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Provisional agenda item 7(b)

GENERAL PROGRAMME OF WORK

(b) Preparation of the general programme of work for the period 2006-2007:
Report of the Programme Committee

Note by the Secretary-General

In the attached document the Secretary-General submits to the Council background information on the procedure for the preparation of the general programme of work for 2006-2007, as well as the preliminary comments and suggestions that the Programme Committee has made, at its 26th meeting (Madrid, 25-26 May 2004), regarding programming principles and strategic priority issues.
GENERAL PROGRAMME OF WORK

(b) Preparation of the general programme of work
for the period 2006-2007:
Report of the Programme Committee

1. In accordance with the new programme regulations, the conceptual phase for the preparation of the Organization's general programme of work for 2006-2007 is initiated by a broad consultation process that involves, from its outset, the Regional Commissions, the Strategic Group, the specialized technical committees and the Programme Committee.

2. The aim of this exercise is to submit to the Executive Council, at its seventy-fourth session, in November 2004, proposals on broad programming principles and priorities, so that the Council may provide the Secretary-General with the necessary policy guidelines for the preparation of the draft programme of work for the forthcoming biennial period.

3. The detailed draft programme and budget will be prepared by the Secretary-General in the light of the decisions that will be taken by the Council on the above mentioned proposals and in consultation with the various specialized technical committees and ad hoc working groups, the Regional Commissions and the Affiliate Members Councils.

4. As can be seen in the attached programme cycle's calendar (Annex 1), this draft will subsequently be examined by the Programme Committee and the Committee on Budget and Finance, in Spring 2005 and by the Executive Council, at its seventy-fifth session (May-June 2005), before being submitted to the General Assembly for adoption at its sixteenth session, scheduled for September-October 2005.

5. The general programme of work for 2004-2005 is guided by the Organization's vision of a globalized and largely privatized and deregulated travel and tourism industry that, despite its vulnerability to external shocks, will continue to record sustained growth over this and the coming decade, facilitated and fostered by continuing advances in information and communication technology.

6. As indicated in document CE/73/7(a), the general programme of work for 2004-2005 focuses to a large extent on activities that correspond to the Organization's fundamental mission and on which the programme develops priority work streams in the following fifteen areas that serve as a reference for and underpin the above-mentioned mission:

(a) monitoring mega trends 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;

(j) 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;

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

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

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

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

7. Nevertheless, the new programme of work should also address the new challenges and opportunities that the changing market conditions have been generating and which are outlined in the Secretary-General’s introductory remarks and in the presentation of Market Trends, shifts of emphasis and innovations should be introduced, priorities redefined, focus of action sharpened and adjustment made in terms of human resources and budget allocation.
8. To this end, the Programme Committee, at its twenty-sixth meeting (Madrid, 25-26 May 2004), carried out a brainstorming discussion on challenges and major critical issues of concern to present and future tourism development and on the role that WTO is expected to play in addressing those issues.

9. The outcome of this preliminary discussion, which is summarized in the attached report of the Programme Committee (Annex 2), is submitted to the Council for information.
ANNEX 1

PROGRAMME CYCLE'S CALENDAR

A. 2004-2005 Programme implementation and evaluation

1. Key programme/project work stream framework (annual work and evaluation plans) shared by programme management group (March 04) – focus on 2 to 4 main work streams/key initiatives in each programme section
2. Key programme/project work stream framework (annual work and evaluation plans) presented to Programme Committee (May 04 and March/April 05)
3. Performance reviews (progress in programme implementation and project evaluation) carried out by programme management group (May, July, September and November/December 04 and January, March, May, July, September and November/December 05)
4. Progress reports on programme implementation and project evaluation submitted to specialized technical committees and horizontal networks (March-October 04 and March-June 05)
5. Progress reports on programme implementation and project evaluation submitted to Regional Commissions (April-June 04 and April-June 05)
6. Progress reports submitted to Executive Council (July and Nov/Dec 04 and June/July 05)
7. Comprehensive report on programme implementation and evaluation submitted to General Assembly (September-October 05)

B. 2006-2007 Programme Preparation

B.1 Guidelines

1. Programme preparation procedure agreed upon by programme management group (March 04)
2. Identification of factors shaping tourism development and strategic issues (global and regional) and definition of WTO's role in addressing them (Feb – Oct 04) by:

(a) Specialized technical committees:

- World Committee on Tourism Ethics (25-26 Feb. 04)
- Sustainable Development of Tourism Committee (1-3 March 04)
- Committee on Statistics and Macroeconomic Analysis of Tourism (8-9 March 04)
- Quality Support and Trade Committee (15-16 April 04)
- Committee on Market Intelligence and Promotion
- Others
Regional Commissions:

- Middle East (29 April 04)
- Africa (10 May 04)
- Europe (19 May 04)
- South Asia (25 May 04)
- East Asia & the Pacific (7 June 04)
- Americas (22 June 04)

(c) Affiliate Members forums and steering committee (Board)

- Destination Management Task Force (13 March 04)
- Education Council and its tourism policy forum (1-3 June 04)
- Business Council and its Leadership Forum (dates to be fixed)
- Affiliate Members Board

(d) Strategic group (27-29 Oct. 04)

3. Progress in identification of strategic issues and development of planning guidelines considered by programme management group in May, July and September 04
4. Strategic issues considered and programme planning guidelines developed by Programme Committee (May and October 04)
5. Executive Council decides on programming principles and priorities (Nov/Dec 04)

B.2 Detailed draft

1. Membership survey on programme priorities and expectations/initiatives to be taken by WTO (May-October 04)

2. Secretariat prepares draft programme of work and budget (December 04 – January 05)

- Outline budget (1st week December 04)
- Outline programme (2nd week December 04)
- First draft of programme-budget considered by project management group (mid-January 05)
- Draft programme-budget finalized and dispatched to Programme and Budget Committees members (beginning February 05)

3. Draft programme budget considered by Programme and Budget Committees (March/April 05)
4. Draft programme budget considered by Regional Commissions (March-June 05)
5. Draft programme budget considered by Executive Council (June/July 05)
6. Draft programme budget considered by General Assembly (September/October 05)
C. Strategic development (2006-2009)

1. Scope, content and format of strategic plan (2009 outlook) agreed upon by programme management group (March 04)
2. Strategic issues identified (Feb-October 04), see Section B, above
3. Outline of draft strategic plan developed by programme management group (May 04)
4. Detailed draft strategic plan aligned to WTO’s 2020 vision and UN millennium goals, developed by programme management group (July-Nov. 04)
5. WTO’s scorecard to guide, prioritise and measure developed by programme management group (Nov 04)
6. Draft strategic plan and WTO scorecard submitted for approval to:
   - Programme Committee (March/April 05)
   - Executive Council (June/July 05)
   - General Assembly (November/December 05)
ANNEX 2

GENERAL PROGRAMME OF WORK

(b) Preparation of the general programme of work for the period 2006-2007:
Report of the Programme Committee

Report of the twenty-sixth meeting
of the Programme Committee

(Extract)

1. The Programme Committee held its twenty-sixth meeting at the Organization’s the Headquarters on 25 and 26 May 2004. The meeting was chaired by Dr. Angelika Liedler, Head of International Tourism Affairs Division of the Ministry for Economic Affairs and Labour.

A. […]

B. Review of the programme cycle

B.1 Statistics and Economic Measurement of Tourism

2. The Committee noted with satisfaction progress made in the implementation of the various projects included in this programme section and requested additional information concerning their scope and time frame.

3. The Committee appreciated the results of the ambitious capacity building programme carried out so far for the development of tourism satellite accounts, particularly the considerable number of countries that have either developed or are in the process of developing a TSA, the increasing demand for WTO’s technical assistance and the credibility earned by the Organization in the development of this important decision-making and awareness-raising tool. The Committee agreed on the need to provide practical guidance to Members in the development of TSAs on a more permanent basis, through the design of a computer-assisted follow up programme on capacity building workshops organized so far and the development of an internet consultancy service.

B.2 Market Intelligence and Promotion

4. The Committee expressed its appreciation of the scope and relevance of the Market Intelligence and Promotion programme with respect to permanent activities as well as to new ones, developed to address key market changes.

5. The Committee agreed on the desirability to:

(a) build upon and further develop existing research programmes aimed at increasing knowledge of market trends, such as short-term forecasts included in the barometer (that may be expanded and structured by sector of activity), additional research on consumer behaviour (to enable decision-making on
promotion, advertising and public relations) and studies on major outbound markets and tourism products;

(b) initiate new research programmes on topical issues such as accommodation supply and air transport policies, in cooperation with other international organizations and in coordination with other programme sections;

(c) develop the Organization’s knowledge base on marketing budgets, responsibilities and structures of national tourism organizations, on marketing plans (strategic and operational) and set up benchmarks for successful promotional campaigns.

B.3 Sustainable Development of Tourism

6. The Committee appreciated the importance of the work being undertaken by the Organization in the field of sustainable development of tourism, including such aspects as:

(a) Policy guidelines and tools for sustainable tourism development and management;

(b) Implementation of the recommendations included in the Quebec Declaration on Ecotourism;

(c) Indicators of sustainability in tourism and certification processes;

(d) Contribution of tourism to poverty alleviation;

(e) Coordination and cooperation with other UN, multilateral and bilateral development agencies in what refers to sustainability issues.

7. The Committee noted that current work in the field of poverty alleviation through sustainable tourism focused on 3 areas, namely: (a) raising awareness among Member States, the tourism industry and especially among non-tourism decision makers in governments and international agencies about the potential of tourism in poverty alleviation efforts; (b) conducting research to learn the different ways and means in which tourism can further increase its contribution to poverty reduction; and (c) fielding exploratory missions to test such ways and means and to identify possible projects for future implementation by ST-EP. Additionally, the Secretariat was already disseminating existing knowledge in this field, through publications and capacity-building seminars in Africa and Asia.

8. The Committee emphasized the need to carefully consider the distribution of tasks between the Sustainable Development of Tourism Section, the ST-EP Foundation, once it is operative, the Regional Representations and the new Technical Cooperation Service at WTO, so as to ensure the necessary coordination in the Organization’s activities in this important field.

9. The Committee also expressed concern about the possible overlap in the work of the SDT Department in the field of certification of sustainability in tourism with that of the Quality and Trade Department in the field of standardization of tourism services. More coordination was required in these fields, especially in what refers to the relationship with ISO.

10. The Committee suggested that a side-event on tourism and climate change is organized by WTO within the forthcoming 10th Session of the UN Convention on Climate Change, to be held in Buenos Aires in December 2034.
11. Finally, the Committee agreed that the next programme of work in the area of sustainable development should continue to focus on sustainability indicators and certification, poverty alleviation and sustainable management of destinations.

B.4 Quality and Trade in Tourism

12. The Committee noted that this programme section covered, with limited resources, an extremely broad range of activities in the areas of trade, safety and security and quality standards. It is therefore recommended that the programme’s implementation is focused on clearly defined priority issues where WTO can “make the difference”.

13. The Committee took note of the recommendations of the Quality Support and Trade Committee with respect to such priorities and agreed that they should include the following issues:

(a) Under the heading of trade, key priority issues should include: Clusters, Partnerships, Access to destinations and air transport and Sustainability measures and standards, which should be developed in close coordination with the Sustainable Development of Tourism section.

(b) The issues of safety, security and health are central to the current situation of world tourism and should therefore be given top priority and include the preparation of a Code of Conduct on travel advisories.

(c) In the area of standard setting, which is a time-consuming and expensive activity, priority should be given to the provision of methodological guidance to Members in the development of hotel classification systems at the regional level.

14. The Committee agreed that the following issues should continue to be addressed in the 2006-2007 programme, under the heading Quality in trade in tourism:

(a) Capacity building and support to SMEs and micro-enterprises in developing countries destinations on competition rules and business practices.

(b) Networking in the development and implementation of tourism safety and security plans and systems.

(c) Methodological guidance for the development of hotel classification systems at the regional level (including international standards for safety and hygiene).

B.5 Human Resource Development in Tourism

15. The Committee noted the progress made in the implementation of the current programme in the following priority fields of activity:

(a) Developing a network of WTO government officials specialized in tourism knowledge management. Developing contents.
(b) Building capacity to respond to knowledge needs of WTO Members with the support of a network of centres of learning in tourism. Networking and activity development.
(c) Helping apply knowledge in tourism in WTO Member countries. Developing programmes.

16. The Committee agreed that the 2006-2007 programme should address the following priority issues:

(a) Capacity building needs for knowledge management. WTO, through its network of TEDQUAL centres and its Education Council, can provide leadership in this area.
(b) Regular assessment of Member’s human resource development needs and requirements (for both the public and private sectors). The WTO Practicum Alumni Association and the new Affiliate Members structure enabling improved coordination between the Business and Education Councils should facilitate this task.
(c) Development of business school networks.
(d) Assessment of quality and quantity gaps existing between demand needs and supply of professionals in the tourism industry. Analysis of reasons and recommendations for possible remedies.
(e) Enhancing the image of tourism professionals.

B.6 Regional Activities, Cooperation for Development and Poverty Alleviation

17. The Committee noted the new emphasis placed under this programme heading on poverty alleviation, accessibility to destinations, development assistance and regionalization of approaches to strategic issues. It expressed its appreciation of the broad range of operational activities carried out by the Regional Representations to support national tourism administrations in addressing market shifts and structural changes, of the results of the meetings of the Regional Commissions for the Middle East, Africa and Europe, which were held prior to the present meeting of the Committee, of measures taken to enhance the efficiency of WTO’s technical cooperation activities and of the results concerning the execution of field missions and technical cooperation projects in the various regions. It also noted that several new technical cooperation projects are likely to be launched in the course of this year and recommended that coordination with bilateral and multilateral development assistance agencies is strengthened so as to develop and expand fund-raising and investment promotion activities. The Committee also recommended that future technical assistance activities take into account trends in the evolution of supply and of community-based development models.

18. Finally, the Committee took note of the following strategic priority issues for inclusion in the 2006-2007 general programme of work, proposed either by the Regional Commissions, which have already met, or advanced by the Regional Representations, until the respective Commission meetings take place and consider the issue:
(a) Africa

- Awareness raising on importance of tourism (tourism enriches campaign, enhancing the image of tourism professions, image building for Africa in major outbound markets)
- Development of sustainable tourism products that contribute to poverty alleviation
- Capacity building for institutional strengthening and improvement of quality of services
- Air transport policies for sustainable tourism development – regional conference
- Development of intra-regional tourism – study
- Revision/removal of travel advisories – consultations
- Hotel classification system (ecolodges)

(b) Americas

- Facilitation of travel at subregional level
- Development and promotion of multideestination tours
- Quality related standards for hotel classification
- Air transport policies for sustainable tourism development
- Application of sustainability indicators

(c) Europe

- Impact of aging population on tourism development
- Development of road transport to cater for EU enlargement
- Rural tourism development
- Cultural tourism development

(d) Asia and the Pacific

- Poverty alleviation through sustainable development
- Development of TSAs
- Destination management

(e) Middle East

- Image building of destinations (safety, quality, diversity and complementarities)
- Guidelines/code of conduct on travel advisories
- Development and promotion of cultural tours.
- Development of quality-related standards and certification systems for the classification of tourism facilities in the region.
• Technical assistance in the formulation and implementation of sustainable tourism development projects that contribute to poverty alleviation.
• Regional e-tourism development strategy (advice and technical assistance in formulation of national strategies, education and skills development programmes for small and medium-size businesses, integration in communication strategy as it relates to image-building objectives and strengthening of consumer confidence, creation of portals and development of linkages).
• Development of cooperative marketing campaigns in major generating markets of inter-regional tourism (at subregional level).
• Promotion of public-private sector partnerships at national and subregional levels (assistance in identification of business opportunities and in development of partnership models in infrastructure and product development and innovation, environment conservation, human resource development, investment and financing and marketing and promotion).

(f) Technical Cooperation

• ST-EP programme
• Tourism satellite account
• Crisis management
• Quality – destinations and human resources
• Dissemination of information
• Regional projects
• New sources of funding

B.7 Activities of the Affiliate Members and Destinations

20. The Committee noted that the main strategic objectives of the Affiliate Members’ are:

(a) To develop the Affiliate Members’ structures, establish the Destination Council and improve coordination and cooperation between the Business, Education and Destination Councils
(b) To develop new services that respond to the different needs and requirements of Members
(c) To carry out a membership promotion campaign

21. The Committee further noted that the activities of the Business Council currently focus on the following priority issues:

(a) Public-private sector cooperation and partnership models
(b) Information and communication technology applications and e-tourism development
(c) Congestion management
(d) Business and MICE tourism development

22. It also noted preparations for the organization of the Leadership Forum of Advisers in September 2004, as well as the following future plans of the Business Council:
to position the industry on key issues on WTO’s agenda, such as liberalization with a human face, poverty alleviation through sustainable tourism development, the implementation of the Global Code of Ethics for Tourism, particularly with respect to the removal of non-tariff barriers and the development of a Code of Conduct on travel advisories;

(b) to support WTO’s market intelligence activities, and

(c) to support WTO’s programming activities in the fields of safety, security and health and to organize an international conference on airport security, jointly with ICAO and IATA

23. As regards the special programme for destinations, the Committee noted the three main initiatives taken or planned with a view to developing effective management tools, disseminating know-how and good practices and raising awareness on the economic impact of tourism at destination level, viz.:

(a) The global survey on DMOs and the presentation of its findings to a seminar on destination management structures, to be held in Cyprus in October 2004.

(b) The organization of a workshop on the contribution of statistics and economic analysis to effective destination management strategies, in February 2004.

(c) The organization of a world conference on urban tourism, in Istanbul in 2005.

24. The Committee agreed with the proposal that the next programme cycle should continue to focus on the development of benchmarks on DMO management structures, provide for the development of performance indicators and address urban tourism policy and management issues.

25. The Committee also noted the proposal to monitor consumer behaviour in destinations by preparing draft guidelines for the harmonization of guest satisfaction surveys and emphasized the need to avoid overlapping with other research programmes on consumer behaviour.

B.8 Communications, Publications and Documentation

26. The Committee expressed its appreciation of the new initiatives undertaken under the current Communications programme, particularly:

(a) The successful organization of the first World Conference on Tourism Communication (TOURCOM) and its outcomes.

(b) The global awareness-raising campaign on the positive impacts of tourism “Tourism enriches”.

(c) The development of a network of tourism communication advisors.

(d) The development of new electronic communication channels for the dissemination of WTO-related information.

(e) The development of cooperation with the United Nations Communication Group.

27. The Committee also welcomed the following proposed new initiatives for consideration under the next programme.
(a) The organization of a series regional conferences and national workshops on tourism communication.
(b) The promotion of World Tourism Day by World Tourism Ambassadors.
(c) The development of a global media market place at the World Travel Market.

28. The Committee commended the head of the Publications Department on the development of the WTO e-library, as well as on the depository library programme.

29. Finally, the Committee also noted with appreciation the three new initiatives launched by the Documentation Department, viz. the WTO tourism legislation database-LEXTOUR, the Tourism Information and Documentation Resource Centre Database – INFODOCTOUR and the publication of the handbook on Information and Documentation Resource Management and plans to further develop these initiatives in the future.

C. General conclusions and recommendations

30. The Committee expressed its appreciation to the Secretariat for the significant achievements reported in the implementation of the programme, so far.

31. The Committee noted that human resource limitations was a serious concern for the implementation of the programme, that is practically common to all programme sections. It therefore recommended that priorities agreed upon under each programme section are strictly adhered to and that the necessary additional resources are secured before embarking on any new project.

32. Furthermore, the Committee strongly emphasized the need to strengthen regular horizontal coordination between the various programme sections and the Regional Representations, so as to avoid overlapping and maximize effectiveness and efficiency in the programme's implementation.

33. Finally, the Committee welcomed the increasing use of modern information and communication technology by the Organization and recommended the allocation of appropriate financial resources to further expand this use in the future.

D. Preliminary brainstorming session on strategic priority issues

34. In the light of the presentations made by the heads of programme Sections and the Regional Representatives, and the ensuing discussion, the Committee agreed that the following strategic issues should be addressed, as priorities, in the next programme cycle:

(a) Poverty alleviation through sustainable tourism development – implementation of the ST-EP initiative
(b) Measurement of the economic impact of tourism – development of tourism satellite accounts
(c) Capacity building programme to improve the reliability, comparability, coverage and periodicity of tourism statistics and improvement of periodicity of publication of statistical data
(d) Analytical research programme on employment in tourism
(e) Research programme on mobility trends, trends in consumer behaviour and strategies to rebuild consumer confidence
(f) Human resource development (proposals under paragraph 23 above)
(g) Increased development assistance (proposals under paragraph 24 above)
(h) Quality improvement – standard setting and certification scheme development
(i) Market segment studies, e.g. rural, cultural and transit tourism
(j) Image building of destinations
(k) Tourism safety and security (proposals under paragraph 21 above)
(l) Travel advisories – development of Code of Conduct
(m) Awareness raising on the importance of tourism and on the legitimacy of tourism development
(n) Equal treatment of tourism activities in multilateral negotiations on trade in services
(o) Evolution of NTAs fields of competence, structures and activities
(p) Implementation of the Global Code of Ethics
(q) Promotion of public-private sector partnerships, affiliate membership development, establishment of Destination Council and creation of new services

E. [...]