

Joint Statement for the Co-creation of the 1st "Global Charter for Sustainable Blue Tourism"

"In favour of seas and oceans, a new world and community of future blue cities, destinations, of the 1st sector of territorial, tourist, social and cultural blue economy and ecology"

From Guadeloupe at the heart of the Caribbean, this Wednesday, 27th September 2023, on the World Tourism Day of the UNWTO, in synergy with the UN's Ocean Decade, "a new blue world" unveils to us, that of a territorial and tourist blue economy and ecology of excellence, that of the symbiosis between blue cities and their biodiversity, that of a new relationship being crafted between citizens, travellers and the unforgettable experience of accessing the knowledge of ocean life.

On 12th October 1492, Christopher Columbus "discovers" the New World in his turn. Over the centuries, the Mediterranean then the Atlantic, the mythical blue routes of the oceans, are sailed by hundreds of vessels steered by the first men, then by great explorers. They pen the history of humanity. The great discoveries, the commercial, scientific, cultural flows, transform the world and network the great continents: Europe, America, Africa, Asia... The boom of the blue economy is announced 5 centuries later by the OECD as the global industry of the decade. This common history, the ocean from where we come, our heritage, is also the birth of the "Grand Tour" of knowledge, at the origin of the word tourism.

Our blue world is to be (re)discovered; it bears our heritage and our future. But the water, the original source of life, is in distress. Our "Mother" Seas and Oceans need us, and we need them. It is vital to care for them, for our survival depends on their good health; and the danger is great!

This joint declaration for the creation of the 1st "Global Charter for Sustainable Blue Tourism" is our responsibility being engaged. It is the culmination of efforts, expertise, research and development, of good practices that exist and are the path to follow... It is the opening to a great organisation and cooperation to act together to reinvent a more sustainable model and foster regional and international cooperation in the field of blue tourist economy, of the necessary implementation of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals of the 2030 Agenda.

Acting together is our response to the emergency situation that engages us in a (re)founding process of a new political era. We engage it in its dimension of heritage and common good of humanity, inspired by UNESCO. Our decision aims to mobilise the scientific community, policy makers, companies, citizens and the youth of civil society, around common values, simple and undeniable principles, in service of a new union in favour of the symbiosis between the peoples of the sea and the land.

Today our suffering blue planet obliges us to reinvent an economic and social model, more ethical, in which the OdysSEA network has invested since 2007. With the engaged future blue cities and destinations, we invite you to organise together, in a circular manner, mirroring what nature has been doing for 4 billion years.

It's a new blue and green world, matrix of a local and sustainable development, that we celebrate today on the occasion of World Tourism Day 2023. With 183 billion euros generated in Europe by our coastline alone, maritime and coastal tourism establishes itself as a leading industry; the sector employs more than 3 million people and represents 50% of hotel capacity. It was essential today to accelerate its ecological and social transition on which rest the blue economy and the quality of life of local populations, to rethink our relations and our mobilities with the Sea and recognise the maritime part of our heritage and our common destiny.

This World Tourism Day engages the decision-makers of Future Blue Cities and Territories to interconnect, in harmony with the biodiversity of the blue world of oceans, in reference to the model revealed by one of our greatest historians, academicians, Fernand Braudel, the originator of the literature of the Mediterranean model and of Europe; he has given us the keys to what should become a new territory of future projects, which, like ancient cities, associate the sea, the river, to its port, to its nourishing terroir and to its blue routes of discoveries, of economy, of knowledge, of intercultural experience, of social cohesion...

“On this 27th September 2023, civil society, its companies, its SSE actors, the youth, the scientific community, policy makers, and all those who want to act for the Sustainable Development Goals of our blue planet and the valorisation of its precious and fragile blue gold, are invited to cooperate and sign their support.”

We echo the Declaration of Mr. Emmanuel Macron, President of the Republic, regarding the stakes of France, the second global maritime power: *“Our civilization lives only thanks to the ocean, to what is sometimes called blue gold. The oxygen we breathe, the ocean produces more than half of it. Carbon storage that allows regulating the climate, slowing down warming, the ocean always constitutes the world's first carbon sink. The ocean is not just the background, if I may say so, of postcards or what the French have behind them when they look at the beach. No, it's truly the lung of humanity, a treasure of humanity. And this truth, which may seem simple, is worth mentioning because it implies structuring decisions in terms of research and international organisation for the years to come”.*

The World Tourism Organisation views investments as a crucial priority for the sector, around which it rallies its member states, destinations, companies, and investors. The pinnacle of this approach, World Tourism Day 2023 will launch a call to action directed at the international community, governments, multilateral financial institutions, development partners, and private sector investors, inviting them to unite around a new strategy for investing in tourism.

This international day celebrating tourism emphasises the vital need to inject investments into projects benefiting humanity (by investing in education and skills), the planet (by investing in sustainable infrastructure and accelerating the green transformation), and prosperity (by investing in innovation, technology, and entrepreneurship).

The appeal from the blue cities and destinations of the Guadeloupe archipelago, a laboratory of transitions and innovations, which act for the quality of life of the population, the future of their youth, around professions, jobs, services, a new sector of excellence and green investments.

To rethink sustainable blue tourism, a territory of innovation commits: the archipelago of Guadeloupe. It operates in cooperation with its future blue cities with good practices. It is this France of the Caribbean that invites us to cooperate to invent the new jobs of the future, to engage in ecological, cultural, digital, and social transitions, to write its narrative, to act and apply the solutions and good practices that you will find in the "Global Charter for Sustainable Blue Tourism." A global charter of the future that specifies in various forms how to reintegrate social and solidary economy, humanity, and heritage at its heart, how to associate and respect local populations, their cultures, assert their peculiarities.

These are our founding principles, the foundation of the global charter, the values of our organisation that traces at the heart of excellent blue destinations and which introduces slow tourism to the first grand cultural and nautical itinerary of the sea, the coastline, and the navigable routes; Blue Routes inscribed as heritage, fragile, precious supports, of an inexhaustible imagination for the creators of arts and cultures, scientists, education, for nautical activities, and blue and green leisure.

These know-hows, these sites and these heritages are the DNA of a new "Controlled Origin Appellation" Sustainable Blue Tourism, that we propose to rethink. It engages us in the creation of the Assembly of mayors and elected officials, the organisation of the value chain of the 1st major future sector of companies in the territorial and tourist blue economy. It is the promise of governance that invites us to a new way of travelling, better organised, more sustainable, circular, more social, more authentic, sensory, more ethical... which takes its meaning in our heritage, in the values to which we adhere which are those of UNESCO, the Ethical Code of Tourism, the European Landscape Charter, and the major cultural routes of the Council of Europe.

Because the 21st century will be maritime, we are committed to a specialised organisation, in the creation of a network of blue cities and regions, a major sector dedicated to Sustainable Blue Tourism, in the service of the cause of seas and oceans to act in transitions, co-create jobs, invent new professions and the green investments of the blue tourist economy. Within the organisation of a Task force and the international working group of the World Tourism Organisation, we will co-lead the collaborative writing of the 1st "Global Charter for Sustainable Blue Tourism for the benefit of humanity".



Philippe CALAMEL
President of the European Cooperative Group OdysSea
Sector, Future Blue Cities and Destinations
Affiliated Member of the World Tourism Organisation
Member of the NECSTouR European Regions Network

Joint declaration made for World Tourism Day, with the support of the UNWTO, in the context of the UN's Ocean Decade, the implementation of the SDGs, and our status as an Affiliated Member of the World Tourism Organisation