

Travel & Tourism's Support for UN's Climate Change Thrust

New York City, USA, 24 September 2009 – Participating at the UN Leadership Forum on Climate Change at the UN General Assembly this week, Secretary-General ad interim Taleb Rifai reinforced the potential of sustainable travel and tourism, particularly for the world's poorest countries. The sector's proven catalytic effect as a job, trade and development provider turns it into one of the pillars of the Green Economy.

Mr. Rifai chaired the session on "Sustainable Enterprises and Decent Work". The session called for businesses to be at the centre of the transformation to a low-carbon economy with sustainable enterprises creating green and decent jobs and providing new and better opportunities for the poor.

Sustainable travel and tourism is well-placed to play a leading role in the transformation to the Green Economy and the creation of 'decent work'. As the world shifts to a low-carbon economic regime, the industry can be a lead change agent by encouraging green employment in sustainable tourism initiatives. These jobs will create wealth and local economic growth, especially in poorer countries, helping to achieve the Millennium Development Goals.

The potential of tourism to provide sustainable and decent work has been highlighted in UNWTO's 'Roadmap for Recovery' which underlines the role of tourism in contributing to a more inclusive green economy.

UNWTO is furthermore making a strong commitment to ensure tourism stakeholders support the "Seal the Deal!" campaign and lobby for a fair, balanced and effective agreement in the climate change summit in Copenhagen, Denmark, in December, which will power green growth and help protect our planet.

The UN Leadership Forum will mark an unprecedented gathering of Heads of State and Government with leaders from the private sector, civil society and the UN. The Forum's objective is to make the case to Government that business has a strong interest in the negotiation of a balanced and effective global climate change agreement and is already taking action to move to a low-carbon economy.

Read the 'Roadmap for Recovery': www.unwto.org/conferences/ga/en/pdf/18_08.pdf

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