



AM NEWSLETTER

Volume 17. March 2020

Dear Affiliate Member,

In February we had focused on establishing the venue of our 42nd Plenary Session, which will take place in autumn 2020. I am happy to announce that after the full assessment of the two candidatures and taking into consideration all the details, evaluations and the recommendations received, including the recommendation of the Board of the Affiliate Members, the Secretary-General decided that Madrid will host the next Affiliate Members plenary session. We are now working with the Spanish national and local authorities to define the date and the logistic details and I am convinced that, in close collaboration with the Madrid City Council and with our Affiliate Member Madrid Destino we will prepare interesting events where you are all invited.

We also had focused on the organization of an Affiliate Members Department event in ITB: the **"Affiliate Members Corner: Leading the Decade of Public Private Partnership for Sustainable Tourism"**. However, due to COVID-19 outbreak, ITB was cancelled and therefore we were also forced to do the same. However, we will organize other AM Corners within the framework of other events as we are convinced these forums represent a great opportunity for our Affiliate Members to present their work in terms of initiatives, projects and publications and provide networking opportunities for any potential partnership and collaboration.

I would like to highlight the upcoming **63rd Regional Commission for Africa (CAF)**, which will be held in **Victoria, Seychelles on 25-27 March**. Within the framework of the CAF, the Forum on **African Youth for Sustainable Tourism Solutions** will take place aimed at identifying existing approaches and bringing new innovative ideas to boost sustainable practices within the tourism sector.

Finally, it is dutiful to tell a few words about the COVID-19 outbreak. On 6 March the UNWTO published a press release stating that political and financial commitments are key to ensure that tourism can lead wider economic and social recovery. Moreover, as the UN agency responsible for tourism and sustainable development, UNWTO stands ready to provide guidance and support for recovery measures of the private and public tourism sector, including organizers of tourism events and fairs.

As always, I am at your disposal and look forward to hearing any comment you may have.

Sincerely,

Ion Vilcu



Meeting of the Working Group on Accessible Tourism

The Working Group on Accessible Tourism, led by the Affiliate Member Red Estable, held another fruitful meeting on 18 February to advance in line with its goals. The idea of creating this Working Group dates back at the beginning of 2017, when the first video conference with interested Affiliate Members was organized to discuss about its structure and goals.

Since then, meetings were held with the aim of promoting training and educational activities on the field of Accessible Tourism between Affiliate Members. Currently, the Working Group has 19 members covering almost all the regions of the world and with a very different profile such as education and training institutes, local and regional tourism boards, consultancies, international associations and observatories of tourism.

During the meetings, the members of the group have been working on three main goals:

- To promote training and educational activities on the field of Accessible Tourism, through bimonthly virtual meetings presenting success stories of experts and Q&A sessions. In the last meetings we counted on the participation of experts such as Professor Buhalis,

from the University of Bournemouth, Yariv Trabelsi, who is currently working on a app for accessible tourism and Pieter Ghijssels, from VisitFlanders;

- To address all elements of Accessible Tourism linked with the SDGs, allowing analysis and gathering conclusions that may inspire future implementations by Affiliate Members;
- To promote networking among members of UNWTO to facilitate the establishment of collaborations and partnerships to implement projects related to Accessible Tourism.

The conclusions of the sessions are being collected and used to assist the member of the group UCM (Universidad Complutense de Madrid) which, thanks to the participation in the Working Group, is currently in process of creating a course on Accessible Tourism. Other universities and institutes part of the Working Group are working towards the inclusion of standardized training on the field for their programmes.

If you are interested to know more about the next activities of the Working Group and the opportunities to join, please contact us at am@unwto.org !



UNWTO encourages tourism stakeholders all around the world to contribute to the survey on tourism and the SDGs

We are delighted to share with you the Survey on how the SDGs have been incorporated into tourism. The survey has been developed by the Affiliate Members Working Group on SDGs in collaboration with the UNWTO and it is available in three different languages:

English: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/PZDBD5V>

French: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/ZFKCVPZ>

Spanish: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/ZFP2KVP>

The survey is conducted to glean the information from all around the World and from all the Tourism sub-sectors. It will provide an overarching preview of the current situation of the carried-out activities on how the Sustainable Development Goals are incorporated into tourism.

2020 kick-starts the UN Decade of Action for a more sustainable tourism and it is essential to mobilize everyone everywhere to take action, locally and globally.

Your activities can inspire the ones looking for best practices and you can contribute to the new ways of accelerating SDGs action for those that are still behind in meeting the goals and create partnership and cooperation opportunities.

We count on our members and all the committed players to help us shape and transform tourism more in line with the 2030 Agenda. Therefore, you are strongly encouraged to complete the survey and also share it with your networks ranging from the private sector to civil societies and academia. Your contributions are really valued and the results and findings will be shared globally with all the tourism public and private sectors.



New online course of Gastronomic Tourism of the Basque Culinary Center

As the World Tourism Organization points out, due to the capacity to **promote the economic development of territories while preserving their heritage and legacy, gastronomic tourism has aroused growing interest** in the last decade. More and more cities, regions and countries are seeking to differentiate themselves through their gastronomic tourism offerings.

This is why, since 2015, the **Basque Culinary Center** has launched several initiatives such as the **World Forum on Gastronomic Tourism** in collaboration with the UNWTO, a **Master's programme** and recently a **100% online Specialization Course** in Gastronomic Tourism, which will be held on March 31.

In this online Specialisation Course, **gastronomic tourism is analyzed** both from the **perspective of companies and destinations**, always taking into account the need to work from a sustainability perspective, respecting the authenticity, values and identity of each place.

Aimed at professionals in the field of tourism, gastronomy and professionals from other disciplines who want to get into gastronomic tourism, this program lasts 200 hours.

Its **learning by doing methodology** is based on **contemporary and interdisciplinary content, audiovisual resources, master classes** with guests and experts, **activities and challenges**, participation in a **debate forum**. In addition, students will have weekly live classes and a tutor who will motivate and provide them personalized feedback.

In short, a **100% flexible course adaptable to the needs of future gastronomic tourism professionals**.

[For more information click here.](#)



New era for tourism: Vienna presents Visitor Economy Strategy 2025

Building on its tourism concepts of recent years, the City of Vienna is now unveiling its Visitor Economy Strategy 2025, under the aegis of the Vienna Tourist Board. Guided by Shaping Vienna, it completely redefines tourism and its effect on the destination, while targeting sustainable development and balancing the needs of residents and visitors.

The new approach means continuing to provide top offerings and services for guests while equally targeting added value from tourism for the whole city, resident satisfaction and added value for businesses. The following goals have been defined for 2025, with 2018 as the baseline:

- Contribution of tourism to Vienna's GDP to increase from EUR 4bn to EUR 6bn
- Revenue from overnight stays to advance from EUR 900m to EUR 1.5bn
- Visitor satisfaction levels to remain at their current high level, with nine out of ten guests recommending Vienna

- Attitudes to tourism to stay overwhelmingly positive, with nine out of ten residents seeing tourism in a positive light
- Number of tourism providers certified with the "Österreichisches Umweltzeichen" ecolabel to double from 112 to 224
- Proportion of arrivals by train (21%) and car (26%) to be reversed

All of the measures in the Vienna Visitor Economy Strategy 2025, developed under Executive City Councilor for Business and President of the Vienna Tourist Board Peter Hanke and Director of Tourism Norbert Kettner, are described at www.shaping.vienna.info.it.

VIENNA
NOW ♦ FOREVER



Starlight Foundation winner in FiturNext 2020 Challenge

Starlight born with the “Declaration in Defense of the Night Sky and the Right to Starlight” (2007), in which, representatives of IAC, UNESCO, UNWTO, IAU, UNEP-CMS, CE, SCBD, COE, MAB and Ramsar-Convention launched this international movement in defense of the sky , promoting the dissemination of astronomy and sustainable, high-quality tourism in those places where the night sky is cared. The Starlight sites are scenarios that incorporate the preservation and observation of the sky as part of the natural, scenic, cultural and scientific heritage and encourage “Star Tourism”, promoting infrastructure, products, activities and training of specialized guides in sustainable tourism.

The Starlight Foundation, the non-profit organization responsible of this project, offers an international certification system so that destinations, lodgings and natural reserves can develop astrotourism in rural territories, with sparse light pollution and that can take advantage of tourist activity to alleviate depopulation.

The Starlight Foundation has been awarded in FiturNext 2020 Challenge: “How can tourism contribute to local economic development”, among more than 250 innovative

sustainable tourism projects carried out worldwide, analyzed by the FiturNext Observatory, the Fitur platform sponsored by Bankia.

An Advisory Committee, made up of 7 experts with great experience in the field of tourism and innovation, voted for the three winning assessing their level of impact and replicability.

The Starlight Foundation leads the Working Group on Scientific Tourism of Affiliate Members (AM) constituted in the AM meeting during the General Assembly of the UNWTO held between september 9 and 13 in St. Petersburg, Russia.

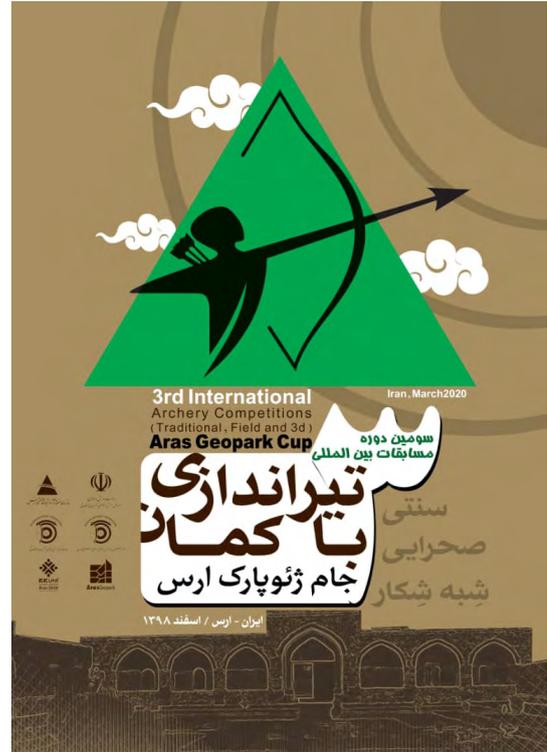


Traditional Archery Competition Upholds “No Hunting” Campaign

Using bow and arrow by humankind dates back to five thousand years B.C. and archers are mentioned in literary, art, legends and epics of ancient civilizations such as Iran, Egypt, China, Greece and Rome. In Iranian epic poem Ferdowsi’s Shahnameh, there are verses telling about the role of archery among Iranian and their wars.

The new affiliate member Aras Free Zone from Iran (the majority of its area is aspiring to join the Global Geoparks Network of UNESCO as Aras Geopark), includes a vast geographical territory as well as faunal variety. Among the indigenous species of the area are wild goats which have been extensively hunted by opportunist people. Considering sustainable development goals and alongside the “NoHunting” campaign, Aras Free Zone has launched an international archery competition by traditional bow and arrow under the title of Aras Geopark Cup. Beginning since 2018, these competitions are held every year in March, when participants compete in their local costumes.

In 2020 competition, archers from countries such as Iran, Turkey, Azerbaijan, Kyrgyzstan and Afghanistan will attend. In this course and for the first time, in addition to traditional archery, there will be Field Archery and 3d Archery which are important fields of WA the World Archery Federation. These new fields are supported by local community of geopark aiming to prevent hunting indigenous animals. In this type of archery organizer uses simulated animals as targets in a natural environment.



A Holistic, Sustainable Plan for Aviation Infrastructure and Tourism

ICF have been engaged by Malta International Airport to undertake a 'Sustainable Tourism Strategy' for the Republic of Malta. The country (and airport) has enjoyed tremendous growth over the past decade, driven primarily by a booming tourism industry. However, the airport and the country's tourism infrastructure is coming under increasing pressure as a result of this growth.

The aim of this study is two-fold, on the one hand it will help inform the airport of its infrastructure requirements – how much capacity it requires and when it is likely to require it. Fundamental to this is a forecast of tourism demand, and how things like hotel capacity will influence this over the next few decades. In addition to this, it will also take a holistic view at the tourism market in Malta and how it can ensure that future growth is done in a sustainable manner.

Delivering sustainable growth means delivering the growth that the country's economy needs, while balancing this with a need to minimise road congestion, minimise friction between residents and tourists, and preserving historical and natural sites.



University of Brighton's professor appointed as independent advisor on Airbnb task force

Marina Novelli, Professor of Tourism and International Development and Academic Lead for the university's Responsible Futures Research and Enterprise Agenda of the University of Brighton (UK), has joined a team of experts to underpin the development of Airbnb's planned registration system for rentals in the UK. She will be coordinating the research process and collaborating with consultants BritainThinkbks for Airbnb's registration roadshow consultations.

Prof. Novelli has worked in policy development for a number of years, said: "Airbnb have a desire to develop their relationships with local communities and work with government, policy makers and city leaders to develop a host registration system that is accessible and effective. This project allows us to explore all the options available."

Airbnb is promoting the registration initiative with a roadshow tour aimed at "forging collaborations with hosts, communities and politicians across the UK to jointly develop proposals for a clear, modern and simple registration system for short-term rentals".

Chris Lehane, Senior Vice President of Global Policy and Communications at Airbnb, said: "The UK is a fantastic destination with hosts in more than 2700 cities, towns and villages welcoming guests from within the UK and around the world into their communities. At Airbnb, we want to serve and strengthen local communities by driving our people-to-people model of sustainable tourism right across the country. That's why we're also looking forward to kicking off our roadshow to meet with communities and stakeholders around the country to discuss our proposals for a national registration system."



University of Brighton

RESPONSIBLE FUTURES

Asia Destination Film Forum 2020 engages destination and filmmakers

The Asia Destination Film Forum 2020, organized by UNWTO Affiliate Member Chameleon Strategies, attracted 200 attendees with sessions by filmmakers, leaders from the tourism industry, and NGOs to celebrate the importance of film in destination marketing and sustainability.

The Forum, which took place in Bangkok on 30 January 2020, included sessions about the power of visual storytelling for destinations as well as the importance of destinations for filmmakers. It showed how film can convey stories and how movies can make people think, inspire them to travel to new destinations, and consider new experiences. Participating organizations included the Ministry of Culture of Thailand, the Ministry of Environment and Tourism Mongolia, the Ministry of Tourism Cambodia, as well as representatives from various tourism boards, including the Tourism Authority of Thailand, Singapore Tourism Board, Tourism Malaysia, and the Mekong Tourism Coordinating Office. Filmmakers shared their experience in working on productions such as “Lara Croft: Tomb Raider”, the Netflix hit-series “The Stranded”, and the Avengers movie productions and the potential of Asia for film locations.

Executive interviews with producers of “The Cave” and “The Steed” which talked about practical challenges in making films and finding locations as well as with the private sector, such as Lebuva Hotels & Resorts to present how businesses can leverage film to position themselves as well as topical panels with presenters from PATA, GSTC, WWF, and UNEP discussed how films affect change and promote sustainability and how video bloggers are inspiring more and more travelers completed the Forum.

Highlights of the Asia Destination Film Forum will be showcased during the 4th Mini Mekong Tourism Forum at ITB Berlin in Germany on March 4th, 2020, at 11 am.

The 3rd Asia Destination Film Forum is scheduled to take place on 25 February 2021, and bids for destination partner and host destination are being accepted.

<http://www.destinationfilmforum.com/>



CHAMELEON
STRATEGIES



The beauty of our dark skies

Light pollution and the effect that it has on our night skies is an important concern environmentally, culturally, and for human health and well-being. Dark night skies form an important component of our life experience, both ordinarily and as tourists.

For the past three years Dr Sean Beer from Bournemouth University has been working with the Cranborne Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) (<http://www.ccwvdaonb.org.uk/>) in the south-west of England. The Cranborne Chase has a diverse historic landscape and it is for this reason that it has received its special designation. The Chase also has beautiful dark night skies because of low levels of light pollution.

Dr Beer has been working with the AONB on obtaining Dark Skies Reserve Status from the International Dark Skies Association. In October the AONB was informed that it had been successful in obtaining Dark Skies Reserve Status, only the 14th area in the world to do so. The potential for developing sustainable tourism in the area is considerable. The Northumberland National Park, in the north of England, estimates that its dark skies status and the associated dark skies tourism was worth over £25m in 2018, generating around 450 jobs. Bournemouth University is currently working on projects to develop our understanding of dark skies from multiple perspectives, including that of the tourist and is keen to work with interested individuals and organisations from around the world. In the first instance please contact Dr Sean Beer (sbeer@bournemouth.ac.uk).

The World Travel Awards to be hosted in the Thompson Okanagan, BC

For the first time in its 27-year history, the World Travel Awards will be hosted in Canada. The Thompson Okanagan has won a three-year bid to host the World Travel Awards in the region. Predator Ridge Resort in Vernon, British Columbia, will host the first year, welcoming more than 300 international delegates at the North American Gala Ceremony in October 2020, as part of the World Travel Awards Grand Tour.

The host city for the second and third years will be announced in Spring 2020 and Spring of 2021, respectively. These events will place the Thompson Okanagan Region and its communities firmly on the World Stage as delegates from global airlines, tour operators, travel agents, international media, and hospitality professionals join us in the region for the award ceremony.

The World Travel Awards (WTA) was established in 1993 to acknowledge, reward and celebrate excellence across all sectors of the tourism industry. Today, the WTA brand is recognized globally as the ultimate hallmark of quality, with winners setting the benchmark to which all others aspire. Each year, WTA covers the globe with a series of regional gala ceremonies staged to recognize and celebrate individual and collective success within each key geographical region. For more information, visit worldtravelawards.com



Intensive deliberations in order to identify Touristic Marketing Planning Aims and Objectives for the city of Thessaloniki- Greece

The procedures have begun on the development of Thessaloniki's strategic tourism marketing plan, undertaken by the Tourism Research Laboratory "TourLab" of the International Hellenic University on behalf of the Thessaloniki Tourism Organization. A co-operation agreement was signed at the official inauguration ceremony of the 35th Philoxenia International Tourism Exhibition of Thessaloniki by the President of the Thessaloniki Tourism Organization and Vice Governor of Region of Central Macedonia-Metropolitan Area of Thessaloniki, Mrs. Voula Patoulidou, and the Dean of the School of Business Administration of the International Hellenic University, Dr Evangelos Christou, in the presence of the Minister of Tourism, Mr. Haris Theocharis, the Governor of the Region of Central Macedonia, Mr. Apostolos Tzitzikostas and the Mayor of Thessaloniki, Mr. Konstantinos Zervas.

As part of the preparation of the Thessaloniki Tourism Marketing Plan, a number of field surveys will be conducted, including meeting of focus groups. The meetings aim to gather the necessary data for the Thessaloniki marketing plan, but also to provide the actual reflection of the positions and concerns of all stakeholders in the city on tourism issues. Specifically, there will be such "open" meetings with the general public in the city of Thessaloniki, as well as "closed" thematic meetings.

At the deliberations institutions of the city and state such as Ministry of Tourism, Greek National Tourism Organization, Ministry of Macedonia-Thrace, Municipality of Thessaloniki, Region of Central Macedonia, Thessaloniki International Fair, the port of Thessaloniki, CERTH, and all City Chambers will participate. By mid-March 2020, 15 different "thematic" closed deliberations will be held, which will include Tourist organizations (Thessaloniki Hotel Association, Thessaloniki Convention Bureau, Macedonia-Thrace Travel Agent Association, etc.). According to the Director of the TourLab Research Laboratory of the International Hellenic University Mr. Evangelos Christou, the purpose of these deliberations is to contribute to the identification of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of Thessaloniki as a touristic destination, and to give a meaningful voice to all those involved in the tourist development of the city.

The Vice Governor of Region of Central Macedonia-Metropolitan Area of Thessaloniki and President of the Thessaloniki Tourism Organization Ms. Voula Patoulidou, underlined the constant commitment of the Thessaloniki Tourism Organization to establish the city as a top tourist destination, in the context of which it is developed with scientific and technological guarantees and the specific strategic marketing and communication plan.



63rd UNWTO Regional Commission for Africa (CAF) and Forum on African Youth for Sustainable Tourism

The 63rd Regional Commission for Africa (CAF) will take place in Victoria, Seychelles, from 25 to 27 March 2020. The meetings will be open to the participation of UNWTO Member States, Affiliate Members, and invited delegations as well as to representatives of the tourism and related sectors.

Within the framework of the CAF, the Forum on African Youth for Sustainable Tourism Solutions will be organized. The decision to focus on this topic was taken in consultation with the Government of the Republic of Seychelles, after identifying the role African youth have to play to boost sustainable practices and solutions in the tourism sector in the continent. The forum, which will be carried out as a workshop, will identify existing approaches that could be applicable in the tourism

sector and bring new creative ideas and innovations about sustainability in tourism. This workshop aims to find solutions that could contribute effectively to decoupling tourism growth from its carbon footprint, mitigating negative impacts and harnessing the benefits of tourism in a model which is replicable, impactful and measurable.

Registration for the Conference, and the forum, is open and participants are requested to complete their online registration available on the UNWTO website at the following link:

<https://www.unwto.org/sixty-third-meeting-commission-africa>.

Also, you can find the preliminary programme.



Motosummit 2020: St. Petersburg International Motorcycle Tourism Forum

The UNWTO is supporting St. Petersburg Convention Bureau in the organization of the Motosummit 2020: St. Petersburg International Motorcycle Tourism Forum, from 3-5 April. The event takes place yearly since 2010 and for this year UNWTO decided to get involved and support this important initiative for the first time.

The organization of the International Motorcycle tourism forum is a unique event in Russia and will be dedicated to the world motorcycle tourism main components: traditional motorcycle festivals, motor rallies and trips, motor sport and motorcycle competitions. Entertaining show projects, motor industry, social projects etc.

The workshops' main topics will include:

- Presentation of famous Russian and international motorcycle routes such as Baltic Run, Baikal and Mad Rider;
- Open meetings of motorcycle clubs representatives;
- Presentation of the main events of the motorcycle season for 2020;
- Meeting with representatives of social projects, including Motodonory, Energy of Life, Victims of Road Accidents Foundation; You can find more information [here!](#)





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The **UNWTO Affiliate Members Department** is responsible for the management of the partnership between UNWTO and the private sector.

Contact us at: am@unwto.org

