

# **BRUSSELS DECLARATION ON A EUROPEAN NETWORK OF DESTINATIONS OF EXCELLENCE FOR SUSTAINABLE TOURISM**

## **1. BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVES**

1.1 The pilot project “European Destinations of Excellence” was launched in 2006 by the European Commission, as a means of initiating Community action in support of European tourism, with the aim to

- draw attention to the value, diversity and shared characteristics of European tourist destinations, and
- promote emerging destinations where the economic growth objective is pursued in such a way as to ensure the social, cultural and environmental sustainability of tourism.

1.2 On December 2007, the pilot project “European Destinations of Excellence” was transformed by the Budget Authority to a preparatory action

The aims of the preparatory action are to:

- enhance visibility of the emerging European tourist destinations of excellence, especially the lesser known,
- create awareness of Europe's tourist diversity and quality,
- promote all European countries and regions,
- help de-congestion, combat seasonality, rebalance the tourist flows towards the non-traditional destinations,
- award sustainable forms of tourism,
- create a platform for the exchange of good practices at European level,
- promote networking between awarded destinations which could persuade other destinations to adopt sustainable tourism development model.

Within the framework of the Agenda for a sustainable and competitive European tourism COM (2007) 621 final of 19.10.2007 the awarded destinations of EDEN 2007 and EDEN 2008 decided to launch a network which should serve :

- to create a platform for the exchange of good practices at European level
- to persuade other destinations in Europe to adopt sustainable tourist development models

1.3 The European Network of Destinations of Excellence for Sustainable Tourism is open to all awarded EDEN destinations and all other destinations which respect the sustainability criteria foreseen in the EDEN competition. They all commit themselves to sign the declaration and adopt sustainable patterns of tourism offer.

## **2. DECLARATION ON A EUROPEAN NETWORK OF DESTINATIONS OF EXCELLENCE FOR SUSTAINABLE TOURISM**

2.1 The undersigning parties agree to collaborate with each other through the dedicated web-portal launched by the European Commission, to exchange experiences and good practices through the organization of annual meetings to be held in one of the winning destinations and to provide a solid outcome of the Network actions and provide a conference conclusions after each of the conferences held.

2.2 The undersigning parties commit themselves to guarantee a constant exchange of information and knowledge on tourism development programs and research, moreover to guarantee a constant exchange of experiences on the participation in the EDEN project. The parties will promote support actions for developing areas to create sustainable tourism development and identify the best practice measures adopted by other destinations.

Parties to the Declaration:

*<names>*

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Brussels, 7 October 2008