



REPUBLIC OF MAURITIUS



SIDS GLOBAL BUSINESS NETWORK (SIDS-GBN) PRIVATE SECTOR PARTNERSHIP FORUM 2018

“Strengthening private sector partnerships for sustainable tourism development”

21 - 22 May 2018

Maritim Resort and Spa, Balaclava, Mauritius

CONCEPT NOTE

Background and objectives of the SIDS-GBN Forums

UN-OHRLLS together with the Government of Mauritius will convene the SIDS Global Business Network (SIDS-GBN) Private Sector Partnership Forum from 9 to 11 May 2018, in Port Louis, Mauritius. This will be the third in a series of SIDS Private Sector Partnership Forums launched by UN-OHRLLS and its partners. The SIDS-Global Business Network (SIDS-GBN) was announced at the first Forum, which OHRLLS co-organised with Government of Samoa and the Samoa Chamber of Commerce in conjunction with the Third International Conference on Small Island Developing States, in Apia, Samoa

“Such a network [SIDS Global Business Network] will provide an important bridge to enable closer private sector ties between the three SIDS regions, but also with the international business community.” Honourable Prime Minister Tuilaepa Sailele Malielegaoi of Samoa at the opening of the 2014 Private Sector Partnerships Forum, Apia, Samoa.

In March 2016, the second Forum, also known as the Aruba P3a Conference was successful in bringing ideas to reality through the official launch of the SIDS-GBN online platform. The P3a Conference which focused on public-private partnerships was co-organised with the Government of Aruba with support from the Kingdom of Netherlands was held in Oranjestad, Aruba.

“The purpose of this conference is to create an international platform and propagate the goals for sustainable development (SDGs) of the United Nations. It is clear that the UN considers the SDGs crucial instruments towards a sunnier future for SIDS”- Prime Minister of Aruba, H.E. Mr. Mike Eman

Objectives of the SIDS-GBN Forums

The SIDS-GBN Forums provide a platform to promote a multi-stakeholder network in forging private sector partnerships that support the objectives of the SAMOA Pathway and the achievement of the SDGs in SIDS. The Forums convenes the private sector, governments, UN

system, research institutions, and other major actors working to promote sustainable development in SIDS to exchange best practices and lessons learned; strengthen efforts by all stakeholders; attract greater interest and investment in to SIDS by the private sector and thereby increase the engagement and the role of the private sector in promoting sustainable development in SIDS.

Key considerations of the 2018 Forum

Following on the success of the biennial forums from 2014 onwards, the 2018 Forum will consider the following:

First the 2018 Forum will be platform to reflect on the progress made since Samoa and to accelerate scaling-up of successful partnerships through sharing of information and best practice and networking to strengthen the contribution of the Forum to support the goals of the SAMOA Pathways and the achievement of the SDGs in SIDS.

The 2018 Forum will be held under the overarching theme of “Strengthening private sector partnerships for sustainable tourism development”. The link between sustainable tourism and the achievement of the SDGs is a straightforward one for SIDS.

Tourism accounts for a significant proportion of the GDP of many SIDS, with tourism accounting for more than 50 per cent of exports in the case of St. Lucia, the Maldives and Samoa. Tourism is often one of the few activities for which their location, coupled with exceptional natural and cultural resources, is a strong competitive advantage for SIDS. Tourism has been key in the recent graduation of Samoa, Cabo Verde and the Maldives from Least Developed Country (LDC) status.

For SIDS, there is a strong connection between sustained tourism and the achievement of SDG 8 “to promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all”. The Forum will also delve into Goal 8 target 8.9 to “by 2030 to devise and implement policies to promote sustainable tourism that creates jobs and promotes local culture and products” and the role of the private sector in achieving this target.

Furthermore, tourism as the backbone of many SIDS economies have a critical role to play in the achievement of all other SDGs. The Forum will review the linkages between sustained tourism in SIDS with other cross-cutting sectors such as sustainable energy, connectivity, sustainable ocean, sustainable agriculture disaster risk reduction and finance which are the key thematic areas of the SIDS-GBN.

The Forum will be aligned to provide substantive inputs to other Global events in 2018 including the AIMS regional preparatory meeting for the SAMOA Pathway mid-term review as well as the inter-regional meeting for the above mentioned review.

Objectives of the 2018 Forum

The Forum will convene stakeholders from the governments, inter-governmental and regional organisations, private sector, research institutions, UN system entities and other major actors to exchange best practices and lessons learned; strengthen efforts by all stakeholders to have impact at country-level; attract greater interest and investment in SIDS by the private sector to support sustainable tourism and the achievement of the SDGs in SIDS.

The 2018 Forum aims to provide:

- A platform for existing and new members of the SIDS Global Business Network to meet and exchange best practices and for building partnerships for sustainable tourism development in SIDS,
- Provide substantive inputs to the AIMS regional preparatory meeting for the SAMOA Pathway mid-term review as well as the inter-regional meeting,
- Facilitate an open dialogue and sharing of experiences among governments, private sector, civil society and other stakeholders on addressing challenges and promoting opportunities for sustainability of the tourism industry in SIDS,
- Dedicated sessions on connectivity, renewable energy, sustainable oceans, climate change and resilience building and other cross-cutting thematic areas in the context of promoting sustainable tourism development in SIDS,
- Advocate for continued momentum on promoting the theme of the third International Conference on SIDS which is “the sustained development of SIDS through genuine and durable partnerships” and recognise the role of partnerships as critical for the implementation of the sustained development in SIDS.

Deliverables of the 2018 Forum

The Forum will result in a comprehensive outcome report with a set of proposals outlining the key issues, discussions and conclusions of the Forum. The recommendations will provide inputs to the inter-regional preparatory meeting on the mid-term review of the Samoa Pathway focusing on opportunities strengthening partnership approach among public and private sectors and local communities for sustainable tourism development as an important economic driver for SIDS. Announcement of partnerships and pledges with and for SIDS to promote sustainable development.

Dates for the 2018 Forum

The Forum will convene over two-days from 21-22 May 2018 Maritim Resort and Spa, Balaclava, Mauritius.

Proposed outline for the 2018 Forum

- Dedicated sessions on key areas of sustainable tourism development bringing together experts in the areas of tourism, sustainable energy, connectivity, nature conservation,

investment and finance, development policy makers among others followed by an interactive dialogue.

- Announcement of partnerships and pledges with and for SIDS to promote sustainable development.
- Provide networking area for participating private sector companies to meet relevant business partners and present their products to a professional audience.
- Provide a space for governments, investors, financiers and knowledge institutes to seek new opportunities and forge new partnerships for the development of mutually beneficial bilateral business relationships.

Participants

Around 100 participants will attend the 2018 Forum. They will be both from the public and private sector. Participants will include, but are not limited to:

- Representatives from SIDS governments;
- Representatives of international organizations and UN agencies;
- Tourism Board Members from SIDS Regions;
- Senior-level representatives from the private sector from SIDS;
- International Financial Institutes; World Bank, IMF, CDB, EIB, ADB, IDB, AIIB,
- Supra-/ Intergovernmental Organisations; CARICOM, OCTA, ACS, OAS, PIFS, EU, ACP,
- Academic institutions and thinktanks