# United Nations Steering Committee on Tourism for Development

"When approached in a sustainable manner, tourism can help drive economic growth and alleviate poverty. In fact, tourism has proved to be one of the leading ways for the least developed countries to increase their participation in the global economy."

UN Secretary-General, Ban Ki-moon



World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) is the specialized agency of the United Nations in the field of tourism, Recognizing tourism's important role in the global economic and development agenda, UNWTO provides leadership and support to the tourism sector in the advancement of sustainable policies, practices and actions. Through the promotion and development of responsible, sustainable and universally accessible tourism, UNWTO endeavours to maximize tourism's contribution to socio-economic growth, job creation, development, environmental conservation, cultural enrichment and international understanding, while minimizing negative social or environmental impacts, paying particular attention to the interests of developing countries.



International Labour Organization (ILO) is the tripartite UN specialized agency devoted to advancing opportunities for women and men to obtain decent and productive work in conditions of freedom, equity, security, and human dignity. Decent work reflects the concerns of governments, workers and employers and resumes the aspirations of people in their working environment and comprises four strategic objectives that are relevant to all workers: fundamental principles, rights at work and international labour standards; employment and income opportunities; social protection and social security; social dialogue and tripartism.



International Trace Center (ITC) is the technical cooperation agency of UNCTAD and WTO which supports developing countries to diversify and increase exports. In tourism we mainly work around the notion of Inclusive Tourism, an approach that aims to improve peoples' lives by promoting local competitiveness and creating mutually beneficial business linkages between local producers of goods and services and the tourism industry. Our services include opportunity studies; enhancing supply-side quality; strengthening support institutions; and creating long-term business for SMEs & farming communities along the tourism value chain. The facilitation of private-sector driven sector strategies and the strengthening of women in tourism are further areas of support.



United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) assists developing countries in their efforts to achieve a more effective integration into the world economy on an equitable basis. With the view to maximizing the trade, investment and development opportunities of developing countries, UNCTAD provides a forum for intergovernmental deliberations, conducts economic research and provides technical assistance and advisory services to member states. As part of its work on international trade in services, UNCTAD is paying growing attention to the contribution of international tourism to poverty reduction and structural transformation, particularly in LDCs.



United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) is the UN's global development network, advocating for change and connecting countries to knowledge, experience and resources to help people build a better life, on the ground in 166 countries. UNDP advocates for nationally-owned solutions to reduce poverty and promote human development. UNDP has been implementing pro-poor interventions in support of the tourism sector under its poverty reduction, private sector and environment programmes. The ultimate objective of UNDP's involvement is to reduce poverty through sustainable and pro-poor solutions.



World Trade Organization (WTO) is the only international organization dealing with the global rules of trade between nations. Its main objective is to ensure that trade flows as smoothly, predictably and freely as possible. Tourism and related services are covered under the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS), where WTO Member governments have individually made legally binding commitments to guarantee specified levels of trade access. With respect to technical co-operation, the WTO organizes around 500 activities annually.



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Delivering as One UN



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### Tourism: driving growth and development

Over the last fifty years, international tourism has grown to become one of the largest economic sectors in the world. Currently accounting for 5% of the world's GDP, one in twelve jobs and 30% of the world's services' exports, tourism is a leading contributor to global growth and development.

International arrivals in the world's Least Developed Countries (LDCs) increased by an average of 11 % a year between 1990 and 2009, and tourism is currently the first or second source of export earnings for nearly half of the LDCs.

As a major source of growth, employment and revenue, tourism is increasingly recognized as having a decisive role in fighting poverty and achieving the UN Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

Through its direct and indirect impact, tourism creates millions of jobs, attracts significant foreign exchange, investment and know-how, stimulates the local economy – with a significant multiplier effect on many other sectors – and plays a decisive role in fighting poverty and fostering development.

Tourism, a transversal economic sector interacting with many other industries and services, can also contribute significantly towards the transformation to a Green Economy, "an economy that results in improved human well being and reduced inequalities over the long term, while not exposing future generations to significant environmental risks and ecological scarcities".

#### Tourism: a priority for developing countries

Despite tourism's proven contribution to foreign exchange, job creation and socioeconomic development, low priority has so far been assigned to the sector in the cooperation for development agenda. This is all the more surprising given that tourism has been clearly identified by developing countries themselves as a priority for development.

A recent UNDP report, undertaken with the input of number of other UN agencies, sheds light on the relevance of tourism to LDCs. The analysis of 35 Diagnostic Trade Integration Studies (DTIS) – an assessment of the competitiveness of a country's economy and of the sectors that are engaged or have the potential to engage in international trade, identifies tourism as a priority sector for 90% of the LCDs.

Least Developed Countries (LDCs) according to the importance of the tourism sector in the balance of payments, 2000-2008	International tourism receipt (exports) over total exports of goods and	
Tourism remained or became the largest export sector	services, 2008 (%)	
Maldives Samoa Vanuatu Eritrea Comoros Tuvalu Gambia Rwanda Tanzania Uganda Nepal Senegal	77 70 52 51 44 35 33 30 26 20 20	
Tourism remaine dor became the 2nd or 3rd largest export sector		
SaoTome & Príncipe Haiti Liberia Cambodia Benin Madagascar Mali Ethiopia Yemen Mozambique Sudan	35 33 25 19 15 12 11 9 6	
Tourism sector demonstrating progress		
Sierra Leone Kiribati Laos Niger Togo Malawi Lesotho Zambia Djibouti Myanmar Bangladesh Bhutan Burkina Faso Mauritania	10 6 5 5 4 4 3 3 2 1 1 	
Without a significant tourism sector		
Guinea-Bissau Burundi Solomon Islands Angola Afghanistan Central African Republic Chad Congo (Dem. Rep. of the) Equatorial Guinea Guinea Somalia Timor-Leste	1 1 0.4   	

Source: UNCTAD. Calculations based on data from UNCTAD's Division for Africa, Least Developed Countries and Special Programmes, the International Monetary Fund, and national sources (2011)

### Delivering as One: the UN Steering Committee on Tourism for Development (SCTD)

The United Nations is committed to 'delivering as one' to ensure a more effective development assistance and to accelerate progress towards the MDGs. Against this background, on the initiative of UNWTO, nine UN agencies and programmes – ILO, ITC, UNCTAD, UNDP, UNESCO, UNIDO, WTO, UNEP– have come together to coordinate their tourism–related work under the UN Steering Committee on Tourism for Development (SCTD).

The SCTD builds on the strengths and expertise of its different members to support developing countries in the area of tourism for sustainable development. By joining forces, the nine UN entities aim to deliver a more coordinated, effective and efficient technical assistance and support developing countries' needs by boosting

"As Rio+20 approaches, UNWTO is coming together with UN sister agencies, industry leaders and civil society to ensure that tourism remains firmly on the journey towards global sustainable development, placing tourism at the heart of the transformation to a Green Economy"

#### Taleb Rifai, UNWTO Secretary-General

tourism's development potential for the poorest and most disadvantaged. The SCTD also aims to raise international awareness of tourism as an instrument for development and increase support for its mainstreaming in national and international development and poverty reduction strategies.

## Assisting LDCs and developing countries

The SCTD provides specialized tourism assistance aimed to maximize tourism's capacity to support countries in reaching their development goals, while preserving their cultural and environmental assets. The Services Portfolio on Tourism for Development sets the services available to LDCs and developing countries. The Services Portfolio makes available to LDCs and developing countries over

50 types of services organized around four pillars: building good governance and sustainability in all its dimensions – social development, economic growth, cultural and environmental protection – promoting investment in the tourism economy, fostering the poverty reduction impact of tourism and encouraging human resources development.

SCTD Services Portfolio on Tourism for Development Areas of Intervention		
1.	Building good governance and sustainability in tourism development	UNWTO ILO
2.	Promoting investment in the tourism economy	ITC UNDP UNEP UNESCO UNIDO UNCTAD WTO
3.	Fostering the poverty reduction impact of tourism	
4.	Encouraging human resources development in tourism	

Download the Tourism Services Portfolio "Tourism for Development

# **Supporting LDCs access to funding mechanisms**

To facilitate the i implementation of the tourism for development services, the SCTD has identified the Enhanced Integrated Framework (EIF) – an Aid for Trade mechanism for LDCs – as a key source of funding.

The EIF is a multilateral trade capacity development initiative that supports LDCs to become more active in the global trading system. The EIF is currently implemented in 46 LDCs and supported by a multi-donor trust fund with contributions from 22 donors. SCTD will work closely with national focal points to help identify the tourism

development priorities and formulate joint proposals and activities according to EIF principles and procedures.

To support the delivery of an integrated service for tourism, the SCTD will build on the strength of each agency and programme to identify and mobilise financial resources necessary to respond to developing countries needs. As an innovative institutional framework for Delivering as One for Tourism, the SCTD will also explore the possibility of creating a Multi Donors Trust Fund for tourism in the future.