

Agenda item 5

**Report on UN Tourism Affiliate Members' Activities in the Americas (2024–2025)**

CAM/70/5  
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## **1. Introduction**

This meeting of the UN Tourism Regional Commission for Americas (CAM) provides a timely opportunity to reflect on the latest activities and strategic direction of the UN Tourism's Affiliate Membership in the region.

The report outlines both the institutional developments and thematic advancements that have characterized the work of Affiliate Members (AMs) across the region, providing insight into strategic objectives, implementation progress, Affiliate Membership status and trends, and upcoming opportunities.

## **2. Strategic objectives for the Affiliate Membership (2024–2025)**

The work of the Organization in this area, carried out mainly through its specialized structure, the Affiliate Members and Public-Private Collaboration (AM-PPC), continues to focus on the strategic objective **to +strengthen our Affiliate Membership**, to further advance towards a network of Affiliate Members with consistent capacity to bring value to the Organization, addressed through initiatives and activities targeting at:

- **enhancing the Value of Affiliate Membership**, by fostering among AMs a stronger sense of belonging to the Organization, satisfaction with the membership and institutional loyalty,

*as well as at*

- permanently strengthening the capacity of our network of Affiliate Members to bring **value to the Organization**, by better engaging the existing AMs in the Organization's agenda and activity, as well as by carrying out a quality-oriented expansion of the Affiliate Membership, incorporating strong new AMs.

The main evolutions on the two abovementioned pillars of the activity carried out by AM-PPC are mentioned below.

### **2.1. Enhancing the Value of Affiliate Membership**

A consistent work is currently being done by the AM-PPC Department in order to **(a)** reach a more effective integration of the Affiliate Members in the Programme of Work, agenda of activities and main projects carried out by UN Tourism, and to **(b)** permanently improve the facilities and services offered by the Organization to AMs.

- a.** In the framework of the 2022–2025 implementation cycle, efforts to better integrate Affiliate Members into the technical and strategic work of UN Tourism have gained momentum. These actions, pursuing a win-win approach that leverages members' knowledge while offering institutional visibility and influence, reflect the core principles and lines of action established through the recent **Legal Reform** and new **Expansion Strategy**, which aim to strengthen governance and ensure that Affiliate Members from diverse regions—particularly the **Americas**—play a more active role in shaping the global tourism agenda.

Affiliate Members from the Americas have made notable contributions to the further development of the following thematic areas:

- **Sports Tourism:**

**The 3<sup>rd</sup> World Sports Tourism Congress**, held in November 2024, in Madrid, at the Santiago Bernabéu Stadium, with relevant participation of AMs and other stakeholders from the region, and marked a milestone event for the network.

The Affiliate Members FAEVYT (Federación Argentina de Asociaciones de Empresas de Viajes y Turismo) and the Oficina de Convenciones y Visitantes de Monterrey contributed to the **World Football Summit – Americas**, held in Monterrey in June 2025.

These contributions reinforced the region's growing leadership in taking advantage of sports as a driver of tourism, legacy creation, and international visibility.

- **Tourism and Audiovisual Industries:** UN Tourism co-organized the forum "Tourism and Culture: A Picture-Perfect Relationship" in Quintana Roo, Mexico (April 2024), in collaboration with the Consejo de Promoción Turística de Quintana Roo. The event took place in the context of the Platino Awards and featured participation from Affiliate Members including Xcaret Group, showcasing how cultural and audiovisual platforms can enhance destination storytelling in Latin America.
- **Astro-tourism:** the forthcoming **UN Tourism Guidelines on Astro-tourism** are being developed with substantive input from Affiliate Members in the Americas and stakeholders from the region. Key contributors include:
  - Consejo Consultivo Estatal de Turismo de Yucatán (Mexico)
  - Secretaría de Turismo, Ambiente y Deportes (Argentina)
- **Thermal Tourism:** while the majority of thematic development in thermal tourism has taken place in Europe, Affiliate Members from the Americas have participated in knowledge generation and Exchange frameworks, such as the **3<sup>rd</sup> International Congress on Thermal Tourism** (held in Budapest, Hungary, in June 2025).
- **Artificial Intelligence and Tourism:** the 2025 publication **"Artificial Intelligence (AI) & the Tourism and Hospitality Sector"** featured representation from Affiliate Members based in the Americas. Case studies and inputs were provided by Tripadvisor and Expedia Group. These contributions illustrate the application of AI in areas such as customer personalization, dynamic pricing, predictive analytics, and data-driven sustainability practices.
- **"On the Go" Podcast Series:** Produced in collaboration with Affiliate Member **ATREVIA**, the **"On the Go"** podcast has served as a tool to spotlight tourism trends and challenges from a global perspective. Plans are underway to expand the podcast's regional coverage in Latin America, including Spanish- and Portuguese-language episodes and interviews with leading Affiliate Members from the region.

**b. AM-PPC Department has continued to place priority on the efforts to continuously improve the services and facilities offered by the Organization to the AMs.**

In this regard, recognizing the importance of the networking, visibility and representation opportunities for our AMs, AM-PPC has provided them with such opportunities for active participation, dialogue and interaction with the governments at all major UN Tourism's Statutory meetings and key events celebrated lately (Executive Councils, Regional Commissions, World Tourism Day celebrations). For example, within the framework of the last Executive Council (Cartagena de Indias, Colombia) a dedicated networking session was organized, providing valuable collaboration and dialogue opportunities for existing and potential new members.

Furthermore, similar participation and visibility opportunities were provided for AMs **within the most important International Tourism Fairs** (such as FITUR Madrid, ITB Berlin, WTM London):

- WTM London (November 2024): several relevant Affiliate Members participated as speakers, representing the private sector, in the Ministers Summit organized by UN Tourism and WTTC.
- FITUR (January 2025): [the Affiliate Members Corner “Targeting Traveler Segments”](#) featured data-driven presentations and peer exchanges.
- ITB Berlin (March 2025): the Affiliate Members IATA and ICVB Istanbul participated as speakers in the *UN Tourism Ministers’ Summit*, reinforcing the AMs perspective on tourism policy.

These were excellent platforms not only to showcase and highlight Affiliate Members' work, but also to facilitate their engagement and collaboration with the governments of the Member States and many other relevant tourism stakeholders.

## 2.2. Strengthening the network of AMs: quality-oriented expansion

A key priority of this area of our Organization is to **achieve a high-quality membership**, reflected in a network of trustworthy and active Affiliate Members, fully committed to UN Tourism's values and with proven capacity to contribute to the fulfilment of its mission. The key factor to achieve this goal is to count with a procedure of evaluation of candidatures and admission demanding and rigorous enough to ensure that only such partners with the necessary expertise, motivation, commitment, and capacity to bring value to Organization are admitted as new Affiliate Members.

- Important progress towards making the admission procedure much more rigorous and demanding has been achieved, considering that the package of 19 candidatures presented for admission at the recent 123<sup>rd</sup> Executive Council have been selected from a total volume of around 150 expressions of interest / applications received, which means that only 13% have passed the quality filters of the admission procedure, those proving that they have the capacity to bring value to the Organization.
- Within this context, since the last Regional Commission meeting in 2024, **10 new Affiliate Members from the Americas region have been admitted** - 8 at the 122<sup>nd</sup> Executive Council (2024) and 2 at the 123<sup>rd</sup> Executive Council (2025). These include public and private entities from Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, Mexico, Peru, and the United States, such as ABAV – Brazilian Association of Travel Agencies, the University of South Florida and CONCANACO SERVYTUR México, among others.

As a result of the above, **currently Americas has 100 Affiliate Members**, representing **20% of the overall network**. This confirms the Americas as the second most represented region within the Affiliate Membership, and reflects continued progress toward a geographically balanced and strategically engaged network.

- **Improved retention and membership stability.** The above-mentioned improvement of services, facilities and engagement opportunities offered to the AMs have contributed to a notable reduction of the number of Affiliate Members ceased from the membership every year due to the accumulation of arrears:
  - 2022: **97 AMs** ceased due to arrears.
  - 2025: this parameter has fallen to **16 AMs**.

This firm downward tendency demonstrates a positive trend in compliance, commitment, and member satisfaction, validating the Organization's retention strategy.

## 3. Collaboration with the Board of Affiliate Members

AM-PPC continued to support the Board of Affiliate Members in the organization of all their meetings and demarches and to have a permanent and smooth collaboration in all the important issues on the agenda.

- **60<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Board of AMs (Madrid, November 2024):** focused on reviewing 2024 activities, planning for 2025, and integrating Affiliate Membership's priorities into UN Tourism's

2026–2027 Programme of Work. The meeting was strategically held on the eve of the 3<sup>rd</sup> World Sports Tourism Congress to maximize synergies and participation, enabling Board Members to actively engage in said global Congress, alongside numerous Affiliate Members, including many from Americas.

- AM-PPC encouraged and supported the participation of the institutional representative of the AMs, designated by the Chair of the Board, in all UN Tourism's Statutory meetings celebrated lately (Executive Councils and Regional Commissions).
- Also, UN Tourism created all the necessary facilities for a permanent dialogue and reinforcement of the **collaboration between the Board of Affiliate Members** and the **Committee on Matters Related to the Affiliate Membership (CMAM)**, the statutory body responsible for evaluating applications and providing oversight, the region being represented by Argentina and Uruguay. This cooperation reinforces:
  - better alignment with UN Tourism's strategic priorities
  - fair and transparent admission processes.
  - adherence to standards.

The Chair of the Board participated in the meetings of the CMAM held in the framework of the last two Executive Councils. This engagement served as a crucial step in fostering dialogue and reinforcing our shared commitment to greater collaboration and integration within UN Tourism.

#### 4. Elections for the 2026–2029 Board of Affiliate Members

The Secretariat, through AM-PPC, has launched the **election process for the new Board of Affiliate Members for the 2026–2029 mandate**, to be carried out between January – October 2025. Key aspects include:

- A **clear roadmap** of the election process, ensuring transparency, participation, and representativeness.
- **Ongoing communication** and consultation with Affiliate Members to encourage candidacies and active voting.
- The process demonstrates the Organization's **commitment to participatory governance** and institutional legitimacy.

It is worth mentioning that 2 seats are reserved for Affiliate Members from the Americas, while Affiliate Members from the region are able also to submit candidatures on the global category.

#### 5. Affiliate Members and Public-Private Collaboration – Programme of Work 2026–2027

As UN Tourism enters a new programmatic biennium, the Affiliate Members and Public-Private Collaboration Department (AM-PPC) is elaborating its **Programme of Work 2026–2027**, conceived to operate in full alignment with the Organization's **General Programme of Work 2026–2027**.

These two strategic instruments are distinct yet complementary:

- The **General Programme of Work of the Organization**, developed in consultation with Member States, outlines the Organization's institutional priorities and global strategic direction.
- The **Affiliate Members Programme of Work** translates those priorities into concrete initiatives, partnerships, and knowledge products driven by Affiliate Members.

To ensure meaningful participation and greater alignment, UN Tourism has launched an open Call for Proposals, inviting Affiliate Members to submit project ideas and activities that contribute to the delivery of the Organization's agenda. This process aims to enhance engagement, foster integration into UN Tourism's workstreams, and enable Affiliate Members to fully benefit from their membership through increased visibility, collaboration, and impact.

Looking ahead, the Affiliate Members network is expected to play a key role in advancing the Organization's strategic objectives, particularly through contributions in thematic areas.

Affiliate Members are encouraged to participate actively in this cycle and submit proposals aligned with the Organization's programmatic vision for 2026–2027.

## **6. Conclusion and Outlook**

The UN Tourism Affiliate Membership is continuously reinforcing its pivotal role in advancing innovation, dialogue, and sustainable development across the global tourism sector.

Looking ahead, the focus will remain on:

- Expanding and strengthening the network with high value partners.
- Fostering active participation in UN Tourism programmes and events.
- Supporting the new Board of Affiliate Members as a strong and representative body.
- Ensuring continuous alignment with the values and goals of the Organization.

Through continued cooperation between Member States and Affiliate Members, the region is well-positioned to further consolidate its leadership role in shaping the future of global tourism.