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UNWTO Affiliate Members Department:
Latest developments, reforms and future outlook

Since the previous report on Affiliate Membership, delivered in the framework of the 33rd Joint meeting of the UNWTO Commissions for East Asia and the Pacific & the Commission for South Asia (held virtually on 21st of September 2021) the activities and initiatives carried out by Affiliate Members Department’s (AMD) were focused on achieving the strategic objective established by the Secretary General for this Department: to consolidate the Affiliate Membership as a pillar of the Organization.

The ultimate goal of all the actions implemented was to strengthen UNWTO’s capacity to deliver services and knowledge through the contribution of its affiliate members.

In order to achieve the objectives established through the Programme of Work (PoW) 2021-2022, the Organization’s work on the Affiliate Membership has been focused on the following priority lines of actions:

1. Deliver value for UNWTO Members.

An important pillar of AMD activity was oriented towards continuously improving the Organization’s capacity to attract valuable ideas and innovative projects from the affiliated tourism private stakeholders, by providing a consistent framework for an efficient interaction and collaboration between the UNWTO and its Affiliate Members, aimed at mitigating the negative consequences of the crisis and consistently contributing to support the restart and recovery of the tourism sector.

1.1. Calls for contributions and projects.

AMD launched various “Calls for submission of projects”, proactively inviting the Affiliate Members to gather solid proposals and best practices on specific sectors:

- **Call for Proposals for the Programme of Work 2022**, carried out prior to the **43rd Plenary Session of the Affiliate Members**, with the aim of enriching it with innovative ideas and to make sure the 2022 agenda of activities is adequately aligned with the priorities and needs of the Affiliate Membership. Among those proposals included in the PoW, 3 were shared by Affiliate Members from East Asia & the Pacific and South Asia:
  
  ✓ **Outlook Group: “Indian Responsible Tourism Awards”**, which was celebrated on the 6th of April and counted on the participation of an expert from UNWTO through a pre-recorded video.
  
  ✓ **Hospitality and Tourism Institute of Duy Tan University: Thematic Conference on the improvement of sustainable mobility, accessibility, and responsible travel (date TBC).**
  
  ✓ **Seoul Tourism Organization: “Global Fair and Sustainable Travel Contest” (date TBC).**
• **The Affiliate Members and the COVID-19 response:** call for contributions to obtain valuable inputs from the Affiliate Members to facilitate their consistent involvement in the common effort to contribute to the restart of the tourism sector. The balance of the mentioned calls for contributions/projects was excellent, with numerous of our Affiliate Members submitting solid and valuable proposals to the Organization for consideration as contributions to the efforts to the restart of tourism, as well as for incorporation in documents and products that UNWTO developed during this period.

1.2. **Boost the visibility of inputs received from the Affiliate Members**

AMD placed a special emphasis on providing higher visibility for the contributions and projects received from the Affiliate Members, organizing dedicated activities to **offer to AMs opportunities to showcase their relevant projects and innovative products** within relevant international events and big International Tourism Fairs.

a. **AMD reinforced the concept the “Corner of the Affiliate Members”** – through which the Organization is providing a visibility framework for presentations of projects on priority topics delivered by Affiliate Members. Main occasions in which events of this type have been organized:

- **Affiliate Members Corner on Iberseries Platino Industria** (30 September 2021), aimed to foster synergies between the tourism and audio-visual industries, where local administrations, DMOs, and other private entities presented their offer of facilities and attractive conditions for the shooting of movies and series.

- **Affiliate Members Corner within the 43rd Plenary Session of the Affiliate Members** (3 December 2021), under the theme “We are Affiliate Members”, in which a rich scope of priority areas was covered like the much-needed reduction of CO2 emissions in tourism, the state of travel industry through data, how hotels and restaurants can become more resilient, the use of technologies to foster public-private partnership etc.

Contributing Affiliate Members from East Asia and the Pacific & South Asia included:

- ✔ **Korea Tourism Organization:** Co2 emissions mitigations project in Korea Tourism Industry and Policy Measurement Building

- ✔ **Chameleon Strategies:** COVID Recovery Solutions for Destinations

- **Affiliate Members Corner on the occasion of FITUR 2022** (21 January 2022), under the theme “Strategies by Tourism Boards”, focused on the changing and adaptive role of tourism boards in the current scenario and how they are contributing to an effective recovery of tourism.

b. **Consistent AMs engagement in main UNWTO Statutory Meetings.**

AMD was continuously working on promoting a more consistent and visible participation of Affiliate Members in UNWTO Statutory Events – i.e. General Assembly, Executive Councils and Regional Commissions- not only for the visibility opportunities that offer, but also as an effective way of improving the effective integration of the Affiliate Membership in the overall activity of the Organization, to generate more collaboration opportunities with the Member States and, as a consequence, to increase the prestige and the value of the Membership.

The recently held 24th General Assembly (Madrid, December 2021), the 114th and 115th Executive Councils organized within its framework, the Regional Commissions held between June and September 2021 as well as the recent 116th Executive Council (Jeddah 7-8 June 2022) constituted illustrative examples of the positive and fruitful engagement of the Affiliate Membership. All these statutory meetings have included in the agenda consistent items regarding Affiliate Membership:

- ✔ Adoption of important in initiatives, like the launching of the Legal Reform Process
- ✔ Reports of the Chair of the Board
- ✔ Progress Report on the ongoing activities
- ✔ Approval of new candidatures

More than 80 affiliated entities attended in-person the mentioned 24th General Assembly and the 116th Executive Council. Affiliate Members from East Asia & the Pacific and South Asia.
1.3. Further develop the priority topics managed by AMD

AMD continued to explore and develop priority topics which fall under its direct management, such as Tourism and the Audiovisual Industry and Sports Tourism.

- **Tourism and the Audio-visual Industry**
  The audio-visual sector plays a vital role in supporting the promotion of tourism. The Affiliate Members Department continued to develop this line of activity through increased participation in projects and initiatives carried out by some of our Affiliate Members.

  **Iberoseries Platino Industria** (27 September – 2 October 2021, Madrid, Spain) – international specialized fair which provided the ideal space for a specialized AMCorner, targeting to facilitate DMOs to present their offer for audiovisual production, their work to keep receiving major productions with the highest standards of safety and to provide a wide range of services and facilities, from granting filming permits to finding locations and local providers, among others.

- **Debate on Cultural Affinity and Screen Tourism.** AMD continued to explore in depth all aspects of the link between tourism and audiovisual. A first chapter focused on the segment of content distribution platforms, on how audiovisual content can generate cultural affinities that can determine future knowledge decisions through travel, was presented on 1 October 2021 through the launch of the UNWTO-NETFLIX Global Report on Cultural Affinity and Screen Tourism. Experts form the tourism and audio-visual industry debated on the current and future trends of the sector and how audio-visual contents can generate a greater cultural affinity between people, communities and countries.

  **Platino Award for Cinema on Education & Values.** With UNWTO also focusing this year on Education, UNWTO Secretary-General presented for the second time the prestigious Platino Award for Cinema on Education & Values, with the goal to efficiently promote the SDGs and the UNWTO’s 2030 Agenda within the outstanding visibility platform given by the huge media coverage of such events.

- **Sports Tourism** – it is another line of action under direct responsibility and coordination of AMD which was further developed through partnerships with other Affiliate Members.

  **World Sports Tourism Congress** (25-26 November 2021, Lloret de Mar, Spain) – for the first time UNWTO organized a World Sports Tourism Congress, in collaboration with an Affiliate Member (Catalan Tourism Board). The event explored the relationship between sports tourism and sustainable and inclusive development, the current and future trends in the sector, as well as successful governance and private sector strategies. AMD facilitated the participation of its Affiliate Members and several of them had the opportunity to showcase their work in this field through the intervention as panellists.

  **Mad-Cup** (26-30 June 2021) – AMD participated in other sport events such as the football competition MadCup, launched in collaboration with the Affiliate Members Club Atletico de Madrid, an initiative which served as a platform to connect sport, tourism, education in values and the promotion of the SDGs.

1.4. Expand and support the activity of the Working Groups

The Working Groups are platform in which Affiliate Members with knowledge and expertise on a specific tourism segment can exchange ideas, develop new forms of collaboration and implement tangible initiatives and projects.

- **Working Group on SDGs Support** – advanced in the preparation of a toolkit/training material for tourism stakeholders on the implementation of the SDGs.

- **Working Group on Accessible Tourism** – its members participated last year in an Expert Meeting organized by AMD during which the publication “Accessibility and Inclusive Tourism Development in Nature Areas – Compendium of Best Practices”, main outcome of the Working Group, was launched. It counts with the active participation of Chameleon Strategies (Thailand), Seoul Tourism Organization (Republic of Korea), and Korea Tourism Organization (Republic of Korea).
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- Working Group on Scientific Tourism – its members participated in the 1st International Astrotourism Conference, held in Evora, Portugal on 8-11 September 2021, organized with the support of AMD.

1.5. Joint UNWTO / AMD – AMs research & publications

AMD continued to work on the development of joint UNWTO-AMs publications on priority topics, to strengthen the Organization’s capacity to deliver knowledge and innovation, based on the partnership with the Affiliate Members.

- "Global Report on Cultural Affinity and Screen Tourism - The Case of Internet Entertainment Services" – this report, published in September 2021 in collaboration with Netflix, looks at the role of film and TV series as drivers for tourism and cultural affinity between communities while at the same time fostering tourism as a pillar of the 2030 Agenda. Furthermore, it offers both policymakers and the private sector recommendations on how to leverage Internet Entertainment Services (IES) to promote unique and shared culture.

- "Accessibility and Inclusive Tourism Development in Nature Areas" – this report is the main outcome of the activities of the Working Group on Accessible Tourism last year. It consists in a compilation of best practices on accessibility in nature areas implemented by the members of the Working Group. It provides stakeholders with relevant conclusions on how to identify accessible tourism products and services in nature areas and so making nature accessible to all. The report included among the selected best practices an exceptional case from the Republic of Korea: "Accessible Tourist Attraction Development Project", implemented by Korea Tourism Organization. Moreover, Chameleon Strategies formed part of the Steering Committee of the publication responsible for the revision and development of the contents, and contributed to developing the design and layout of the final report.

2. Expand and reinforce the Affiliate Membership

The more quality companies join the AM community around the world, the greater opportunities to establish valuable partnerships and generate collaboration opportunities. A main goal of UNWTO / AMD is to achieve a quality-oriented expansion of the membership.

Current status of the Membership in East Asia & the Pacific and South Asia. Out of a total of 530 Affiliate Members, 14% come from these regions.

Expansion of the Membership: more AMs. On the expansion dimension, AMD continued to carry out promotional activities along with modernizing the promotional strategy and available tools.

An example of these promotional campaigns, which AMD looks to repeat in other regions with the support of current affiliate members and Member States, was the promotional session “UNWTO Affiliate Membership and private tourism sector development in Africa”, organized within the framework of the 2021 World Tourism Day.

Focus on the quality dimension: stronger AMs. Our promotional campaign was focused on the quality dimension, in attracting stronger candidates, mainly through the modernization of the Legal Framework, to provide UNWTO with the necessary tools to promote a quality-oriented expansion of the Affiliate Membership.

In this regard the new legal framework of the Affiliate Membership, currently under implementation, would:

- Set more demanding eligibility criteria
- Set conditions for UNWTO to introduce a strict and precise preliminary check and admission procedure, to ensure that a candidate has the capacity, knowledge and determination to add value to the Membership.

As a result of the promotional activity developed, the evolution of the Affiliate Membership was encouraging, despite the difficult context: since September 2021 to date 36 new Affiliate Members were admitted, among them 2 from the East Asia & the Pacific and South Asia region:

✓ Gangwon Tourism Organization (Republic of Korea)
✓ Kobe University (Japan)
Inevitably, the status of our Affiliate Membership suffered the tough impact of the COVID-19. These difficulties were reflected in the unavoidable increase in the number of Affiliate Members facing difficulties in coping with the payment of their membership fees.

3. **Modernized management of the Affiliate Membership network.**

An efficient and qualitative interaction and dialogue of the Organization with each Member, as well as with the overall network of Affiliate Members is fundamental to meet the expectations of our Affiliate Membership and to consolidate the value of said Membership.

To achieve this goal, it is crucial to count on the necessary resources and appropriate tools and procedures to manage this daily interaction in terms of the facilities, support and services. In this regard, the priorities of AMD were focused on:

### 3.1. **Integral Reform of the Legal Framework of the Affiliate Membership.**

The approval by the 24th UNWTO General Assembly of the new legal basis for the Affiliate Membership has meant fulfilling a key objective. Among the main improvements introduced by the reform, it is worth to mention:

- **The creation of the Committee on matters related to Affiliate Membership (CMAM)** – a specialized institutional framework to serve as operational channel for the interaction of the Affiliate Members with the Organization’s statutory organs and for integration and networking with the Member States.

- **Improved eligibility criteria** – the new legal basis established a solid admission procedure to ensure that a candidate has the profile and capacity to add value and quality to the Organization. This reinforced eligibility check procedure allows to directly involve the Government of the State of the candidate’s headquarters and includes the possibility to carry out a due diligence procedure.

- **Regulation of the functions and working methods for the Board of Affiliate Members and the Plenary** – more specific and clear responsibilities of the Governing Bodies of the Affiliate Membership, namely the Plenary and the Board of Affiliate Members, whose mandate was extended from 2 to 4 years.

Currently AMD is working on the implementation of all these key new aspects introduced by the reform.

### 3.2. **Consolidation and expansion of the AMConnected platform**

AMD intensified its efforts on making the interactive platform AMConnected, its main tool for communication and networking, more intensively used by the affiliate members and on better communicating the advantages and facilities that it offers.

Through a 24 / 7 scheme of assistance and guidance, AMD targeted to permanently increase the use and the user’s satisfaction of using this tool.

Moreover, AMD started to organize informative sessions on the functioning of the platform, with the aim of making the Affiliate Members aware of all the options that it offers and so encourage them to use it.

The results are very encouraging: AMConnected is becoming every day more intensively used and the volume of interaction between the Affiliate Members increased significantly.

### 3.3. **Organization of the electoral process for election of the members of the Board of AMs 2022-2025**

AMD organized in 2021 the election process for the new Board of Affiliate Members 2022-2025.

The East Asia and the Pacific is represented in the Board by the below Affiliate Members:

- Chameleon Strategies (Thailand) – Second Vice-Chair
- Japan Tourism Board Corporation (Japan)

The South Asia region is represented by the below Affiliate Members:

- PATWA – Pacific Area Trave Writers Association (India)
- KITTS – Kerala Institute of Tourism and Travel Studies (India)
Details on the structure and composition of the Board in *Annex I.*

### 4. Ongoing Activities and upcoming deliverables

- The UNWTO Affiliate Membership continues to reinforce its presence in the East Asia & the Pacific and South Asia region. The Committee on matters related to Affiliate Membership (CMAM), which functions as a much-needed tool for the promotion of the tourism-public private sector cooperation, will count on two Member States from East Asia & the Pacific and South Asia: China and the Islamic Republic of Iran (Member States with the third and second, respectively, largest number of Affiliate Members in the region).

- UNWTO will provide support to Affiliate Members carrying out their own activities and projects in the region, including:
  - Thematic Conference focused on the improvement of sustainable mobility, accessibility and responsible travel (Date, venue and format TBC). Affiliate Member: Hospitality and Tourism Institute of Duy Tan University (Vietnam).
  - Fair Tourism Contest (Date TBC). Affiliate Member: Seoul Tourism Organization (Republic of Korea).

- UNWTO will facilitate the participation of Affiliate Members from East Asia & the Pacific and South Asia at UNWTO main conferences and events taking place in the region, including:
  - World Tourism Day (Bali, Indonesia), 27 September 2022: potential organization of a promotional session of the Affiliate Membership and/or a Roundtable in partnership with Netflix to promote Screen Tourism in the region.
  - 7th UNWTO World Forum on Gastronomy Tourism (Nara, Japan), 12-15 December 2022: support to the event by proposing Affiliate members with knowledge and expertise on the topic as potential panellists.

- Intensify the participation of Affiliate Members from the region in UNWTO projects and activities in fields such as culinary, audio-visual and sports tourism, as well as through the format of the AMCorner.

- Promotion of the Affiliate Membership in East Asia & the Pacific and South Asia and constant communication with the Affiliate Members of the region. The Affiliate Member Department will carry out promotional campaigns in underrepresented Member States in order to increase their representation in the Affiliate Membership network. This will be done counting on the expertise of existing Affiliate Members that can best present their experience being part of UNWTO.

- In order to better integrate Affiliate Members in the work of UNWTO, including those from East Asia & the Pacific and South Asia, the Affiliate Members Department is rolling out a new format of virtual event called *UNWTO Briefing for Affiliate Members,* which are informative sessions dedicated exclusively to provide Affiliate Members first-hand insights on future UNWTO major events so that they are informed on different formulas for engagement.

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**UNWTO Affiliate Members: Report of the Chair of the Affiliate Members**

Having consulted with the Board, its Chair (Ms. Mar de Miguel Colom, Executive Vice-President, Asociación Empresarial Hotelera de Madrid AEHM), has decided to delegate its institutional representation before UNWTO Joint Commission for East Asia & the Pacific and South Asia at its thirty-fourth Meeting to JTB Corporation, represented by Mr. Hiroyuki Kitagawa, President – Asia and the Pacific, who wishes to report to the Joint Commission of East Asia and the Pacific and South Asia and on the following on behalf of the Board:

- The Board of the Affiliate Members seeks to increase its presence at the statutory and specialized committees of UNWTO and to that end has started a mechanism of consultations to decide on which Affiliate Members are best positioned and qualified to execute such a representation role for each UNWTO specific body or structure.
The Board of the Affiliate Members recognises that for the Affiliate Members it is of great importance to be present at these ministerial meetings, to share with the governments of the Member States their proposals and points of view on the priority topics of the Organization and of the tourism industry.

The East Asia & the Pacific and South Asia is the third-largest region in terms of Affiliate Members, representing 14% of the total. The Board expresses its availability and willingness to keep working on the quality-oriented expansion of the Affiliate Membership in the region.

The private sector can strongly contribute to the development of the tourism sector in East Asia & the Pacific and South Asia, hence the importance to increase the efficiency of the Affiliate Membership promotional strategy, for the benefit of all the Member States of the region and of the Organization.

The main expectations and needs of the Affiliate Members (confirmed by the survey launched by AMD in 2021) are:

- Effective opportunities for networking with Member States
- Enhanced engagement of the Affiliate Members in the UNWTO Agenda
- Stronger participation of the AMs in the UNWTO Statutory Meetings and Thematic Events

The Board of the Affiliate Members expresses its satisfaction as UNWTO is giving the right priority to the objective of better integrating Affiliate Members within the Organization, as shown by several ongoing initiatives reflected in the Programme of Work (PoW) 2022.

The reform process of the Affiliate Membership Legal Framework was carried out through a permanent collaboration and coordination between the Affiliate Members, the Member States and UNWTO Secretariat, and this will allow a better UNWTO capacity to attract quality Affiliate Membership and a more effective integration of the Affiliate Members with Members States and within the Organization.

The Affiliate Members consider extremely promising the creation of the Committee on Matters Related to the Affiliate Membership, perceived as being an important institutional channel for an enhanced interaction of AMs with UNWTO Statutory bodies and an institutional tool for effective integration of AMs with UNWTO and Member States.

The Board of the Affiliate Members stands ready to work with the Committee on Matters Related to the Affiliate Membership. Which will allow for a better regulation of the functions and working methods for the Affiliate Members governing bodies, especially with regard to:

- Extension of the mandate of the Board from 2 to 4 years, to align it with mandate of the Secretary General and so facilitating the integration of the AMs in the agenda for the next 4 years.
- Alignment of the functions of the Board with the UNWTO Statutes.
- More precise specification of the prerogatives and responsibilities of the Plenary, such as the introduction of a quorum for decision-making and decisions by consensus except when a majority is required.

The Board of the Affiliate Members and its Members from the region will support the promotion of the Affiliate Membership in the region, through closer collaboration with the Secretariat (with AMD and the Regional Department for Asia and the Pacific), and with the Member States.

More involvement of the Affiliate Members from the East Asia & the Pacific and South Asia will be promoted within the main activities of the UNWTO in priority topics such as sustainability, innovation, digitalization, and education.

The Board of the Affiliate Members thanks the Joint Commission for East Asia & the Pacific and South Asia for this opportunity to share their concerns and messages and expresses the full availability and commitment by the UNWTO private sector to support the Organization and its Member States in their efforts.