

AM News

VOL. 75 - April 2025



UN Tourism



Dear Affiliate Members,

I am pleased to introduce the latest edition of the Affiliate Members Newsletter. This monthly publication will keep you updated on the latest news, events, and initiatives related to your membership and the Affiliate Members network. Also included is the calendar of events for 2025, featuring key UN Tourism events.

The upcoming months will be rich in events and initiatives for our Affiliate Members, especially as we prepare to host the elections for the Affiliate Members Board for the 2026-2029 mandate, the representative body of all Affiliate Members in the Organization. I strongly encourage all Affiliate Members to stay tuned to AMConnected+ to stay up to date with news and updates regarding this important topic.

I would also like to highlight the high level of engagement by our Affiliate Members during the recently celebrated UN Tourism Statutory Meetings and Thematic Events. I look forward to the same promising results in the upcoming UN Tourism Statutory Meetings:

- Regional Commission for Asia and the Pacific (15-16 April, in Jakarta, Indonesia)*
- Regional Commission for Europe (4-6 June, in Baku, Azerbaijan)*
- 123rd UN Tourism Executive Council (29-30 May, Segovia, Spain)*
- Regional Commission for Africa (11-13 June, in Abuja, Federal Republic of Nigeria)*
- Regional Commission for the Americas (8-10 -TBC- July, Lima, Peru)*

I am pleased to share that the new tools and functionalities of the AMConnected+ platform have received very positive feedback from Affiliate Members. In particular, the new AMConnected+ app, available for iOS and Android, allowing to stay connected to the network on the go from mobile devices, anywhere and at any time.

As we continue into 2025—a landmark year celebrating the 50th Anniversary of UN Tourism—I invite you to stay connected through the AMConnected+ platform, where you can find updates, resources, and opportunities to collaborate with other valued Affiliate Members and in the main UN Tourism's initiatives and projects.

From the Affiliate Members and Public-Private Collaboration Department, we remain committed to supporting your projects and initiatives to the best of our abilities. We welcome your comments and feedback at any time.

*Sincerely,
Ion Vilcu
Director*

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Ion Vilcu', with a long, sweeping horizontal stroke extending to the right.

AGENDA OF THE AFFILIATE MEMBERS - EVENTS 2025

UN TOURISM STATUTORY AND HIGH-LEVEL MEETINGS

UN TOURISM GENERAL ASSEMBLY & EXECUTIVE COUNCILS

29-30 May	<u>123rd Executive Council</u>	Segovia, Spain	In Person
Nov. (TBC)	124th Executive Council	Riyadh, Saudi Arabia	In Person
7-12 Nov. (TBC)	26th UN Tourism General Assembly	Riyadh, Saudi Arabia	In Person
Nov. (TBC)	45th Affiliate Members Plenary Session	Riyadh, Saudi Arabia	In Person

UN TOURISM REGIONAL COMMISSIONS

11-13 Feb.	<u>51st Regional Commission for the Middle East</u>	Doha, Qatar	In Person
15-16 April	<u>37th Joint Meeting of East Asia and the Pacific and South Asia</u>	Jakarta, Indonesia	In Person
4-6 June	<u>71st Regional Commission for Europe</u>	Baku, Azerbaijan	In Person
11-13 June	<u>68th Regional Commission for Africa</u>	Abuja, Nigeria	In Person
8-10 July (TBC)	70th Regional Commission for the Americas	Lima, Peru	In Person

BOARD OF THE AFFILIATE MEMBERS

29 May (TBC)	61st Meeting of the Board of the Affiliate Members	Spain	In Person
11 Nov. (TBC)	62nd Meeting of the Board of the Affiliate Members	TBC	In Person

COMMITTEE ON MATTERS RELATED TO AFFILIATE MEMBERSHIP

29 May (TBC)	7th Meeting of the Committee on Matters Related to Affiliate Membership (CMAM)	Spain	In Person
8 Nov. (TBC)	8th Meeting of the Committee on Matters Related to Affiliate Membership (CMAM)		

UN TOURISM/AM-PPC THEMATIC EVENTS WITH THE PARTICIPATION OF AFFILIATE MEMBERS

8-10 April	2nd UN Tourism Africa & Americas Summit	Livingstone, Zambia,	In Person
23-25 April	2nd UN Tourism Regional Forum on Gastronomy Tourism for Africa	Arusha, Tanzania	In Person
28-29 April	Expo Japan Women Pavillion: Empowering Innovation, Investment, and Inclusion	Osaka, Japan	In Person
12-13 May	World Tourism Forum Prague 2025	Prague, Czech Republic	In Person
24-25 June	UN Tourism Global Forum on Urban Tourism: Shaping the Future of Urban Tourism	Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran	In Person
22-24 July	2nd UN Tourism and ICAO Ministerial Conference on Tourism and Air Transport in Africa	Luanda, Angola	In Person
27 Sept.	World Tourism Day 2025	Melaka, Malaysia	In Person
Sept. (TBC)	9th UN Tourism Global Wine Tourism Conference	Plovdiv, Bulgaria	In Person
Oct. (TBC)	10th UN Tourism World Forum on Gastronomy Tourism	San Sebastian, Spain	In Person
2-6 Dec.	III International Seminar on Tourism Law	La Habana, Cuba	In Person

AM-PPC NEWS

UN Tourism and ACES sign a MoU to advance Sustainable Sports Tourism

UN Tourism - through the Affiliate Members and Public-Private Collaboration Department (AM-PPC) - and ACES (Worldwide Capitals and Cities of Sport Federation) signed a Memorandum of Understanding to strengthen the role of sports as a driver of sustainable and responsible tourism development.

This partnership aims to promote sports as a key pillar for sustainable tourism development, facilitate knowledge exchange and best practices in sports tourism, and advocate for sports as a tool for social change.

This MOU reaffirms UN Tourism's commitment to leveraging the transformative power of sports tourism, ensuring it drives economic growth, local communities' engagement, and sustainability.

On this occasion, the director of AM-PPC Ion Vilcu and ACES president and founder Gian Francesco Lupattelli, and their respective teams held a meeting to discuss upcoming events and initiatives focused on the growing field of sports tourism.

You can find more information [HERE](#)



AM-PPC NEWS

University of Málaga's Faculty of Tourism honors UN Tourism for institutional cooperation

During the recent Awards, Honors, and Distinctions Ceremony held on March 26, the Faculty of Tourism at the University of Málaga presented the Honorary Distinction for Institutional Cooperation to UN Tourism (World Tourism Organization) in recognition of its unwavering commitment to sustainable tourism development and international public-private collaboration.

The award was accepted by Mr. Juan Carlos Baena Franco, Senior Project Specialist at the organization, on behalf of Mr. Ion Vilcu, Director of the Affiliate Members and Public-Private Collaboration Department.

The award was presented by Mr. Jonathan Gómez Punzón, Head of the General Directorate of Tourism and City Promotion of the Málaga City Council.

This recognition highlights UN Tourism's ongoing efforts to foster strategic alliances between governments, the private sector, and academia, promoting innovation, inclusion, and sustainability as core pillars of tourism's future.

You can find more information [HERE](#)



AM-PPC NEWS

UN Tourism supports the 40th edition of the Alimara Night 2025

The Affiliate Members and Public-Private Collaboration Department had the honour of participating in the ceremony of the CETT Alimara Awards - Barcelona 2025, organized by the Affiliate Member CETT, and celebrating this year its 40th Anniversary. On this occasion, UN Tourism delivered the awards in the "Trough Sustainability" category.

The awards were granted to projects selected by the Jury, in which UN Tourism participated, based on criteria such as the preservation of biodiversity, the rational use of resources, benefits to the local community, and the distribution of generated wealth, as well as respect for and valorization of culture and heritage in the tourism sector over the past year.

With 40 years of history, reflecting the evolution of the tourism sector, the awards are an initiative of CETT, a university recognized for its training and research in tourism, hospitality, and gastronomy, for its outstanding work and connection with the sector. CETT is affiliated with the University of Barcelona and organizes the awards together with B-Travel Tourism Fair, in collaboration with the Generalitat de Catalunya.

These awards highlight the joint efforts and collaboration between academia, public administrations, and the private sector to advance toward a more sustainable, inclusive, and innovative vision of tourism.

You can find more information [HERE](#)



Episode 9 of the ATREVIA-UN Tourism Podcast “ON THE GO” is now available

The Affiliate Member ATREVIA and UN Tourism are jointly producing a series of podcasts that will address current events, trends, and challenges in the tourism sector with the participation of managers and experts, from UN Tourism itself, as well as representatives of companies and relevant public entities in the sector, Affiliate Members and who are leading specific areas of the tourism industry.

The objective of the podcast is to highlight the valuable knowledge, information, and best practices for the sector of our Affiliate Members, reaching a wide and diverse audience thanks to the potential offered by a dynamic format such as this series of podcasts.

Despite notable progress in gender equality, women in the tourism sector still face barriers to reaching leadership positions.

Addressing these disparities is a key objective of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and UN Tourism continues to promote gender equality and women's empowerment within the industry.

- How can we foster greater female representation in leadership roles?
- What strategies can encourage the next generation of women leaders in tourism?

Speakers:

- Sonia Lázaro, Accounts Director, ATREVIA (moderator)
- Isabel Oliver, Advisor to the UN Tourism Secretary-General
- Rafael Bover, Co-founder & COO, Hotelverse
- Ana Abade, Public Affairs Manager, Booking (Affiliate Member)

You can find more information [HERE](#)



AM-PPC NEWS

AMConnected+ Now With Its Own App

Are you a UN Tourism Affiliate Member new to the AMConnected+ platform, and willing to make the most out of this network?

Through AMConnected+, you can easily manage your organization's documents.

In AMConnected+, private projects provide a secure space to access your most important documents quickly and easily, such as:

- Executive Council's Decision
- Application Form
- Certificate of Membership
- UN Tourism Affiliate Member Logo and respective Logo Request Form
- even your financial documents.

Click on the below links to find out more:

- [Easily Manage Your Organization's Documents](#)
- [Gestiona fácilmente los documentos de tu organización](#)

If you have any doubts, the Thematic Channel "First Steps" provides the main guidelines on how to use the platform. Access it [HERE](#)

And do not forget, your community guides are available to assist you. You can reach out to them: [HERE](#)

AMConnected+, the exclusive Affiliate Members platform, now has its own smartphone app. It is available for iOS and Android under the name "AMConnected+."

See you on AMConnected+!



AMConnected+

Stay connected on the go!

Download the new AMConnected+ App on your phone.

iOS:



Android:



UN TOURISM HIGHLIGHTS

UN Tourism and Lithuania Partner to Boost Innovation and Visibility

UN Tourism and the Ministry of the Economy and Innovation of Lithuania have agreed on a shared vision for tourism development in the country for the period 2025–2027. In addition to accelerating digital transformation, innovation and investments in the sector, the strengthened partnership will also focus on governance and destination management to ensure the continued growth of Lithuanian tourism.

The collaborative plans were set out during an official visit to Vilnius by UN Tourism Secretary-General Zurab Pololikashvili, as he met with Minister of the Economy and Innovation Lukas Savickas, Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs, Julius Pranevičius, members of parliament, and key tourism stakeholders.

In Vilnius, UN Tourism and Lithuania agreed to deepen cooperation in several priority areas:

- Tourism promotion & destination marketing
- Education and workforce development
- Startup Challenge –
- Support new governance models for destination management and enhancing rural tourism
- Investment Guidelines to position Lithuania as a prime destination for sustainable tourism investment

The Secretary-General's visit included a high-level address to the Committee on Economics at the Lithuanian Parliament, where he commended Lithuania's post-pandemic recovery, leadership in digital innovation, and efforts to ensure inclusive rural development. He also acknowledged Lithuania's proactive participation in international dialogues, including its role in the UN Tourism Executive Council.

You can find more information [HERE](#)



UN TOURISM HIGHLIGHTS

UN Tourism Secretary-General Concludes Landmark Visit to China, Strengthening Global Tourism Cooperation

The leadership of UN Tourism has successfully concluded a high-profile visit to China, reinforcing strategic partnerships and advancing sustainable tourism initiatives across key regions. The visit by Secretary-General Zurab Pololikashvili featured engagements with senior government officials, industry leaders, and international development agencies, further deepening UN Tourism's collaboration with China.

The visit marks a milestone in UN Tourism's partnership with China, underscoring the shared vision of advancing sustainable tourism and economic progress worldwide.

Throughout the visit, the Secretary-General reiterated UN Tourism's support for China's Global Development Initiative (GDI) and the vision of a Community with a Shared Future for Mankind. UN Tourism remains committed to fostering inclusive, innovative, and partnership-driven frameworks that align with the UN 2030 Sustainable Development Goals.

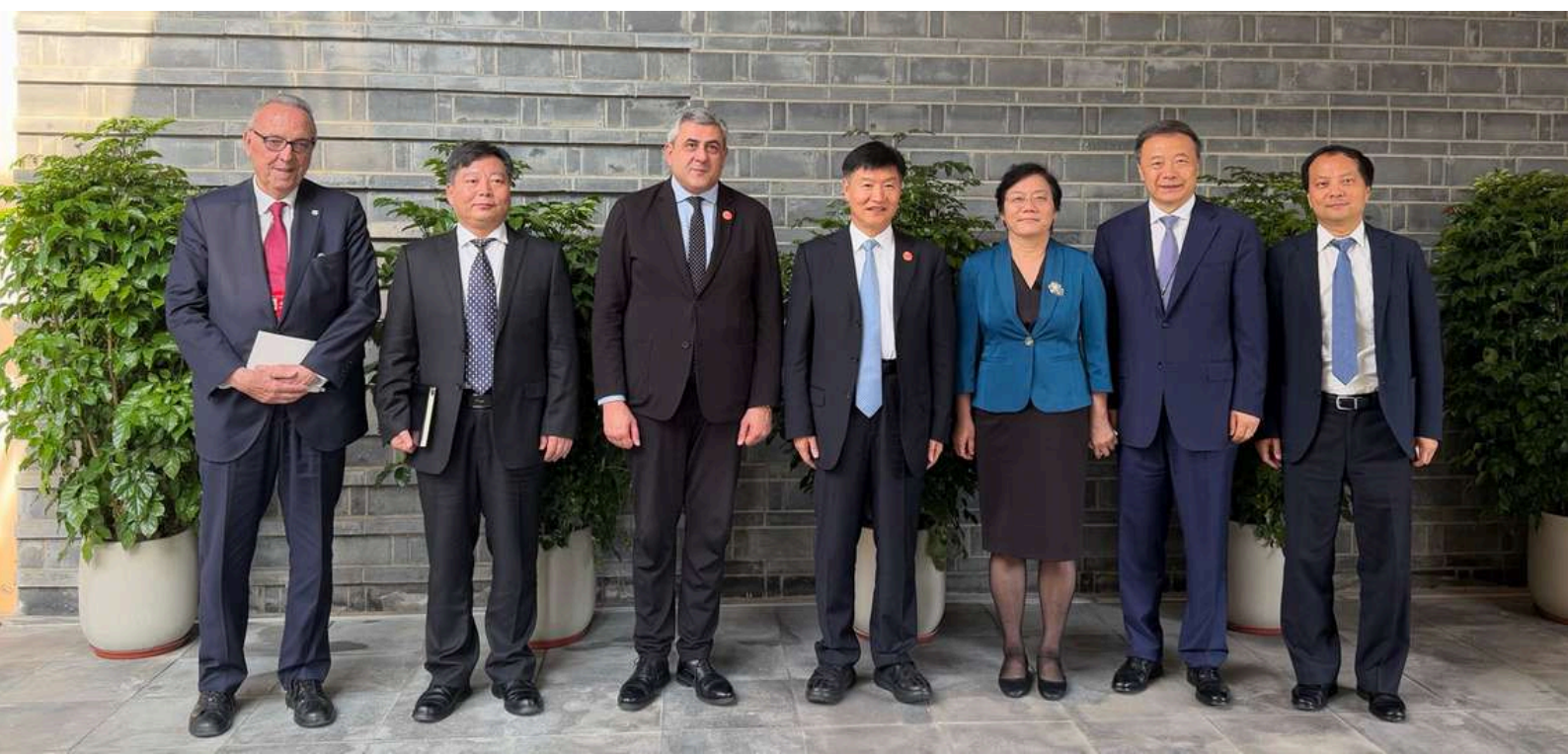
During meetings with senior officials in Shanghai, including Chen Jining, Member of the Politburo of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Committee and Secretary of the Shanghai Municipal Committee, the Secretary-General reaffirmed the commitment to regional tourism development.

As well as engaging public sector leaders, the UN Tourism delegation also strengthened ties with the private sector in China, by visiting Trip.com Group headquarters.

In Hainan Province, the Secretary-General held productive discussions with the Governor, Vice Governor, and senior officials from the Hainan Provincial Department of Culture and Tourism.

The Secretary-General met with Pansy Ho, Vice Chairman and Secretary-General of GTEF and UN Tourism Ambassador, to discuss ongoing strategic cooperation and preparations for the 2025 Global Tourism Economy Forum. The dialogue reinforced the critical role of tourism in driving global economic growth and collaboration.

You can find more information [HERE](#)



UN TOURISM HIGHLIGHTS

UN Adopts New Tourism Employment Indicator to Guide Efforts Toward the SDGs

The United Nations has taken a major step in recognizing tourism's role in sustainable development by adopting a new tourism employment indicator as part of the official Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) Indicator Framework.

Endorsed at the 56th session of the UN Statistical Commission, this landmark decision means that—for the first time—global data on tourism employment will be systematically monitored within the SDG monitoring process. It also increases the number of official tourism SDG indicators from two to three, raising recognition of the sector's global contribution to economic and social progress.

UN Tourism Secretary-General Zurab Pololikashvili says: "What gets measured, gets done. As part of Goal 8, we strive for sustainable tourism that creates jobs. The new tourism employment indicator goes beyond GDP to enhance our understanding of tourism's potential for social progress. Policymakers will be better equipped to identify gaps, address inequalities, and maximize tourism's social and economic benefits—ensuring no one is left behind."

UN Tourism's most recent survey of Member States' priorities revealed a strong preference for the Organization to work towards ensuring tourism contributes to the achievement of the SDGs. The new indicator, with UN Tourism as its custodian, delivers the evidence to advance this priority.

You can find more information [HERE](#)



AFFILIATE MEMBERS NEWS

Risk Management for Outdoor Programs Online Certification Course

Registration is now open for Viristar's online Risk Management for Outdoor Programs training. This comprehensive 40-hour course provides outdoor, wilderness, travel, adventure, and related programs with essential skills to enhance safety practices and manage risk effectively.

2025 Course Dates:

- April 2 – April 30
- May 7 – June 4
- June 4 – July 2
- July 2 – July 30
- August 6 – September 3
- September 3 – October 1
- October 1 – October 29
- November 5 – December 3

The course covers theoretical models of incident causation and prevention, safety standards, and detailed procedures for helping prevent and mitigate incidents.

The curriculum addresses risk assessment and safety management practices, an overview of general legal principles, and adventure activity standards and good practice guides.

Graduates complete the course with valuable, practical skills and expert guidance for improving safety at their organization.

Learn more and register at <https://www.viristar.com/course/risk-management-for-outdoor-programs/>.



VIRISTAR®



Risk Management *for* Outdoor Programs

AFFILIATE MEMBERS NEWS

Calling All Filmmakers! Food Film Menu 2025 – Open Call

IGCAT (International Institute of Gastronomy, Culture, Arts, and Tourism) invites filmmakers from around the world to submit their short films for the Food Film Menu 2025, an international competition celebrating the rich diversity of food cultures, traditions, and regional gastronomic heritage.

Each year, the Food Film Menu showcases up to 14 outstanding winning short films that capture the deep connections between food, heritage, and local identity. The selected films will receive international recognition and will be promoted across IGCAT's website, social media channels, and global partner networks, as well as featured in international film festivals. For full submission details, guidelines, and to enter your film, check the open-call: <https://shorturl.at/YUG2A>

Why Participate?

By taking part in the Food Film Menu 2025, filmmakers contribute to the global movement of raising awareness about the value of food heritage and sustainability. Winning films will not only be showcased internationally but will also enter a social media vote, where audiences worldwide will select the Public's Favourite Film.

Themes and Categories

The competition is open to a wide range of food-related themes, including but not limited to:

- Regenerative Pathways – Encouraging sustainable and locally rooted tourism practices. Category partner: Regenerative Vanua
- Feeding the Planet – Exploring food origins, biodiversity, and food security. Category partner: Slow Food
- Educating for Our Future – Highlighting the importance of food education and sustainable consumption. Category partner: Future Food Institute
- Others.

How to Submit Your Film

Deadline: 27 June 2025

Films should be no longer than **5 minutes** in duration. All languages are accepted, but films must include **English subtitles**.

Short films should either be submitted: through FilmFreeway: <https://filmfreeway.com/FoodFilmMenu> or via email. Download the **registration form** from [IGCAT's website](#). Fill in the form and send it to communications@igcat.org together with a link to your film/video.



FOOD FILM MENU 2025

– Open Call –

Deadline: 27 June 2025

– Awarded by –



AFFILIATE MEMBERS NEWS

Diriyah Company Takes Broad Strategic Steps: Luxury Residences, A Promising Media District, & Development Program

Diriyah Company continues its ambitious development journey with confident improvements, achieving significant milestones in expanding its portfolio of premium residential units and launching impactful initiatives.

In a move reflecting its ambitious vision for the future, Diriyah Company has launched the "Media and Innovation District," which aims to become a vibrant hub for driving creativity and technological advancement. This district spans an area of 250,000 square meters of modern office spaces, in addition to 450 contemporary residential units and 15,000 square meters of dynamic retail spaces. It is expected that this new district will attract leading global companies in the fields of media, technology, and communications.

Regarding strategic partnerships, Diriyah Company announced its collaboration with the renowned Italian design house Armani during its participation in MIPIM 2025 in Cannes, France.

This partnership will lead to the launch of 15 unique residential units featuring bespoke interiors individually curated by iconic Italian fashion designer Giorgio Armani located in the heart of "Diriyah Square".

As part of its ongoing efforts to empower and upskill the Diriyah community, Diriyah Company also recently announced the launch of the fifth edition of the Diriyah Graduate Development Program. This program is designed to empower young talent from Diriyah, equipping participants with essential skills and knowledge, and enabling them to contribute to the ongoing transformation of Diriyah and the Kingdom. The program offers graduates a unique educational experience, enhanced through collaboration with top experts, consultants, and management institutes.

A key part of Diriyah's development strategy, the program aligns with the goals of Saudi Vision 2030 by focusing on personal and professional development and fostering a strong connection to the values of Diriyah.



AFFILIATE MEMBERS NEWS

CIFFT Circuit 2025 – Final Call to Enter the World's Most Prestigious Tourism Video Competition

The International Committee of Tourism Film Festivals (CIFFT), Affiliate Member of UN Tourism, is entering the final stage of submissions for the CIFFT Circuit 2025 – the exclusive global competition that rewards the best tourism promotional videos and campaigns.

Tourism Boards, DMOs, private companies, production agencies, and institutions still have a last chance to join this unique journey.

The final deadline to participate in 6 leading international festivals is June 10, 2025. These festivals include:

- Cannes Corporate Media & TV Awards (France)
- ART&TUR International Tourism Film Festival (Portugal)
- SILAFEST – Silver Lake Tourfilm Festival (Serbia)
- Terres Travel Festival – Films & Creativity (Spain)
- US International Awards (USA)
- Zagreb Tourfilm Festival (Croatia)

The CIFFT Circuit is more than a competition – it is a global platform that increases visibility, enhances credibility, and places tourism content in front of international audiences and experts. Winners accumulate points for the CIFFT Rankings and may qualify for the World Tourism Film Awards, where the "World's Best Tourism Films" are officially announced.

As part of the benefits of being a UN Tourism Affiliate Member, we are pleased to offer a special promocode – UN2025 – which provides a €250 discount per entry.

Now is the time to give your destination or tourism service the international recognition it deserves. Each award earned throughout the CIFFT Circuit contributes to the CIFFT Rankings, and the top productions will be honored at the World Tourism Film Awards, the official grand finale of the competition held annually in late November.

More info & Entry Kit: www.cifft.com
Contact: hugo.marcos@filmservice.at



FINAL CALL



CIFFT CIRCUIT 2025

Enter the World's Most Prestigious
Tourism Video Competition

Promocode: **UN2025**

AFFILIATE MEMBERS NEWS

Grupo Piñero's Los + Ecoistas Awards arrive for the first time in Mexico and return to the Dominican Republic

Grupo Piñero, with more than 50 years in the tourism sector, reinforces its commitment to sustainability through the Somos Ecoístas movement, an initiative that promotes environmental awareness in the industry. As part of this effort, the Los + Ecoístas Awards arrive for the first time in Mexico and celebrate their second edition in the Dominican Republic.

These awards recognize suppliers, collaborators and allies that implement sustainable practices in key areas such as energy and climate, circular economy and biodiversity. These awards seek to make visible and reward private companies, which assume real commitments to generate a positive impact on people and the planet.

With this initiative, Grupo Piñero reinforces its commitment to a sustainable business model, highlighting those that make sustainability a fundamental pillar in their operations.

The Awards ceremony in Mexico will take place on May 6, 2025 at Jaguar Park and in the Dominican Republic on May 14 at the inauguration at the Dominican Annual Tourism Exchange (DATE 2025).

With these recognitions we continue to build a more responsible future, recognizing those who, with their effort and dedication, are transforming the industry towards a more eco-conscious management.



AFFILIATE MEMBERS NEWS

Almada 2032: A Destination with Soul and a Vision for the Future of Tourism

The future of tourism in Almada takes on a new vision with the launch of the Strategic Plan for Almada Tourism, developed and coordinated by IPDT-Tourism. This plan aims to establish Almada as an authentic, sustainable, and attractive destination where residents and visitors coexist in a unique and enriching experience.

From the outset, IPDT adopted an integrated and participatory approach, conducting field visits, consultation sessions, and satisfaction surveys. These initiatives identified key challenges and defined strategic solutions for the region's tourism development.

The positioning "Almada: Somos Alma!" reflects the essence of the destination: a vibrant city that stays true to its identity, values authenticity, and promotes quality tourism. The plan envisions Almada in 2032 as a well-structured and differentiated destination, capable of attracting tourists and investors aligned with territorial enhancement and sustainability.

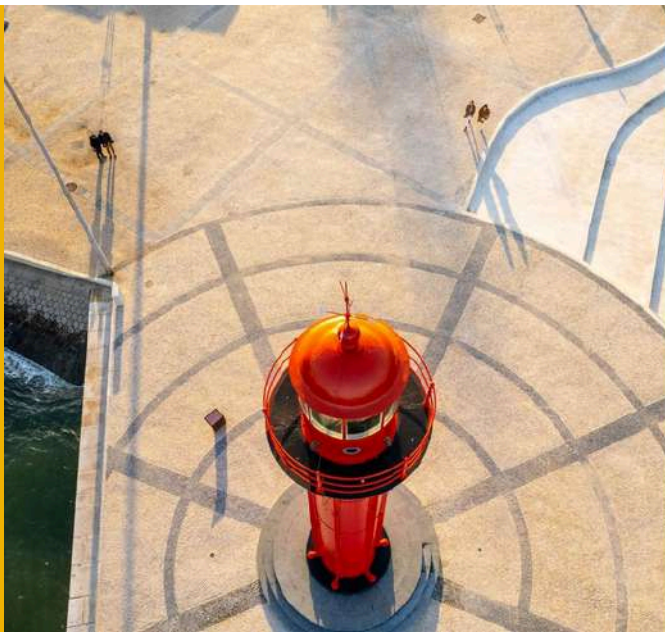
The plan is based on a triangular geographical model, representing Almada's three key territorial elements:

the Rio Tejo, the Atlantic Ocean, and the urban area. This concept guides a more localized tourism planning approach, supported by six key strategic areas:

- The residents are protagonists;
- Distinctive and authentic tourism products;
- Sustainable and innovative tourism businesses;
- A high-quality and accessible public space;
- Destination promotion, reinforcing Almada's brand;
- Connectivity, ensuring accessibility.

Almada's leading tourism products stand out for their diversity and unique identity: culture and urban landscape, which define the city's character, and beaches and water sports, recognized both nationally and internationally.

The international promotion strategy focuses on direct communication with the German, Spanish, French and Portuguese markets, and indirect communication (via local operators) with the Brazilian, Canadian and American markets. IPDT has embraced this project with great enthusiasm, adopting a pioneering approach that aims to maintain values such as quality and authenticity.



Strategic Plan for Almada Tourism

2024-2032

AFFILIATE MEMBERS NEWS

SHTM Study Recommends Creating Integrated Tourism Cluster Brand for the Greater Bay Area

As the Greater Bay Area (GBA) rapidly emerges as a key tourist destination with potential to become a world-leading leisure travel hub, the School of Hotel and Tourism Management (SHTM) explores strategies for developing an integrated GBA tourism brand in a recent study.

Led by Professor Kam Hung, Principal Investigator and SHTM Professor, the research team adopted a robust mixed-method approach in the study, and conducted site visits across 11 GBA cities, analysed 200,000 online reviews and interviewed 182 stakeholders, including residents, cultural and tourism officials and business owners. The findings revealed that while individual cities emphasise their unique identities, a cohesive regional brand remains underdeveloped.

To address this, the study proposed a brand architecture that balances city-specific strengths with a unified regional image. It recommends diversifying tourism offerings by integrating the unique assets of each GBA city into curated theme-based itineraries—

such as heritage, nature, and family-friendly experiences—to cater to different market segments.

Additionally, the study highlighted the need for a cross-regional unit to coordinate branding efforts alongside a multifaceted marketing approach to raise awareness of the cluster's tourism offerings. Recommendations include implementing synchronised online and offline marketing initiatives, such as leveraging social media to draw younger audiences, offering incentives for travelling to multiple destinations and hosting themed events and festivals across cities.

A well-defined and cohesive regional tourism brand would benefit the GBA in the long run – not just economically but also by sharpening its competitive edge, fostering cross-regional collaboration, supporting sustainability development, as well as enhancing its global recognition and influence. The GBA's success will not only benefit the region but also serve as a model for other destinations worldwide. The SHTM remains committed to advancing the tourism industry through research and innovation.



AFFILIATE MEMBERS NEWS

Sustainable Greece: 10 Eco-Travel Experiences

The Sustainable Greece campaign, developed in partnership with the Greek National Tourism Organisation and Mastercard, is one of the latest additions to TOPOSOPHY's ongoing efforts to promote social sustainability. With sustainability becoming a key consideration for 71% of global travellers, the campaign aimed to position Greece as a leading destination for eco-conscious travellers by offering 10 curated experiences that balanced environmental awareness, cultural authenticity, and local impact.

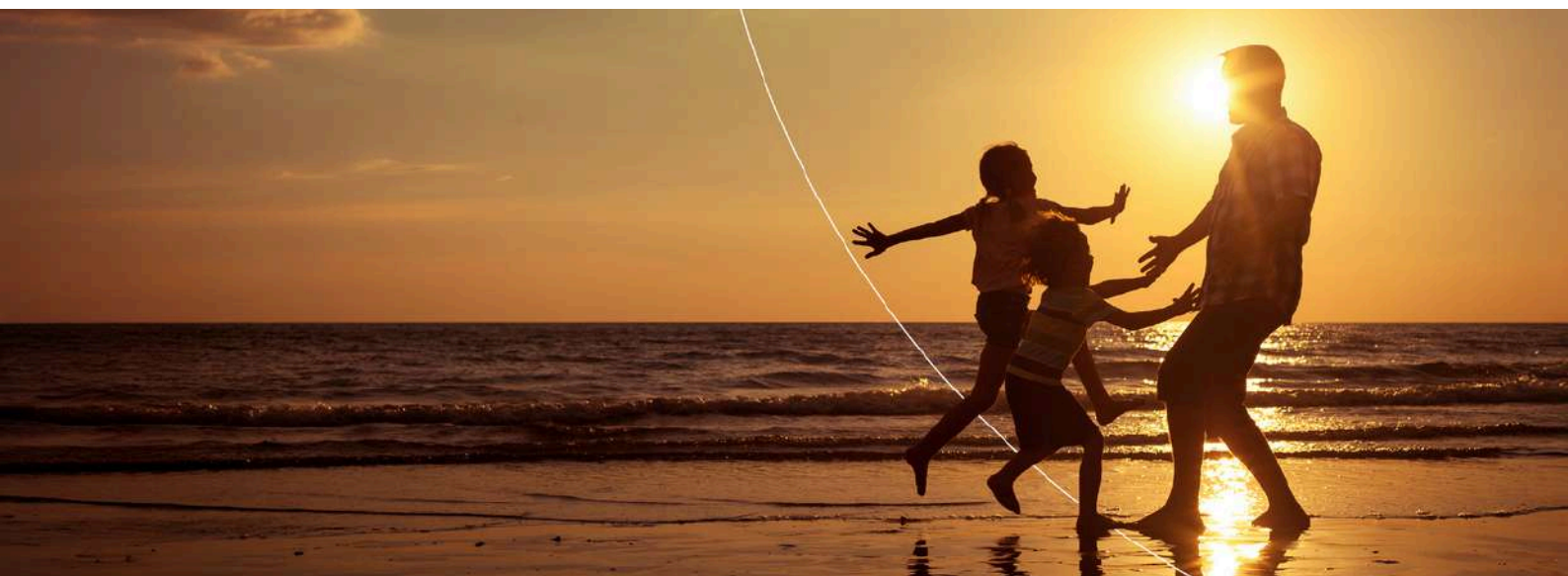
TOPOSOPHY designed an integrated strategy that combined global benchmarking with tailored messaging for key markets such as the UK and Australia. The campaign was implemented across multiple digital platforms—Google Ads, Meta, YouTube, LastMinute.com, and the Visit Greece mobile app—maximising visibility and engagement among eco-friendly audiences. A dedicated microsite, sustainability.visitgreece.gr, acted as the campaign's central hub, featuring all experiences alongside their respective educational content and, most importantly, the "Visitor Pledge," which encouraged travellers to adopt responsible practices during their stay.

Through dedicated storytelling and smart digital promotion, the campaign highlighted Greece's natural assets and cultural richness while supporting community-based tourism and the local economy by encouraging year-round tourism. The curated experiences spanned from nature-based adventures to meaningful cultural interactions, promoting hidden gem destinations with strong sustainability credentials.

Building on our experience with destination marketing and sustainable tourism development, TOPOSOPHY delivered a campaign that not only raised awareness but also invited travellers to actively participate in shaping a more responsible future for Greek tourism.

By positioning Greece as a leading sustainable destination, the initiative supported year-round visitation and long-term destination value. The campaign's collaborative nature, clear purpose, and measurable outcomes reinforced Greece's status as a forward-thinking, eco-friendly destination on the global stage. To read more about [this initiative](#) and explore more of our [recent work](#) on social sustainability, visit our [website](#).

TOP·OSOPHY
PLACE MAKING & MARKETING AGENCY



AFFILIATE MEMBERS NEWS

Inclusive and Accessible Tourism in Smart Destinations: a systematic literature review

The Smart Tourism Destinations (STD) are characterized by their capability to incorporate technology and innovation into tourism management and experiences. Based on this premise, it is proposed that aspects such as accessibility and inclusion should be integrated across all aspects of the STD models to build equitable and efficient destinations focused on satisfying all people's needs. However, the theoretical relationship between accessibility, inclusion and smart tourism still has significant gaps in the specialized literature on the topic. Therefore, the objective of this documentary study was to identify and analyze the current state of research on inclusive and accessible in STDs, and to propose a theoretical model that articulates these approaches.

To achieve this goal, a systematic literature review was conducted using the PRISMA statement (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses) to ensure transparency in the review process. The search was conducted in the scientific databases SpringerLink and Scopus. After applying selection, exclusion and inclusion criteria, the final sample consisted of 23 relevant scientific articles for the review.

The results show a progressive increase in scientific production on the topic, with a peak in 2023. Research predominates in Europe, with Spain having the largest number of studies, while Latin America is underrepresented, with Brazil being the only country with research on the topic. Regarding methodological approaches, quantitative studies stand out, followed by theoretical and qualitative research.

Among the main findings, on one hand, the state of the art enables the identification of trends, approaches and gaps in research on inclusion and accessibility in STDs. On the other hand, a theoretical model is proposed, composed of six key dimensions: accessibility, technology, information, personalized services, regulations, and promotion. These findings contribute to both scientific knowledge and professional tourism practices by offering a comprehensive framework that encourages the formulation of inclusive policies and sustainable development in tourism destinations.



AFFILIATE MEMBERS NEWS

Call for Skål International Sustainable Tourism Awards 2025

We are thrilled to launch submissions for the 2025 Sustainable Tourism Awards! Since 2002, these awards have recognized outstanding innovation and impact in sustainable tourism.

Organizations from the public and private sectors, educational institutions, NGOs, and government agencies worldwide are invited to apply and showcase their commitment to sustainability.

Collaborations

Skål International continues its partnership with esteemed UN Tourism as foreseen on the Affiliate Members Department Programme of Work 2024-2025.

UN Tourism's support of these awards provides Skål International with their global platforms to promote the STA program and its winners, is an opportunity to showcase excellent "best practices" that can serve as great examples for other institutions, companies, and countries to help in their learning and practice for a more sustainable future. Winning projects will be promoted through various platforms including UN Tourism's media channels, significantly increasing their visibility.

Additionally, our ongoing partnership with Biosphere Tourism and the Responsible Tourism Institute since 2018 continues and they will grant the winners with the special Skål Biosphere Award.

Judging

A distinguished panel of industry leaders and experts will evaluate the entries, ensuring a rigorous and fair assessment. Their identities will be officially revealed during the 84th Skål World Congress during the Awards Ceremony to be held in Cusco, Peru, on 26 September 2025.

Key Updates:

- Call for Entries is Open
- Submission Deadline: 31 May
- Judging Period conclusion: 1 May – 15 August
- Winners Announcement: 26 September

For more information, consult our full Rules Guide <https://skal.org/web/content/1022699> or contact awards@skal.org



AM-PPC

the Affiliate Members and Public-Private Collaboration Department

The UN Tourism Affiliate Members and Public-Private Department (AM-PPC) fosters public-private cooperation in tourism and the synergies among Affiliate Members and Member States. Bringing together around 500 private companies, associations, educational institutions, and DMOs, the Affiliate Membership provides an unparalleled space for members to engage in dialogue, exchange knowledge, support new measures and create synergies that promote the development of the sector, and contribute to the promotion of the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).



OUR MISSION

Helping private entities to forge alliances, fostering dialogue and collaboration, as well as strengthen synergies between Member States and Affiliate Members to face the challenges of the tourism sector

OUR PURPOSE

Supporting the development of the tourism sector by contributing to the achievement of the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals

OUR VALUE PROPOSITION

Assisting our members in the development of a more inclusive, responsible, sustainable and accessible tourism industry

Main Objectives of the Membership

1

VISIBILITY

Enhance the work of our Affiliate Members through the new communication channels

2

NETWORKING

Promote the creation of alliances among like-minded Affiliate Members and Member States around the world

3

PARTICIPATION

Facilitate the participation of our Affiliate Members in major events and international initiatives that will provide them with value and visibility

4

KNOWLEDGE

Collect and share information, data, and research relevant to the Tourism Industry

5

COOPERATION

Foster collaboration in joint projects with UN Tourism and in business projects among Affiliate Members

6

SUPPORT

Offer institutional support and endorsement to promote new projects developed by the Affiliate Members

7

DEVELOPMENT

Create opportunities for new innovative business projects for Affiliate Members that will contribute to the sustainable development of the Tourism sector



The UN Tourism Affiliate Members and Public-Private Collaboration Department is responsible for the management of the partnership between UN Tourism and the public and private sectors.

Contact us at: am@unwto.org

*UNprecedented Perspectives
by UN Tourism Affiliate Members*