

## CONCEPT NOTE

### IORA COASTAL AND MARINE TOURISM WORKSHOP AND THE 3<sup>RD</sup> IORA TOURISM EXPERTS MEETING: ESTABLISHMENT OF THE IORA TOURISM CORE GROUP

*“IORA – uniting the peoples of Africa, Asia, Australasia, and the Middle East through enhanced co-operation for peace, stability and sustainable development”*

**6-8 MAY 2018  
DURBAN, SOUTH AFRICA**

#### **1. INTRODUCTION**

The United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) classifies Tourism as an economic and social phenomenon. Over the decades, tourism has experienced continued growth and deepening diversification to become one of the fastest growing economic sectors in the world. Modern tourism is closely linked to development and encompasses a growing number of new destinations. These dynamics have turned tourism into a key driver for socio-economic progress. According to the UNWTO and the World Travel & Tourism Council, Tourism contributes to 10% of the world’s GDP, creates 1 in 10 jobs globally, and generated US\$ 1.4 trillion in export earnings in 2016.

The Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) recognises that substantial benefits could be accrued by member states through the enhancement of tourist linkages and marketing within the region. IORA recommends that Member States should strive towards regional cooperation in tourism, especially to achieve sustainable tourism growth in the region.

#### **2. IORA COASTAL AND MARINE TOURISM WORKSHOP: 6 MAY 2018**

As an ocean based community, IORA places great interest and high commitment to the development and sustainable use of ocean for economic development and wellbeing of people, especially the wellbeing of coastal community of IORA member states. To attest to this commitment, IORA member states adopted Blue Economy as the cardinal principle for sustainable ocean-based growth in the region.

The implementation of IORA's Blue Economy would accelerate ocean-driven economic growth amongst its members. A series of workshops and conferences on the Blue Economy were organised by IORA with the last one held in Indonesia in May 2017 where the "Jakarta Declaration on the Blue Economy" was adopted. The declaration focused on the way-forward for the sustainable development of the Blue Economy.

**Tourism** is one of the largest employers in the **Blue Economy** and provides valuable income for coastal communities world-wide. Coastal and Marine Tourism is a growing area that represents an important contributor to the economy of countries and for generating employment. The rapid growth of coastal and marine tourism can be attributed to enhanced marketing linkages and promotion of environmentally sustainable practices in the tourism industry. IORA member states are blessed with unique biological diversity that has tremendous coastal and marine tourism potential.

Marine activities, including cruise tourism, if not managed sustainably, could develop a parasitic relationship with the environment, leading to destruction and degradation of marine habitats and environment, loss of biodiversity, marine pollution and overexploitation of resources. Protecting local marine resources is one of the most urgent needs in promoting sustainable tourism. Sustainable coastal tourism can assist with the preservation of artisanal fishing communities, allow for subsistence fishing, protect the environment, and make positive contributions to sustainable economic development.

## **2.1 Objectives**

The overall objective of the workshop is to provide a platform for IORA member states to share experiences and best practices related to coastal and marine tourism and identify areas to unlock the tourism potential of the ocean's economy. The workshop will also support South Africa's chair ship of IORA.

Specifically, the objectives of the workshop are as follows:

- Sharing of research studies which have been conducted on coastal and marine tourism from IORA member states;
- Sharing of knowledge and best practices on governance and regulatory imperatives with respect to coastal and marine tourism;
- Sharing of knowledge and best practices on cruise tourism with reference to existing and emerging models; and
- Identify and propose solutions for skills and training challenges with respect to coastal and marine tourism development.

## 2.2 Format of the workshop

The workshop will consist of:

- **An official opening session** which will include, *inter alia* a Welcome Address by the Director-General, Presentation on Tourism's place in the coastal & marine economy by the Chair for Indian Ocean Rim Studies and remarks by the IORA Secretariat.
- **A plenary session** which will include main presentations on four key areas, namely **research studies, governance and regulatory impediments/imperatives, cruise tourism, and skills and training challenges with respect to coastal and marine tourism development**. Speakers will be required to provide an outline/abstract of their presentations beforehand.
- **Break-away sessions** which will focus on the abovementioned key areas. A template will be circulated to speakers, rapporteurs and facilitators to guide the breakaway sessions and to prepare for report back.
- **A plenary session** for report back and discussion.

## 2.3 Expected outcomes

The outcome of the workshop is to enhance capacities of IORA member states to unlock the tourism potential of the ocean's economy through exchange of knowledge, technical know-how and best practices in coastal and marine tourism.

The workshop will also generate simple and implementable ideas for action by member states, either individually or collectively.

## 3. THE 3<sup>RD</sup> IORA TOURISM EXPERTS MEETING: ESTABLISHMENT OF THE IORA TOURISM CORE GROUP: 7 MAY 2018

The first IORA Leaders' Summit of Heads of State and/or Government was held in Jakarta, Indonesia on 5-7 March 2017 to commemorate the 20th Anniversary of IORA. The "Jakarta Concord" committed the IORA Member States to "fostering tourism and cultural exchanges by:

- Increasing people-to-people interaction to promote regional economic growth;
- Encouraging the sustainable development of community-based tourism and eco-tourism;
- Promoting cultural heritage and harnessing the economic potential of this heritage, including World Heritage properties and sites;
- Cooperating and sharing experiences for the sustainable development of tourism; and

- Augmenting regional connectivity by encouraging direct flights and shipping services including cruises by encouraging investment in requisite infrastructure.”

To give effect to the commitments under the Jakarta Concord, the IORA Council of Ministers (COM) adopted the IORA Action Plan (2017 – 2021) as a firm set of realistic and measurable commitments to take IORA forward, including:

- The establishment of a Core Group for Tourism (short term);
- Conduct feasibility studies to explore the potential of cruise tourism and to establish an IORA Tourism Resource Centre and Website in the Sultanate of Oman (medium term); and
- Develop joint capacity building projects in tourism including community-based tourism for poverty reduction, cultural heritage and eco-tourism.

The 2017 IORA COM approved the formation of the IORA Tourism Core Group (TCG). It is anticipated that the establishment of the IORA TCG would provide a platform for the implementation of vital tourism projects and programmes under the IORA Action Plan and within IORA Member States.

To support the establishment and work of the TCG, the South African Department of Tourism will be hosting the Third IORA Tourism Experts Meeting on 7 May 2018 to finalise discussions for the establishment of the IORA Tourism Core Group. The meeting will be conducted as per the IORA Rules of Procedure, with Dialogue Partners encouraged to participate actively, but not in the decision-making processes.

### **3.1 Objectives**

The objectives of the meeting will be as follows:

- 3.1.1 Discuss and finalise the Terms of Reference for the establishment of the IORA Tourism Core Group.
- 3.1.2 Reflect on progress made since the 2<sup>nd</sup> Tourism Expert’s meeting held in 2015 and subsequent meetings, and in implementation of the IORA Action Plan in areas such as:
  - Organising IORA Tourism and Travel Fairs;
  - Establishment of the IORA Tourism Research Centre & Website;
  - The improvement of air connectivity;
  - The development of cruise tourism in the region;
  - Measures on sustainable tourism development in the region; and
  - Feedback from the Coastal and Marine Tourism Development.

3.1.3 Update on preparations and progress for the hosting of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Tourism Ministerial Meeting in South Africa in November 2018.

### **3.2 Expected outcomes**

- Final draft of the Terms of Reference for the establishment of the IORA Tourism Core Group (Objectives, mandate, structure, meeting procedures, implementation of programmes and projects, etc.).
- Recommendations to the IORA Tourism Ministers and the IORA Council of Ministers on the commencement date of the IORA Tourism Core Group.

## **4. RECOMMENDED PARTICIPATION FOR THE CMT WORKSHOP AND EXPERTS MEETING**

Member states are allowed to be represented by three tourism delegates per member state, consisting of government officials, tourism marketing authorities, coastal tourism specialists, marine environmental research experts, tourism and travel associations, academia, private sector, and/or tourism experts as may be defined by respective member states.

## **5. OFFICIAL OPENING OF THE 2018 AFRICA TRAVEL INDABA: 8 MAY 2018**

Delegates are invited to attend the official opening of the 2018 Africa Travel INDABA, formerly known as Tourism INDABA - one of the largest tourism marketing events on the African calendar. Delegates will be granted registration fee waiver for access to the INDABA for the 8th of May 2018. Delegates interested to attend the official opening of the Africa Travel INDABA should indicate as such in the registration form, and will receive further information during accreditation.