



Global Action for Sustainable  
Consumption and Production

**Sustainable Tourism**  
PROGRAMME  
Committed to drive the change

## Financing sustainable development in tourism SMEs

Webinar n° 09: Date 18<sup>th</sup> of October 2017, 15:00-16:00 CEST

Please register for the webinar [here](#)

UN Environment and the Government of France are collaborating to provide a series of stimulating webinars on sustainable tourism to advance sustainable consumption and production in the tourism sector. These webinars connect leaders and practitioners in the field of sustainable tourism. Each session aims to broaden the experience of professionals working in the industry by building knowledge of science-based and real solutions for implementing sustainable tourism on the ground.

The webinar "Financing sustainable development in tourism SMEs" aims at raising awareness of political actors, private investors, developers and operators on the need to establish financing and investment schemes for sustainable tourism development. It will share experience of countries development and adoption of guidelines for sustainable investments in and an investment-friendly macro-economic policy framework (e.g. subsidies, tax incentives) which promote more resource efficient and sustainable tourism operation and performance.

The focus is made on small and medium enterprises (SMEs), as they are the backbone of the tourism industry<sup>1</sup>. For instance in Canada, 99% of tourism sector businesses are SMEs<sup>2</sup>. Because of lack of human and financial resources, they tend to overlook environmental and social impacts that their business decisions may have. SMEs also experience difficulties to access finance instruments for projects due to the incomplete integration of sustainability in risk assessments in the banking system (investors' short term logic, while investments need longer terms to become profitable). As a consequence it is of highest importance to enable tourism SMEs access to financial mechanisms for sustainable and innovative business models.

Working with tourism SMEs to identify their financing needs and shortcomings to cope with key environmental hotspots will be key to facilitate a shift to sustainable consumption and production patterns. Rethinking financing for sustainable tourism development provides opportunities to promote innovations for relieving budget pressure, and may be coupled with the right incentives for transitioning to a low-carbon, green economy. The objectives of the webinar "Financing sustainable development in tourism SMEs" are to:

- Present solutions that public actors, in collaboration with banks may develop to support SME access to finance
- Share information on governmental investment and finance initiatives supporting the tourism transition towards sustainable tourism development.

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<sup>1</sup> OECD (2017), "Financing approaches for tourism SMEs and entrepreneurs", OECD Tourism Papers, 2017/03, OECD Publishing, Paris. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/8d06572a-en>

<sup>2</sup> [Government of Canada](#)

Participants will have the opportunity to raise questions and more broadly obtain access to top tourism and sustainability sector experts.

### ***Moderator & Speakers***

**Mr Salvador Leal, Chief of Staff, Ministry of Tourism, Mexico**



Salvador Leal holds a bachelor's degree in Economics from the Autonomous Technological Institute of Mexico (ITAM), a master's degree in Public Policy from the Graduate School of Public Administration and Public Policy of the Tecnológico de Monterrey, he is a Phd researcher in economics at the National Autonomous University of Mexico.

In his professional career of more than 15 years he has worked in the private and public sector, particularly in financial field in Development banking within Financial Rural, a development agency of the Mexican government in charge of the agricultural, rural, forestry and fishing sector, and the National bank of Foreign Trade, Bancomext.

He currently serves as Chief of Staff of the Ministry of Tourism and is in charge of the Area of Attraction of Investment and Financing of the same Ministry.

**Ms Virginia Robano, Economist, External consultant to the OECD**



Virginia Robano holds a PhD in Economics from The George Washington University. Dr. Robano specialises in Development Economics and the role of entrepreneurship. For the past 10 years she has worked at the World Bank, Inter-American Development Bank and the OECD, where she is now an external expert on SME and entrepreneurship. She contributed to the OECD Tourism Policy Review of Mexico (Chapter on finance), to Financing Approaches for Tourism SMEs and Entrepreneurs, and is now drafting a report on investment and financing for sustainable tourism development. Dr. Robano is also a member of the COMPASS Advisory Board on Responsible Innovation for SMEs and teaches a seminar on Entrepreneurship and Public Policies at Sciences Po – Campus du Havre. More info is available at [www.virginiarobano.com](http://www.virginiarobano.com)

**Mr Vasilis Karakousis, Environment & Sustainability Manager, TEMES S.A.**



Mr Vasilis Karakousis is a sustainability senior executive with more than nineteen years of diverse professional experience. Born in Athens in 1974 and graduated from the Mine and Metallurgical Engineering Department of the National Technical University of Athens, he holds an M.Sc. in Environmental Technology from Imperial College London and an M.Sc. in Business Administration from Alba Graduate Business School. Worked in London from 1998-2000 as Environmental Technology Consultant at the Interdepartmental Centre for Environmental Technology (ICCET) of Imperial College, now Centre for Environmental Policy (CEP) and in Corinth Pipeworks as Quality Certification Manager

(2002-2009). In 2009 he joint TEMES S.A., the developer of Costa Navarino. He is member of the steering committee of Navarino Environmental Observatory (NEO), cooperation between Stockholm University, the Academy of Athens and TEMES dedicated to the study of Climate Change in the Mediterranean region.

Agenda	
15:00-15:05	Introduction by the moderator
15:05-15:20	Financing solutions to support tourism SMEs striving to invest in sustainability, Ms Virginia Robano, Economist, External consultant to the OECD
15:20-15:35	Case study: financial tools supporting hotels' shift to sustainable operation in Mexico, Mr Salvador Leal, Chief of Staff, Ministry of Tourism, Mexico
15:35-15:50	Destination's development and empowerment through support to SMEs, Mr Vasilis Karakousis, Environment & Sustainability Manager, TEMES S.A.
15:50-16:00	Discussions and closing

#### About 10YFP STP

*The 10YFP Programme on Sustainable Tourism catalyses changes in tourism operations. It promotes transformation for sustainability through efficiency, innovation and adaptability. The Programme supports evidence-based decision-making; adopts a life cycle approach for continuous improvement, emphasizes collaboration among stakeholders and results-based project implementation.*