



Rev. 20 – September 2013

1st EURO- ASIAN SKI RESORTS CONFERENCE

Developing New Destinations for Snow Tourism

8 - 9 October 2013

Almaty, Kazakhstan

Background and objectives:

- Ski sports constitute quite an important segment in today's highly lucrative domestic and international tourism market. Relevant data indicates that around 2000 ski resorts which are operated in around 80 countries worldwide accommodate approximately 6 million beds for those who practice winter sports.
- In general, cross-border snow tourism takes place in bigger ski resorts in destinations with a long tradition in winter sports; however, smaller ski resorts mostly depend on the domestic demand. Mature ski destinations are quite concentrated in Western Europe, United States and Japan.
- Ski resorts concentrate on recreational use, permitting tremendous numbers of people to enjoy and learn about delicate mountain environments in a safe manner. When undertaken in an environmentally sensitive manner, ski resorts can minimize their impacts on the land, while maintaining or improving business.
- Due to some environmental, structural and market oriented challenges, the consumer for winter resorts is looking for new destinations and innovative products.
- A competitive ski resort development and its efficient management both have a high cost in terms of investment and maintenance. There is strong need for a long term vision and clear understanding of the market dynamics as well as an established management culture and entrepreneurial spirit.
- The objective of the Conference is to acquire an overview to further develop and expand the international ski tourism market in order to ensure its steady and sustainable growth. For this purpose, it aims at exchanging state of the art experiences between the traditional, established hot spots of ski tourism and the new and developing ski resorts in winter destinations in Europe and Asia.

PRELIMINARY PROGRAMME

Tuesday, 8 October 2013

08:00 - 09:00 Registration of participants

09:00 - 10:00 Opening ceremony

H.E. Akhmetzhan Yesimov, Mayor of the Municipality of Almaty, Kazakhstan

H.E. Aset Isekeshev, Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Industry and New Technologies, Kazakhstan

Mr. Taleb Rifai, Secretary-General, UNWTO

Other local officials designated by the hosts

10:00 – 10:30 Coffee Break

10:30 – 11:30 SESSION 1: A STRATEGIC OUTLOOK TO SKI RESORTS

The session will provide a strategic framework for a sustainable ski resort development through 2 illustrative cases: an emerging destination vs. a well-developed one.

Moderator: **Mr. Frédéric Pierret**, Executive Director, UNWTO

i) **Introduction and Keynote presentation:** The key factors of success for developing ski resorts

Mr. Peter F. Keller, Scientific expert of the Conference

ii) Ski Resorts as successful autonomous growth poles, case of Andorra

Mr. Joan Viladomat, Executive President, PGI Management, Headquarters Andorra La Vella, Principality of Andorra

iii) A New Development Strategy, Kok Dzhalau project, Kazakhstan

Mr. Zhulamanov Bakhitzhan Tolevzhanovich, Head of Tourism Department Municipality of Almaty, Kazakhstan

Panel discussion / Q & A

11:30 – 12:30

SESSION 2: RECENT GLOBAL TRENDS AND THE EURO-ASIAN SKI MARKET

The session will provide a global insight into the new dynamics and trends in the snow tourism market and explore the necessary policies to adapt to change.

Moderator: **Mr. Luigi Gaido**, Technical Director of the Conference, Italy

- i) The global ski market; changing trends and the impact on the Euro-Asian region:

Mr. Laurent Vanat, Laurent Vanat Consulting SARL, Switzerland

- ii) The potential of new ski resorts in Europe and Asia: Positioning and challenges for the newcomers.

Mr. Josef Zenhäusern, FIS Aid and Promotion Consultant, International Ski Federation, Headquarter of the International Ski Federation, Switzerland

- iii) Ski sports development in the Republic of Kazakhstan and the impact of major sporting events on promotion and marketing

Mr. Andrey Obyskalov, Executive Director, Kazakhstan Alpine Ski Federation, Kazakhstan

Panel discussion / Q & A

12:30 – 14:30

Lunch Break

14:30 – 16:00

SESSION 3: SUCCESS STORIES OF THE WORLD'S LEADING SKI RESORTS

The session will illustrate good practices and success stories as regards new business and partnership models and the role of the public authorities.

Moderator: **Mr. Peter F. Keller**, Scientific expert of the Conference, Switzerland

- i) Keys to success for a fragmented resort management, case of Courchevel, France

Ms. Adeline Roux, Director of the Tourism Office, Courchevel, France

- ii) The development model of leading North American Ski Resorts, the case of Whistler Blackcomb Mountain, Canada

Mr. Peter W. Williams, Professor, Director of the Centre for Tourism Policy and Research, Resource and Environmental Management, Simon Fraser University, Vancouver, B.C., Canada

Panel discussion / Q & A

16:00 – 16:30

Coffee break

16:30 – 18:00

SESSION 4 : BUSINESS MODELS AND EXPERIENCES OF LEADING RESORT DEVELOPERS

The panellists will discuss how the successful market driven business and development models they implemented led to growth in mountain areas with fragile economies:

Moderator: **Ms. Esencan Terzibasoglu**, Programme Coordinator Destination Management & Quality, UNWTO

- i) The global management of ski and mountain resorts: Which are the effective business models? The experiences of PGI Management, Andorra

Mr. Joan Viladomat, Executive President, PGI Management, Headquarters Andorra La Vella, Principality of Andorra

- ii) The necessity of strategic planning for developing tourism resorts: What can new ski resorts in Asia learn from the experience of the current operating companies?

Mr. Javier Gonzalez, Chief Operation Officer, THR International Tourism Consultants, Barcelona, Spain

- iii) The Future of the Chinese Ski tourism: Experiences with the development of ski resorts?

Mr. Fabio Ries, Chairman of the Board of Salbei Duolemeidi Ski resort, CEO of Sydex Service for Ski resorts, Beijing, China

Panel discussion / Q & A

Wednesday 9 October 2013

09:30 – 11:00

SESSION 5 : OPTIMAL SIZE FOR EFFECTIVE PERFORMANCE

The session will acquire an overview about the relationship between the size of the ski resort and its effectiveness and profitability.

Moderator: **Mr. Luigi Gaido**, Technical Director of the Conference, Italy

- i) Small and large ski resorts: What strategies will make them profitable in a competitive environment? The case of Lombardy, Italy

Mr. Andrea Macchiavelli, Co-founder and Director of Tourism, Gruppo Clas Consulting Milano, Director of the Centre of Tourism Studies at the University of Bergamo, Italy

- ii) The Austrian Ski Resort Experience: How can limited scale ski resorts sustain competitiveness in the disputed ski markets? Case of medium and smaller ski resorts in Austria

Mr. Christoph Hinteregger, Head of “International Projects”, Kohl & Partners, Villach, Austria

Panel discussion / Q & A

16:00 – 16:30

Coffee break

11:30 – 13:00

SESSION 6: THE ASIAN SKI RESORT EXPERIENCE

The panellists will identify the key business strategies of successful Asian ski resorts which opened their countries to the domestic and international ski market:

Moderator:.....

- i) The Alpine business model for ski resorts: Is it a worldwide benchmark for developing ski resorts? The case of Niseko, Hokkaido

Mr. Ross Findlay, Managing Director, Niseko Adventure Centre, Aburatsubo, Hokkaido, Japan

- ii) The successful ski resorts in Korea: How did this country achieve to become a leading Asian ski destination?

Mr. In Jun Park, Managing Director of the Yongpyong Ski Resort, Gangwon Province, Republic of Korea

Panel discussion / Q & A

13:00 – 15:00

Lunch Break

15:00 – 16:30

SESSION 7: THE GROWTH STRATEGY: DIVERSIFICATION - KEY TO GLOBAL MARKET EXPANSION

The session will highlight a strategic vision and direction to attract the targeted market segments at international level.

Moderator:

- i) The impact of mega events on market expansion and resort rejuvenation: the case of Sochi, Russia.

Ms. Nadya Bozhko, Project Manager, Sochi, Russian Federation

- ii) **Final Keynote:** The new ski resorts in countries in transition: How can they contribute to develop the domestic ski market and attract foreign visitors?, the case of Gudauri

Mr. Aleksandre Onoprishvili, Director, Gudauri Development Agency Ltd, Georgia (tbc)

16:30 – 17:00

CONCLUSIONS AND THE CLOSING CEREMONY

Technical conclusions and closing remarks