



Executive Council

Ninety-fifth session
Belgrade, Serbia, 27-29 May 2013
Provisional agenda item 3(I)(d)

CE/95/3(I)(d)
Madrid, 10 April 2013
Original: English

Report of the Secretary-General

Part I: Current situation and activities

(d) UNWTO activities in the UN system

I. Introduction

1. The UNWTO has continued forging strong links with the United Nations (UN) and other UN system entities of the UN General Assembly (UNGA), Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) and their subsidiary commissions/bodies' meetings, and in various inter-agency mechanisms and networks with tourism sector relevance. The aim is to ensure that tourism's growing potential is fully recognized at the international level, as a multidisciplinary sector, contributing to economic growth, sustainable development and poverty reduction. UNWTO's New York Liaison Office continued representing UNWTO and actively participating in a wide variety of inter-governmental and inter-agency meetings and events held in the New York UN Headquarters.

II. Activities within the UN system

A. Participation in the Chief Executives Board (CEB) and in substantive issues:

2. Regular participation in the coordination mechanism established by the **Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB)**, supported by its three subsidiary pillars: the **High Level Committee on Programme (HLCP)**, the **High Level Committee on Management (HLCM)** and **United Nations Development Group (UNDG)**, all working closely with a number of major networks and working groups.

A1. Chief Executives Board:

3. The second regular session of the CEB in 2012 was held at UN Headquarters in New York in November. The session was postponed from the original dates, while the private meeting and retreat portion of the session were cancelled altogether due to the impact of Hurricane Sandy. CEB members at duty stations away from New York participated in the session via video and audio connections. The Board confirmed the dates of *5 and 6 April 2013 for the holding of the first regular session of CEB in 2013*, and thanked *UNWTO for accepting to host the session*.



4. UNWTO welcomed for the second time since becoming a UN Specialized Agency the participants of the first regular session of the CEB on Friday 5 and Saturday 6 April in Madrid. The session saw representation from UNSG Ban Ki-Moon, Chair of the CEB and other high-level and distinguished executives from all of the 29-member UN system coordination mechanism. In continuation of the Rio+20 outcome discussions and implementation process, special focus was given as part of the retreat to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the post-2015 development agenda. Prior to the CEB, a number of related side events were held in a separate venue, one of which included the “MDG-Momentum – 1000 Days of Action” campaign launch that aims to raise awareness and call to action on last days to reaching the target date for the MDGs.

A2. Participating in UN system substantive issues and activities:

5. Sustainable tourism is included in the Rio+20 Implementation Matrix, the framework for implementation of *The Future We Want*, with UNWTO as the coordinator of the **Steering Committee on Tourism for Development (SCTD)** bringing together nine UN agencies. The SCTD, with other alliances, caters for the need for renewed Partnerships for Development (MDG8). UNWTO is fully engaged in the **10 Year Framework Programme on Sustainable Consumption and Production (10-YFP)**, a concrete operational outcome of Rio+20. Sustainable tourism, which includes ecotourism among others, has been identified as one of the five areas of programme development. This demonstrates that tourism can make a significant contribution to the three dimensions of sustainable development, has close linkages to other sectors, and can create decent jobs and generate trade opportunities. The 10-YFP will focus on the development, replication and scaling up of sustainable consumption and production (SCP) patterns, at national and regional levels, including the identification of courses of funding to establish a Multi-Partners Trust Fund for the next decade.

6. In direct collaboration with the **World Trade Organization (WTO)** and the **Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)**, including other international stakeholders, UNWTO is preparing a joint study on value chains to be presented at the 4th Global Review on Aid-for-Trade in July 2013. The study aims to draw conclusions on the measures that governments, development partners and the private sector can take to help remove constraints for connecting to value chains. Responses will influence on-going support to help developing, and in particular least-developed countries (LDCs) and small island developing states (SIDS) connect to global trade. The monitoring exercise will survey five sectors of particular economic importance to developing countries: tourism; agri-business and food processing; information and communication technologies (ICT); textiles and apparel; transport and logistics.

7. The Single-year Expert Meeting on Tourism’s Contribution to Sustainable Development on 14-15 March 2013 in Geneva, Switzerland, organized by the **United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD)** had key inputs and participation from the UN Steering Committee on Tourism for Development (SCTD), a UNWTO-led initiative which currently includes nine UN-related agencies working together for development through tourism. The expert meeting aimed at sharing knowledge and identifying key issues and policy options related to how tourism can contribute to sustainable development. The meeting was an opportunity to present work for which the European Commission’s Directorate General for Development and Cooperation (DG DEVCO) commissioned UNWTO to prepare a Guidebook on “Enhancing capacities for Sustainable Tourism for Development”. The Guidebook is an instrument that will enable officials of 180 European Union (EU) Delegations and of headquarters of DG DEVCO to include sustainable tourism development as a component of their programme cycles that are as well in line with the EU agenda for change and global development imperatives such as the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

8. UNWTO participated in the Workshop of the **HLCP Working Group on Climate Change** “Aligning our strengths to advance and sustain climate action”, held in Geneva, Switzerland, in September 2012. One of the main outcomes was to agree on the UN system strategic position and presence at the 18th Conferences of Parties (COP18) of the **UN Framework Convention on Climate Change** (UNFCCC) from 26 November to 8 December 2012 in Doha, Qatar. This Working Group was set up in order to develop a system-wide approach to address climate change and to support the process for a global consensus on climate action on the ground. Within the framework of COP18, UNWTO organized the side event on “The tourism sector response to climate change: mitigation and adaptation initiatives and strategies”. On this occasion the joint **United Nations Environment Programme** (UNEP)-UNWTO publication, entitled *Tourism in the Green Economy* was launched. At the side event, speakers addressed tourism response to climate change and mitigation measures adopted within the transport and accommodation sectors. The following UN agencies participated in the side event: **International Maritime Organization** (IMO), **International Civil Aviation Organization** (ICAO) and UNESCO.

9. In the framework of the 11th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the **Convention on Biological Diversity** (COP-11), four tourism side events were held from 8 to 19 October 2012 in Hyderabad, India. UNWTO, together with CBD, organized one of these side events, under the theme “Highlighting tourism’s contribution to biodiversity conservation and sustainable development”.

10. The closing event of the celebration of the 40th Anniversary of the World Heritage Convention in Kyoto, Japan in November 2012 included the participation of UNWTO. The event, which was co-organized by the **United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization’s** World Heritage Centre (UNESCO-WHC) and the Japan’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Agency for Cultural Affairs, Ministry of the Environment, and Forestry Agency, represented the occasion to explore all issues related to the theme of the anniversary year, World Heritage Convention and Sustainable Development: the Role of Local Communities. During the session, the final Kyoto Vision was formulated with the intention to orient the implementation of the World Heritage Convention going forward. UNWTO continues participating in the Steering Committee of the World Heritage Tourism programme, led by UNESCO’s World Heritage Centre.

11. On 5 April 2013, the **United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime** (UNODC) and UNWTO enhanced their relationship further by signing a Cooperation Agreement that falls within the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) the two entities signed in early 2012. The joint agreement will focus on an “awareness-raising” campaign, whereby both parties will co-operate on raising awareness, inter alia other related activities, amongst international tourists and travellers of the various existing forms of organized crime and the role that tourists and travellers can play in reducing demand for illicit transnational organized crime (TOC) products.

A3. CEB and its subsidiary structure working groups:

12. The **High Level Committee on Management** (HLCM) met in September 2012 and held a retreat in January 2013. This retreat considered ways to enhance the working of HLCM and its networks as well as ways to address topical issues which reduce productivity and efficiency in program delivery of the UN system. This line of work is anticipated to be elaborated further in upcoming HLCM meetings.

13. The **HLCM Finance and Budget** network was attended through video conference (February 2013) and once at the conference venue (September 2012). Likewise a task force on accounting standards (IPSAS) was also attended back to back with the network meeting.

14. Issues addressed in the **working group (WG) on Safety and Security Costs** were also followed through video conference and others through office communications. This network mainly deals with establishing of standard budgetary and financial practices through the UN system, including IPSAS. The IATN (travel) network meeting held in September 2012 in Montreal was also attended.

15. The latest meeting of **HLCM Information Communication and Technologies (ICT)** network held October 2012 was followed through video conference and a symposium on cyber security held in Geneva also in October 2012 was attended. An ICT special group on security met also twice virtually.

B. Participating in UN meetings:

16. In the framework of the **67th Session of the UN General Assembly (UNGA)**, UNWTO participated in the high-level plenary debate of the main part of the UNGA and its relevant Committees. Many Member States expressed the reoccurring theme of the growing inequalities of incomes and rising unemployment, some noting with great concern as well of the recent unprecedented decrease in official development assistance (ODA) and the rise of trade protectionism. Tourism was noted in a number of statements by high-level representatives particularly from SIDS in varying contexts, but moreover with regard to lack of adequate cooperation in addressing climate change. Based on the latest ecotourism report of UNWTO's Secretary-General and with the support and leadership of Morocco, the UNGA unanimously adopted the resolution entitled *Promotion of ecotourism for poverty eradication and environment protection (A/RES/67/223)*. Additionally, the UNGA unanimously declared the decade 2014-2024 as the *Decade of Sustainable Energy for All*, underscoring the importance of energy issues for sustainable development and for the elaboration of the post-2015 development agenda.

17. The **Committee for the Coordination of Statistical Activities (CCSA)** held its last meeting at UN Headquarters (New York, 25 February 2013) and had the participation of UNWTO. The Committee focuses its work on six main activities: efficient functioning of the statistical system, common standards and platforms, development of methodologies, inter-institutional support, outreach, and advocacy for statistics.

18. UNWTO has participated at a number of related meetings of the **HLCP Senior Managers Group for Disaster Risk Reduction and Resilience** (September, October, November 2012), convened by its Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General for the UN system, amongst others, including the participation at a retreat hosted by UNESCO in Paris on Disaster, Risk Reduction and Resilience. The objective of this group is to mainstream disaster risk reduction by finding common engagement and collaboration among all UN programmes.

19. The 3rd Global Coordination Meeting (October 2012) of the **Cooperative Arrangement for the Prevention of Spread of Communicable Disease through Air Travel (CAPSCA)** had the participation of UNWTO. The CAPSCA is a cooperative arrangement between international organizations, amongst others, ICAO, WHO, UNWTO, WFP, ACI, and IATA.

20. **Inter-Agency Committee on Radiological and Nuclear Emergencies (IACRNE)** (December 2012, February 2013) UNWTO became member of an ad hoc working group on air and maritime transportation, coordinated by IACRNE, with the aim to facilitate coordinated and consistent preparedness and response amongst concerned international organizations and international trade associations in the event of a radiation incident or emergency that is having or that is perceived to have an impact on the international air and/or maritime navigation.

21. UNWTO participated at the 1st Plenary Meeting of the **Intergovernmental platform on Biodiversity & Ecosystem Services (IPBES)** in Bonn, on January 2013. The platform was established

as an independent intergovernmental body open to all UN Member states to assess the state of the planet's biodiversity, its ecosystems and the essential services they provide to society.

22. Under the Central Fund for Influenza Action (CFIA) project on *Targeted Communications for Travelers, the Travel Industry, and Tourist Destinations – Phase II*, UNWTO provided the final narrative progress report for the **United Nations System Influenza Coordination (UNSIC)** in February 2013.

III. Actions to be taken by the Executive Council

23. The Executive Council is requested:

- (a) To take note of the unanimous decision of the UN General Assembly in adopting the resolution entitled *Promotion of ecotourism for poverty eradication and environment protection (A/RES/67/223)* and to further support the work of UNWTO in this area;
- (b) To recognize and continue supporting the Secretariat in mainstreaming tourism and building upon the “The Future We Want” document, e.g., through key initiatives such as the 10-YFP, for a *post-Rio+20* Tourism for Development Agenda within the UN system and in support to Member States;
- (c) To encourage the Secretariat to continue its participation in the discussions leading to the formulation of Sustainable Development Goals as part of the post-2015 Development Agenda;
- (d) To acknowledge the important work of the Secretariat related to its commissioned project of the European Commission’s Directorate General for Development and Cooperation (DG DEVCO) and its opportunity to mobilize ODA for developing countries;
- (e) To encourage the Secretariat in engaging actively in the preparations and processes which will contribute to the Third UN Conference on Small Island and Developing States scheduled for 2014 in Samoa; and
- (f) To take note of the Secretariat’s participation in substantive issues of the UN System and to support the continuation of its participation and involvement in those issues as well as in the CEB subsidiary structure working groups.