

MALE' DECLARATION ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

(adopted at the Asia-Pacific Ministers' Conference on Tourism and Environment, in Male' Maldives, 16 February 1997)

WHEREAS, the Asia- Pacific Tourism Ministers Conference on Tourism and Environment as held on 16 February 1997, in Male, Republic of Maldives, convened by the World Tourism Organisation with the participation of delegations of 27 States, Affiliate Members, international organisations, regional organisations and observers, to clarify and define the linkage between tourism and environment, as well as to consider the responsibility of States and the private sector for achieving a high degree of sustainable tourism development; and

WHEREAS, the theme of the conference, "Tourism 2000 - Building a Sustainable Future for Asia-Pacific," attests to the unanimous sentiment on the part of the conference participants and the substantial and ongoing investment of financial, human and natural resources in tourism development requires a fiduciary responsibility to the sustainability and continued viability of the industry for the benefit of communities and nations; and

WHEREAS, there is recognition and appreciation for the uniqueness of the natural environment, peoples, cultures, and heritage of the Asia-Pacific countries and their importance for tourism's potential for cross cultural learning, international understanding, and world peace; and

WHEREAS, the conference participants have explored the many policy-related and technical issues involved in sustainability, with an emphasis on those of particular relevance to the public sector; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by conference that the participants of the Asia-Pacific Ministers Conference on Tourism and the Environment agree in principle to:

Pledge continuing support for the vision and goals of a sustainable future, as conceived and articulated in the 1987 Bruntland Commission report, the 1992 Earth Summit, the Rio Declaration, and Agenda 21, further extended to the tourism industry through subsequent efforts such as Agenda 21 for the Travel and Tourism Industry, the World Conference on Tourism and Heritage Management, encompassing the following precepts:

- Fostering awareness of environmental ethics in tourism among communities and consumers;
- Conservation and sustainable use of resources;
- Reducing consumption and waste;
- Natural, social and cultural diversity;
- Integrated tourism planning for sustainability;
- Support for local economies;
- Local community involvement;
- Consulting tourism stakeholders and the public;
- Human resources development;
- Responsible tourism marketing;
- Ongoing inquiry into sustainability issues;
- Development of measurements on tourism impacts on environment, culture and heritage; and
- Private sector involvement.

Commit resources to improving the quality and professionalism of our human resources to create a valuable and meaningful visitor experience and to meet the needs of a competitive global environment;

Emphasise the urgency of sustainability, to the health of both the tourism industry and the world economy;

Intensify efforts to make operational those policies and practices that promote sustainability, realising that research and technological advance have brought us to the point where sustainable action can now proceed;

Strive to provide the leadership, training and technical support needed by communities to enable them to become fully aware of, and involved with, the processes by which tourism is planned and developed;

Support an active and important role for governments at all levels, international and regional co-operation in promoting and achieving sustainable development; and

Strengthen and promote co-operation with the many tourism-related businesses and organisations that comprise the private and non governmental sectors, in recognition of the costs and effort that sustainability requires for optimising opportunities.