



**African Tourism Ministers Meeting
November 10th, 2016, Marrakesh, Kingdom of Morocco**

MARRAKESH DECLARATION

On

« Tourism and Climate Issues in Africa »

Concerning the adoption of

The African Charter on Sustainable and Responsible Tourism



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“Tourism and Climate Issues in Africa”

We, the Ministers of Tourism of African countries that are member of the UNWTO regional commission for Africa, having partaken in the African Tourism Ministers Meeting held in Marrakesh (Morocco) on November 10th, 2016, on the sidelines of the 22nd UN Climate Change Conference (COP 22):

FULLY AWARE of our continent’s tourism potentials as regards natural and cultural resources and the significant role of sustainable tourism as a driver of economic and social development in our respective countries;

BEARING IN MIND the cross-cutting nature of the tourism sector and its numerous effects, as well as the challenges the industry is likely to encounter, particularly as regards environment and biodiversity protection, cultural heritage preservation, and equitable development of local communities;

CONCERNED BY the extent of global warming and its prejudicial consequences on mankind, the environment, and the tourism industry, and by the impact of the tourism industry on climate change and the effects of the latter on tourism activities in several African countries;

TAKING ACCOUNT OF the recommendations of the Casablanca Declaration on tourism and climate change, resulting from the 4th “5+5 Tourism Dialogue” Conference held in Casablanca (Morocco) on July 11th, 2016;

RECALLING the decisions taken by the 58th UNWTO Regional Commission for Africa, held from 19-21 April 2016 in Abidjan (Côte d’Ivoire), particularly decision CAF/DEC/9(LVIII) that stipulates that the Commission welcomes Morocco’s initiative that aims at encouraging member countries to adopt the African Charter on Sustainable and Responsible Tourism;



WELCOMING the international mobilisation around climate change issues and the Paris Agreement resolutions resulting from the 21st UN Climate Change Conference (COP 21) that aim at keeping global warming below the threshold of 2 degrees Celsius compared to pre-industrial levels, and reducing greenhouse gas emissions;

WELCOMING favorably the adoption of the ten-year framework for sustainable production and consumption by the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development notably the 10 YFP program of sustainable tourism (A / CONF.216 / 5.annexe) co-led by Morocco, and France and the Republic of Korea and lead by the World Tourism Organization;

RECALLING the UN General Assembly resolution A/RES/70/1 of 25 September 2015 on Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which adopts a comprehensive people-centered set of universal and transformative Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), as well as considerations related to the means of implementation and follow-up and review, and commits to achieving sustainable development in its three dimensions — economic, social and environmental — in a balanced and integrated manner;

REINFORCING the UN General Assembly resolution A/RES/70/193 of 22 December 2015, which adopts 2017 as the International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development and encourages the UN system and all other actors to support sustainable tourism at all levels, including international cooperation, "as a means of promoting and accelerating sustainable development, especially poverty eradication";

TAKING INTO CONSIDERATION the UN General Assembly Resolution 69/233 dated December 19th, 2014, on the Promotion of sustainable tourism, including ecotourism, for poverty eradication and environment protection;

REAFFIRMING the results of the 1st and 2nd International Conferences on climate change and tourism held respectively in Djerba (Tunisia) in April 2003 and Davos (Switzerland) in October 2007;

FULLY IN LINE WITH the general principles and recommendations of the Global Code of Ethics for Tourism adopted by the UNWTO General Assembly in Resolution A/RES/406(XIII) of its 13th Session that was held in Santiago (Chile) from September 27th to October 1st 1999;



TAKING INTO ACCOUNT the relevant observations of the World Committee on Tourism Ethics (WCTE) regarding the adoption of the African Charter on Sustainable and Responsible Tourism by the Member States of the UNWTO Commission for Africa (CAF);

ACKNOWLEDGING The Global Sustainable Tourism Council Criteria (GSTC), established in 2008 and developed by several African countries;

MINDFUL of the tourism sector's vulnerability to climate change and its importance in Africa with regard to job creation, poverty alleviation, developing natural resources, promoting gender equity, and bringing peoples and civilisations together;

Declare :

- Our firm belief that tourism is one of the key drivers of socioeconomic development in Africa and an instrument that ensures people's right to development and dignity;
- Our determination to understand that an unsustainable development of the tourism industry can jeopardise the perpetuation of the positive tourism dynamics that Africa is supposed to enhance and accelerate;
- Our understanding that climate is undergoing changes that are reflected in extreme natural events that impact the tourism industry and local populations alike;
- Our willingness to encourage initiatives addressing issues related to the impact of tourism on biodiversity and climate change
- Our determination to understand and analyse sustainability concerns and mitigate the impact of climate change on tourism by initiating a participatory reflection process –involving all stakeholders in each stage of tourism products life cycle- so as to develop and implement strategies, programmes, and action plans that aim at (1) mitigating and/or adapting tourism development to climate change, (2) preserving and developing natural potentials and human and cultural riches, and (3) mitigating and/or limiting tourism's negative externalities;
- Our commitment to collaborate as part of the international agreements and conventions as regards sustainable development, particularly the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, as well with other national, regional, and international institutions with a view to developing a sustainable and responsible tourism that takes into account climate change constraints in Africa;



- Our firm belief to cooperate and strengthen south-south and north-south strategic alliances and partnerships as regards preserving and developing African destinations' sociocultural, economic, and environmental resources, and promoting a sector with low greenhouse gas emissions.

With this in mind, it was decided to :

1. Provide African tourism stakeholders with a common reference of principles and guidelines formalised in an "African Charter on Sustainable and Responsible Tourism" – annexed to this Declaration- that aims, inter alia, at mobilising the sector's stakeholders so as to develop a sustainable tourism in Africa ;
2. Adopt the principles of the "African Charter on Sustainable and Responsible Tourism" and begin the process of signing it by the African Tourism Ministers attending the "Ministerial Forum on Tourism and Climate Issues in Africa" held in Marrakesh on November 10th, 2016, on the sidelines of COP22;
3. Extend membership to the "African Charter on Sustainable and Responsible Tourism" by organising annual rotating African forums, between different African regions, so as to sustain the momentum established for a sustainable and responsible tourism in Africa, and continue promoting the African Charter so it can be adopted by new tourism signatories, particularly by including it in the agenda of the next UNWTO Regional Commission Meeting for Africa scheduled for 2017;
4. Work to develop platforms to share good practices and exchange knowledge, particularly by establishing research and university exchange programmes, and programmes to sensitise and build the capacity of stakeholders and the public (including educational institutions) as regards the issues of tourism sustainability and the impacts of climate change;
5. Work to set up a fund to finance and support African initiatives and innovative projects in the field of sustainable and responsible tourism and those that favour mitigating/adapting tourism activities to climate change;
6. Call on mobilising the international community to support the efforts made by Africa for a sustainable and responsible tourism by granting the sector a strong presence among funding priorities, particularly through support mechanisms that are developed to preserve the environment and generate socio-economic benefits, as well as specialised technical and financial support instruments, such as those related to climate change and the concerns of sustainable development in Africa;



7. Call on mobilising the international community so as to integrate tourism in themes and topics related to climate change.

A monitoring committee that comprises representatives African countries that signed this Declaration and adopted the “African Charter on Sustainable and Responsible Tourism” with the support of UNWTO is set up so as to ensure monitoring the implementation of the commitments undertaken and the means to implement them.

Done in Marrakesh on November 10th, 2016.