



**Standing Committee
for Economic and Commercial Cooperation
of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (COMCEC)**

**Proceedings of the 14th Meeting of the
COMCEC Tourism Working Group**

**“Developing Multi-Destination Tourism Corridors
in the OIC Member Countries”**



**COMCEC COORDINATION OFFICE
October 2019**



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**PROCEEDINGS OF THE 14TH MEETING OF THE
COMCEC TOURISM WORKING GROUP
ON**

**“Developing Multi-Destination Tourism Corridors
in the OIC Member Countries”
(October 31st, 2019, Ankara, Turkey)**

COMCEC COORDINATION OFFICE

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For further information, please contact:

Mr. Gökten DAMAR
Expert

Ms. Ayten AKMAN
Expert

COMCEC Coordination Office
Necatibey Caddesi No: 110/A
06100 Yücetepe
Ankara/TURKEY
Phone : 90 312 294 57 10
Fax : 90 312 294 57 77
Web : www.comcec.org
e-mail : tourism@comcec.org
gdamar@comcec.org
aakman@comcec.org

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Introduction

The 14th Meeting of the COMCEC Tourism Working Group was held on October 31st, 2019 in Ankara, Turkey with the theme of “Developing Multi-Destination Tourism Corridors in the OIC Member Countries.” The Meeting was attended by the representatives of 18 Member States, which have notified their focal points for the Tourism Working Group namely Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Djibouti, Egypt, Gambia, Malaysia, Maldives, Mauritania, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Tunisia, Turkey and Uganda, Representatives of the COMCEC Coordination Office, SESRIC, Turkic Council and HIS Tourism have also attended the Meeting.¹

At the outset, the representative of the COMCEC Coordination Office informed the participants about the tourism outlook of the Member Countries. The participants considered developing multi-destination tourism corridors through focusing on the Analytical Study titled “Developing Multi-destination Tourism Corridors in the OIC Member Countries” prepared for the Meeting with a view to enriching the discussions.

The participants had the chance to discuss the policy options for enhancing the cooperation in this important field during the policy debate session. The Room Document based on the findings of the Analytical Study submitted to the Tourism Working Group Meeting and the answers of the Member Countries to the policy questions sent to the Member States by the COMCEC Coordination Office were the main inputs for the discussions during moderation session.

COMCEC Coordination Office also presented the COMCEC Project Funding Mechanism and informed the participants of its details.

The Representatives of the Member States have shared their experiences, achievements and challenges regarding destination development and institutionalization strategies in tourism sector in their respective countries.

Lastly, the international institutions’ perspectives and private sector efforts were also reflected to the discussions.

¹ The list of participants is attached as Annex 4.



1. Opening Session

In line with the tradition of the Organization of the Islamic Cooperation (OIC), the Meeting started with the recitation from the Holy Quran. At the outset, Mr. Selçuk KOÇ, Director in the COMCEC Coordination Office introduced the COMCEC and its activities briefly.

Mr. ABDUL KHANI DAUD, Director General, Islamic Tourism Centre of Malaysia was elected as the Chairman of the Meeting. Mr. DAUD introduced himself and thanked all the participants for electing him as the Chairman of the Meeting.

2. The COMCEC Tourism Outlook

Dr. Gurel CETIN, consultant from the COMCEC Coordination Office and scholar at Istanbul University, has presented some of the key developments of tourism industry in the World and in the OIC Member Countries. In his presentation, Dr. CETIN provided an overview of the importance of tourism as a socio-economic phenomena and the current state of the industry in the World and in the OIC Region.

He underlined the importance of tourism particularly for developing economies and expressed that tourism has experienced continued growth over the past eight years and become one of the most rapidly developing industries in the world. He shared various figures demonstrating that a strong tourism sector could contribute in many ways to development and the economy. He mentioned that tourism has various benefits, one of them regards to social interactions between countries and people which also brings cultures together. This is particularly important for OIC countries, as when people visits countries they get familiar to other cultures and are able to change misconceptions. In other words, tourism can be used to bring cultures together. Furthermore, in terms of its contributions to economy, tourism brings foreign change, promotes employment and has a multiplayer effect larger than other industries. Each dollar spending in tourism industry is actually meaning more than a dollar. This is roughly calculated between 2, 5-3, 5 dollar depending on the related economy. It makes nearly 10% of GDP with direct and indirect effects. It also creates 10% of the global jobs. Currently it is expected to be around 12%.

He underlined that demography, technology, crises and sustainability issues directly affect the tourism industry. One of the demographic changes affecting tourism is aging population, who are still active travelers and security, personalized services, health, sports and wellness products are important for them. They are looking into soft adventure products. Most of the OIC member countries' destinations are emerging destinations. .

He emphasized that while tourism receipts are growing, the average tourist spending is not high enough in the OIC Region. The average tourist spending is around 800 dollars and the tourism potential of the OIC Member Countries, among others cultural heritage, dynamic population, and price competitiveness, provides an important opportunity for developing tourism industry.

In conclusion, he highlighted that insufficient tourism investments, poor destination planning and program development, travel facilitation problems, crises, insufficient image building and branding, lack of tourism diversification are some of the challenges faced by the member countries.

3. Developing Multi-Destination Tourism Corridors: Global Trends and Success Factors

Ms. Nahla Mesbah, Senior Associate at DinarStandard, gave this presentation. She first shared the research methodology which consisted of primary and secondary research. The primary research involved in-depth interviews and field visit case studies. The secondary research consisted of desk-based case studies, the review of academic research papers, and publications from international organizations, including the UNWTO, the UNESCO, WTTC, the World Bank, OECD and others. Ms. Mesbah then defined multi-destination tourism (MDT) as tourism which combines assets and attractions from various destinations to form a “cumulative” or integrated attraction, and that MTD is based on the cooperation between two or more destinations/countries to realize several potential benefits from attracting new markets to collaborate in areas of product development, marketing strategies, and travel policies. She then explained how tourism corridors can be classified according to several criteria, including theme, design, historical origin, territorial coverage, and development.

Next, Ms. Mesbah shared best practices in the planning and establishment of a corridor, governance and management, as well as in marketing. In planning and establishment, destinations need to assess demand and determine social value, as well as evaluate feasibility based on infrastructure, then formulate the theme of the corridor. In terms of governance, destinations should start by choosing a suitable governance model and setting a legislative framework. They should also monitor performance, facilitate collaboration with stakeholders, as well as focus on capacity building and sustainability. They should also determine funding sources.

Ms. Mesbah then went on to share a number of complementary approaches that can be used to monitor performance, including the use of visitor metrics, the measurement of organizational effectiveness of the corridor management entity as well as the effectiveness of its marketing communications activities, the measurement of changes in consumer-based brand equity as a result of the corridor’s management entity operations, gauging stakeholder evaluation of TC management performance, and evaluating the sustainability of tourism along the corridor.

Next Ms. Mesbah stressed the importance of collaboration with stakeholders, including NGOs and development organizations, professional associations, universities, global tourism operators, tourism industries, public tourism institutions, government bodies, in addition to tourists and local communities. Ms. Mesbah went on to share examples from best practices of global MDTCs in the creation of formal platforms to ensure continuous and effective collaboration with all stakeholders.

In terms of best practices in capacity building, Ms. Mesbah shared some best practice examples from global MDTCCs which included: universities and training centers developing and delivering training, interactive workshops on developing tourism products, development of handbooks to disseminate knowledge, roundtables for knowledge exchange between stakeholders, as well as field visits.

Ms. Mesbah expressed that funding is a major challenge and that most MDTCs are funded by national governments, with some benefiting from grants. Funding can be divided into internal and external funding. In terms of internal funding, its from public funding sources such as local and national government funding, and private funding sources, such as from the tourism industry, private financial institutions, professional associations and NGOs. Whereas external funding can be from bilateral donors, regional development organizations, and international development organizations and financial institutions.

In terms of tourism corridor marketing best practices, Ms. Mesbah covered both branding and promotion. In terms of branding, theme-based branding involves creating a story or narrative to be associated with the corridor and communicating this story across the various channels to all relevant stakeholders. The creation of a unified branding message is a crucial task for TCs to increase awareness. Branding also involves ensuring content and design consistency for marketing messages across the various platforms used to promote the corridor. Brand identity is also becoming increasingly affected by consumers' narratives or their "storytelling." In terms of promotion, both traditional and digital tools are used for the promotion of MDTCs, however, digital media is increasingly being used to customize marketing messages to targeted tourist segments.

Question: What is the profile of the people interviewed for the study?

Answer: As the focus is MDTCs, we have tried to target those involved in MDTCs from management entities and consultants for MDTCs mainly. In the context of the field studies, we were able to reach out to other tourism stakeholders involved with field study countries' MDTCs.

Question: What if a country has many different assets and cultural elements, how can they apply the TC concept?

Answer: A single country can be part of various TCs, as is evident from the cultural routes of Europe, where some countries are members of a multitude of different corridors. In the case of the Danube, many corridors can be seen under the Danube brand such as the Roman Emperors Route.

4. Developing Multi-Destination Tourism Corridors: Selected Tourism Corridors, Main Challenges, Recommendations and Prospects

In her second presentation, Ms. Mesbah shared the case study findings, discussed the main challenges of the OIC member states and provided policy recommendations.

For each of the case studies, Ms. Mesbah shared the corridor's initiatives in planning and establishment of the corridor, governance and management, as well as in marketing. She also shared the lessons learned in each of these areas.

For the Greater Mekong Subregion (GMS) Tourism Corridor, which was a non-OIC member country field visit case study, some of the lessons learned were that in corridor development, intergovernmental collaboration is needed to develop tourism. In corridor management, that formal collaboration platforms involving the tourism industry and local NGOs in decision making are needed, in addition to the need to diversify funding. In corridor marketing, one of the lessons learned was the importance of the use of digital tools and storytelling.

For the Danube Tourism Corridor, which was a non-OIC member country desk case study, some of the lessons learned were that in corridor development, it is very important to research demand for MDTCs. In corridor management, the importance for capacity building tailored to tourism corridor countries' specific needs. In corridor marketing, one of the lessons learned was the need for cooperation in joint marketing activities.

For the Turkic Silk Road Tourism Corridor, which was an OIC member country field-visit case study, some of the lessons learned were that in corridor development it is important to involve and benefit local communities. In corridor management, the importance of holistic planning with well-integrated stakeholder participation for sustainability was stressed. In corridor marketing, one of the lessons learned was the need for integrating digital tools and a joint marketing platform.

For the Holy Family Tourism Corridor, which was an OIC member country desk case study, some of the lessons learned were that in corridor development, informal tourism corridors can provide a starting point for formal corridor development. In corridor management, government funding needs to be complemented with other sources, whether private or international development organizations funding. In corridor marketing, one of the lessons learned was that traditional marketing tools need to be complemented with digital tools.

Ms. Mesbah then went on to discuss the main challenge facing the OIC member countries in relation to developing multi-destination tourism corridors. In terms of corridor development, challenges include: limited research and data collection efforts, infrastructure development is

a obstacle, assistance is needed with formulating themes and identifying tourism resources to be included. In terms of governance and management, challenges include: not having unified visa for corridors (except for 3 East Africa Northern Corridor countries), strict visa requirements for most countries, monitoring performance lags behind global best practices, and limited funding sources. In terms of marketing, the challenges include: limited use of uniform branding, limited use of digital marketing or integrated marketing communication.

Ms. Mesbah then provided policy recommendations for the OIC countries to establish and manage tourism corridors. She first shared a chart which mapped each of the OIC countries in terms of their tourism readiness and openness, in addition to tourism's share of GDP. It is to be noted that Malaysia, Indonesia and Turkey ranked the highest on tourism readiness and openness. Countries in the same corridor that had varying indicators were encouraged to apply knowledge transfer from developed countries to less-developed countries.

Policy recommendations were provided on two levels. First, general policy recommendations were provided based on whether an MDTC was a new or established corridor, and were categorized under the areas of planning and establishment, governance and management, and marketing and promotion. Second, more specific recommendations were provided based on the MDTC member countries' relative positions on the tourism readiness and openness spectrum, with application to the OIC TCs from the case studies, namely the Turkic Silk Road and the Holy Family TCs.

Ms. Mesbah also recommended the establishment of the following new corridors or extended corridors: The Islamic Silk Road, Alexander the Great, the Travels of Imam Bukhari, Cross-Border Parks and Protected Areas in West Africa, Masar Ibrahim, Bedouin Trails, The Frankincense Route, Fatimid Culture Route, the Red Sea Tourism Corridor, Ibn Battuta's Eastern Journey, the Trans-Saharan Trail.

Question: Does the tourism corridor concept work within the context of a single country and which is better single or multi-destination TCs?

Answer: Within a single country, using a unified theme, several nodes can be connected to develop a TC and market it. Coordination will be easier for single country TCs, however, the development of an integrated or cumulative product, knowledge transfer between TC member countries, and the possibility of diversified funding as a result of cooperation with other countries in the context of multi-destination TCs are added benefits.

5. Success Stories of the Member States

5.1. Turkey

Gürsel GÜNDOĞDU, expert from Ministry of Culture and Tourism of Turkey, made a presentation on destination management experience of Turkey.

At the outset, he gave information on tourism development process and destination management principles. He also shared the Turkey Tourism Strategy's (2023) main objectives as the following:

- To ensure sustainable development of tourism,
- To extend the tourism season throughout the year by diversifying tourism products,
- To extend the tourism activities from coastal and urban areas to rural and interior regions,
- To be one of the top five countries considering tourism income by the year 2023.

Mr. GÜNDOĞDU gave information about the Silk Road. Silk Road links to Europe and Asia through trade and is the most well-known trading route of ancient civilization. Silk Road is also the first mark of globalization with its wide route. In Turkey's 2023 tourism strategy, tourism corridors are given crucial importance. Turkey is part of many tourism routes and attaches particular importance to tourism corridors. In this respect, the benefits of tourism corridors are, among others, transportation and infrastructure development, trade and investment, energy and natural resource and financial security.

Mr. Gündoğdu also expressed that tourism corridors are very instrumental for the concerned countries for building trust and mutual learning. Lastly, he highlighted the importance of developing tourism corridors among the member countries.

6. Policy Options for Developing Multi-Destination Tourism Corridors in the OIC Member Countries

The session was moderated by Mr. Mr. ABDUL KHANI DAUD, Director General, Islamic Tourism Centre of Malaysia.

At the outset, Mr. Selçuk KOÇ made a brief presentation on the responses of the Member Countries to the policy questions on developing multi-destination tourism corridors. After presenting the questions and responses of the Member Countries, Mr. KOÇ introduced the Room Document including draft policy advices.

Afterwards, the participants deliberated on the policy advices. After intensive discussions, the Working Group came up with following policy recommendations to be submitted to the 35th Session of the COMCEC.

- Planning corridors based on thorough SWOT analysis, infrastructure assessment, and social value analysis and identifying assets through expert-led research.
- Making use of public-private partnership models for the effective planning and management of Tourism Corridors and encouraging the participation of and collaboration with all relevant stakeholders.
- Identifying a comprehensive set of indicators, promoting harmonized tourism related data collection as well as analysis for monitoring the corridor performance effectively and feedback into the corridor strategy to create synergies.
- Improving branding and marketing of the tourism corridors in the OIC Region through among others, joint interactive marketing platforms and user-generated content (storytelling) in ICT platforms to create unique brands.
- Creating and Diversifying funding sources of tourism corridors with a view to ensure the sustainability of their management and marketing.

7. International Institutions’/ Private Sector’s Perspective

7.1. Cooperation Council Of Turkish Speaking States (Turkic Council)

Mr. Ersin AYDOĞAN, Project Director, Turkic Council made a presentation on “Modern Silk Road Joint Tour”.

At the outset he expressed that, Turkic Council is responsible for promotion of close relationship among its member countries. Turkic Council is an intergovernmental international organization, whose overarching aim is to promote comprehensive cooperation among Turkic speaking states and in the region. The founding and current members are: Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Turkey and Uzbekistan. Hungary is observer country since 2018. Observer Member to ECO since 2012. MoUs with UNWTO, UNDP, UNOSSC, UNAOC, World Customs Organization, OIC, SESRIC

Mr. Aydoğan stated that the Turkic Council develops joint tour package to raise awareness on historical and cultural heritage of Silk Road in member countries, prepares cities of member countries in tourism, and contributes training of member countries and supporting projects in this area. In order to arise awareness on Silk Road, the Council uses all the media tools.

Mr. Aydoğan mentioned that The Silk Road has been the route not only for exchange of commercial items but also the hub for interaction between, cultures, people religions, ideas, innovations etc. He underlined the Projects aims:

- Raise awareness on the historical and cultural heritage of the Silk Road in the Turkic Council Member States and across the region.
- Prepare the cities of the Member States in line with the new trends in tourism and empower them to become attractive touristic stops.
- Contribute to the training of tourism employees of the Turkic Council Member States in the needed sectors.
- Support generating projects to turn the Silk Road into a well-structured and well-known tourism destination.
- Facilitate the experience sharing among the Member States for the development of Silk Road Tourism.

7.2. H.I.S. Global

Ms. Merve ÖZKÖK, Assistant General Manager-Regional Inbound Marketing, H.I.S. Global made a presentation on “Experience of Private Sector in Multi-Destination Tourism Corridors”.

At the beginning of her presentation, she mentioned especially the world wide tourism flow and the general perspective of the tourism sector.

She also stated that every crises is a chance to grow. It is important to funding from your government at the outset. This funding can be cheap flight tickets, local workshops and help for the affordable sales calls. After that step taking the guests to the country trip for the familiarization, to help familiarization using social media and mouth to mouth is the best way.

She concluded her presentation by underlying that tourists like to visit more than one country during their holiday. It helps to support the tourism corridors.

8. Utilizing the COMCEC Project Funding

Mr. Deniz GÖLE, Director at the COMCEC Coordination Office made a presentation on the COMCEC Project Funding introduced by the COMCEC Strategy. The video clip shown at the outset of the presentation provided details about the rules and procedures of the COMCEC Project Funding as well as examples from the previously implemented projects.

After the video, Mr. GÖLE explained the timeline for the project submission and stated that the 7th Call for Project Proposals under the COMCEC Project Funding was launched on September 1st, 2019 and the Member Countries and relevant OIC Institutions submitted their proposals until the end of the September.

Mr. GÖLE emphasized that project topics can be found by examining; i) COMCEC policy recommendations, ii) sectoral themes, iii) outputs of the COMCEC Working Groups, iv) previous projects funded by the COMCEC, and v) COMCEC Strategy.

Then, Mr. GÖLE mentioned the available information on the COMCEC website regarding the COMCEC Project Funding. Mr. GÖLE stated that there are 6 tabs on the website namely overview, supported themes, online project submission, implemented projects, selected outputs and frequently asked questions, which can be utilized during the project submission period.

Mr. GÖLE shared brief information with participants regarding supported sectoral themes in tourism cooperation area. After touching upon the sectoral themes, Mr. GÖLE highlighted the essentials of online project submission system and reference materials that should be given an eye before submitting a project.

After briefly explaining how to reach and use the Online Project Submission System for COMCEC Project Funding Mr. GÖLE also gave information on tourism projects implemented in 2019. These projects are titled “Destination Management Organization: Conceptual Framework for Azerbaijan, Cameroon and Iran”, “Training of Accommodation Providers in the OIC Member Countries on Muslim Friendly Tourism Standards and Quality Service Provision”, “Capacity Building on Destination Management Organizations of OIC Member Countries”, “Improving Human Capacity on Muslim Friendly Tourism for Regulating Accommodation Establishments in the OIC Member Countries”, “Developing Muslim-Friendly Tourism in Guyana and Suriname” implemented by Azerbaijan, The Gambia, Mali, Mozambique and ICDDT, respectively.

9. Closing Remarks

The Meeting ended with closing remarks of Mr. ABDUL KHANI DAUD, Director General, Islamic Tourism Centre of Malaysia and Mr. Selçuk KOÇ, Director at the COMCEC Coordination Office.

In his remarks, Mr. DAUD thanked all the Member Countries for giving her the opportunity to chair this session. He also thanked all the participants, presenters for their invaluable contributions, comments and ideas presented during the discussions.

Mr. KOÇ also thanked all the participants for their invaluable contributions. Mr. KOÇ informed the participants that the next (14th) Meeting of the Tourism Working Group with the theme of “Developing Multi-destination tourism corridors in the OIC Countries.” Mr. KOÇ also highlighted the importance of COMCEC Project Funding and invited the Member Countries to benefit from this important asset.

Annex 1: Agenda of the Meeting



14th MEETING OF THE COMCEC TOURISM WORKING GROUP (October 31st, 2019 Ankara)

“Developing Multi-Destination Tourism Corridors in the OIC Member Countries”

AGENDA

Opening Remarks

1. The COMCEC Tourism Outlook
2. Developing Multi-Destination Tourism Corridors: Global Trends, Approaches and Success Factors
3. Developing Multi-Destination Tourism Corridors in the OIC Member Countries
4. Policy Options for Developing Multi-Destination Tourism Corridors in the OIC Member Countries
5. Member State Presentations
6. International Institutions’/ Private Sector’s Perspective
7. Utilizing the COMCEC Project Funding

Closing Remarks

Annex 2: Programme of the Meeting



14th MEETING OF THE COMCEC TOURISM WORKING GROUP (October 31st , 2019, CP Ankara Hotel, Ankara)

“Developing Multi-Destination Tourism Corridors in the OIC Member Countries”

PROGRAMME

08.30-09.00 **Registration**

09.00-09.05 **Recitation from the Holy Quran**

09.05-09.15 **Opening Remarks**

The COMCEC Tourism Outlook

09.15-09.35 - *Presentation: Mr. Gürel ÇETİN*
Associate Professor
COMCEC Coordination Office (CCO)

09.35-09.45 - *Discussion*

Developing Multi-Destination Tourism Corridors: Global Trends and Success Factors

09.45-10.15 - *Presentation: Ms. Nahla Mesbah*
Senior Associate
Dinar Standard

10.15-10.45 - *Discussion*

10.45-11.00 *Coffee Break*

Developing Multi-Destination Tourism Corridors: Selected Case Studies, Main Challenges, Recommendations and Prospects

- 11.00-11.40 - *Presentation: Ms. Nahla Mesbah
Senior Associate
Dinar Standard*
- 11.40-12.15 - *Discussion*
- 12.20-13.45 *Lunch*
Policy Options for Developing Multi-Destination Tourism Corridors in the Member Countries
There will be a moderation session under this agenda item. The participants are expected to discuss the policy options/advice on developing multi-destination tourism corridors in the OIC Member Countries. At the beginning of the session, the CCO will make a short presentation on the responses of the Member Countries to the policy questions and the Room Document.
- 13.45-14.00 - *Presentation: "Responses of the Member Countries to the Policy Questions on
Developing Multi-Destination Tourism Corridors"
Mr. Selçuk KOÇ
Director
COMCEC Coordination Office (CCO)*
- 14.00-15.15 - *Discussion*
- Utilizing the COMCEC Project Funding**
- 15.15-15.25 - *Presentation: Mr. Deniz GÖLE
Director
COMCEC Coordination Office (CCO)*
- 15.25-15.35 - *Presentation: Experience of Azerbaijan in implementing the project titled "Destination
Management Organization: Conceptual Framework for Azerbaijan, Cameroon and Iran"
Assoc. Prof. Dr. Cenk Demiroglu
Lead Project Researcher*
- 15.35-15.45 - *Discussion*
- 15.45-16.00 *Coffee Break*
- 16.00-17.00 **Member Country Presentations**
- *Presentation(s)*
 - *Discussion*

International Institutions/Private Sector's Experiences

- 17.00-17.10 - *Presentation: "Modern Silk Road Joint Tour "*
Ersin AYDOĞAN
Project Director
Cooperation Council of Turkic Speaking States (Turkic Council)
- 17.10-17.20 - *Presentation: "Multi-Destination Tourism Corridors: the case of Al-Quds "*
Mr. Raed SAADEH
Jerusalem Tourism Cluster (JTC)
- 17.20-17.30 - *Presentation: "Experience of Private sector in Multi-Destination Tourism Corridors "*
Ms. Merve ÖZKÖK
Assistant General Manager-Regional Inbound Marketing
H.I.S. Global
- 17.30-18.00 *Closing Remarks and Family Photo*

Annex 3: The Policy Recommendations

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE 14TH MEETING OF THE COMCEC TOURISM WORKING GROUP

The COMCEC Tourism Working Group (TWG) has successfully held its 14th Meeting on October 31st, 2019 in Ankara, Turkey with the theme of “Developing Multi-Destination Tourism Corridors in the Member Countries.” During the Meeting, Tourism Working Group, made deliberations on multi destination tourism corridors. Accordingly, the participants has come up with some policy recommendations.

Policy Advice 1. Planning corridors based on thorough SWOT analysis, infrastructure assessment, and social value analysis and identifying assets through expert-led research.

Rationale: Analyzing tourism trends and current tourists’ profiles for destinations along the corridors, and the size as well as nature of the domestic markets are needed to assess whether a corridor would attract potential tourists, and increase the number of tourists and/or tourist nights/spending.

From a logistical perspective, assessing feasibility of a corridor also entails considering the enabling infrastructure in terms of transport networks along its various nodes. Tourism Corridors (TC) should ensure the mitigation of the negative impacts of tourism as well as increasing the economic benefits for local communities, which need to be ascertained through research and collaboration with local stakeholders starting from the planning phase.

The formulation of TC themes necessitates an effective cooperation among various stakeholders in the destinations along TCs on several fronts in the planning stage, including the corridor’s proposed theme and name as well as the decision on the tourism assets to be included in the corridor. This requires extensive research with the aid of experts from historical, cultural, and practical perspectives as well as a thorough assessment of the tourism assets that can be included and their potential appeal to tourists.

Policy Advice 2. Making use of public-private partnership models for the effective planning and management of Tourism Corridors and encouraging the participation of and collaboration with all relevant stakeholders.

Rationale: Public-Private Partnership Models can be utilized for encouraging higher levels of collaboration between public and private entities needed for Multi Destination TCs to thrive. Public-private partnerships should allow for higher levels of participation from the civil society

and ensure, to a greater extent, the support of the private sector for corridor development and management policies and strategies. Establishing formal platforms for collaboration can ensure timely and efficient interaction and involvement in the management of the corridor as well as ensuring all relevant stakeholders' support for the policies and strategies related to the concerned corridor.

It is recommended to have board of directors responsible for coordination among the corridor partners, whether permanently located at one of the corridor nodes, or shifting between different nodes along the corridor according to the site of the entity in charge of its management. Local steering committees with members from various stakeholder groups, including public and private entities as well as NGOs and professional associations, may be responsible for strategic planning and implementation of local strategies.

Policy Advice 3. Identifying a comprehensive set of indicators, promoting harmonized tourism related data collection as well as analysis for monitoring the corridor performance effectively and feedback into the corridor strategy to create synergies.

Rationale: Complementary approaches need to be used to effectively monitor the performance of TCs, which include the use of visitor metrics, the measurement of organizational effectiveness of the corridor management entity as well as the effectiveness of its marketing communications activities, the examination of changes in consumer-based brand equity as a result of the corridor's management entity operations, stakeholder evaluation of TC management performance, and assessment of the sustainability of tourism along the corridor. Identifying common indicators would facilitate the measurement of success of a corridor in the OIC Region.

Policy advice 4. Improving branding and marketing of the tourism corridors in the OIC Region through among others, joint interactive marketing platforms and user-generated content (storytelling) in ICT platforms to create unique brands.

Rationale: MDTC themes can be used as a framework for positioning and differentiating corridors. Theme-based branding involves creating a story or narrative to be associated with the corridor and communicating this story across the various channels to all relevant stakeholders. The creation of a unified branding message is a crucial task for TCs to increase awareness. Branding also involves ensuring content and design consistency for marketing messages across the various platforms used to promote the corridor.

With the rise of social media, brand identity is becoming increasingly affected by consumers' narratives or their "storytelling." To harness the power of storytelling, there's a need to choose the stories that suit the brand narrative and engage emotions and amplify them through joint interactive marketing platforms. The tourism corridors' marketing strategy should also include

segmentation, targeting, differentiating and positioning the corridor under a single brand and aligning marketing efforts based on this brand strategy including managing public opinion.

Policy advice 5. *Creating and Diversifying funding sources of tourism corridors with a view to ensure the sustainability of their management and marketing.*

Rationale: Identifying various funding streams is needed to ensure the sustainability of management and marketing of TCs. The required financing may come from various sources, internal (public or private) and external. Membership fees, whether from public or private entities, may also be an important source of funding, especially as they promote a sense of ownership.

Assistance from and collaboration with external sources, whether international or regional, can be sought out to complement internal funding. However, it must be ensured that a tourism corridor is not over-reliant on external funding as this might influence its sustainability in the long term. It may also be decided to change the financing framework over time. For example, a corridor could be launched with shared public financing to build a critical mass of participating stakeholders, and this can then be transferred to private-sector stakeholders to manage.

Instruments to Realize the Policy Advice:

- **COMCEC Tourism Working Group:** In its subsequent meetings, the Working Group may elaborate on the above-mentioned policy areas in a more detailed manner.
- **COMCEC Project Funding:** Under the COMCEC Project Funding, the COMCEC Coordination Office calls for projects each year. With the COMCEC Project Funding, the Member Countries participating in the Working Groups can submit multilateral cooperation projects to be financed through grants by the COMCEC Coordination Office. For the above-mentioned policy areas, the Member Countries can utilize the COMCEC Project Funding and the COMCEC Coordination Office may finance the successful projects in this regard. These projects may include organizing seminars, training programs, study visits, exchange of experts, workshops and preparing analytical studies, needs assessments and training materials/documents.
- **OIC/COMCEC Private Sector Tourism Forum:** In its meetings, the OIC/COMCEC Private Sector Tourism Forum may elaborate on the above-mentioned policy areas and the sub-areas from the private sector perspective.

Annex 4: List of Participants

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS 14th MEETING OF THE TOURISM WORKING GROUP October 31st 2019, Ankara

A. MEMBER COUNTRIES OF THE OIC

ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF AFGHANISTAN

- Ms. ADELA NABIZADE
Cultural Attaché, Embassy of Afghanistan in Ankara

REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN

- Mr. AZER ORUCOV
Senior Consultant, State Tourism Agency
- Mr. DON TAYLOR
Consultant, Azerbaijan Tourism Board
- Ms. SHARIFA HASANOVA
Consultant, Azerbaijan Tourism Board

PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF BANGLADESH

- Ms. LUBNA YASMINE
Deputy Chief, Ministry of Civil Aviation and Tourism

REPUBLIC OF BENIN

- Mr. MENSAH HYACINTHE MONTCHO
Head of Research Department, Ministry of Planning and Development

BURKINA FASO

- Mr. BASSIROU BALBONE
Director, Ministry of Culture Arts and Tourism
- Mr. EMMANUEL SOME
Legal Adviser, Ministry of Culture Arts and Tourism
- Mr. OUSMANE OMAR BARRY
Economic Attaché, Burkina Faso Embassy in Ankara
- Mr. EDWIGE ZAGRE KABORE
Culture Attaché, Burkina Faso Embassy in Ankara

REPUBLIC OF CAMEROON

- Mr. MIREILLE DELPHINE NGO NJONOK EPSE LEA
Follow-Up Unit Head, Ministry Of Tourism and Leisure

REPUBLIC OF DJIBOUTI

- Mr. IDIL MOHAMED MAHAMOUD
Head of Tourism Development, National Tourism Office of Djibouti

ARAB REPUBLIC OF EGYPT

- Mr. AMR SELIM
Deputy Head of Mission, Embassy of Egypt in Ankara

REPUBLIC OF GAMBIA

- Mr. ALAGIE LAYE
Manager, Gambia Tourism Board

MALAYSIA

- Mr. ABDUL KHANI DAUD
Director General, Islamic Tourism Centre
- Mr. NUR ALYSSA CORALINE YUSSIN
Manager, Islamic Tourism Centre

REPUBLIC OF MALDIVES

- Mr. ALI RAZZAN
Senior Policy Director, Ministry of Tourism

ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF MAURITANIA

- Mr. Varba ELEMINE
Counsellor, Ministry of Commerce and Tourism

STATE OF QATAR

- Mr. OMAR AL JABER
Chairman Office Manager, Qatar Tourism Authority
- Mr. MOOZA ALKUWARI
Researcher, Qatar Tourism Authority

KINGDOM OF SAUDI ARABIA

- Mr. ABDULAZIZ ALFARRAJ
-Head of Planning Department, Saudi Commission for Tourism and National Heritage (SCTH)

REPUBLIC OF SUDAN

- Mr. MUSA ABDELKERIM ADAM BABIKER
Deputy Chief, Ministry of Culture Arts and Tourism

REPUBLIC OF TUNISIA

- Mr. MEHDI ESSEGHIR
Counsellor, Embassy of Tunisia

REPUBLIC OF TURKEY

- Ms. BAŞAK ÖNSAL DEMİR
Coordinator, Ministry of Culture and Tourism
- Mr. ENİS UĞUR
Expert, Ministry of Culture and Tourism
- Mr. GÜRSEL GÜNDOĞDU
Expert, Ministry of Culture and Tourism
- Mr. FARUK ÇUBUKÇU
Expert, Ministry of Culture and Tourism
- Ms. YASEMİN ÇELİK
Interpreter, Ministry of Culture and Tourism
- Ms. EBRU UĞURSOY
Officer, Ministry of Culture and Tourism
- Mr. MEHMET UNCU
Director General, Ministry of Culture and Tourism

REPUBLIC OF UGANDA

- Ms. ROSEMARY TWINOMUGISHA KOBUTAGI
Assistant Commissioner Tourism Development, Ministry Of Tourism Wildlife
and Antiquities

B. THE OIC SUBSIDIARY ORGANS

**STATISTICAL, ECONOMIC, SOCIAL RESEARCH AND TRAINING CENTER
FOR
ISLAMIC COUNTRIES (SESRIC)**

- Mr. CEM TINTIN
Researcher, SESRIC
- Ms. NENDEN OCTAVARULIA SHANTY
Researcher, SESRIC

C. INVITED INSTITUTIONS

- Mr. ERSİN AYDOĞAN
Project Director, TURKIC COUNCIL
- Mr. RAED SAADEH
Managing Director, Jerusalem Tourism Cluster
- Ms. MERVE OZKOK
Assistant General Manager, H.I.S. GLOBAL
- Ms. NAHLA MESBAH
Consultant, Dinar Standard

D. CONSULTANTS

- Mr. GÜREL ÇETİN
Consultant, COMCEC
- Mr. CENK DEMİROĞLU
Consultant, UMEÅ UNIVERSITY

E. COMCEC COORDINATION OFFICE

- Mr. M. METİN EKER
Director General
- Mr. ERTAN TOSUN
Deputy Director General
- Mr. SELÇUK KOÇ
Head of Department
- Mr. DENİZ GÖLE
Head of Department
- Mr. MEHMET ASLAN
Head of Department
- Mr. GÖKTEN DAMAR
Expert
- Ms. AYTEN AKMAN
Expert