemish Community of Belgium (Associate Member), six Affiliate Members and Estonia in an observer capacity. The Commission reviewed the progress of WTO activities in the European region and discussed global and European tourism trends and their impact on tourism policies in member States. It also reviewed how the Global Code of Ethics for Tourism can be applied in European countries. Also high on the agenda were the European countries' proposals for the next programme of work. The future of traditional destinations and the relevance of their experience to emerging countries in Europe was the topic of the technical seminar organized in conjunction with the Commission.

199. The Regional Representation has enhanced its web-page on the WTO website: www.world-tourism.org/regional/europe, available in English, French, and to a limited extent in Russian. This page includes information on the activities and events organized by the Regional Representation for Europe, as well as speeches and presentations delivered at CEU seminars and other events. Tourism officials and professionals in European countries are encouraged to visit the web-page to get useful information.

200. A survey carried out by the Secretariat indicated, despite the limited number of replies received so far from Members, a common interest in the following topics:

(a) Development of marketing plans and measurement of the efficiency of promotional activities
(b) Development and management of ecotourism at national parks and protected areas
(c) Cultural tourism development and promotion
(d) Liberalization of air transport policies and accessibility to tourism destination
(e) GATS application to tourism
(f) Tourism communications with focus on crisis management, branding and image building and new media applications

F.2.5 Middle East

201. Under the programme's heading technical support and assistance, seventeen advisory and technical support missions have been programmed in the region since the 24th meeting of the Commission held at Bahrain in September 2003. Nine have already been carried out or are currently being fielded: to Egypt (in October 2003), to draw up a Tourism Satellite Account (TSA) compilation plan, to Jordan (in July 2003) to assess the contribution of sustainable tourism development projects at Afra and As Silaa to poverty alleviation and to develop a hotel classification system (in April 2004), to Kuwait (in December 2003) to review the implementation of Phase I of the Tourism Development Master Plan project to Lebanon (in October 2003) to develop a promotional campaign with a view to enhancing the country's image as a tourist destination, in December 2003, to prepare sustainable eco and rural tourism regional development plans and in March 2004, to review and assess the national statistical system and propose a capacity building programme in this area and to prepare a feasibility study for the development of an experimental TSA for Lebanon, to Syria (in November/December 2003) to carry out an economic impact analysis of tourism and formulate recommendations on ways of enhancing the sector's economic benefits and in April 2004, to develop a hotel classification system. Furthermore, the Secretariat assisted the Supreme Commission for Tourism of Saudi Arabia in the evaluation of a study on e-tourism application in Arab countries.
202. Eight additional missions have been programmed for the remaining part of the year, viz. to Egypt to draw up a hotel classification system (September 2004) and to develop the information resource centre of the Ministry of Tourism (November 2004); to Jordan to draw up a classification system for restaurants (September 2004); to Saudi Arabia to develop an outline for a comprehensive tourism safety and security system (September 2004); to Syria to draw up the terms of reference for the preparation of development and management plans for major tourism sites (October 2004); to the Palestinian Authority to develop a national system for tourism statistics and to advise on basic legislation for the sector (October/November 2004); Yemen to develop a promotional campaign with a view to enhancing the country’s image as a tourist destination and to provide policy guidance on measures required for the liberalization of the country’s tourism sector with a view to joining the World Trade Organization (October/November 2004).

203. As regards technical cooperation projects in the region, WTO continues to assist the Tourism Affairs Sector of the State of Kuwait in the preparation of a National Tourism Master Plan. The project aims at establishing a coherent framework for the long-term sustainable development of the sector, identifying and assessing potential tourism development areas and planning selected projects, developing appropriate marketing and promotional strategies for the sector, strengthening the institutional capacity of the newly created national tourism administration and addressing both private and public sector training needs. The project is being implemented in two phases. Phase 1 (completed) covered the preparation of a national tourism structure plan. Phase 2, which will detail the master plan and include the preparation of a five-year action programme (2004-2008) and the definition of priority projects, is scheduled to commence in mid-April 2004.

204. During the period under review, the Organization also assisted the Ministry of Tourism of the Syrian Arab Republic in the formulation of a marketing strategy and a promotional programme.

205. WTO continues to assist the General People’s Committee for Tourism of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya in the implementation of the priority strategic initiatives recommended within the country’s tourism development master plan, particularly in the areas of product development, investment promotion and marketing.

206. The capacity building programme in statistics and the development of satellite accounts included, in addition to the technical assistance missions mentioned in paragraph 201 above, the holding of a training workshop at Beirut Lebanon from 22 to 24 March 2004, sixty participants from nine countries took part in this workshop, which overviewed the methodological approach for the development of TSAs and considered practical guidelines as well as country’s experiences in its implementation. The proceedings of the workshop were positively valued by participants and the Secretariat is currently drawing up a comprehensive capacity building programme to follow up on the outcome of this workshop, in the light of the feedback received from participants.

207. Two additional training courses on tourism policy and strategy (GTAT-TPS), are scheduled in the region in the course of this year. The first is to be held in Kuwait from 28 June to 11 July 2004 and the second in Beirut, Lebanon during the second half of September 2004.
208. In addition to the seminar on e-tourism, held in conjunction with the 26th meeting of the WTO Commission for the Middle East, an international conference on Built environments for sustainable tourism, is scheduled from 4 to 6 December 2004, in Oman and a regional seminar on Quality management systems for the tourism industry is tentatively scheduled for February 2005, at Bahrain.

209. A survey recently carried out by the Secretariat indicated a common interest in the following topics:

(a) Development of marketing plans and measurement of the efficiency of promotional activities
(b) Development and management of ecotourism at national parks and protected areas
(c) Cultural tourism development and promotion
(d) Liberalization of air transport policies and accessibility to tourism destination
(e) GATS application to tourism
(f) Tourism communications with focus on crisis management, branding and image building and new media applications

210. The programme of work provides for special research programmes on major developments and policies affecting tourism in the various regions. The aim of these research programmes is to lay the ground for the development by the Regional Commissions of special agendas and action plans to address specific strategic issues facing the industry in different regions and subregions.

211. It is recalled that, under this heading, a comprehensive technical support programme was developed to guide and assist Members belonging to the Middle East and North Africa in their efforts to respond to the crisis that has affected the tourism industry in the region. This special support programme had the following components:

(a) A research programme on short and mid term market prospects and rebuilding strategies for the travel and tourism industry of the Middle East and North Africa, initiated in March 2002 and updated at regular intervals.

(b) An international seminar on the recovery of the travel and tourism industry in the Middle East and North Africa, which was held at Cairo, in September 2002. The seminar which brought together some 150 participants representing National Tourism Administrations of Arab countries, renowned specialists, prominent representatives from the travel trade, media and a number of international and regional organizations interested in tourism, reviewed recent global and regional trends and prospects, considered relevant crisis management and image building techniques and assessed remedial actions taken by national tourism administrations and the industry in response to the market uncertainty and developed strategic guidelines to facilitate and speed up the restoration of tourism flows to and within the region.

(c) Crisis Management Guidelines for implementation by Members of the Commission (presented to the Commission at its 24th meeting held in Bahrain in September 2003).

(d) As a supplementary measure, an expert task force was set up to provide members, on an individual basis, with specialized advice on crisis management, media relations and image building.
(e) A collaborative tourism marketing and communications action plan for Arab countries, with the twin aim of strengthening market confidence in the Middle East and of building the region's image as a safe, welcoming and attractive tourist destination. (The proposed action plan was also presented to the Commission at its 24th meeting).

(f) A technical debate on measures to strengthen market confidence in tourism destinations in the region, organized in conjunction with the 26th meeting of the Commission, as a first step in facilitating the implementation of the above-mentioned action plan. The debate addressed the important issue of travel advisories from the different perspectives of generating country governments and tourism operators and destination countries' tourism sectors. As a result of this debate, the Commission requested the preparation by WTO of "a set of Guidelines and recommended practices that would constitute a Code of Conduct on travel advisories, addressing legitimate concerns expressed by Members on this important issue" and proposed the formation of a "reference committee to consider possible disputes arising from non-compliance of the above-mentioned Code of Conduct". The Commission's decision on this issue, which is attached as Annex 1 to the present report is submitted to the Council for approval.

(g) A study on outbound tourism from Saudi Arabia as a contribution to the promotion of intra-regional tourism in the Middle East.

(h) Finally, a Ministerial conference was held at Bahrain in conjunction with the 24th meeting of WTO Commission for the Middle East to consider ways and means of promoting increased partnerships between countries and operators in the region.

(i) Surveys recently carried out by the Secretariat (including project health checks, participant feedbacks and user satisfaction service) indicate that the special support programme is highly valued by Members as is WTO's advice and guidance and that a closer and more sustained technical support and assistance is required from the Organization in furthering the programme's outcomes.

212. Main field visits carried out in the region by the Secretary-General and/or the Regional Representative included Egypt, to participate in the Annual Conference of the International Hotel and Restaurant Association (December 2003), the International Conference on Information Technology ENTER 2004 (January 2004) and the First Annual Session of the Executive Committee of the Council of Tourism Ministers of the League of Arab States (January 2004), as well as Kuwait, to participate in the First GCC Tourism and Development Forum organized by the Kuwait Tourism Sector at the Ministry of Information and Lebanon, to participate in the Arab Ministerial meeting, organized by the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) in July 2003, in preparation for the fifth Ministerial Conference of the World Trade Organization and in the workshop on International trade in tourism services, also held at the UN House in Beirut, as well as on the occasion of the training workshop on statistics and tourism satellite accounts (March 2004). During the second quarter of the year, the Secretary-General and the Regional Representative visited, Lebanon, the Sultanate of Oman, Qatar, Syria and the United Arab Emirates. Furthermore, the Chief of the Statistics and economic measurement Section visited Saudi Arabia, in May 2004 to participate in a national forum on tourism statistics.
213. The Government of the Sultanate of Oman has formally applied for membership of the Organization, in accordance with the relevant statutory provisions and General Assembly resolution A/RES/449(XV), the candidature of Oman is submitted to the Executive Council under agenda item 5. Furthermore, the Government of the United Arab Emirates also expressed interest in rejoining the Organization after the recent visit of the Secretary-General.

214. Finally, cooperation with international organizations having an interest in tourism has been pursued. In this context, working relations with the Secretariat of the League of Arab States continue to develop as are consultations and cooperation in various areas of the Organization’s general programme of work. The Secretary-General attended the seventh session of the League’s Council of Tourism Ministers, held in Dubai, UAE on 5 and 6 May 2004. Cooperation is also developing with the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) and its conference of Ministers of Tourism, since the conclusion of a memorandum of understanding with the Organization on the occasion of the Conference’s third session held at Riyadh, Saudi Arabia in October 2002. Finally, the Secretary-General and the Executive Director of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) signed a memorandum of understanding that formalizes the links of cooperation recently developed with ESCWA in areas of common interest such as the liberalization of trade in tourism services and the measurement of the economic impact of tourism.

G. ACTIVITIES OF THE AFFILIATE MEMBERS AND DESTINATIONS

G.1 ACTIVITIES OF THE AFFILIATE MEMBERS

G.1.1 Mission and Objectives

215. The mission of the Committee of Affiliate Members is to provide a platform for consultation and exchanges among governments, the private sector, educational institutions, destinations and other stakeholders in the global tourism industry, with a view to:

(a) Increasing competitiveness through Public Private Sector cooperation and partnerships among WTO members
(b) Developing consultation, coordination and exchanges between governments and affiliate members on strategic issues of common interest
(c) Enhancing knowledge of IT and E-business developments and their impact in the tourism sector

216. To carry out its mission the WTO Affiliate Members – who are organized within three different councils: Business, Education and Destination - undertakes research of special interest to affiliate members and governments, disseminates research at seminars – often in close cooperation with Regional Commissions – and provides marketing intelligence to WTO Member States allowing WTO to shape its programme of activities in the interest of Governments as well as of the private sector.
G.1.2 Achievements and work plans

G.1.2.1. Increasing competitiveness through Public Private Sector cooperation and partnerships among WTO members

G.1.2.1.1. Publications

217. In 2003 the 2000 study "Public-Private Sector Cooperation: Enhancing Tourism Competitiveness", was followed by the study: Cooperation and partnerships in tourism – a global perspective, published jointly with the Canadian Tourism Commission (CTC).

G.1.2.1.2 Conferences and Seminars

218. Several national and regional seminars have been organized together with Affiliate Members and the Regional Representatives. The first ministerial conference on partnerships to follow the new publication was organized in cooperation with the Regional Representative for the Middle East in Bahrain in September 2003 and together with the Regional Representative for Asia a conference on Tourism Partnerships in Destination Development and Management was organized on Guilin, China, December.

219. Together with CTC a continuous monitoring of the developments in the field of cooperation and partnership models has been agreed, in particular to be able to address the challenges of mature partnerships as well as those partnerships face in times of crisis.

G.1.2.2 Developing consultation, coordination and exchanges between governments and affiliate members on strategic issues of common interest

220. The Leadership Forum of Advisers is an Affiliate Member-sponsored think-tank composed of some sixty leading experts and professionals who contribute with a wealth of original ideas, insights and proposals to shaping the Organization's general programme of work. A large number of the proposals that emerged from the last meeting of the forum in November 2002, form part of the Organization's general programme of work for the period 2004-2005. The next Leadership Forum of Advisers will take place September 2004.

G.1.2.3 Enhancing knowledge of IT and E-business developments and their impact in the tourism sector

G.1.2.3.1 Publications

221. E-Business for Tourism: Practical Guidelines for Destinations and Businesses, focusing on the analysis of DMOs and the opportunities offered by the Internet to the different subsectors (hotels, tour operators, attractions, etc.) published 2001 in English, 2002 in French and Spanish. Rapid development in this important field require regular updating of these research programmes by means of seminars

G.1.2.3.2 Seminars

222. Several seminars have been held in all WTO regions and the first to be held in 2004 is organized in cooperation with the Regional Representative for the Middle East:
E-tourism – the route to competitive success. Damascus, Syrian Arab Republic April 2004. This seminar was the first to address the issue of tourism and the Digital Divide. Together with Affiliate Member Cotelco, a seminar on the latest developments in E-tourism was held in May in Bogota, Colombia.

G.1.2.3.3 Tourism destinations, web sites, benchmarking and evaluation scheme

223. The World Tourism Organization together with its strategic partner, the International Federation for Information Technology and Travel and Tourism (IFITT) is developing an evaluation and benchmarking scheme for tourism destination websites. The benchmarking scheme will enable Destinations to improve accessibility, usability and visibility to search engines. This will assist developing countries in assessing the performance of their web site and further develop it to ensure return of their investment and continued adjustment of its role according to the overall tourism strategy.

G.1.2.3.4 New seminar themes

224. Apart from Public Private Sector Cooperation and partnerships and Information and Communication Technologies, the Affiliate Members are organizing seminars on the following topical issues:

(a) Business and MICE tourism development (based on an analytical report of this important market segment, recently published jointly with the European Travel Commission).

(b) Congestion Management. Throughout the world there is reported evidence of problems related to the management of increasing flow of tourists at both natural and cultural sites. Not only site managers but also industry players like tour operators have expressed their concern about the arising congestion problems, which eventually could result in deterioration of the sites if not dealt with properly. WTO and its Business Council have therefore decided to undertake a study on the management of tourism flows to and at sites in cooperation with the Sustainable Development Section. The manual – including 15 case studies – will be published in September 2004.

Evaluation: The Programme of work of the Affiliate Members is evaluated and reshaped in continuous dialogue with the Board of the Affiliates. Specifically for seminars, an evaluation form has been developed and used since July 2003. (The same form is being used by the Regional Representative for the Middle-East.) The results of this evaluation has allowed us to improve our seminars in one area in particular: The interaction with participants.

G.2 DESTINATIONS

G.2.1 Mission and Objectives

225. In order to respond positively to the growing need for i) systematic, ii) multidisciplinary and iii) inter sectoral strategies and approaches for decentralized/localized tourism management, WTO keeps on supporting the members (destinations) in their efforts to enhance sustainable development of tourism,
maximizing economic, social and cultural benefits for the local communities through the close synergy of interests of all the stakeholders and to reinforce their global competitiveness.

226. It is recalled that the main outputs of this programme focus on:

(a) Improved capacity of the destinations for developing effective and successful management tools
(b) Disseminated know-how and good practises related to destination competitiveness and optimisation of destination management,
(c) Advocacy and broader awareness with regard to decentralization and localization of tourism management.

G.2.1.1 Task Force for Destination Management

227. The Task Force, reflecting WTO’s intergovernmental character as well as considering the need for public private cooperation/ partnership, acts as an informal, advisory and operational body of the Organization and is given the mission of identifying the needs and addressing the challenges of individual tourism destinations and hence contributing to the global strategy of the WTO, concerning “destination management”. It is also a platform for exchange of experience and good practices.

228. The 3rd Meeting of the Task Force, chaired by the former Minister of Tourism of Malta, Dr. Michael Refalo, took place in Berlin, on 13 March 2004 with the participation of representatives from each category of membership and geographic region, i.e. Member States, Associate and Affiliate members.

229. The participants took note on the achievements of the specific programme for destinations as well as the activities to be carried out during 2004-2005. The discussions focused on the structure, roles and responsibilities of Destination Management Organizations as well as some practical questions about the assessment of “destination image”, “brand effectiveness” and “positioning” as an essential tool for the marketing strategies of DMOs. The preliminary results of the DMO survey as well as some case histories were also presented.

230. As an important outcome of the meeting, the Task Force favourably supported the establishment of a “Destination Council” before the end of 2005.

G.2.2 Achievements and work plans

G.2.2.1 DMO Survey

231. A large scale research of Destination Management/Marketing Organizations has been undertaken as the first of its kind carried out on a global basis.

232. Aim: To develop a reliable base of knowledge about the structure, scale, status, activities, resources and priorities of DMOs on a global basis. It is intended as a benchmark survey to track the development and activities of these organizations on a regular basis.

233. Output: The results enable us to understand the institutional framework within which the DMOs (national, regional, local) work and to measure their attitudes and
actions on key policy issues. The study also revealed the degree to which DMOs had adopted and implemented an e-business strategy.

234. The results will be presented in a WTO seminar on “Destination Management Structures” to be held on 21-22 October 2004 in Cyprus.

G.2.2.2 Economic impact at local destination level

235. A workshop on the “Contribution of Statistics and Economic Analysis to Effective Destination Management Strategies” was held in Antibes, Juan Les Pins, France, on 19-20 February, 2004. At this stage, the region of Europe was targeted since this region implies more decentralized models in tourism management and has the experience in TSA at regional/local level.

236. Aim: To stimulate the debate between the technicians responsible for measuring the economic impact of tourism at regional/local level together with the decision makers so as to highlight how statistics and economic analysis of tourism can support the identification of strategic priorities for destination management.

237. Output: Presentations and ensuing debates highlighted:
(a) The need to establish a bridge between statistical/analytical culture of technicians and the management mindset of policy makers and the private industry.
(b) The importance of establishing a statistics/research/information structure in the destination.
(c) The need to orient the economic analysis of tourism in accordance with the real needs of the destination.
(d) The role of regional/local TSA as a tool.

G.2.3 Web forum on destination management

238. Aim: i) To initiate a “destination network”, an instrument for the Destination Management Organizations to exchange know-how and good practices, related to destination competitiveness. ii) To provide an easy-access platform for discussion on theoretical and empirical data relevant to specific themes and topics identified in accordance with the results of a survey on the management based priorities and concerns of destinations.

239. The web-forum could not be operational due to the lack of technical infrastructure expected from UNED and the lack of interest and input from the destinations invited to take part in the forum.

G.2.4 Urban (city) tourism

240. A worldwide “Urban Tourism Conference” will be organized in 2005.

241. Aim: i) To provide an international forum for the discussion of the role of city tourism for the local and global economies. ii) To identify the needs and challenges of city tourism policy and management together with management structures iii) To understand the mega-trends in city tourism demand.
G.2.5 Other activities

242. Participation and presentation:

(a) Destination Congress (Paris, 2003)
(b) TOI (Tour Operators Initiative) Destination Workshops-Pilot Project: Side, Turkey, 2002 and 2003
(c) International Tourism Forum (Benidorm, Spain 2003)
(d) WTO Seminar on Destination Marketing (Moscow, Russia 2004)
(e) European Cities Tourism Annual Conference (Nice, France 2004)
(f) Technical Seminar on Destination Management and Marketing (Hyderabad, India 2004)

H. COMMUNICATIONS, PUBLICATIONS AND DOCUMENTATION

H.1 COMMUNICATIONS

H.1.1 Mission and Objectives

243. This section of the programme is structured around four objectives:

(a) Strengthen WTO’s role as a leading organization in the field of travel and tourism and focal point for tourism information,
(b) Improve communication skills and crisis management efforts among Members and the rest of tourism sector,
(c) Raise awareness of importance of tourism in the community,
(d) Promote triple bottom line sustainable development of tourism – economic, social and ecological, through constant media relations and corporate communication with stakeholders.

H.1.2 Achievements and work plans

H.1.2.1 TOURCOM conferences and workshops on tourism communications

244. In view of the success of the First World Conference on Tourism Communications (TOURCOM) held on 29-30 January 2004 in Madrid, the Secretary-General will suggest to the Executive Council the inclusion into the programme of work of a series of regional conferences and local workshops on tourism communications.

245. The proceedings of these technical meetings will address local or regional issues related to tourism communications. Basic education on public relations, e-communications, crisis communications, advertising etc., can be added as a part of such event. Findings of local and regional tourism communications conferences will be discussed at the next edition of the World Conference on Tourism Communications.

H.1.2.2 “Tourism Enriches” Campaign

246. As requested by the Member States and as provided for in the general programme of work for the biennium 2004-2005 adopted by the Beijing General Assembly, the World Tourism Organization launched the global campaign “Tourism Enriches”, promoting the positive impacts of tourism.
247. The aims of this campaign are:

(a) to promote tourism as a basic human right and way of life, which enriches individuals, family, societies and nations
(b) to stimulate communication about the benefits of tourism as the most prospective economic activity for the local communities and countries
(c) to enhance cooperation between destinations and the tourism industry with the local, regional and international media
(d) to link individual tourism entities to the larger community of international tourism

248. Participation in the Campaign is offered to all destinations, tourist companies and the media, regardless of their membership status in the WTO. Target groups include the public and private sectors, decision makers, tourism professionals, opinion leaders, but also the general public through the media.

249. The campaign features basic components that can be adapted and expanded for use by Member States, Affiliate Members of the WTO and the rest of the tourism industry in their own tourism promotion and awareness-building activities.

250. Suggested local or national activities include:

(a) Using the slogan and logo on destination brochures and advertising;
(b) Using the slogan and logo and artwork (poster) in print media;
(c) Using the slogan and logo on press familiarization trips;
(d) Publishing the flyer in local languages;
(e) Adding the campaign to tourism websites;
(f) Printing T-shirts or billboards with the slogan and logo;
(g) Providing journalists with story ideas based on the campaign;
(h) Conducting a contest for journalists;
(i) Exchange of promotion ideas among TOURCOM Network members.

251. Members have been invited to communicate regularly to the Secretariat their plans and projects to participate in this global campaign. Best ideas and practices will be publicized on the WTO website and in WTO News.

H.1.2.3 TOURCOM Network of Communication Experts

252. As suggested by the delegates at the 15th session of the WTO General Assembly in Beijing and by the delegates of the First World Conference on Tourism Communications, the Secretariat initiated preparations for the establishment of a network of tourism communication experts – referred to as “TOURCOM Network”.

253. The TOURCOM Network was included in the Programme of Work of the Press and Communication Department for 2004-2005.

254. The Tourism Communications Network (TOURCOM) is not a WTO body but an informal consultative group, which aims to enhance the expertise of WTO members in the increasingly important field of communications. As called for in the 2004-2005 WTO Programme of Work, it also aims to support the Organization in its twin goals of communicating the importance of tourism, mitigating the undesirable impacts of tourism activity and provide technical assistance to Members in crisis communications, media relations, branding and other promotion techniques.
255. The network’s objectives are:

(a) to coordinate joint communications actions on behalf of the tourism industry
(b) to identify the best methods of crisis communications
(c) to share communications resources and techniques
(d) to encourage professionalism in tourism communications
(e) to support and set priorities for WTO communications activities

256. Its activities will include:

(a) support for the global tourism communications campaign “Tourism Enriches”;
(b) organization of local, regional seminars, workshops and world conferences on tourism communications under “TOURCOM” brand
(c) support for activities of travel journalists and writers, in the world in general and in Africa, Latin America and Asia specifically
(d) support for the communications efforts of WTO Members
(e) establishment of “TOURCOM Principles” – a breakdown of best practices in integral tourism communications
(f) pursuing linguistic and cultural diversification in international tourism communications
(g) promoting issues like trade liberalization, ST-EP, UN Millennium Development Goals through effective tourism communications
(h) addressing and promoting the parts of the World Code of Ethics in Tourism, referring to the media relations
(i) publication of articles or brochures on crisis communications, destination websites, newsletters, etc.

257. It should be pointed out that the Network does not have a decision-making role but will provide recommendations and expertise to the WTO Communications Department. Membership will not limited to WTO Members. There will be no membership fee for the Network members. Membership in the network will be limited to individuals with direct responsibility for communications within their organizations.

H.2. PUBLICATIONS

258. The WTO e-library project was officially launched in December 2003. The project offers the broadest, up-to-date information produced and gathered by the Organization. It includes already more than 300 publications, research reports, and documents, in their respective languages (English, Spanish, French, Russian or Arabic). A special first-hand access to information is exclusively granted to Member States. Each member State can designate up to 20 single or network accesses. With a network access it is possible to connect several persons of the same institution, given that they use the same Internet Protocol Address Range (IP). For each network, a focal point has to be named to be responsible for the management of the local WTOelibrary access.

259. The Depository Library Programme is developing extremely well. In the last 18 months some 39 Universities decided to collect all WTO publications in at least one official language.
260. Thirty **new publications** have been released since the General Assembly in Beijing. The list is attached as an Annex 2 to the present document. The following three publications are now also available in **Arabic** language:

(a) Tourism at World Heritage Cultural Sites  
(b) What Tourism Managers Need to Know  
(c) Tourism Market Trends – Middle East 2003 Edition

**H.3. DOCUMENTATION**

**H.3.1 Mission and Objectives**

261. During the present biennium, the Documentation Department will aim at promoting and facilitating access to tourism information for Members and other institutional partners through appropriate mechanisms and effective information support services.

**H.3.2 Achievements and work plans**

**H.3.2.1 Priority areas**

262. The above-mentioned mission will be carried out by the Documentation Department through its Centre, in three priority areas.

**H.3.2.1.1 Provision of Information Support Services**

263. In this **first** priority area, the objective is to provide permanent information services on legislative, administrative and policy measures regarding the tourism sector.

264. As from mid-November 2003, the Documentation Centre launched the **Tourism Legislation Database- LEXTOUR**. This database has been designed to act as a referral system facilitating direct access through links to external websites, databases and information servers on tourism legislative data produced and distributed by authoritative sources, such as national parliaments, central government bodies (including tourism administrations), professional associations, universities, etc.

265. Presently, some three hundred information systems have been identified in approximately 130 countries.

266. As a result of a short-term evaluation mission conducted in May 2003 by the Chief of Documentation, this Department is coordinating since last November, together with the National Tourism Administration of Vietnam (VNAT) and the Office in Vietnam of the Netherlands Development Organisation (SNV-Vietnam), a project to assist the Vietnamese authorities in drafting the **First Tourism Law**. This project, planned in several phases, will be completed at the end of 2004.

267. The other activities included under the same priority area, i.e. tourism taxation; government bodies and management in tourism; facilitation, safety and security measures applied to frontier formalities, will be initiated as from the second half of 2004, depending on the human resources available.
268. Members have been invited to:

(a) Report systematically to the WTO Documentation Department on existing online access to national tourism legislation databases so as to ensure that LEXTOUR remains a reliable source of information

(b) Promote the creation of online tourism-related legislative information systems under the auspices of the National Tourism Administrations in those countries where such databases are not yet available

H.3.2.1.2 Provision of linkage networking between the WTO Documentation Centre and its partners

269. This second priority area concerns the provision of a permanent tourism information referral service and a standardized tool to facilitate tourism information transfer and exchange.

270. Regarding the first aspect, it should be recalled that, simultaneously with LEXTOUR, the Documentation Department also launched the Tourism Information and Documentation Resource Centres Database – INFODOCTOUR. This second Database has been conceived to act as an online world directory of products and services available from libraries, documentation centres, producers and distributors of databases directly or indirectly related to the tourism activity. INFOCDOCTOUR should therefore contribute to improve and reinforce the development of information linkages between the WTO Documentation Department and its institutional partners.

271. So far, some hundred sixty information systems have been localized in more than 90 countries.

272. With regard to the second aspect, the development of a standardized instrument for tourism information process and exchange, it should be pointed out that, since the first edition in 2001 of the multilingual version (French/English/Spanish) of the Thesaurus on Tourism and Leisure Activities, the Italian version was published in 2003. The Croatian and Portuguese versions of the Thesaurus should become available this year.

273. The objective set up for this linguistic tool during this biennial period is to provide updated online editions and also expand it to other languages.

274. In this context, it appears that there is an increasing interest to use the WTO Thesaurus, particularly in a number of important European projects which aim at creating online multilingual information systems on tourism destinations, products and services.

275. In this respect, mention should be made to the Three-Year (2002-2005) Multilingual and Multimedia Information System for the Euro-Mediterranean Culture Heritage and Tourism – STRABON Project (www.strabon.org) funded by the MEDA Programme of the European Union.

276. This programme, coordinated by the French authorities, groups nineteen partners belonging to twelve Mediterranean countries. These are: Algeria, Egypt, France, Greece, Italy, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Portugal, Syria, Tunisia and the Palestinian National Authority. With the exception of three States where the tourism administration is associated to the Strabon Project, partners in the other countries are mainly the ministry of culture and related bodies, universities as well as institutions involved in new information technologies.
277. The Secretariat is exploring the possibility to include within this Euro-Mediterranean Cooperative Project, the preparation of the Arabic version of the WTO Thesaurus.

278. More recently, in the same spirit, the WTO Secretariat has been contacted by the University of Innsbruck - Austria which expressed its interest to develop – within the setting up of electronic tourism portal -, the German version of the Thesaurus.

279. Members have been invited to:

(a) Report regularly to the WTO Documentation Department on the existence of national tourism information and documentation resource centres so as to update the INFODOCTOUR Database
(b) Promote the use of the WTO Thesaurus as an instrument to facilitate tourism information process and exchange
(c) Encourage the participation of the tourism administrations belonging to the countries involved in the Strabon Programme

H.3.2.1.3 Promotion of Tourism Information Networking

280. The third priority area concerns the direct support to WTO Members, especially to tourism administrations, in order to permit them to fully participate in the tourism information networking development.

281. As a first step, the Secretariat - published in June, the Handbook on Setting Up and Running an Information and Documentation Resource Centre (IDRC) for the Tourism Sector. This manual – which is designed to address the needs of all those involved in information and documentation tasks and offers guidelines for establishing an IDRC or a similar structure- could be used to assist Member States in developing documentation and information resource centres for tourism.

282. The second step will consist in the creation of an advisory group of experts in tourism information management and networking

283. This group –which will act as a consultative body- should be composed by experts in documentation and information management systems (including the institutions which have prepared the different linguistic versions of the WTO Thesaurus), from the tourism sector and different areas, for instance, other UN agencies and non-UN organizations (UNESCO, European Commission, etc.). It is expected to organize the first meeting of this advisory group at the WTO Secretariat, in principle, end of 2004.

284. By 2005, the WTO Secretariat should be in a position to organize, in accordance with the needs expressed by Members, regional seminars or workshops, to promote tourism information management and networking.

285. Members have been invited to:

(a) Indicate their interest in receiving technical assistance for the setting up and running of tourism information and documentation resource centres
(b) Suggest names of national experts to be a member of the WTO Advisory Group of Experts in Tourism Information Management and Networking
ANNEX 1

DECISION TAKEN BY THE WTO COMMISSION FOR THE MIDDLE EAST
(Damascus, Syria, 29 April 2004)

"The Commission,

Having examined the ways in which travel advisories are prepared, revised and updated and the issues and concerns arising from the different perspectives of generating country governments and tourism operators and destination countries' tourism sectors,

Bearing in mind WTO's position on travel advisories, as defined by Article 6 of the Global Code of Ethics for Tourism, and elaborated upon by the WTO Quality Support and Trade Committee,

1. Emphasizes the importance of a transparent exchange of information between stakeholders in tourism destinations and authorities in tourist generating countries, so as to ensure accuracy and fairness of the information that supports decision-making on the issuing of travel advisories and to enable timely revision, updating and, where appropriate, removal of cautionary advice;

2. Notes with appreciation the measures that are currently being taken by the competent authorities of some generating countries to this end;

3. Requests the preparation by WTO of a set of Guidelines and recommended practices that would constitute a Code of Conduct on travel advisories, addressing legitimate concerns expressed by Members on this important issue;

4. Further proposes the formation of a reference committee to consider possible disputes arising from non-compliance of the above-mentioned Code of Conduct;

5. Expresses its appreciation and gratitude to the Governments of Germany, Italy, Spain and the United Kingdom for their participation in the discussion of this important issue; and

6. Entrusts the Secretary-General with submitting the above-mentioned decision, on its behalf, to the Executive Council."
ANNEX 2

LIST OF PUBLICATIONS RELEASED SINCE THE 15th SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

- Tourism Market Trends – World Overview & Tourism Topics 2003
- Tourism Market Trends 2003 – Americas (English, Spanish)
- Tourism Market Trends 2003 – Middle East (English)
- Tourism Market Trends 2003 – Africa (English, French)
- Tourism Market Trends 2003 – Asia (English)
- European Integration in the Era of the European Union’s Enlargement and the Development of Tourism (English, French)
- Enzo Paci papers on Measuring the Economic Significance of Tourism Vol. 3
- Tourism and Poverty Alleviation – Recommendations for Action
- Climate Change and Tourism (English, French)
- Sustainable Development of Ecotourism – A Compilation of Good Practices in SMEs (English, French, Spanish)
- Tourism Recovery Committee – Beijing
- Co-operation and Partnerships in Tourism: A Global Perspective (English, French)
- Tourism and Sport: Destination Latin America (English, Spanish)
- 2002: Climbing Toward Recovery? (French, Spanish)
- Tourism Recovery Committee – Berlin 2003 (French, Spanish)
- Evaluating NTO Marketing Activities
- Marketing Papers Number 1 (English, French, Spanish)
- Rural Tourism in the Americas and its Contribution to Job Creation and Heritage Conservation (English, Spanish)
- What Tourism Managers Need to Know (Arabic)
- Tourism at World Heritage Cultural Sites (Arabic)
- Tourism Market Trends 2003 Edition Middle East (Arabic)
- Tourism, Peace and Sustainable Development for Africa
- Tourism in a Globalized Society
- Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas – Guidelines for Planning and Management (English, Spanish)
- Local Food & Tourism International Conference Vol. I and Vol. II
- WTO World Tourism Barometer (English, French, Spanish)
- Mice Outbound Tourism 2000
- Chinese Outbound Tourism
- Inbound Tourism to the Middle East and North Africa