



# Chimelong Tourism Development Forum



Chimelong International Conference Centre, Guangzhou, China  
16 - 17 October 2019

## Technical Note

### Background

The Greater Bay Area (Guangdong-Hong Kong – Macao) initiative is a national and regional development strategy bringing together 11 cities in the Pearl River Delta. The overall aim is to create a more dynamic economic zone, a high-quality living area providing employment opportunities for the local population, including travel, in order to deepen the cooperation between mainland China, Hong Kong (China) and Macao (China). Supported by the Belt and Road Initiative, the Greater Bay Area is the fastest growing region for tourism growth in China. The Greater Bay Area initiative is expected to exert a profound impact on the development of regional tourism, opening opportunities to strengthen collaboration for national and regional tourism growth through a unified tourism brand and shared tourism data resources.

The development of tourism in the Greater Bay Area will require unified planning and deployment of all stakeholders involved: from the public sector (Hong Kong SAR and Macao SAR, provincial government of Guangdong) to the private sector (including major actors such as the Guangzhou Chimelong Group).

The Guangzhou Chimelong Group is China's tourism resort development leader, building a world-class national tourism brand with its two tourist resorts - Guangzhou Chimelong Tourist Resort (Guangzhou) and Zhuhai Chimelong International Ocean Resort (Hengqin).

The Zhuhai Chimelong International Ocean Resort is involved in the Hengqin New Area project in the Guangdong Province and is expected to play a significant role in boosting the local tourism sector and connected industries, having become a major destination in Zhuhai attracting about 10 million tourists per year and a new engine for the city's economic growth.

Regarding corporate responsibility, the company has a special focus on the conservation and protection of wildlife at a global scale.

Chimelong has proven its commitment to wildlife through the Guangdong Chimelong Flora and Fauna Foundation, the creation of a new park to develop a world resource base for rare fauna and flora (Chimelong Qingyuan Forest Resort), the creation of facilities for the education and awareness raising of the visitors in the theme parks in Guangdong and Zhuhai, and the UNWTO/Chimelong Initiative created in support of wildlife conservation projects through sustainable tourism, in collaboration with the World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO).

The threat to wildlife has never been so pronounced and publicized: according to a recent report released by the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES), biodiversity is declining faster than at any time in human history. Human actions threaten more species than ever before, accounting for around 1 million species facing extinction. Mass biodiversity loss poses serious risks on the ecosystem at the local and global scales, generating knock off effects on related sectors such as agriculture (e.g. food production and food safety), fishing, construction (e.g. reduction of available natural material), and tourism.

UNWTO and Chimelong have agreed to work together under the framework of the UNWTO/Chimelong Initiative to advocate for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) through the promotion of sustainable tourism with particular reference to wildlife conservation.

The Wildlife Tourism sector is growing at a rate of about 10% a year and in 2018 alone contributed US \$120.1 billion to the global economy (4.4% of the estimated direct global tourism GDP of US \$2,751 billion in 2018) - over five times the value of the illegal wildlife trade. While tourism can provide benefits for conservation, it may also give rise to several adverse effects (such as waste and the connected habitat deterioration, disturbance of wildlife through foreign noise and inappropriate behaviour of visitors). With growing wildlife tourism, it is imperative to encourage and implement well planned and overall sustainable tourism operations. These have proven to enhance the perceived value of live animals, reduce poaching, increase investments in protected areas and reserves, and provide opportunities for rural communities to improve their livelihoods through tourism-related jobs, revenue sharing arrangements and co-management of natural resources.

In light of the above, the framework of the UNWTO/Chimelong Initiative includes activities focused on:

- Conducting research on wildlife conservation and its role in enhancing the quality of human capital;
- Advancing sustainable tourism policies in wildlife tourism, and encouraging the tourism private sector to adhere to corporate social responsibility;
- Training local tourism stakeholders as champions for biodiversity conservation and protection; and
- Raising awareness of the media on the challenges of wildlife conservation through sustainable tourism development.

Since its inception in 2017, the activities of the UNWTO/Chimelong Initiative directly benefitted eight African UNWTO Member States and seven Asia-Pacific UNWTO Member States, for a total of 375 participants.

In light of the current and future achievements of the Greater Bay Area and the UNWTO/Chimelong Initiative, and on the occasion of the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the return of Macau to the People's Republic of China and the 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the foundation of Chimelong, the Group is organising the Chimelong Tourism Development Forum in collaboration with UNWTO.

## Objective

In the context of the above, the objectives of the Dialogue are:

- To understand the challenges and opportunities generated by the development of the Greater Bay Area;
- To get a better knowledge of wildlife conservation through sustainable tourism development, especially in Africa and Asia-Pacific;
- To raise awareness on the important relationship between biodiversity protection and sustainable tourism development;
- To provide a platform for UNWTO African and Asia-Pacific Member States to exchange information on their respective policies and best practices for wildlife conservation through sustainable tourism development.

## Methodology

### 16 October 2019

The Forum will begin with an **opening ceremony** with welcome remarks by Mr. Su Zhigang, Chairman of the Guangzhou Chimelong Group, congratulatory remarks by a senior representative of the Macau Government, opening remarks by a senior representative of the Guangdong Provincial Government and congratulatory remarks by Mr. Zurab Pololikashvili, UNWTO Secretary-General.

The Forum will proceed with the launching of a **video clips** to celebrate the achievements of the UNWTO/Chimelong Initiative and to introduce the Guangzhou Chimelong Group, followed by a signing ceremony for the UNWTO/Chimelong Meeting Minutes, the Donation by the Guangdong Chimelong Flora and Fauna Conservation Foundation to UNWTO and the launching of the Chimelong Tourism Institute on the development of Hengqin tourism and Chimelong.

The Forum will follow with **Session I** on the Tourism Development of the Greater Bay Area and explore its tourism trends, with a particular focus on Hengqin, Macao SAR and Hong Kong SAR with presentations led by:

- Dr. Wenjie Chen, President of the CTS Academy for Tourism Industry, China National Travel Service Group Corporation, on tourism trends in Hengqin;
- One senior representative from the Guangdong Provincial Culture and Tourism Department;
- One senior representative from the Hainan Provincial Culture and Tourism Department;
- Ms. Pansy Ho, Vice Chairman and Secretary General of GTEF (TBC);
- Mr. Zhu Shanzhong, Executive Director, UNWTO.

In the afternoon, **Session II** will introduce a Panel on Wildlife Conservation through Sustainable Tourism Development that will address the challenges for wildlife conservation, integrating solutions provided by sustainable tourism development practices and conservation policies and recommendations for the future, with a special emphasis on Africa and Asia-Pacific. The Panel includes the following participants:

- Mr. Xu Jing, Director for Regional Department for Asia and the Pacific, UNWTO;
- Mr. Dong Guixin, Vice President, Guangdong Chimelong Flora and Fauna Conservation Foundation;
- Tourism officials from UNWTO Asian and African Member States;

- Professor Xu Honggang, Dean of the School of Tourism Management, Sun Yat-sen University;
- Professor Kevin Hannam, Dean of the Faculty of International Tourism, Macau City University.

**Sessions III and IV** will highlight practices from destinations in Africa and Asia and the Pacific, with presentations led by:

- Ms. Elcia Grandcourt, Director, Regional Department for Africa, on the achievements of the UNWTO/Chimelong Initiative in Africa;
- Dr. Noel Scott, Professor of Tourism Management, University of the Sunshine Coast, on the UNWTO/Chimelong report on Sustainable Development of Wildlife Tourism in Asia and the Pacific: Good Practices and their Implications;
- African tourism officials on their current national wildlife conservation and sustainable tourism policies;
- Asia and the Pacific tourism officials on their current national wildlife conservation and sustainable tourism policies.

### **17 October 2019**

**Session V on Media Relations and Communication on Wildlife Conservation** will train 30 participants on the key role of communication and the media relations as drivers to promote sustainable tourism practices in favour of wildlife conservation.

### **Participants**

International participants: selected representatives from National Tourism Administrations and National Tourist Organizations from Africa and Asia and the Pacific

National participants: public and private sector stakeholders, universities and media from the People's Republic of China including national and local provincial government officials associated with the Guangdong Province dealing with tourism and environment. They will also include representatives from Hong Kong and Macau.