UN Tourism Celebrates High-Level Support after Productive FITUR 2024

Madrid, Spain, 26 January 2024 – UN Tourism has celebrated the first major tourism event of 2024, FITUR travel trade fair in Madrid, advancing its priorities for the sector for the year ahead.

Ahead of FITUR, UN Tourism – the new name for the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) released its latest data. The first World Tourism Barometer of the year highlighted the sector’s recovery, *with international arrivals back to 88% of pre-pandemic levels* at the end of 2023. With full recovery expected in 2024, UN Tourism again served as the bridge between public and private sector leaders to build a more resilient and sustainable future.

**Welcoming Leaders to UN Tourism**

With the new UN Tourism name and logo officially announced to Members on the eve of FITUR, the Organization then welcomed a series of high-level visitors to its Madrid headquarters. The visit of the President of the Republic of Ecuador, His Excellency Daniel Noboa Azín underscored his country’s commitment to tourism as a source of growth and development, also reflected in Ecuador being the official partner country of FITUR 2024. Secretary-General Pololikashvili commended President Noboa and Ecuador’s Minister of Tourism Niels Olsen Peet, for making clear the role tourism can play in bringing hope and promoting understanding even in challenging times. In recognition of his leading role, President Noboa Azín was presented with an honorary UN Tourism plaque.

Within the framework of FITUR Secretary-General Pololikashvili also held bilateral meetings with the Ministers of Tourism of Albania, Argentina, Colombia, Croatia, Cuba, Czechia, Dominican Republic, Gambia, Gabon, Haiti, Jamaica, Iran, Jordan, Palestine, Tanzania, Jordan, Serbia, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

**Focus on tourism investments**

UN Tourism has identified investment as a key priority for transforming the sector. Within the framework of FITUR, UN Tourism hosted “Invest in Zambia”, bringing together public sector leaders from the country as well as from other African Member States, alongside high-level private sector representatives and investors.
Alongside this, UN Tourism further built on its partnership with the Investment Bank for Latin America (CAF). The two parties agreed to jointly publish "Tourism Doing Business" Investment Guidelines focused on Brazil, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico and Peru, while also re-launching the revised guidelines for investing in tourism in Ecuador.

Building a more ethical and sustainable sector

UN Tourism gathered together a number of signatories of the Glasgow Declaration on Climate Action in Tourism. The side event reinforced the shared commitment to addressing climate challenges across the whole of the tourism sector, highlighting key challenges as well as opportunities to do better. Additionally, the International Network of Sustainable Tourism Observatories (INSTO) formally welcomed its newest members, Nuevo León (Mexico) and Petén (Guatemala). They bring the global network to 44 members.

Also growing in size and impact is the Global Code of Ethics for Tourism. UN Tourism welcomed three new private sector signatories, Piñero, Kuoni and Hotel Taimar to the Code, a comprehensive set of principles that helps to maximise the benefits and minimise the negative impacts that tourism development can have on the environment, cultural heritage and societies around the world.

Best Tourism Villages 2024 Launched

Continuing its work to grow tourism as a pillar of rural development, UN Tourism opened applications for the 2024 edition of its “Best Tourism Villages” initiative.

UN Tourism Member States are invited to submit up to eight candidate villages. Applications are open until 24 April 2024, with the selected villages announced in the third quarter of the year.

Related Links

[UN Tourism Opens Calls for Best Tourism Villages 2024](#)

[UNWTO Becomes “UN Tourism” to Mark A New Era for Global Sector](#)