

# AM News

VOL. 76 - May 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.*

*As we move forward into the year, we are entering a particularly dynamic period for Affiliate Members. Preparations are in full swing for the upcoming elections of the Board of Affiliate Members for the 2026–2029 mandate. This process is central to ensuring strong representation of our network within the Organization. I encourage all Affiliate Members to stay informed and engaged via the AMConnected+ platform, where all key information and updates on the elections are regularly published.*

*I would also like to thank our Affiliate Members for their strong participation in the recent UN Tourism Statutory Meetings and Thematic Events. Your continued engagement is crucial and highly valued. We look forward to your active presence in the upcoming meetings:*

- 123rd UN Tourism Executive Council (29–30 May, Segovia, Spain)*
- Regional Commission for Europe (4–6 June, Baku, Azerbaijan)*
- Regional Commission for Africa (11–13 June, Abuja, Nigeria)*
- Regional Commission for the Americas (8–10 July - TBC, Lima, Peru)*

*We are also pleased with the positive feedback on the new tools available on the AMConnected+ platform, including the recently launched mobile app—available on iOS and Android—helping you stay connected to the network wherever you are.*

*As 2025 marks the 50th Anniversary of UN Tourism, we look forward to celebrating this milestone with all our members. I encourage you to stay active on AMConnected+, where you can access resources, discover collaboration opportunities, and contribute to shaping the future of tourism together.*

*The Affiliate Members and Public-Private Collaboration Department remains fully committed to supporting your initiatives and fostering meaningful partnerships across the network. Please feel free to share your suggestions, ideas, or needs with us 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**

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## **UN TOURISM STATUTORY AND HIGH-LEVEL MEETINGS**

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### **UN TOURISM GENERAL ASSEMBLY & EXECUTIVE COUNCILS**

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29-30 May	<b><u>123rd Executive Council</u></b>	Segovia, Spain	In Person
Nov. (TBC)	<b>124th Executive Council</b>	Riyadh, Saudi Arabia	In Person
7-11 Nov.	<b>26th UN Tourism General Assembly</b>	Riyadh, Saudi Arabia	In Person
Nov. (TBC)	<b>45th Affiliate Members Plenary Session</b>	Riyadh, Saudi Arabia	In Person

### **UN TOURISM REGIONAL COMMISSIONS**

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

### **BOARD OF THE AFFILIATE MEMBERS**

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29 May	<b>61st Meeting of the Board of the Affiliate Members</b>	Segovia, Spain	In Person
11 Nov. (TBC)	<b>62nd Meeting of the Board of the Affiliate Members</b>	TBC	In Person

### **COMMITTEE ON MATTERS RELATED TO AFFILIATE MEMBERSHIP**

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

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

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

## AM-PPC NEWS

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### **Affiliate Members take the stage at the 37th Joint Meeting of the Commission for East Asia and the Pacific & the Commission for South Asia**

UN Tourism has brought together its Member States from across Asia and the Pacific to guide the sector's development beyond recovery and towards greater resilience and sustainability.

In Jakarta, the Commission for Asia and the Pacific, alongside the Commission for South Asia, met jointly for the 37th time, and welcomed high-level delegations from 17 Member States to assess achievements, analyse sector trends, and focus on key priorities. The agenda of the Commission focused on the following priority topics:

- Report of the Secretary-General - Implementation of the Organization's Programme of Work for 2024- 2025
- Report of the Regional Director for Asia and the Pacific - Implementation of the Programme of Work for 2024-2025 in Asia and the Pacific

- Survey Findings on Members' Priorities for UN Tourism 2026-2027 Programme of Work (PoW)
- Report on UN Tourism Affiliate Members' activities in Asia and the Pacific (2024-2025)
- Venue of the 38th CAP-CSA Joint Meeting in 2026
- Preparations for the 26th Session of the UN Tourism General Assembly in Saudi Arabia in November 2025

It is worth noting that during the Commission, the Affiliate Members were represented by Traveloka, who conveyed to the participants about the status of the Affiliate Membership in the Region, and the main activities carried out by the Affiliate Members recently.

You can find more information [HERE](#)



**37<sup>th</sup> CAP-CSA**

UN Tourism Commission for  
East Asia and the Pacific &  
UN Tourism Commission for South Asia  
Jakarta, Indonesia, 15 - 16 April, 2025

### 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 address current events, trends, and challenges in the tourism sector with the participation of managers and experts, UN Tourism representatives, as well as representatives of companies and relevant public entities in the sector, and Affiliate Members who are leading specific areas of the tourism industry.

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

Episode 9 explores the topic of Rural Tourism. Since the pandemic, Rural Tourism has gained popularity as travelers seek more authentic experiences in nature. This shift presents both opportunities and challenges, making it essential to plan and manage rural tourism in a way that maximizes its benefits while ensuring sustainability.

#### Speakers:

- Manuel Mostaza – Global Head of Public Affairs, ATREVIA (moderator)
- Patricia Carmona – Market Intelligence, Policies, and Competitiveness Department, UN Tourism
- Patrick Torrent – Executive Director, Catalan Tourism Agency (Affiliate Member)
- Ana Blasco – Mayor of Alquézar, representing Best Tourism Villages

You can find more information [HERE](#)





## AM-PPC NEWS

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### AMConnected+: How to Best Organize Your Activity on Your Dashboard

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

The “My Dashboard” section provides a clear and personalized overview of your activity within AMConnected+.

This user-friendly space is designed to enhance your experience and help you make the most of the platform’s features and opportunities.

Watch this short video tutorial to explore how it works:

Click on the below links to find out more:

- [Discover “My Dashboard” section \(ENG\)](#)
- [Descubre la sección "Mi Espacio" \(ESP\)](#)

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

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## UN Tourism Members from Asia and the Pacific to Focus on Resilience and Sustainable Tourism for the Region

UN Tourism has brought together its Member States from across Asia and the Pacific to guide the sector's development beyond recovery and towards greater resilience and sustainability.

According to UN Tourism's data, after an initial slow recovery from the impacts of the pandemic, Asia and the Pacific has been rapidly returning to full strength. In 2024, destinations in the region welcomed 316 million international arrivals between them, equivalent to 87% of pre-pandemic numbers, and up from 66% at the end of 2023. South Asia saw the best results by sub-region, with a 92% recovery, and the Maldives posted the highest growth in the region, welcoming 20% more tourists than in 2019, followed by Japan, with 16%, Fiji with 10% and Sri Lanka 7% more compared to 2019. The Commission's host this year, Indonesia, welcomed 13.9 million tourists in 2024, recovering 86% of 2019 levels.

In Jakarta, Member States were brought up-to-date of the progress being made guiding the sector's development in the region.

The Report of the Secretary-General outlined progress made over the past year, most notably in the priority areas of Tourism Insights, Knowhow, Investments and Innovation, Education, and UN Tourism's support on the ground for its Members.

UN Tourism fulfilled its statutory obligations for the Organization, with elections held for key positions for the months ahead. The Philippines and Maldives were nominated as Vice-Presidents for the upcoming 26th UN Tourism General Assembly. The Philippines was also nominated to Chair the Commission for South Asia, with the Maldives nominated to Chair the Commission for East Asia and the Pacific. Japan and Fiji were nominated as Vice-Chairs for East Asia and the Pacific, and India and Bhutan were nominated as Vice-Chairs of South Asia. Iran and India were nominated to represent the Asia and Pacific region on the UN Tourism Executive Council. All nominations are to be ratified by the General Assembly.

UN Tourism will return to Asia and the Pacific in September as Malaysia is the official host of World Tourism Day 2025.

You can find more information [HERE](#)





# UN TOURISM HIGHLIGHTS

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## Gastronomy Tourism takes center stage in the Agenda for Africa

The 2nd UN Tourism Regional Forum on Gastronomy Tourism for Africa reinforced the region's growing commitment to make gastronomy tourism a key driver in social and economic development.

Co-organized with the Basque Culinary Center, the event celebrated the continent's culinary richness and represented a strong step towards stronger cooperation among tourism and gastronomy stakeholders – producers, chefs, entrepreneurs, tour operators and ministries of tourism.

The Forum was officially opened by His Excellency Dr. Philip Isdor Mpango, Vice-President of the United Republic of Tanzania, underscoring the political commitment to advance gastronomy tourism in the country. In his address, he called for greater visibility of African diverse food cultures, stronger regional branding, enhanced collaboration with local producers, and more sustainable practices, highlighting the sector's potential to drive tourism, strengthen food systems, empower women and promote the consumption of healthy foods across the continent.

Bringing together over 400 participants from 30 countries, the Forum discussions focused on policy frameworks with the participation of the Ministers of Tourism of Tanzania, Zimbabwe and the Democratic Republic of Congo, and the Deputy Minister of South Africa, as well as the FAO Representative in Tanzania.

Education and skills, national targeted strategies, communication and product development emerged as main priorities to advance the agenda of gastronomy tourism in Africa. To advance this, the Secretary-General announced that 100 scholarships will be made available to students from Africa to benefit from the UN Tourism Online Academy. The scholarships will help strengthen the capacities of national tourism professionals in the field of gastronomy and culinary arts.

On the occasion, UN Tourism and Chefs in Africa signed a Memorandum of Understanding. The partnership will focus on advocacy, promotion and skills to strengthen gastronomy tourism across the continent.

You can find more information [HERE](#)



# UN TOURISM HIGHLIGHTS

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## UN Tourism and Università della Svizzera Italiana partner to incorporate Fashion into Cultural Tourism

Destinations are increasingly focusing on fashion to enhance the tourism experiences and empower local communities, especially among indigenous populations, as well as small-scale creators and businesses.

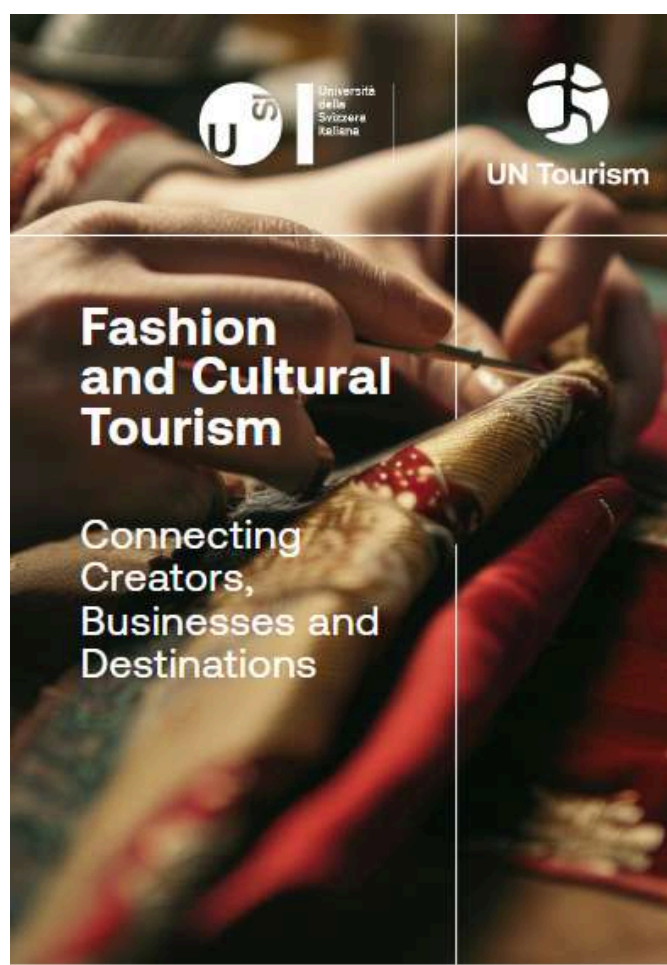
Despite the growth of globalization and e-commerce, fashion-related products such as textiles, jewellery, perfumes, and accessories, still hold the greatest value when purchased at their destinations of origin. These items are more than souvenirs—they are powerful storytellers that connect travellers to the culture, history, and identity of places they visit.

Drawing on case studies from 11 countries (Indonesia, Italy, Lebanon, Mexico, Nigeria, Peru, Republic of Korea, Saudi Arabia, Spain, Switzerland, and Tanzania), the report:

- Shows how fashion and tourism are interwoven to uplift local creators and attract diverse audiences.
- Suggests recommendations on how to create win-win synergies between fashion and tourism key players.
- Promotes tools that create an enabling environment for these stakeholders to co-create new products, while also addressing marketing strategies, branding and sustainability principles.
- Makes clear the need to raise awareness among tourists, encouraging responsible behaviour and deeper appreciation for specific cultural contexts.

By blending traditional fashion expressions with innovation, these examples show different ways the creative industries can serve as a tool for trade opportunities, inclusive growth and cultural exchange, across the globe.

You can find more information [\*\*HERE\*\*](#)



# AFFILIATE MEMBERS NEWS

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## Viristar Releases New Adventure Safety Accreditation

Viristar has introduced a new Adventure Safety Accreditation service designed for adventure, travel, and outdoor programs. This accreditation is an impartial, trusted recognition of quality risk management. Adventure safety accreditation from Viristar indicates that an organization has met widely accepted industry standards of good safety practice.

The accreditation standards establish good practice criteria for risk management of outdoor, adventure, travel and experiential programs. In order to gain accreditation, an organization must show evidence that it meets all standards applicable to its operations.

The Adventure Safety accreditation standards are documented in the Adventure Safety Accreditation Standards Manual. The Accreditation Standards Manual provides over 100 pages of detail on the adventure safety accreditation standards, including explanations of each standard along with explanatory notes, suggestions, and good practice guidance.

With decades of experience in accreditation and audit systems, Viristar brings extensive expertise to this service. The organization has conducted risk management reviews for outdoor, experiential, travel, and adventure programs across multiple countries and continents. These assessments use Viristar's established good practice standards as a benchmarking tool to evaluate performance.

The Adventure Safety Accreditation Standards have been carefully developed over many years, shaped by feedback from adventure programs worldwide, including those in Asia, Africa, the Americas, Oceania, and Europe.

A diverse range of organizations — from government entities and corporations to associations, nonprofits, and educational institutions — have trusted Viristar to provide impartial, high-quality evaluations of their adventure-based programs, ensuring they align with industry best practices.

To learn more about Adventure Safety Accreditation, visit <https://www.viristar.com/accreditation/> or contact Viristar at [info@viristar.com](mailto:info@viristar.com).



**VIRISTAR®**





## AFFILIATE MEMBERS NEWS

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### The Future of City Cards to Take Centre Stage in Gdansk

City Destinations Alliance will convene City Cards professionals in Gdansk on 5–6 June 2025 for the 14th City Cards Expert Meeting. This annual gathering provides a focused space for DMOs to explore the evolution of city card programmes, exchange insights, and co-create innovative approaches to visitor services.

As digital transformation accelerates and visitor expectations become more dynamic, city cards are being reimagined. This year's programme places a spotlight on AI and data as game-changers for destination services. Joshua Ryan-Saha, Director at the Edinburgh Futures Institute, will lead a keynote and workshop exploring how AI is already influencing tourism—from enhancing visitor engagement to optimising operations—and how it could fundamentally reshape city card ecosystems. Ethical issues such as data privacy, bias, and transparency will also be addressed, offering participants a holistic perspective.

At the heart of the event is peer-to-peer exchange.

Cities including Gdansk, Poznan, Salzburg, Basel, and Barcelona will share concrete experiences around customer data, stakeholder involvement, and product innovation. Through case studies, group work, and open dialogue, the meeting fosters a trusted environment for shared learning and practical collaboration.

The programme is designed for professionals responsible for managing or developing city card schemes within DMOs—those seeking both strategic foresight and operational insight. Informal moments such as city walks, shared dinners, and group activities will complement the content-driven sessions, strengthening the network and facilitating cross-border inspiration.

In a context where city cards are evolving from access tools to data-driven service platforms, the City Cards Expert Meeting continues to provide a vital forum for innovation, knowledge exchange, and shaping the future of visitor experience across Europe.

**CITY  
DESTINATIONS  
ALLIANCE**



# AFFILIATE MEMBERS NEWS

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## **OMRAN Group Unveils the Design of Club Med Musandam**

In a strategic move aimed at boosting Oman's position as a global tourism destination, Oman Tourism Development Company (OMRAN Group) unveiled the design of the Club Med Musandam resort during its participation in the International Hospitality Investment Forum (IHIF) in Berlin. This project will offer an exceptional and luxurious experience for tourists in one of the most stunning destinations in Oman, further enhancing the country's position as a destination for sustainable and luxury tourism.

### **A Transformative Project for Musandam**

OMRAN Group's announcement at IHIF, one of the leading global events in the hospitality and investment sectors, highlights its commitment to fostering strategic partnerships and attracting international investors. The project aligns with Oman's national tourism strategy, positioning the Sultanate as a world-class destination that offers both natural beauty and luxury experiences for discerning travelers.

### **A Resort Rooted in Culture and Sustainability**

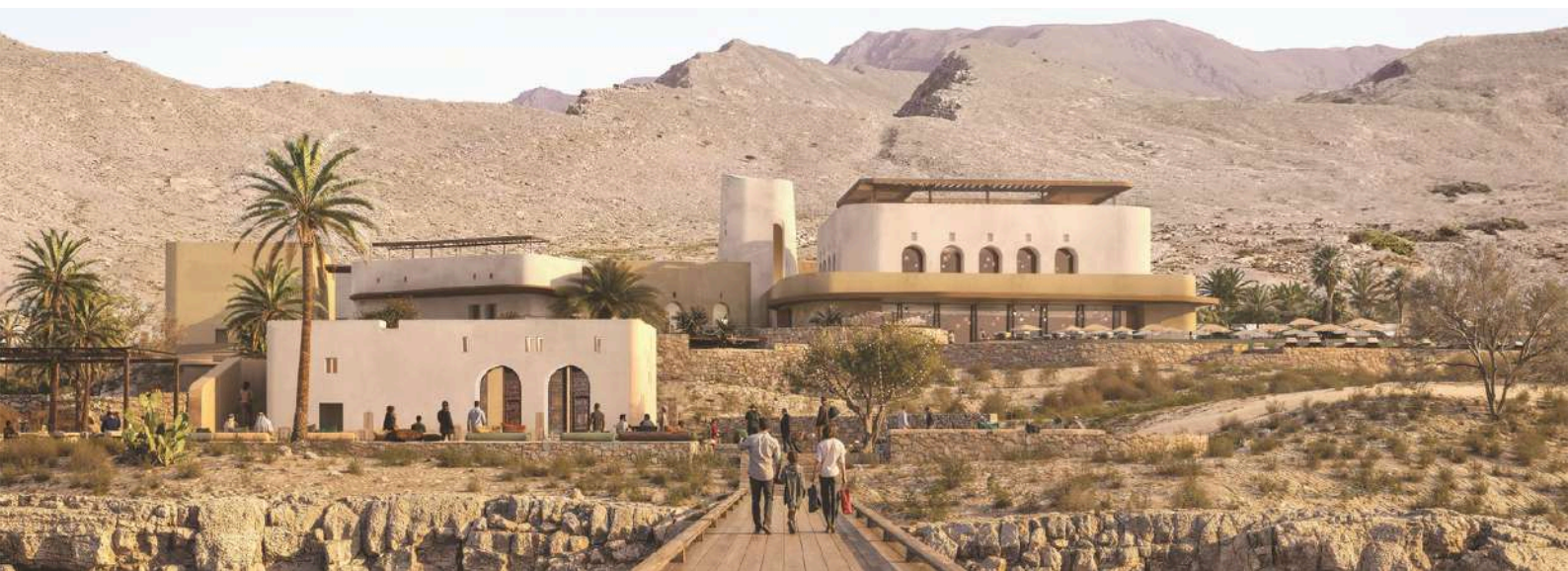
As the first Club Med resort in the Middle East, Club Med Musandam reflects a commitment to providing an unparalleled luxury experience built on sustainability.

The resort will feature 300 premium rooms, wellness retreats, adventure activities, and world-class dining. Its design integrates open spaces and stunning views, with locally sourced materials and eco-friendly technologies to minimize its environmental footprint. This innovative approach sets a new benchmark for sustainable resort development.

### **Innovative Design Through Global Competition**

The design was chosen through the Club Med Musandam Design Competition, an international contest launched to enhance the resort's appeal and sustainability. Top architects from around the world participated, presenting cutting-edge designs that blend luxury with environmental responsibility and cultural authenticity.

The winning design, by AW<sup>2</sup>, reflects a harmonious fusion of Omani heritage and modern sustainable hospitality, inspired by Musandam's dramatic fjords and rugged mountains. This vision offers guests a unique, immersive experience that connects them with the region's natural beauty.





## AFFILIATE MEMBERS NEWS

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### **A Strategic Milestone for HTMi Saudi Arabia: THE ICE Accreditation Achieved**

The Higher Institute for Tourism and Hospitality (HTMi Saudi Arabia) has successfully achieved full accreditation by THE-ICE (The International Centre of Excellence in Tourism and Hospitality Education). This initiative was driven by the Ministry of Tourism of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, as part of its steadfast support to tourism education and training centers in obtaining both local and international accreditations, thereby improving the quality of human capital in the sector.

The accreditation process involved a formal self-assessment submission aligned with THE-ICE's standards, on-site evaluations by international experts, faculty and student interviews, and a detailed review of academic programs, industry engagement, governance, and quality assurance. HTMi Saudi Arabia demonstrated compliance with international best practices, supported by strong employer engagement, graduate outcomes, and strategic alignment with national goals.

THE-ICE accreditation directly elevates the value of qualifications offered by HTMi Saudi Arabia.

Students now benefit from internationally recognized credentials, greater mobility opportunities for internships and networking, and access to THE-ICE Research Grant Scheme, supporting academic and professional growth. In addition, students graduating from accredited programs will receive a THE-ICE Diploma Supplement, providing formal recognition of their qualifications in the global education and employment market.

For Saudi Arabia's tourism education sector, this accreditation is a significant contribution toward Vision 2030 goals. By aligning hospitality training with world-class standards, HTMi Saudi Arabia directly supports the Kingdom's strategy to develop a skilled workforce, enhance vocational education quality, and contribute to the growth of the tourism sector in line with national development objectives. This milestone demonstrates that Saudi-based institutions can achieve and sustain international excellence, serving both student career ambitions and national development goals.





## AFFILIATE MEMBERS NEWS

### SHTM Unveils Large Language Model-Based Tourist Satisfaction Index to Help Destinations Improve Tourism Service Quality

The School of Hotel and Tourism Management (SHTM) at The Hong Kong Polytechnic University has recently launched an innovative Large Language Model (LLM)-based Tourist Satisfaction Index (TSI) developed by its Research Centre for Digital Transformation of Tourism (RCdTT). The TSI evaluates inbound tourist satisfaction in Hong Kong from 2012 to 2024 across different tourism sectors, temporal scales and regions.

Led by Professor Haiyan Song, Principal Investigator and SHTM Associate Dean, RCdTT Director and Mr and Mrs Chan Chak Fu Professor in International Tourism, the TSI was first introduced in 2019 as a questionnaire-based framework. Harnessing AI, LLM and big data analytics, the latest iteration adopts an interdisciplinary approach, integrating theories from management science, economics, and computer science. Over 1.25 million reviews from TripAdvisor were analysed using Alibaba's open-source General Text Embedding model to extract semantic insights.

Key findings indicate that the Hong Kong TSI reached record highs in 2024, recovering fully post-pandemic.

Sector analysis reveals that transportation and attractions consistently showed high performance, with service reliability and tangible qualities being key satisfaction drivers in the hotel and restaurant sectors. Spatially, southern districts outperformed northern areas, while business travellers and European tourists reported generally high satisfaction levels.

The LLM-based TSI framework goes beyond merely assessing Hong Kong's performance as a destination, it holds significant potential for adaptation by other destinations and sectors. By providing timely, data-driven insights, it empowers tourism stakeholders to pinpoint areas for improvement and develop sustainable strategies that elevate tourist satisfaction, fostering long-term growth. This innovative approach sets a new standard for measuring and enhancing tourist experiences through advanced data analysis.

The remarkable framework underscores the SHTM's leadership in cutting-edge research and its commitment to advancing sustainable tourism development on a global scale.



THE HONG KONG  
POLYTECHNIC UNIVERSITY  
香港理工大學

SCHOOL OF HOTEL AND TOURISM MANAGEMENT



# AFFILIATE MEMBERS NEWS

## ECTN Awards “Destination of Sustainable Cultural Tourism 2025”

### About the Awards

The ECTN Awards enhance the visibility of European cultural tourism destinations, create a platform for sharing experience and knowledge and promote networking between destinations. The Awards contest is open to tourist destinations across Europe, to showcase their results and outputs in sustainable cultural tourism under several selected categories each year. The Awards have been organised since 2014 by ECTN around annual themes, for the benefit of destinations, communities, associations, businesses, citizens and visitors.

### Call for Entries

The 2025 overall theme is:

"Visitor Experiences and Authenticity for Sustainable, Smart and Resilient Cultural Tourism Destinations".

The Awards will be given for achievements by cultural tourist destinations which have produced significant results related to enhancing visitor experience while respecting traditions and involving local host communities.

The 2025 Awards address the following tangible and intangible heritage-related aspects of resilient, smart and sustainable cultural tourism development and promotion:

1. Resilience in Sustainable Cultural Tourism Destinations.
2. Wine and Gastronomy Tourism based on eno-culinary heritage preservation.
3. Digitalisation in Smart Tourism Cultural Heritage and Creativity aspects, enhancing visitor experiences.
4. Transnational Thematic Tourism products involving Culture and Heritage.
5. Cultural Tourism Services for All, Visitors and Residents Alike.

The ECTN Awards are open to all tourist destinations across Europe, national, regional and local authorities, tourism boards and associations, destination management organisations, museums, heritage sites, interpretation centres, cultural routes, festivals and cultural NGOs.

Award winners will be announced at the Awards Ceremony to be held during the 18th International Conference for Cultural Tourism, organised by ECTN on 1-4 October 2025 in Sibiu, Romania.

Applications must be submitted online at the dedicated platform:

<https://culturaltourism.awardstage.com>



## Visitor Experiences and Authenticity for Sustainable, Smart and Resilient Cultural Tourism Destinations



## AFFILIATE MEMBERS NEWS

### Visitor Behavior Study Analysis in Guanajuato: Strategic Insights for Destination Management and Development

The Secretariat of Tourism and Identity of the State of Guanajuato (SECTURI) has undertaken a comprehensive study on visitor behavior, aimed at fostering the sustainable growth of its tourist destinations, enhancing the visitor experience, and supporting evidence-based strategic decision-making at both state and municipal levels.

Conducted throughout 2024, the study encompassed the administration of 15,452 surveys on-site across 14 municipalities within the state. Data collection was carried out using both digital and physical instruments, in close collaboration with the local tourism offices of the participating municipalities. The insights obtained are instrumental in constructing an up-to-date tourism profile that informs public policy development and promotional strategies at the state level, while also serving as a critical resource for municipal tourism planning for the 2025 cycle.

Key variables analyzed include visitors' sociodemographic characteristics, origin markets (domestic and international), travel motivations, recommendation and satisfaction levels, and expenditure patterns across categories such as accommodation, food and beverage, entertainment, transportation, and local shopping.

The findings directly inform four key indicators within the Guanajuato State Tourism Observatory (OTEG) under the Destination Management dimension of its Control Dashboard: Visitor Classification, International Visitors, Destination Recommendation, and Visitor Satisfaction. Furthermore, the collected data enhance two additional indicators within the Observatory's Economy dimension: Average Length of Stay and Tourism Revenue Generation.

Amid a global context that increasingly emphasizes sustainable tourism practices aligned with local community needs, the State of Guanajuato continues to strengthen its evidence-based management model by incorporating environmental, socio-cultural, and economic sustainability principles to ensure responsible and resilient tourism development.

By centering its efforts on a thorough analysis of visitor behavior, Guanajuato not only identifies opportunities to enhance the quality of tourism services but also enables the development of tailored, destination-specific strategies. This holistic approach aligns tourism offerings with visitor expectations and addresses the challenges posed by current economic and geopolitical conditions. In doing so, Guanajuato consolidates its leadership as a smart, innovation-driven, and sustainability-committed tourism destination.



**Estudio de Comportamiento del Visitante**  
ESTADO DE GUANAJUATO 2024



GUANAJUATO.MX





## AFFILIATE MEMBERS NEWS

### What's New in Diriyah: From Diriyah Tan to Zallal and the Royal Opera House

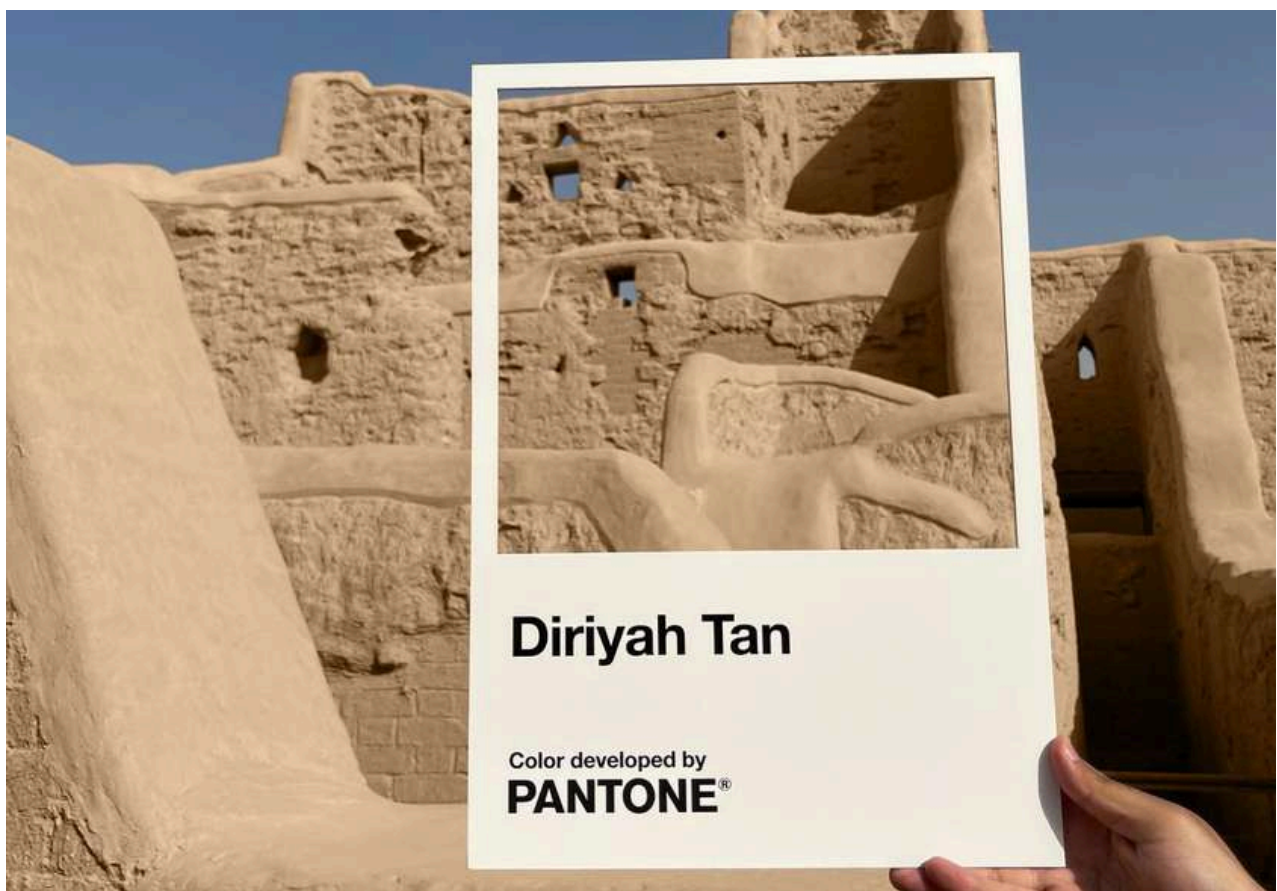
Diriyah is making progress across its masterplan, with new milestones shaping the city's cultural and urban landscape.

One of the latest highlights is the introduction of "Diriyah Tan," a signature color developed with Pantone. Inspired by the natural beauty shades of At-Turaif's mudbrick structures, the color is now becoming part of Diriyah's evolving identity, and it has been derived from a rich blend of mudbrick materials, capturing the essence of traditional Najdi construction being used in numerous ways across The City of Earth.

At the same time, Zallal, a new mixed-use district within Diriyah, has officially opened its doors. It offers boutique retail, premium office spaces, and leisure areas, designed to reflect Najdi traditions but adapted to today's needs.

The opening of Zallal marks an important step in bringing more spaces to life across Diriyah.

Adding to these achievements, Diriyah awarded a \$1.4billion construction contract to develop the Royal Diriyah Opera House, which will feature Saudi Arabia's largest main theater alongside additional performance spaces. Designed by renowned Norwegian architects Snøhetta, the Opera House will showcase a contemporary Najdi aesthetic, using natural materials such as palm, stone, and earth. The design will prioritize sustainability, incorporating water conservation, natural lighting, strategic building orientation, and thermal comfort measures.



# AFFILIATE MEMBERS NEWS

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## **CIFFT Circuit 2025: Your Chance for International Recognition Deadline Approaching!**

The CIFFT Circuit 2025 is your exclusive opportunity to elevate your tourism content on the global stage, gain international recognition, and connect with industry leaders. As we approach the final call for submissions (Deadline: June 10, 2025), now is the time to showcase your destination, service, or campaign to an international audience.

### **Who can enter?**

The awards are open to government organizations, ministries, administrative regions, tourism boards, DMOs, tourism businesses, as well as marketing agencies, production companies, and other entities working in tourism.

### **Why participate in the CIFFT Circuit?**

The CIFFT Circuit is a global platform designed to amplify your tourism content, foster innovation, and increase visibility.

By entering, you gain:

- Global Exposure: Your work will be presented across six prestigious international festivals,

- including the Cannes Corporate Media & TV Awards (France), Terres Travel Festival (Spain), ART&TUR International Tourism Film Festival (Portugal), Zagreb Tourfilm Festival (Croatia), SILKFEST International Tour & Ecology Film Festival (Serbia) and Amorgos Tourism Film Festival (Greece).
- Prestigious Recognition: Compete for the prestigious title of World's Best Tourism Film of the year, to be awarded at the World Tourism Film Awards in November.
- Additional Awards: Entries will also participate in the exclusive Tourism Press Award, a special recognition defined by travel journalists from five continents.

### **Exclusive Benefit for Affiliate Members**

UN Tourism Affiliate Members are eligible for a special discount of €250 per entry, using the promo code **UN2025**. This is your chance to ensure that your destination, products, or services stand out among the best in tourism advertising. The clock is ticking. Submit your work before June 10th, 2025.

For more information, please visit [www.cifft.com](http://www.cifft.com). Submit your work here.  
For inquiries, contact [hugo.marcos@filmservice.at](mailto:hugo.marcos@filmservice.at)



# FINAL CALL

**10.06  
2025  
DEADLINE**

## **CIFFT CIRCUIT 2025**

Enter the World's Most Prestigious  
Tourism Video Competition

Promocode: **UN2025**

## AFFILIATE MEMBERS NEWS

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### **Conference Invitation and Call for Papers: Tourism, Hospitality, and Sustainable Tourism Development**

We are pleased to invite scholars, practitioners, and industry professionals to contribute to the Tourism, Hospitality and Sustainable Tourism Development sections of the Kautz Conference on Business and Economics 2025, held at Széchenyi István University in Győr, Hungary, from 8–11 October 2025.

Under the conference theme “Transforming Global Challenges into Opportunities”, we welcome submissions that critically engage with the evolving role of tourism in a dynamic global context shaped by sustainability, digital innovation, and socio-economic change.

**Section I – Sustainability:** We invite papers that explore sustainable tourism practices, climate-conscious destination development, green innovations in hospitality, and the socio-environmental impacts of tourism. Topics may include responsible travel, rural tourism development, ecotourism, and resilience in the face of climate and geopolitical challenges.

### **Section II – Marketing and Management:**

Contributions may address tourism marketing strategies, digital branding, service design, destination competitiveness, and customer experience management. We especially encourage submissions that explore the use of AI, data analytics, and smart technologies in shaping visitor experiences and strategic decision-making.

### **Section III – Hospitality and Tourism:**

This section focuses on the evolving interface between the hospitality industry and tourism, including experiential hospitality, service excellence, workforce challenges, and cross-sector collaboration. Case studies, conceptual papers, and applied research are all welcome. Join us in Győr and be part of a vibrant academic forum that aims to shape the future of tourism and hospitality in a time of transformation.

For more information and to submit your abstract, visit <https://kautzconference.sze.hu> or contact us at [kautzconference@sze.hu](mailto:kautzconference@sze.hu).



**KAUTZ CONFERENCE**  
**ON BUSINESS AND ECONOMICS**  
TRANSFORMING GLOBAL  
CHALLENGES INTO OPPORTUNITIES





## AFFILIATE MEMBERS NEWS

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### IPDT Tourism Barometer: Trust Index reaches historic value

The 73rd Tourism Barometer reveals optimism for tourism activity in the coming months, presenting a historic record in the trust index: 85.2 points, the highest value ever recorded.

For António Jorge Costa, president of IPDT – Tourism, ‘this result is no coincidence. The combination of factors and elements continues to boost Portugal’s attractiveness as a tourist destination. It reflects not only the recovery of tourism but also the sector’s maturity, which continues to demonstrate its resilience in the face of global challenges.’

The Barometer had predicted growth in revenue and overnight stays for Easter 2025. Domestically, performance was expected to be similar to that of 2024, although 56% of experts anticipated higher revenues. In the foreign market, 66% expected an increase in revenue, and 49% foresaw more overnight stays compared to the previous year.

In addition to these forecasts, the Barometer also questioned experts about the impact of the upcoming local elections in 2025 — 78% dismissed any direct impact.

Nevertheless, 33% considered collaboration between local authorities and tourism entrepreneurs to be insufficient, highlighting the need for greater coordination among stakeholders.

The MICE segment was also featured in the analysis. Portugal continues to stand out due to its security, political stability, and good value for money. Experts also pointed to service quality, climate, and infrastructure as relevant factors.

To consolidate this position, 65% of respondents considered it vital to attract major events, while 63% advocated investment in specialised infrastructure. Other priority measures included strengthening the ‘Portugal’ brand on the international stage (46%) and creating tax incentives for event organisers (41%).

The IPDT Tourism Barometer, launched in 2006, aims to bring together the sector’s main decision-makers to discuss major tourism trends. The survey for this edition was conducted between 19 and 27 February 2025.



**Tourism  
Barometer**

## AFFILIATE MEMBERS NEWS

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### Coming Soon: The Thermal Tourism Congress

The European Historic Thermal Towns Association (EHTTA) holds the Thermal Tourism Congress in Budapest on June 4-6, 2025 with participation of UN Tourism, hosted by Budapest Spas and VisitHungary.

It exclusively extends the Early Bird rate for a congress ticket of 199 Euro for Affiliate Members!

The ticket can be purchased by sending an email to [team@thethermalcongress.com](mailto:team@thethermalcongress.com) before 15th May 2025 with the reference "**AM UN Tourism**".



# GET YOUR TICKET



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## AFFILIATE MEMBERS NEWS

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### **The 2025 World Leisure Expo & 27th Hangzhou West Lake International Expo: Hangzhou, a city at the forefront of leisure**

The 2025 World Leisure Expo & 27th Hangzhou West Lake International Expo: Hangzhou, a city at the forefront of leisure

The 2025 World Leisure Expo & 27th Hangzhou West Lake International Expo will take place from July 10–12, 2025, at the Hangzhou Grand Convention and Exhibition Center. Co-hosted by the World Leisure Organization (WLO) and the Hangzhou Municipal People's Government, this biennial event will feature an opening ceremony, themed exhibitions, and a series of high-level activities.

Hangzhou, known as the "Oriental Leisure Capital," continues to shine as a global center for leisure, culture, and innovation. With UNESCO-listed West Lake and the Liangzhu Archaeological Site, the city has also hosted major international events like the 2016 G20 Summit and the 2023 Asian Games.

Key attendees will include officials from Hangzhou's top administrative groups and WLO leaders such as Chair Prof. Joanne Schroeder and COO Prof. Cristina Ortega.

A highlight of this year's event is the thematic exhibition marking the 10th anniversary of the China (Hangzhou) Cross-Border E-commerce Pilot Zone. Under the theme "Picking Source Boutiques, Linking Cross-Border Talents," it will explore trends in global e-commerce and showcase products supporting modern, leisure-oriented lifestyles.

Exhibition zones will include cross-border e-commerce ecosystems, international imports, tech innovation, and leisure living. Featured products range from general merchandise and fitness gear to beauty, fashion, electronics, and pet supplies. Alongside the exhibitions, a full program of events—including platform lecture halls, product launches, procurement fairs, and talent forums—will foster international cooperation and innovation.

Together, these expos will serve as a dynamic platform for global professionals, businesses, and thought leaders to share ideas, forge partnerships, and shape the future of leisure and e-commerce.





## AFFILIATE MEMBERS NEWS

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### How TOPOSOPHY is shaping the future of creative placemaking and events

At TOPOSOPHY, we proudly operate as a fully integrated creative placemaking and events agency, providing end-to-end services across every phase of project development — from strategic conception to on-the-ground delivery.

Our dedication to research-led event strategy is clearly demonstrated through projects on the Tourism Festivals in Donegal and the Thoroughbred Country Festivals; our expertise ranges from conducting extensive stakeholder consultations, competitive and international benchmarking to delivering targeted recommendations for enhancing the tourism and economic impact of regional festivals, or developing cohesive festivals strategy aimed at strengthening the role of local events in visitor economy growth, community identity, and long-term sustainability.

These strategic foundations empower us to deliver major public-facing initiatives with creativity, precision, and scale. Over recent years, we have successfully led the production of landmark events such as Around the Table Athens, Taste of Athens, and, most notably, nine successful editions of Dine Athens Restaurant Week.

In 2025, for the ninth consecutive year, TOPOSOPHY once again took the lead in the full-scale delivery of Dine Athens — now recognised as Athens' premier culinary event. Our involvement spanned the entire spectrum of execution, including: restaurant screening and menu design, creative content development, media strategy and production, brand partnership coordination, and live event management.

During this four-week, city-wide celebration, we facilitated the participation of more than 150 restaurants, while leading the creation and management of dineathens.gr— a branded microsite serving as the primary platform for reservations, storytelling, and content activation. We also designed and implemented a comprehensive 360° marketing strategy in close collaboration with partners and sponsors, underscoring our commitment to crafting experiences where strategic foresight meets flawless execution.

We invite you to explore more about Dine Athens Restaurant Week; browse our full portfolio through our website to discover how TOPOSOPHY is shaping the next generation of creative placemaking and events.

**TOPOSOPHY**  
PLACE MAKING & MARKETING AGENCY





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](mailto:am@unwto.org)

*UNprecedented Perspectives  
by UN Tourism Affiliate Members*