



## SIDS GLOBAL BUSINESS NETWORK FORUM

21 - 22 MAY 2018 / MAURITIUS

*STRENGTHENING PRIVATE SECTOR PARTNERSHIPS  
FOR SUSTAINABLE TOURISM DEVELOPMENT*

# SPEAKERS

## Session 1: Tourism as a driver of SDGs

Moderator: Ms. Fekitamueloa Katoa 'Utoikamanu, USG, UN-OHRLLS

**Prof. Geoffrey Lipman**, President, International Coalition of Tourism Partners

Professor Geoffrey Lipman is President of the International Coalition of Tourism Partners (ICTP). ICTP is a grassroots travel & tourism coalition of destinations and stakeholders and one of the focus being Green Growth and Climate Resilience through their SunProgram. Professor Lipman was Executive Director International Air Transport Association (IATA), and the first President of the World Travel & Tourism Council (WTTC) and the former Assistant Secretary General of UN World Tourism Organization. He has served on public & private sector Boards in Africa, Europe, Middle East & Canada and EU Commissions on Airline Liberalization and on Tourism Employment.

**H.E. Dessima Williams**, former United Nations special adviser for the implementation of the SDGs, Grenadian diplomat

H.E. Williams recently served at the United Nations as Special Advisor for the Sustainable Development Goals in the Office of the President of the General Assembly, 2016-2017. The Ambassador was the President's representative at a wide range of meetings around the world, from Mexico to Thailand, the Bahamas to Turkmenistan, from Ghana to Ecuador. H.E. Williams continues to consult on the implementation of the SDGs, including the the UN's Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, UN-ECLAC. She has served as Permanent Representative of Grenada to the United Nations, 2009-2013. The Grenadian diplomat was responsible for leading the Alliance of Small Island Developing States, AOSIS, through early climate change negotiations toward the sustainable development meeting, Rio+20 in 2012 in Brazil.

**Ms. Sonja Hunter**, Board Member, South Pacific Tourism Organisation

Ms. Papalii Matatamalii Sonja Hunter, serves as Chairwoman of the South Pacific Tourism Organisation and CEO of the Samoa Tourism Authority. Ms. Sonja Hunter has been working in Travel and Tourism for more than 25 years. Established in 1983 as the Tourism Council of the South Pacific, the South Pacific Tourism Organisation (SPTO) is the mandated organisation representing Tourism in the region. Its 18 Government members are American Samoa, Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, French Polynesia, Kiribati, Nauru, Marshall Islands, New Caledonia, Niue, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Timor Leste, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu and the People's Republic of China. In addition to government members, the South Pacific Tourism Organisation has about 200 private sector members.

## Session 2: Promoting Tourism through Cultural Heritage

Moderator: Mr. Garry Kelleher, Ireland Tourism Promotion Board

**Mr. Chris Cocker**, Chief Executive Officer, South Pacific Tourism Organisation

Mr. Chris Cocker is from the Kingdom of Tonga and has wide experience in Pacific tourism, trade and investment. Mr. Cocker has vast regional experience in trade, investment and regional tourism and worked with regional agencies include the Pacific Trade & Invest Auckland office, and Pacific Community (SPC). He was previously employed at SPTO as Project Manager for the EU-funded Pacific Regional Tourism Capacity Building Programme. The South Pacific Tourism Organisation (SPTO) is the mandated organisation representing Tourism in the Pacific region, it has 18 Government members and about 200 private sector members.

**Mr. Paul Holthus**, Founding President and CEO, World Ocean Council

Paul Holthus is the founding CEO of the World Ocean Council - the international business leadership alliance on "Corporate Ocean Responsibility". The WOC brings together shipping, fisheries, aquaculture, oil/gas, tourism, offshore renewables, and other ocean industries - and the investment community. The WOC is a growing network of 35,000+ ocean industry stakeholders, creating global ocean business community leadership and collaboration on sustainable development, science and stewardship. Since 1998, Paul has worked with the private sector to develop practical solutions to ocean sustainable development. He has worked in over 30 countries with companies, communities, industry associations, UN agencies, NGOs, foundations and governments.

**Ms. Isolina Boto**, Head of Technical Centre for Agriculture and Rural Cooperation, Brussels Office.

Isolina Boto is the Manager of the CTA Brussels Office. CTA is a joint ACP-EU organisation, part of the Cotonou Agreement, providing access to information and knowledge, facilitating policy dialogue and strengthening the capacity of agricultural and rural development. Within CTA, she worked in various positions at headquarters, especially on co-funded technical programmes implemented at regional level. Since 2004 she heads the CTA Brussels Office, dealing with policy issues related to the ACP-EU cooperation in the field of agricultural and rural development and part of CTA policy group dealing with regional trade. The office produces a daily news service highlighting key policy areas of ACP-EU cooperation on trade, fisheries, climate change, food security and development policy.

**Dr. Robin Nunkoo**, Head of the International Centre for Sustainable Tourism and Hospitality, University of Mauritius

Dr. Nunkoo is an Associate Professor in the Department of Management and the Head of the International Center for Sustainable Tourism and Hospitality at the University of Mauritius; a Visiting Senior Research Fellow in the Faculty of Management at the University of Johannesburg, South Africa; and an Adjunct Research Fellow at Griffith Institute for Tourism, Griffith University.

**Ms. Khalissa Ikhlef**, Associate Programme Specialist, Department Section for Small Islands and Indigenous Knowledge, Division of Science Policy and Capacity- Building, Natural Sciences Sector Position United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)

Ms. Khalissa Ikhlef, with a background in social and environmental sciences, joined UNESCO in 1994, where she initially worked in the Culture Sector, followed by the Gender Section and the Communication & Information Sector. In 1996, she joined the Small Islands and Indigenous Knowledge Section (former Coastal Regions and Small Island Unit), within the Natural Sciences Sector. Since then she has managed and implemented projects on various subject areas, with focus on SIDS. Among others, she has been working with local communities and policy-makers on issues related to the impacts of climate change, to identify with them contextualized adaptation solutions. In parallel to her role as project manager, she is also part of the coordination team that fulfills the role of the UNESCO SIDS focal point.

## Session 3: Improving Connectivity for Tourism

Moderator: Terence Tan, First Secretary (Political) Permanent Mission of Singapore to the United Nations

Mr. Pascal Viroleau, Chief Executive Officer, Vanilla Islands Organization

Mr. Pascal Viroleau serves as the first CEO of the Vanilla Islands Organization, and previously served as Director General of the La Reunion Tourism Office. The concept of 'Vanilla Islands', defined at the beginning of August 2010 under the aegis of the Indian Ocean Commission, aims to unify the islands of Comoros, Mauritius, Madagascar, La Reunion, Seychelles Maldives and Mayotte, under one tourism brand through the valorization of each of the islands unique selling propositions. The Organization aims to increase connectivity to and intra islands, create new multi-destination products and attract more visitors to the Indian Ocean.

**Mr. Somas Appavou**, Chief Executive Officer, Air Mauritius

Mr. Apparov, has over 20 years' experience in the aviation industry and has worked in key global markets. He started his career in the Strategic Planning Department of Air Mauritius. He then joined Airbus where he has held leadership positions including Head of Supply Chain in Hamburg, Germany; Regional Sales Director for Subcontinent-India and Africa. He was appointed Senior Sales Director, Middle East and Africa in 2009, a position he held until July 2017. In this capacity, Somas was in charge of mounting market presence and supporting the growth of established airlines; and the development of new airlines in Africa. He is well versed in forming new business and industrial partnerships along with providing global functional support.

**Mr. Stephen Lyon**, Board Member, Pacific Islands Private Sector Organisation

Mr. Lyon is a Board Member of the Pacific Islands Private Sector Organization (PIPSO). PIPSO is the premier private sector representative body in the Pacific Islands region. PIPSO advocates for and drive private sector driven economic growth for the benefit of our region, while our vision is to promote and inspire the growth of Pacific businesses. Mr. Lyon is also currently the President of The Cook Islands Chamber of Commerce.

## Session 4: Environmental Sustainability and Renewable Energy

Moderator: H.E. Mr. Ronald Jumeau, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Seychelles to the United Nations

**H.E. Ms. Marjaana Sall**, Ambassador of the European Union to the Republic of Mauritius

In her role as Ambassador of the European Union to the Republic of Mauritius, Ambassador Sall is also responsible for the EU's relations with the Republic of Seychelles and the Union of the Comoros as well as for the EU's cooperation with the Indian Ocean Commission (IOC). Previously, Ambassador Sall worked in the EU Kenya Delegation, the Permanent Mission of Finland to the UN in New York, and as Deputy Head of the Finnish Mission in Indonesia and South Africa.

**Mr. Kevin Ramkaloan**, Chief Executive Officer, Business Mauritius

Mr. Ramkaloan is currently the CEO of Business Mauritius which, is an independent association that represents over 1200 local businesses and has, through them, a national, regional and international reach. Business Mauritius is the coordinating body and the voice of local business, and delivers services that sustain the progress of both business and community. Prior to this, he was the Director of New Business Development at the Board of Investment (BOI) for 10 years. He started his career in financial services. From 1997 to 2009, he worked as a consultant and was later employed as a Senior Manager for DCDM prior to joining the Board of Investment. He has an M.A (Cantab.) from the University of Cambridge and a MSC in Economic Resources and Policy from the University of Maine.

**Mr. Earlston McPhee**, Director, Office of the Minister, Bahamas Ministry of Tourism

Mr. Earlston McPhee is responsible for Sustainable Tourism development and related Projects at The Bahamas Ministry of Tourism. He has over twenty years of experience in the tourism industry and has served in various positions within The Bahamas Ministry of Tourism with responsibilities ranging from formulating planning frameworks for the development of the tourism sector to developing econometric models to forecast tourism activity and its impact on the Bahamian economy. Mr. McPhee represents The Bahamas on the International Task Force for Sustainable Tourism Development, an initiative led by government of France and currently is Technical Advisor on the Global Partnership for Sustainable Tourism Development.

**Ms. Janice Bristol**, Senior Quality and Standards Officer, Tourism Department, Ministry of Tourism, Civil Aviation, Ports and Marine, Republic of Seychelles

Ms. Bristol's work helps to support tourism, which is the mainstay of the economy in Seychelles, which provides for decent work for more than 25% of the national work force. Ms. Bristol previously worked as an Occupational Safety Officer for the Government of Seychelles.

**Mr. Sid Vollebregt**, Managing Director, Elemental Water Makers

Mr. Sid Vollebregt has served as Managing Director of Elemental Water Makers for over 6 years. Mr. Vollebregt is a water enthusiast and clean-tech specialist whose mission is to be part of a sustainable solution for global water scarcity and create awareness on the importance and the role of water in our lives and ecosystems. He holds a Master of Science degree in Sustainable Energy Technology, and Bachelor of Science degree in Mechanical Engineering, both from the Delft University of Technology in the Netherlands.

**Mr. Thomas Siebenbrunner**, Managing, Head of Sales and Marketing, Swimsol, Austria/Maldives

Mr. Siebenbrunner is an expert on sustainable entrepreneurship and renewable energy. He serves as Head of Sales & Marketing at Swimsol, a supplier of solar energy solutions and pioneer in marine grade floating solar systems. Working with the most renowned hotel resorts, he is experienced in supporting the transition towards sustainability in the tourism industry. He also develops new markets in South-East Asia and small island nations where SolarSea technology enables renewable energy deployment beyond the constraints of land scarcity.

**Mr. Leighton Waterman**, Programme Officer, IRENA – SIDS Lighthouses Initiative

Mr. Waterman has significant international development background and energy. Prior to joining the SIDS Lighthouses Initiative at IRENA, Mr. Waterman previously worked as a Senior Programme Officer at the Department for International Development (DFID) and at the Global Village Energy Partnership (GVEP) based in Barbados. While at GVEP, Mr. Waterman was responsible for implementation of the IDEAS 2012 project. He worked in the Energy sector at CARICOM, supporting the work of the Secretariat's energy programme.

## Session 5: Financing for sustainable tourism development

Moderator: H.E. Mr. Jagdish D. Koonjul, Permanent Representative of Mauritius to the United Nations

**Ms. Piera Tortora**, Advisor, Development Finance, OECD

Ms. Tortora works as an Advisor on Development Finance. Her team at the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development recently released a new report entitled "Making Development Co-operation Work for Small Island Developing States." The report seeks to better tailor development co-operation to the specific circumstances of SIDS, as part of the OECDs work on "countries most in need," and to contribute to international efforts to better tailor development co-operation to the specific circumstances of SIDS.

**Dr. Azeema Adam**, Maldives Envoy on Financing for Development Dr. Azeema Adam is the Maldives Government's Envoy on Financing for Development and former Governor of the Maldives Central Bank (the Maldives Monetary Authority). Azeema has worked to draw attention to the significant challenges facing SIDS in generating financing for infrastructure projects, and in diversifying the economy to build resilience. She holds a Bachelor's Degree in Economics from the University of Canberra, Australia, MSc in International Development and Finance from the University of Leicester, UK, and PhD in Economics from the University of Canberra. In her PhD research, Azeema developed an in-depth analysis of the most effective exchange rate.

**Mr. Cyrille Frederic Marie Barnerias**, Global Environment Facility

Mr. Barnerias works on Ocean Climate Finance at the Global Environment Facility (GEF), which was established on the eve of the 1992 Rio Earth Summit to help tackle our planet's most pressing environmental problems. Since then, the GEF has provided over \$20 billion in grants and mobilized an additional \$88 billion in financing for more than 4,000 projects in 170 countries. Today, the GEF is an international partnership of 183 countries, international institutions, civil society organizations and the private sector that addresses global environmental issues.

**Mr. Nagarajan Sridhar**, CEO and Executive Director, Mau Bank

Mr. Sridhar is an engineering graduate with a Master's in Business Administration. He has over twenty years of banking experience, of which sixteen years were with Standard Chartered Bank in various businesses, franchise building, and governance roles. In this capacity, since 2008, he had been overseeing the formulation and successful implementation of the bank's Mauritius strategy, which included leveraging Mauritius as a hub for Africa and unlocking the franchise's potential as a global financial centre. Mr. Nagarajan previously held posts of vice-chairman of the Mauritius Bankers Associate (MBA) and chairman of the International Banking Sub-Committee of the MBA. He has also been the vice-chairman of Global Finance Mauritius, (GFM), an industry body representing banks, institutional investors, law firms, accounting firms and management companies in Mauritius.

**Mr. Frank Rutabingwa**, Senior Natural Resources Expert, UNECA

Mr. Rutabingwa is a natural resources expert working with African Climate Policy Centre (ACPC) at the UNECA: ACPC is part of a tripartite programme bringing together AUC, UNECA and AfDB ClimDev-Africa whose aim is to bring to build interface between climate science and development.

**Mr. Garry Kelleher**, Ireland Tourism Promotion Board

Garry has held a variety of research, marketing and strategy roles at home and abroad for Tourism Ireland. Currently part of the Strategy and Insights team, Garry works across a range of projects including the development and communication of Tourism Ireland's strategic and operational plans. Garry also supports the development of long term marketing strategies aimed at growing tourism from key geographies along with the provision of market and industry intelligence to key tourism stakeholders. Garry is current Chair of the Culture, Arts, Sports and Tourism Committee at the British Irish Chamber of Commerce.