Dear reader,

Welcome to the third edition of the Affiliate Members Programme Newsletter. With the continuing development of our activities we are pleased to share these exciting updates highlighting the work of our Programme.

If you would like additional information about events or have something you would like to share in upcoming editions, please don’t hesitate to contact us.

Yolanda Perdomo
Director of UNWTO Affiliate Members

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The UNWTO Affiliate Members Programme, Destino Punta del Este and The Ministry of Tourism and Sport of Uruguay are organizing the 1st UNWTO Affiliate Members Conference on innovative approaches to overcome seasonality: The Punta del Este Prototype, that will take place on 1-3 May 2014 in Punta del Este, Uruguay. We look forward to meeting you there. For information please visit this webpage.

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UNWTO Knowledge Network Symposium and UNWTO.Tedqual Seminar
Hong Kong SAR, China, 16-17 November 2013

The Symposium, held in collaboration with the School of Hotel and Tourism Management, Hong Kong Polytechnic University, provided a unique opportunity for tourism educational institutions to come together, to discuss and share their experiences in promoting capacity building in tourism through research, education and training. It served to consolidate UNWTO the Knowledge Network, especially in the Asia and the Pacific region, and allowed Affiliate Members to discuss the Program of Work and future action plans including their own initiatives. The Seminar brought the UNWTO Knowledge Network and the UNWTO.TedQual Programme Institutions together for the first time and highlighted the importance of innovative research.

Dr. Lisa Ruhanen, The University of Queensland; Márcio Favilla, UNWTO; Dr. Aurora Pedro Bueno, University of Valencia; Dr. Fanny Vong, Institute for Tourism Studies; and Prof. Haiyan Song, School of Hotel and Tourism Management, The Hong Kong Polytechnic University.
Tourism, Responsibility and Insurance
UNWTO Headquarters, 10 December 2013

The World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) and the international law firm Thomas Cooper organized the session “Tourism, Responsibility and Insurance”, held at UNWTO Headquarters. Opening remarks by the UNWTO Secretary General, Taleb Rifai, Thomas Cooper Associate Director in Spain, Juan Alegre, and Miguel Mirones, Chairman of the UNWTO Affiliate Members Board, were followed by enriching presentations by expert panelists from their respective fields.

The event fostered dialogue over the current and future outlook of the tourism sector and key topics discussed included international legal initiatives, public-private collaboration for tourism promotion, tourism as a public right, tour operator liability, market fragmentation, resolutions of disputes in tourism, risk insurance and classification of claims. With participants from both the tourism and the insurance sector, the discussion proved to be fruitful and of mutual benefit in understanding a fundamental aspect of the industry and for a positive visitor experience.

1st International Tourism Forum of Maspalomas Costa Canaria
Costa Canaria, 12-13 December 2013

The 1st International Tourism Forum of Maspalomas Costa Canaria (I Foro Internacional de Turismo de Maspalomas Costa Canaria) was organized by Affiliate Members University of Las Palmas de Gran Canaria and the Town Hall of San Bartolomé de Tirajana, in collaboration with Ibn Zohr University – Agadir-Morocco and with support of the UNWTO Affiliate Members Programme.

The two day Forum, inaugurated by the Minister of Industry, Energy and Tourism of Spain, José Manuel Soria, focused on offering participants –academics, researchers, professionals and students– an international platform for exchanging experiences and knowledge on topics such as competitiveness, innovation and entrepreneurship for tourism destinations in times of crisis.

Competitiveness, Tourism and Big Data/Open Data
Madrid, 16 December 2013

Affiliate Members SEGITTUR and IE Business School, in partnership with the UNWTO Affiliate Members Programme, collaborated on the conference “Competitiveness, Tourism and Big Data / Open Data”, which took place on the 16 December 2013 at the IE Business School in Madrid.

The Executive Director of the UNWTO Affiliate Members Programme, Ms. Yolanda Perdomo, opened the session with Mr. Ernesto Bartolucci Blanco, Director of the Center for Advanced Studies in Tourism (CESTUR) –under the Ministry of Tourism of Mexico. Different perspectives were exchanged on the importance of collecting, analyzing and using information to improve the competitiveness of the tourism sector.

FITUR 22-26 January 2014

2013 UNWTO Awards for Excellence and Innovation in Tourism
Madrid, 22 January 2014

The tenth edition of the UNWTO Awards was held for the first time in the framework of FITUR. Co-hosted by FITUR – IFEMA, the Awards Ceremony gathered wide global media coverage, more than 250 tourism industry representatives and tourism officials from more than 50 countries. The 2013 UNWTO was honored to give the UNWTO Ulysses Prize for Creation and Dissemination of Knowledge was awarded to Dr. Tej Vir Singh, and the UNWTO Award for Lifetime Achievement to Mr. Richard Quest, host of CNN’s flagship daily business programme ‘Quest Means Business’ and monthly ‘CNN Business Traveller’, for his contribution in promoting tourism in the global business agenda. UNWTO also recognized 13 finalist organizations from 12 different countries that have led innovative tourism initiatives. See the full awards here.
UNWTO Knowledge Network Symposium
Madrid, 23 January 2014

Subsequent to the UNWTO Awards Ceremony and Gala Dinner, the UNWTO Knowledge Network Symposium highlighted best theories and practices showcased by winners of the UNWTO Awards in different categories.

The Symposium offered a special interview with the 2013 UNWTO Ulysses Prize Laureate Dr. Tej Vir Singh, conducted by Dr. Don Hawkins, first Ulysses Prize Laureate, followed by two thematic panel discussions enriched by the inspirational experience of the 2013 UNWTO awardees. The panels highlighted the importance of innovation as a key driver for socio-economic progress.

FITUR 22-26 January 2014

The “Madrid Precious Time” application was available at FITUR for visitors to try during the entirety of the fair, taking a virtual tour of Madrid through the eyes of Google Glass.

You can find a demo here: http://vimeo.com/85154856.

This initiative is part of the “Madrid Precious Time” Prototype, a broader project of the UNWTO Affiliate Members Programme. The goal is to develop practical learning exercises within Madrid to find new ways to adapt to the rapidly changing tourism scene, sharing knowledge amongst organizations throughout the sector. See the full press release here: http://www.minetur.gob.es/es-es/gabineteprensa/notasprensa/2014/documents/npinauguracionfiturknowhow230114.pdf

AENOR celebrates quality in tourism
Madrid, 23 January 2014

For the ninth year in a row, AENOR, the Spanish Association for Standardization and Certification, recognized quality in tourism at FITUR. The event presented 228 acknowledgements to organizations that achieved certification or were evaluated during 2013 in the areas of Quality Management, Environmental Management, Accessibility, Social Responsibility, Carbon Footprint, Innovation, among others. Hereby, AENOR recognized the organizations’ commitment to continuously improving services and competitiveness in tourism.

Furthermore, the session “Smart destinations: key integration of criteria for excellence in tourism” was held, gathering salient experts to discuss excellence in tourism through the integration of sustainability, innovation, technology, accessibility and governance criteria. Yolanda Perdomo, the Director of the UNWTO Affiliate Members Programme, was amongst the experts called upon for joining this interesting discussion.

A working group driven by SEGITTUR (State Company of Innovation and Tourism Technology) and supported by AENOR and SETSI (Secretary of State for Telecommunications and the Information Society) was been established to develop the first Global Standard for Smart Tourism Destinations.

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Madrid, 23 January 2014

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Madrid Precious Time at FITUR
Madrid, 22 January 2014

The “Madrid Precious Time” application, developed as part of the Prototype that UNWTO is carrying out in the city of Madrid, and the first Google Glass application for Spanish tourism, was presented at FITUR Know-How & Export 2014, a space for tourism companies to show their knowledge, services and tourism products to international markets. The application was developed by the Ministry of Industry, Energy and Tourism of Spain, through SEGITTUR, in collaboration with the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO).

The application aims at providing tourists with a superior and immersive experience, offering location-based information in a timely manner, as they discover the city. This project is an innovative way of further developing the destination’s relationship with its visitors, attending to their unique and special circumstances, offering them tailored information on places, traffic in the area, weather, near-by deals, events, and so on.
37th Meeting of the Affiliate Members Board
Madrid, 24 January 2014

The 37th Meeting of the UNWTO Affiliate Members Board was held on January 24, 2014, at UNWTO Headquarters in Madrid. The meeting was attended by 28 Board Members and observers. Led by Mr. Miguel Mirones Díez, Chairman of the board, Members engaged in valuable discussions covering the current challenges and opportunities of the tourism sector, globally and in their respective regions.

During the meeting, UNWTO’s Secretary General, Taleb Rifai, offered his welcoming remarks and announced the UNWTO’s recent structural changes affecting the UNWTO Secretariat. Furthermore, the Affiliate Members discussed the proposed Programme of Work for 2014-2015, which reflects on the areas of interest proposed by Members themselves. Future events discussed included the Conference on the Seasonality Prototype in Punta del Este, Uruguay, and the Plenary Meeting to be held in Baku, Azerbaijan. Another highlight was the establishment of the 1st Regional Conference of the African Affiliate Members, to be held in Durban, South Africa. This initiative was received by the Board Members with unanimous support.

Madrid Precious Time at ITB Berlin
Berlin, 05 March 2014

The UNWTO Madrid Precious Time Prototype was presented during ITB, in Berlin, with the presence of UNWTO Secretary-General, Taleb Rifai, the Mayor of Madrid, Ana Botella, and the Spanish Secretary of State for Tourism, Isabel Borrego. “There can be no tourism development without a close relationship between public and private sector; we believe the tourism sector needs to find new approaches to public/private sector collaboration to keep pace with the changes in the market and we hope this can become a model for others to follow,” said UNWTO Secretary-General, Taleb Rifai, during the launch of the project. Ms. Botella pointed out that this collaborative work brings together the best of Spain and Madrid’s tradition, modernity and innovation; while Ms. Borrego commented on the opportunity that the development of city tourism brings for the diversification of the country’s touristic offer and its economy.

This project represents a successful example of public-private collaboration between diverse organizations for the development of innovative and specialized tourism products, to stay competitive, especially in the context of city tourism.

Madrid Precious Time brings together organizations from the accommodation and transport sectors, academic ambit, public administration, destination marketing organizations, museums, among many other crucial players. For a brief insight on some of the experiences that are being developed, the presentation included a brief video that we invite you all to watch: http://vimeo.com/88232859.

For more information on this project, how it was originated and the kind of outcomes that are being developed, we invite you to have a read at this booklet.

Future events

- 1st UNWTO Affiliate Members Conference on innovative approaches to overcome Seasonality: The Punta del Este Prototype, 1-3 May in Uruguay.
- 2nd UNWTO Knowledge Network Forum on Innovation in Tourism: Bridging Theory and Practice, 28-30 May, in México.
- 3rd Global Summit on City Tourism, 9-11 December 2014, in Barcelona, Spain.

Contact Us

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