

Keeping sand and sea plastic free in Cyprus

- *An industry wide initiative supports Cyprus in its efforts to go plastic free*
- *Awareness raising and a wide range of activities will tackle single-use plastics*
- *Tourism businesses such as hotels, restaurants and bars are at the core of the initiative*

Berlin, August 29, 2019 – TUI Care Foundation and the Travel Foundation today announced the launch of an initiative to tackle single-use plastics in coastal regions of Cyprus. The partnership will work closely with the Cyprus Sustainable Tourism Initiative (CSTI) to tackle the threat of single-use plastics for Cyprus as a destination and the marine environment in which it is located.

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In the Mediterranean, plastics constitute the majority of beach litter, over 85% of floating litter and 45% to 95% of the litter found on the seafloor. Packaging like plastic bags and food containers as well as single-use plastics such as straws, bottles and cotton buds are the most common items of litter found in the Mediterranean Sea. But to tackle plastic pollution of the sea, action needs to be taken on land first. The tourism industry and its stakeholders provide a great platform to increase awareness of the plastic challenge by reducing their own plastic usage.

The initiative targets a local reduction of single-use plastics by tourism businesses of up to 70% by 2022, focusing on the popular destinations of Ayia Napa and Protaras in the East of Cyprus. Tourism businesses have been increasingly engaging with the issue of plastic pollution, recognising their role in distributing single-use plastics. This campaign will support local hotels, bars and restaurants with training and guidance to find alternatives to purchasing plastic items such as straws, cups, cutlery, bottles, bags and take-away food containers. The project will also raise awareness of the issue of single-use plastics with tourists, residents and youth – with activities such as beach cleans, competitions, school activities and events. It will include social media engagement and an online community to drive outreach and awareness.

“This project takes a collaborative approach, bringing together businesses, policy makers, NGOs and society to reduce the amount of single-use plastics. It’s an opportunity for the tourism industry to lead the way in reducing, re-using and recycling, and to encourage others to reduce their environmental footprint, helping to conserve this beautiful coastline”, says Frank Oostdam, Member of the Board of TUI Care Foundation

“We already have had a lot of support from hotels, bars and restaurants and other local businesses who want to get ahead of this issue, do the right thing for Cyprus and respond to the growing expectations of customers – local and international – who are now questioning the use of disposable plastics. This initiative is about providing training and advice for businesses and recommendations for residents and visitors

about how they can do their bit, and events such as beach cleans and awareness raising activities.” says Philippos Drousiotis, Chairman of CSTI.

At the moment, the initiative is gathering the commitment and support of stakeholders to shape a campaign that will see its launch in November 2019. The mission is clear and the name speaks for itself: Keeping sand and sea plastic free!

About the TUI Care Foundation

Building on the potential of tourism as a force for good, the TUI Care Foundation supports and initiates partnerships and projects, which create new opportunities for the young generation and contribute to thriving communities all over the world. Connecting holidaymakers to good causes, the TUI Care Foundation fosters education and training initiatives to open up new opportunities and perspectives for young people, the protection of the natural environment in holiday destinations and sustainable livelihoods in thriving destinations where local communities can benefit even more from tourism. TUI Care Foundation works global and acts local - it builds on strong partnerships with local and international organisations to create meaningful and long lasting impact. The charitable foundation values transparency and the efficient use of funds. Therefore 100% of the donations go to destination programmes with all administration costs of the foundation covered by TUI. TUI Care Foundation was founded by TUI, the world’s leading tourism business, and is based in the Netherlands.

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About the Travel Foundation and Cyprus Sustainable Tourism Initiative

The Travel Foundation is a charity that works in partnership with leading tourism organizations to improve the impacts of tourism and shape a positive future for destinations. Since it was set up in 2003, it has worked in 26 popular holiday destinations around the world. Its head office is in the UK and it has a global network of project managers. The Travel Foundation has been working in Cyprus, in partnership with the Cyprus Sustainable Tourism Initiative (CSTI), since 2006, on projects including Minimum Standards for Hotels, Cyprus Breakfast, and Plastic Reduction in the Hotel Industry.

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