

TUI Care Foundation and World Tourism Organization announce 'Tourism for Development Fund' for Least Developed Countries

- *UN Conference LDC5 recognises tourism as one of the main drivers for sustainable development in Least Developed Countries (LDCs)*
- *Supported by UNWTO, TUI Care Foundation will invest €10 million by 2030 to boost sustainable tourism in LDCs*
- *Education, entrepreneurship, cultural heritage, and protection of natural habitats at the heart of the initiative*
- *Untapped potential of tourism for LDCs will be unlocked in the race to meet the UN Sustainable Development Goals by 2030*

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Doha, 8th March 2023. During the fifth UN Conference on the Least Developed Countries (LDC5), which takes place once every decade, the TUI Care Foundation and the UN World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) announced their plan to put LDCs at the heart of sustainable tourism development. Through its new Tourism for Development Fund, supported by the UNWTO, the TUI Care Foundation will invest €10 million by 2030 to support projects in LDCs.

According to the United Nations, sustainable tourism has the potential to be a key driver of development in many LDCs. The sector, with its extensive links to a wide range of stakeholders and activities, can contribute to economic growth, community development, intercultural dialogue and environmental conservation. Through its Tourism for Development Fund, the TUI Care Foundation will drive positive outcomes in education, local entrepreneurship, support for artisans and creatives, and the protection of natural habitats on land and below water.

Thomas Ellerbeck, Chairman of the TUI Care Foundation, explains: "Least Developed Countries have an enormous untapped tourism potential which is an important opportunity for their economic, social, and environmental sustainability. Together with UNWTO, we will foster tourism as a vehicle for cross-sectoral growth and create an enabling environment for founders and small businesses to thrive. Particularly female founders have a tendency to create more sustainable and digital solutions and thus deserve more support. We want to put destinations in LDCs on the global tourism map and examples like Cape Verde have proven: Tourism is a global force for good."

UNWTO Secretary-General, Zurab Pololikashvili, says: "For Least Developed Countries everywhere, tourism represents a pillar of growth and opportunity. Through the Tourism For Development Fund, UNWTO and TUI Care Foundation will provide vital investment for the sector, working directly with local stakeholders to deliver on our sector's unique potential to spur economic development, protect culture and ecosystems and put emerging destinations on the global tourism map."

Press Information

Implementing the Foundation's strategic framework, projects will particularly focus on dual vocational training for disadvantaged communities, the conservation of endangered species, sustainable agriculture, protection of marine environments, empowering local entrepreneurs, creatives, and artisans, and promoting sustainable investment. Carefully assessing local needs, the Fund will support projects designed to increase the capacity of destination communities to improve their livelihoods, conserve and regenerate nature, and create market-based solutions that benefit tourism destinations. Targeted LDCs include Cambodia, Lao, Mozambique, Rwanda, Senegal, The Gambia, Tanzania, Uganda, and Zambia.

To support the Tourism for Development Fund, the UNWTO will provide a platform to advance the initiative, invite funders to join and support calls for proposals, liaise with member states from LDCs and international organisations for further coordination, and jointly organise a series of events that promote the potential of sustainable tourism in LDCs.

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UNWTO Executive Director, Zoritsa Uresovic, adds: "The creation of the Tourism for Development Fund represents a big step forward in building a more sustainable sector. Funding will be directed where it will make the biggest difference and allow communities in Least Developed Countries to take the lead in the development of tourism as a driver of opportunity and a tool to protect and celebrate cultural and natural heritage."

TUI Care Foundation Executive Director, Alexander Panczuk, adds: "Together with the World Tourism Organization, we invite potential partners to collaborate and join forces to boost the potential of tourism in LDCs. The Tourism For Development Fund will leverage the power of the tourism sector in the race to meet the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals."

Call for proposals will be published via UNWTO and TUI Care Foundation on a regular basis for non-profit organisations and social enterprises to apply to the Tourism For Development Fund.

About the TUI Care Foundation

Building on the potential of tourism as a force for good, the TUI Care Foundation supports and initiates projects, which create new opportunities and contribute to thriving communities in tourism destinations all over the world. Connecting holidaymakers to good causes, it supports education and training opportunities for young people; drives the protection of natural habitats and the marine environment; and helps local communities to thrive sustainably and benefit from tourism. The TUI Care Foundation builds on strong partnerships with local and international organisations to create meaningful and long-lasting impact. The independent charitable organisation was founded by TUI, one of the world's leading tourism businesses, and is based in the Netherlands.

Website: www.tuicarefoundation.com

About the United Nations World Tourism Organization

The World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) is the United Nations specialized agency fostering tourism as a vehicle for equal, inclusive and sustainable development. Working with its Member States, international organizations and the private sector, UNWTO promotes safe and seamless travel for all. UNWTO also works to make tourism the foundation of trust and international cooperation and a central pillar of recovery. As part of the wider UN system, UNWTO is at the forefront of global efforts to achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including through its ability to create decent jobs, promote equality and preserve natural and cultural heritage.

Website: www.unwto.org

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