



Press Release

Lucerne, 9 April 2009

World Tourism Forum Lucerne: Where Global Leaders meet

The 1st World Tourism Forum Lucerne will be held in Lucerne from 22 to 24 April 2009. Federal Councillor Doris Leuthard will open the event, attended by international management executives in tourism, mobility, business, politics and science. The Forum is designed as a global platform for industry leaders, who will address the challenges of the future and discuss the opportunities that lie ahead.

The topics of the 1st World Tourism Forum Lucerne highlight the particular nature of tourism. It is closely linked to other industries and highly sensitive to changes in the economic environment. That is why the Forum is looking in particular at the way in which the economic crisis, climate change and changes in value patterns have impacted the tourism industry.

Mobility vs. sustainability

The main topic of the Forum is the future of mobility. Indeed, mobility patterns have been greatly affected by the shortage of resources, rising energy costs, and a growing sense of environmental awareness. The latest Travel & Tourism Competitiveness Report 2009 published by the World Economic Forum (WEF) clearly states that ecological sustainability has also become increasingly important for the tourism and travel industries. In its rankings for this year, which rates criteria such as safety, infrastructure and natural resources as well as active environmental protection, Switzerland came top of a list of 130 countries. As Prof. Martin Barth, Managing Director of the World Tourism Forum Lucerne explains: "As the Forum's venue and host, Switzerland provides the ideal setting, and the Lucerne School of Business as the organiser is well aware of its role as model."

Prominent participants guarantee international reputation

Around 100 personalities have registered for the event to be held at the Swiss Museum of Transport in Lucerne. With prominent speakers and participants in attendance such as Michael Reiterer (Head of the Delegation of the European Commission for Switzerland), Duncan Pollard (Director of Conservation Practice & Policy, WWF International), Thea Chiesa (Head of Aviation, Travel and Tourism Industry, WEF), Geoffrey Lipman (Assistant Secretary-General, World Tourism Organisation UNWTO) and Doris Leuthard (Head of the Federal Department of Economic Affairs and patron of the event), the Forum's international significance is assured.

Solution-finding at the World Café

The Forum will offer a number of different platforms (thesis talks, panel discussions, presentations, and workshops), providing a setting for creative and interactive exchange. One such special communication platform is the World Café, designed to encourage brainstorming sessions aimed at finding solutions to existing problems in the tourism sector. Key issues include tourism's vulnerability to crises, pinpointing opportunities for tourism and mobility resulting from the economic crisis, ways of implementing ecotourism and its offers, and attracting qualified young talents to the industry.

Mentoring programme for promoting young talents

The World Tourism Forum Lucerne is also active when it comes to promoting young talents. A mentoring programme has been specially drawn up for the event, enabling five tourism students from Hong Kong and Switzerland to take part in the Forum. The students, who qualified for the event by submitting excellent contributions in a competition held ahead of the Forum, have now been invited by a mentor to attend the event. For them it is a unique opportunity to establish contacts with industry leaders.

Public panel discussion

A public panel discussion on "Future Investment Strategies" is being held in English on April 24 as part of the World Tourism Forum Lucerne.

The event is an opportunity for experts and anyone with an interest in the subject to find out more about the strategies behind existing or planned top tourism projects. The panellists will address critical questions: How willing are banks to continue investing in tourism? Is there an oversupply of tourism projects? Is profitability in tourism generally too low?

The panellists are:

Samih Sawiris, Orascom Development Holding SA

Alexander E. Lebedev, JSC National Reserve Corporation

Joseph E. Gaukler, UBS Global Asset Management

Peter Rothwell, Kuoni Travel Holding Ltd

Bassam Salem, EFG Bank International

In the chair: Casper Selg, Swiss Radio DRS

Date: Friday, 24 April 2009, 1.45 pm

Venue: Conference Hall, Swiss Museum of Transport, Lidostrasse 5, Lucerne

Audience registration:

www.wtflucerne.org/open-forum

Admission costs: CHF 120.00 incl. aperitif

Registration deadline: 20 April 2009

Registration for press representatives (free):

Registration deadline 17 April 2009 ulrike.seifart@hslu.ch or phone: +41 41 228 40 35

Contact:

World Tourism Forum Lucerne

c/o Lucerne School of Business,
Institute of Tourism
Prof. Martin Barth, General Manager
P.O. Box 2940
6002 Lucerne
T: +41 41 228 99 80
F: +41 41 228 41 44
martin.barth@hslu.ch

Lucerne School of Business

Sigrid Cariola
Head of External Corporate Communications
P.O. Box 2969
6002 Lucerne
T: +41 41 228 40 34
F: +41 41 228 42 43
sigrid.cariola@hslu.ch