



EUROPEAN TRAVEL COMMISSION

Rue du Marché aux Herbes 61 - 1000 Brussels - BELGIUM
tel +32 2 - 548 9000 fax +32 2 - 514 1843
press@visiteurope.com / www.etc-corporate.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

THE EUROPEAN TRAVEL COMMISSION AND THE NETWORK OF EUROPEAN DESTINATIONS
OF EXCELLENCE ANNOUNCE A PARTNERSHIP FOR ADVANCING THE COMPETITIVENESS OF
THE TOURISM INDUSTRY

Brussels, 7th December 2016

The European Travel Commission (ETC), the association representing the 32 European national tourism organisations, and the European Destinations of Excellence Network (EDEN Network), the network uniting the sustainable tourism destinations in Europe, announce the signature of a Memorandum of Understanding on the occasion of the European Tourism Day, the annual event organized by the European Commission in Brussels, in the presence of Elżbieta Bieńkowska, Commissioner for Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs, Tibor Navracsics, Commissioner for Education, Culture, Youth and Sport and Karmenu Vella, Commissioner for Environment, Maritime Affairs and Fisheries.

ETC and EDEN Network commit to work together and to continue investing in the promotion of Europe as a travel destination in overseas markets with the common view to strengthen the competitiveness of the European tourism industry as one of the main engines of economic growth and employment in Europe.

“The EDEN network comprises currently 72 off-the-beaten-track destinations and sites in natural areas, which are awarded for their efforts in sustainable development of tourism by the European Commission. These destinations represent some of the most stunning and pristine environments in the continent,” says Xavier Lechien, President of EDEN Network. “We look forward to working closely with ETC to present these European hidden gems to new audiences in international markets.”

“In the course of the past few years, we learned that travellers to Europe are increasingly more sophisticated in their choices. The destinations in the EDEN Network are a source of inspiration to attract both new and repeating visitors” says Eduardo Santander, Executive Director of ETC. “Our partnership with EDEN is a further step towards our long-term goal of consolidating a unique image that differentiates Destination Europe from other international regions.”



Mr Xavier Lechien (left), President of EDEN and Mr Eduardo Santander (right), Executive Director of ETC, at the European Tourism Day in Brussels on 29th November 2016

ENDS

Note to editors:

The European Travel Commission is an association of National Tourism Organisations (NTOs). It was created in 1948 to promote Europe as a tourist destination to the long-haul markets outside of Europe, originally in the USA and later in Canada, Latin America and Asia. It currently has 32 member NTOs, including 8 from outside the European Union. Europe is the world's no. 1 tourist destination with 608 million international arrivals in 2015 and more than 50% of the market share of worldwide tourism.

EDEN Network is a net of destinations of excellence in sustainable tourism. The EDEN Network promotes a new way to travel in Europe, drawing attention to the value and the diversity of emerging European tourist destinations. Visitors will experience the real country and culture as it is lived every day. Activities and offers are made in a way that guests can experience a region from within (with inhabitants, on locations that are normally difficult to visit). The offer is structured in a way guests are able to learn something from the region, not only fun aspects.

Contact: ETC Executive Unit - Rue du Marché aux Herbes 61 - 1000 Brussels - BELGIUM.
T: + 32 2 548 9000 F: + 32 2 514 1843 e-mail : press@visiteurope.com:

Contact: EDEN – www.youredenexperience.com

For further information: ETC's corporate website www.etc-corporate.org is aimed at industry, government and educational personnel interested in tourism to Europe. Tourists seeking travel-specific information and ideas are directed to ETC's consumer portal www.visiteurope.com.