Donors’ Conference on the Regional Project on Sustainable Tourism Development in a Network of Cross-Border Parks and Protected Areas in West Africa

Dakar, Senegal, 27 and 28 May 2011

Recommendations of the conference

The Donors’ Conference for the Regional Project on Sustainable Tourism Development in a Network of Cross-Border Parks and Protected Areas in West Africa, convened in Dakar, Senegal, on 27 and 28 May 2011,

Having taken cognizance of the preliminary study that describes the condition of the sites, defines the strategic axes and proposes an action plan,

Having taken cognizance of the Portfolio of Funding Opportunities,

Having heard the introductory presentations of the project, the statements of potential funding entities and the explanations of the representatives of the governments and the parks involved,

- Lauds the quality and exhaustiveness of the preliminary study as well as the relevance of the Portfolio of Funding Opportunities;

- Expresses its unanimous support for a project whose potential is extremely rich and promising in terms of sustainable tourism development, biodiversity conservation, poverty reduction, job creation and infrastructure development;

- Notes that this project holds a prominent place in the sub-regional economic integration process;

- Has taken note of the interest and proposals listed in the report annexed to the present recommendations on the part of the principal development partners (ADB, IDB, UNDP, Coopération française) and of the interested institutions (OIC, WAEMU, UNESCO);

- Invites other development partners to join this undertaking;

- Wishes this project to move forward to an operational implementation phase;
- Recommends the governance of the project to associate, around the tourism ministries and in a form to be determined, the technical ministries that are most closely concerned (in particular, those responsible for environment, transport, education, culture, handicrafts), promoters of similar initiatives, the interested funding entities and the private sector;

- Wishes the ten countries concerned to rapidly undertake a reflection regarding the place that should be accorded to the private sector in terms of investment and the management of the parks and/or some of their functions (accommodation, reception, visits, etc…), so as to develop public-private partnerships, for example, on a concession basis;

- Wishes the governments and the managers of the parks and protected areas concerned, as well as the representatives of the local communities to specify the modalities whereby the local populations are to be associated in the implementation of the project;

- Requests the governments to rapidly define cross-border management structures for each park and protected areas;

- Requests the ten governments concerned to include this project among the priorities of the development programmes they present to bilateral and multilateral funding entities;

- Requests the UNWTO, as executing agency of the project and in consultation with the ICDT, to carry out the necessary contacts with the AfDB, the IDB, Coopération française, WAEMU and the OIC in order to determine their respective commitments in the implementation of the project.

Dakar, 28 May 2011