



Issue 1. International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development, Special Edition



In December 2015, the United Nations General Assembly declared 2017 as the International Year of Sustainable Tourism, and UNWTO has been designated to lead its implementation. For this purpose, UNWTO developed a Programme that outlines the objectives, suggested activities and a fundraising strategy.

This special edition of the UNWTO newsletter dedicated to the Year, highlights some of the activities and events that took place. For more information and news, please visit the [IY2017 official website](#). In the last six months, we have welcomed ten [Special Ambassadors](#) who are joining us in promoting tourism for development. We have celebrated eight out of the fourteen official IY2017 events included in the IY Official Calendar of Events.

All this was made possible due to the contribution and support of more than 60 sponsors and partners. Additionally we have partnered with other UN agencies and organizations to disseminate the messages of the Year.

Check out some of our activities below.

[UNWTO appoints the President of Malta as Special Ambassador of the International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development](#)

Marie Louise Coleiro Preca, President of the Republic of Malta, has been nominated as Special Ambassador of the International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development. The appointment took place at a ceremony held at the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) Headquarters in Madrid. The

event served also to introduce the Mediterranean Tourism Foundation, which aims at increasing the potential for sustainable tourism growth across the Mediterranean and to transform the Mediterranean into an area of peace, cooperation and prosperity by investing and promoting sustainable tourism.

[Read more +](#)

[The tourism sector highlights the potential of urban tourism and the need to move toward more sustainable practices](#)

Tourism has become one of the most effective engines of economic activity, social life and geography in many cities, owing above all to the processes of urbanization. With the aim of exchanging experiences in urban tourism management, tourism ministers and representatives from throughout the world met in Madrid on 10 May. The roundtable, an official event of the IY2017, was organized by the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), the Spanish Ministry of Energy, Tourism and the Digital Agenda, and the City Council of Madrid.

[Read more +](#)

[UNWTO welcomes Hilton as Official Partner of the International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development](#)

Hilton has signed on as an official partner of the International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development, 2017 and joined the long list of sponsors supporting the Year. Hilton's Travel with Purpose strategy identifies innovative solutions that leverage its global footprint to provide positive impact in three key focus areas; creating opportunities for people, strengthening communities, and preserving the environment. By mobilizing its nearly 5,000 hotels in 103 countries and territories, Hilton continues to operate in responsible and sustainable ways.

[Read more +](#)

[Biodiversity and Sustainable Tourism](#)

Many natural areas with rich biodiversity, such as beaches, coasts and islands, mountains, rivers and lakes, are tourism destinations. In close cooperation with UNWTO, the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) is undertaking activities to ensure that biodiversity is a central concern for sustainable tourism, and that their mutual impacts be measured and managed for optimizing synergies.

[Read more +](#)



[Share your initiative!](#)

We have so far received more than 700 initiatives, celebrations and innovative solutions that contribute to creating more decent jobs, to protecting biodiversity, to empowering communities, and to advancing sustainable tourism.

Below, some of the many initiatives from around the world celebrating the Year. Make sure to share yours!

[EBATUTA, CONNECTING ARTISANS AND TRAVELLERS](#)

eBatuta platform, creates a meeting point between travellers and artisans. Through the platform, travellers can easily locate places to buy locally made handicrafts during their trip and the artisans can connect with the high growing tourism market. The platform gives the option to search artisans by location, handicraft type and enterprise type and show results providing a description of the artisan, the products that they sell and allows travellers to provide recommendation and comment about the artisan.

[LAUNCH OF SPANISH STAMPS OF THE INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF SUSTAINABLE TOURISM FOR DEVELOPMENT 2017](#)

UNWTO Headquarters in Madrid hosted the presentation of two Spanish stamps commemorating the International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development 2017. With a circulation of 14,000,000, the stamp will promote responsible tourism among Spaniards and the millions that every year visit Spain.

[PEACE BOAT – ECOSHIP PROJECT](#)

Peace boat is trying to develop a cruise industry that can be a vector for socio-economic development at the local level, a vehicle to learn about each other's culture and, last but not least, a way for a deeper understanding and peace building on a people to people level. The Ecoship, with its visionary whale-inspired design combines innovative energy efficiency measures; boundary defying use of renewable energies; nature-inspired design and the implementation of real ecosystems on board. It is also committed to a target of zero discharge and close to zero waste operation and will incorporate closed-loop waste and water management systems to prevent and significantly reduce marine pollution.

[ADVENTURENEXT NEAR EAST](#)

AdventureNEXT Near East is dedicated to fostering new partnerships for travel professionals in the Near East region, and to showcasing adventurous experiences in an ancient place steeped in tradition. Tourism professionals from within Jordan and surrounding countries, along with international tour operators and media with an interest in the region, are invited to access hallmark educational keynotes and breakout sessions, a business-to-business tour operator marketplace and connection to travel media.

[BALI WATER PROTECTION PROGRAMME](#)

Bali is facing a decrease of its water table levels as well as saltwater intrusion into freshwater aquifers due to excessive extraction of water. Bali's freshwater pollution is also growing at an alarming rate due to the illegal trash disposal and excessive use of chemical for agriculture farming. The Bali Water Protection Program (BWP) proposes to impulse freshwater resilience and good tourism practice throughout the province through 3 subprograms: Aquifer Recharge – "Adopt A Well", Education – "Adopt A River" and Media campaign – "Adopt Water" Despite all the threats to Bali's freshwater, we are thrilled to know how to impulse positive change!

[Read more +](#)



[World Tourism Day 2017 “Sustainable Tourism – a Tool for Development” Official Celebrations \(Doha, Qatar, 27 September, 2017\)](#)

[UNWTO, Government of Jamaica and World Bank Group Conference on Jobs & Inclusive Growth: Partnerships for Sustainable Tourism \(Montego Bay, Jamaica, 27-29 November, 2017\)](#)

[Second UNWTO/UNESCO World Conference on Tourism and Culture: Fostering Sustainable Development \(Muscat, Sultanate of Oman, 11-12 December, 2017\)](#)



[UNWTO Discussion Paper on “Sustainable Tourism for Development”](#)

In the context of the International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development, UNWTO produced an initial draft discussion paper that offers a framework for further debate on tourism’s role towards sustainable development. It underlines where the sector stands today and what priorities for action are needed to progress further.

The draft discussion paper was open for public consultation. Governments, International organizations, private entities and other tourism stakeholders, have commented on the issues raised by the discussion paper and shared success stories as well as case studies.

[Download the executive summary](#)

[Download the discussion paper](#)



Did you know that you can also take part in the celebrations of the International Year 2017?

In the last six months UNWTO has invited all tourism stakeholders to join its celebrations through a variety of possibilities. In particular, UNWTO has worked on the following:

- [Roadmap](#)
- [Communication tools and resources](#)
- [Consumer-oriented campaign “Travel, Enjoy, Respect”](#)
- [Discussion paper “Tourism for Development”](#)
- [Fourteen IY2017 Official Events](#)
- [Special Ambassadors Programme](#)

Join the celebrations!

- Learn more about the contribution of tourism to sustainable development on the #IY2017 official website
- Join the #IY2017 celebrations by adding your initiative to the of the Celebrations Map and Calendar on the #IY2017 official website
- Share solutions, stories and knowledge of how sustainable tourism can be an effective tool for development
- Follow the conversation on the #IY2017 on Facebook and Twitter
- Become a partner by engaging with the #IY2017 and benefit from worldwide visibility, networking opportunities and association with the values of the United Nations.

The outreach of an International Year is global, attracting an audience of millions of people from governments, the private sector, international organizations, academia, NGOs and civil society, and tourists themselves.

[Check out the partners](#)

[Contact UNWTO for partnerships](#)

About 2017 International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development (IY2017)

The United Nations 70th General Assembly has designated 2017 as the International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development (A/RES/70/193). The World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), the United Nations Specialized Agency for Tourism, has been mandated to facilitate the organization and implementation of the International Year, in collaboration with governments, relevant organizations of the United Nations system, international and regional organizations and other relevant stakeholders.

[Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#), [Youtube](#), [Flickr](#), [Website](#)

The [World Tourism Organization \(UNWTO\)](#), a United Nations specialized agency, is the leading international organization with the decisive and central role in promoting the development of responsible, sustainable and universally accessible tourism. It serves as a global forum for tourism policy issues and a practical source of tourism know-how. Its membership includes 156 countries, 6 territories, 2 permanent observers and over 500 Affiliate Members. Follow us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#), [YouTube](#), [LinkedIn](#) and [Flickr](#).



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