

# Second International Conference on Climate Change and Tourism

## DAVOS DECLARATION

### CLIMATE CHANGE AND TOURISM RESPONDING TO GLOBAL CHALLENGES

Davos, Switzerland, 3 October 2007



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The international community is taking concerted action against climate change around a commonly agreed framework led by the United Nations. This UN framework will seek to establish a long term post-Kyoto roadmap with rapid deployment and targeted milestones. The tourism sector has an important place in that framework, given its global economic and social value, its role in sustainable development and its strong relationships with climate.

To support this action the UN World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), jointly with the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), with the support of the World Economic Forum (WEF) and the Swiss Government, convened the Second International Conference on Climate Change and Tourism, in Davos, Switzerland, from 1 to 3 October 2007. This event, building on the results of the First International Conference organised on this topic in Djerba, Tunisia in 2003, gathered 450 participants from over 80 countries and 22 international organizations, private sector organizations and companies, research institutions, NGOs and the media, with the aim of responding in a timely and balanced way to climate change imperatives in the tourism sector. In preparation of this Conference the organizers commissioned a report to provide an extensive review of current impacts and analyse options for possible actions.

**The Conference** agreed that:

- climate is a key resource for tourism and the sector is highly sensitive to the impacts of climate change and global warming, many elements of which are already being felt. It is estimated to contribute some 5% of global CO<sub>2</sub> emissions.
- tourism - business and leisure - will continue to be a vital component of the global economy, an important contributor to the Millennium Development Goals and an integral, positive element in our society.
- given tourism's importance in the global challenges of climate change and poverty reduction, there is a need to urgently adopt a range of policies which encourages truly sustainable tourism that reflects a "quadruple bottom line" of environmental, social, economic and **climate** responsiveness.
- the tourism sector must rapidly respond to climate change, within the evolving UN framework and progressively reduce its Greenhouse Gas (GHG) contribution if it is to grow in a sustainable manner; This will require action to:
  - **mitigate** its GHG emissions, derived especially from transport and accommodation activities;
  - **adapt** tourism businesses and destinations to changing climate conditions;
  - apply existing and new **technology** to improve energy efficiency;
  - secure **financial** resources to help poor regions and countries.

**The Conference** calls for the following actions

### **1) Governments and International Organizations:**

- Incorporate tourism in the implementation of existing commitments under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and its Kyoto Protocol, and respond to the call by the United Nations Secretary-General for launching, at the 13th session of the UNFCCC Conference of the Parties in Bali, December 2007, an effective and comprehensive climate change framework for the post-2012 period.
- Implement concrete, simultaneous actions for mitigation, adaptation, technology and financing, consistent with the Millennium Development Goals.
- Provide financial, technical and training support to tourism destinations and operators in developing countries (especially in the least developed countries and Small Island Developing States) to ensure that they can participate in the global climate response framework, through established initiatives, such as the Clean Development Mechanism.

- Promote, at all levels, interdisciplinary partnerships, networks and information exchange systems essential to sustainable development of the sector.
- Collaborate in international strategies, policies and action plans to reduce GHG emissions in the transport (in cooperation with ICAO and other aviation organizations), accommodation and related tourism activities.
- Introduce education and awareness programs for all tourism stakeholders – public and private sector – as well as consumers.
- Develop regional and local climate information services tailored to the tourism sector and promote their use among tourism stakeholders. Build capacities for interpretation and application of this information, strengthening collaboration with WMO's National Meteorological Services.
- Implement policy, regulatory, financial, managerial, educational, behavioural, diversification, research and monitoring measures, for effective adaptation and mitigation.

## **2) Tourism Industry and Destinations**

- Take leadership in implementing concrete measures (such as incentives) in order to mitigate climate change throughout the tourism value chain and to reduce risk to travellers, operators and infrastructure due to dynamic climate variability and shift. Establish targets and indicators to monitor progress.
- Promote and undertake investments in energy-efficiency tourism programmes and use of renewable energy resources, with the aim of reducing the carbon footprint of the entire tourism sector.
- Integrate tourism in the formulation and implementation of regional, national and local level adaptation and mitigation strategies and implementation plans. The Nairobi Work Programme on Impacts, Vulnerability and Adaptation to Climate Change, coordinated by UNFCCC, represents an important opportunity for the tourism sector to enhance knowledge, increase capacities and stimulate action.
- Strive to conserve biodiversity, natural ecosystems and landscapes in ways which strengthen resilience to climate change and ensure a long-term sustainable use of the environmental resource base of tourism - in particular those that serve as "earth lungs" (carbon sinks), sequestering GHGs through forest management and other biological programmes, or that protect coastlines (e.g. mangroves and coral reefs).
- Seek to achieve increasingly carbon free environments by diminishing pollution through design, operations and market responsive mechanisms.
- Implement climate-focused product diversification, to reposition destinations and support systems, as well as to foster all-season supply and demand.
- Raise awareness among customers and staff on climate change impacts and engage them in response processes.

## **3) Consumers:**

- In their choices for travel and destination, tourists should be encouraged to consider the climate, economic, societal and environmental impacts of their options before making a decision and, where possible to reduce their carbon footprint, or offset emissions that cannot be reduced directly.
- In their choices of activities at the destination, tourists should also be encouraged to opt for environmentally-friendly activities that reduce their carbon footprint as well as contribute to the preservation of the natural environment and cultural heritage.

#### **4) Research and Communications Networks:**

- Encourage targeted, multi-disciplinary research on impacts of climate change in order to address regional gaps in current knowledge, develop tools for risk assessment and cost-benefit analyses with which to gauge the feasibility of various responses.
- Include environmental and climate specific subjects in the study curricula of tourism training programmes and extend these to broader educational systems.
- Promote responsible travel that supports “quadruple bottom line” sustainable tourism, incorporating climate, environmental, social and economic considerations.
- Raise awareness on tourism’s economic role as a tool for development, and present information on causes and effects of climate change based on sound science, in a fair, balanced and user-friendly manner.

#### **The Conference**

- sets out a range of specific actions to be taken by all stakeholders in the sector to immediately begin to establish and implement a long range carbon-neutral roadmap;
- invites governments and international organizations; the tourism industry; consumers; research and communications networks to implement these recommendations, with concrete commitments and action plans, and to use the UNWTO on-line Climate Change and Tourism Information Exchange Service as a platform, for committed stakeholders to register their pledges and activities toward adaptation and mitigation on an on-going basis;
- stresses the need that UNWTO, in collaboration with UNEP and WMO, continue to lead this process, and to consider convening a Third Conference on Climate Change and Tourism, at an appropriate time in the future, to review progress, to maintain response levels and to identify further needs and actions;
- urges action by the entire tourism sector to face climate change as one of the greatest challenges to sustainable development, and to the Millennium Development Goals in the 21st Century.

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**The Davos Declaration and results of this conference will provide the basis for the UNWTO Minister’s Summit on Tourism and Climate Change, scheduled at the World Travel Market, London, UK, 13 November 2007. It will be submitted for adoption at the UNWTO General Assembly in Cartagena de Indias, Colombia, 23-29 November 2007, and also will be presented at the United Nations Climate Change Conference in Bali, Indonesia, in December 2007.**