

WORLD TOURISM DAY

2020

SUPPLEMENT

Maldives
...the sunny side of life





**WORLD
TOURISM
DAY 2020**

**TOURISM
& RURAL
DEVELOPMENT**

Greetings on the occasion of World Tourism Day 2020!

In these challenging and uncertain times, we mark this year's World Tourism Day with optimism and hope, and we share the sentiments with all industry stakeholders, and send greetings of the day, as we look forward to a more prosperous time ahead.

United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) has designated 2020 as the year of Tourism and Rural Development. Maldives has been exemplary in bringing the economic and social benefits of tourism to rural communities in the country for quite some time and it is a key priority of the government to increase the benefits of tourism for locals through expansion of the guest house sector.

In Maldives, local tourism has been the main income source for a lot of women working from home, and young people coming out of school looking into learning a trade. With introduction of guest house tourism in local islands and across the whole nation, communities have come together to provide services like childcare, and water sports for the tourists, and continues to create vast economic opportunities in the rural areas of the country.

Maldives has re-opened its borders for tourists since 15th of July 2020, and although resorts and liveaboards have been the only options for tourists so far, we are looking forward to welcoming budget conscious travelers, island hoppers, and tourists looking for a more unique experience amongst the many beautiful islands, by opening our tourist guest houses from October 15th of this year.

Maldives like any other country dependent on tourism are continuously working in recovery efforts of this pandemic, and to make way for a safer experience for incoming tourists. As part of this initiative and efforts we have been granted Safe Travels Stamp by the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC) on 15th September 2020. As we embark the journey of recovery, all industry stakeholders must unite to achieve this, and we shall overcome this strenuous situation together.

Once again on the occasion of the World Tourism Day 2020, Ministry of Tourism convey greetings to all and profoundly thank all those who have been working tirelessly to sustain the mainstay of our economy.



Zurab Pololikashvili - Secretary-general United Nations World Tourism Organization



For the past 40 years, World Tourism Day has highlighted the power of tourism to touch on almost every part of our societies. Right now, this message is more important than ever.

The theme of **World Tourism Day 2020 - Tourism and Rural Development** - is particularly relevant as we face up to an unprecedented crisis.

Tourism has proven to be a lifeline for many **rural communities**. However, its true force still needs to be fully deployed. The sector is not just a leading source of employment, particularly for women and youth. It also provides opportunities for territorial cohesion and socio-economic inclusion for the most vulnerable regions.

Tourism helps rural communities hold onto their unique natural and cultural heritage, supporting conservation projects, including those safeguarding endangered species, lost traditions or flavours.

The **COVID-19 pandemic** has brought the world to a standstill. Our sector is among the hardest hit with millions of jobs at risk.

As we join forces to restart tourism, we must live up to our responsibility to ensure that tourism's benefits are shared by all.

This crisis is an opportunity to rethink the tourism sector and its contribution to the people and planet; an opportunity to build back better towards a more sustainable, inclusive and resilient tourism.

Placing rural development at the heart of tourism policies through **education, investment, innovation and technology** can transform the livelihoods of millions, preserve our environment and our culture.

As the ultimate cross-cutting sector, tourism contributes directly or indirectly to all of the **Sustainable Development Goals** (SDGs).

Harnessing tourism as a driver of rural development will keep the global community on track to achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, our ambitious plan for people and planet.

As we mark the 75 years of the United Nations, it is time to really fulfil tourism's massive potential, including its unique ability to drive development for rural communities, backing up our pledge to leave nobody behind.

HAPPY WORLD TOURISM DAY!



UNWTO
World Tourism Organization



Dr. Abdulla Mausoom - Minister Ministry of Tourism

This year we celebrate 48 years of tourism in the Maldives. Through its transformational journey tourism industry has been the main contributor to GDP and economic development.

In line with the vision of the new administration of His Excellency President Ibrahim Mohamed Solih to spread the benefits of tourism across the country and the concept of blue economy, increasing significance is given to participation of local communities in tourism. Focus is on targeted projects that would firstly expand the outreach of tourism through our natural resources, culture and heritage; and secondly, expand the network of beneficiaries of tourism through ownership and active participation of island communities, and most specifically enabling more women to participate in the tourism sector.

The theme of this year's World Tourism Day "Tourism and Rural Development" is particularly relevant as we face up to an unprecedented crisis. Tourism has been one of the fastest-growing and most resilient socio-economic sectors of our times, but since the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic, and the subsequent closure of borders across the globe, travel and tourism had been at a near standstill. Moving forward gives us an opportunity to build back better for the tourism sector, to rethink its contribution and an opportunity to work towards a more resilient and inclusive tourism to ensure that tourism's benefits are shared by all.

While the path ahead is not going to be easy we recognize that this is an opportune moment to acquaint ourselves with new methods of doing business, support new entrants to the job markets to shift across jobs and support future jobs by equipping people with skills and qualities, while supporting experienced and capable locals to move to managerial posts in the tourism industry. Maldivians must step up on the ladder of ownership and leadership in this promising industry.

I extend my warmest thanks to the immense work undertaken by the tourism industry stakeholders, especially the pioneers and the employees, for the illustrious contribution in the journey of Maldives tourism. We are determined to revive our tourism industry, and the spirit of co-operation is high among our stakeholders. Our goal is to make the Maldives not only the most beautiful, but also the safest tourist destination in the coming years. Let us all make our world of tourism more inclusive, diversified and unique!

HAPPY WORLD TOURISM DAY!

TOURISM PERFORMANCE

Maldives recorded strong results in 2019, ending the year with over 1.7 million international arrivals attaining a solid growth of +14.7% compared with 2018. Bed nights of tourist stood at 10.7 million, which was an increase of 12.8%. Occupancy rate for the year was 62.3% with a total of 49,854 bed in operation. And the average duration of stay was 6.3 days.

The year 2020 started off with this positive trend. The month of January recorded strong performances. Arrivals saw an increase of 14.4%, bed nights increased by 15.3% and average duration of stay was 6.6 days. While there were a total of 824 tourist establishments with 44,266 beds in operation, occupancy rate was recorded to be at 73%. The COVID-19 pandemic which brought the worldwide travel industry to an abrupt halt from February 2020 took its toll on Maldives tourism. Arrivals saw a decline of -11% in February.

With the worsening world situation, Maldives closed its border to international tourists on 27th March 2020. At the time of closing border, Maldives received a total of 382,760 tourists, which was a decline of 20.8%. While bed nights was recorded at 2.7 million, declining by 10.6%, occupancy rate was estimated at 58.6%. Available bed capacity at the end of this period was 45,216.

Maldives re-opened its border to international tourists on 15th July 2020, welcoming 1,752 tourists by 31 July, with 40 establishments having a total bed capacity of 7,690 providing accommodation to tourists. Arrivals started increasing slowly, with the month of August recording a total of 7,628 and September as of 23rd a total of 7,076 tourists. Since, the opening of border on 15th July as of 23rd September, Maldives has received a total of 16,405 tourists.

TOP 10 MARKETS SINCE OPENING BORDER (from 15 Jul - 23 Sep)



Rank #1
United Arab Emirates
Arrivals: 2607
Share (%) : 15.9



Rank #2
Russia
Arrivals: 1745
Share (%) : 10.6



Rank #3
U.S.A
Arrivals: 1597
Share (%) : 9.7



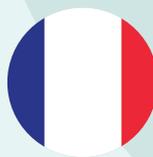
Rank #4
United Kingdom
Arrivals: 1445
Share (%) : 8.8



Rank #5
Spain
Arrivals: 955
Share (%) : 5.8



Rank #6
Germany
Arrivals: 720
Share (%) : 4.4



Rank #7
France
Arrivals: 562
Share (%) : 3.4



Rank #8
Brazil
Arrivals: 546
Share (%) : 3.3



Rank #9
Ukraine
Arrivals: 443
Share (%) : 2.7



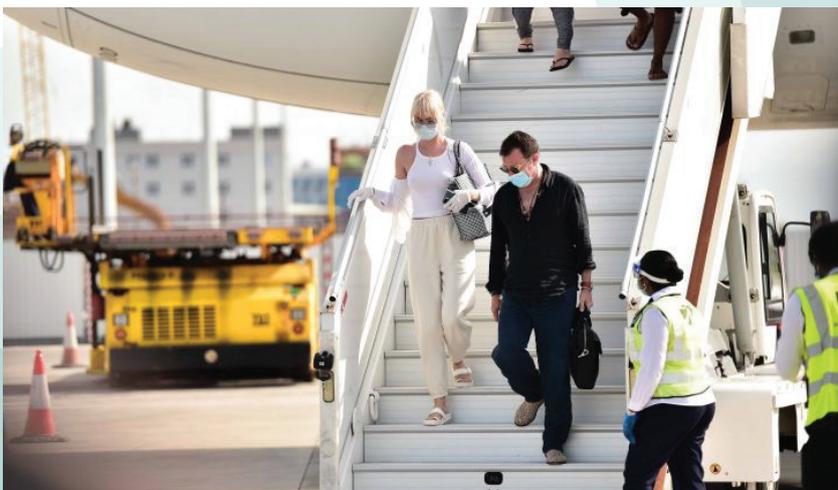
Rank #10
Egypt
Arrivals: 397
Share (%) : 2.4

TOTAL ARRIVALS 2020

	ARRIVALS	GROWTH (%)	DAILY AVERAGE
TILL BORDER CLOSURE (JAN-MAR)	382,760	-20.8	4,206
July (border opened on 15th July)	1,752	-98.7	117
August	7,628	-94.5	246
JANUARY - AUGUST	392,176	-65.4	
September (1st - 23rd)	7,076	-92.1	308
TOTAL 2020 (1ST JAN - 23RD SEP)	399,252	-67.4	
SINCE BORDER OPENING (15TH JUL- 23RD SEP)	16,405	-	238

NUMBER OF TOURIST FACILITIES IN OPERATION AS OF 23rd SEPTEMBER 2020

Facility Type	NOS.	BEDS
Resorts	82	20,148
Hotels (in Uninhabited Islands)	03	442
Safari Vessels	106	2,068
Transit Facilities (Greater Male' Region)	32	1,664
TOTAL	223	24,322





Uz Fayyaz Ismail - Minister Ministry of Economic Development,

The Maldives celebrated 47 years of tourism industry in 2019, against the backdrop of renewed excitement and momentum mirrored by record arrival numbers. However, with the onset of the COVID-19 crisis, the tourism industry—which is the main driver of the Maldivian economy— has gone into a virtual standstill. The crisis has directly affected the employment and livelihoods of over 40,000 workers employed in the tourism industry. Furthermore, the ensuing crisis has subsequently led to a significant decline in business activity across enterprises of all scales, with SMEs notably taking the largest brunt of the crisis.

Despite the economic downturn from the COVID-19 crisis, this moment in time also gives us many opportunities to restructure the economy and rebuild it on stronger roots. As part of the economic agenda and key pledges of the administration, economic diversification and capacity development is a key theme—both across and within industries of the economy.

Among the initiatives, the State owned Maldives Fund Management Company is currently working on launching multiple investment funds that would aim to increase the role of the private sector in upscaling and expanding tourism activity across the nation. This would provide opportunities for potential investors to engage in and expedite the process of delivery of tourism establishments to the market. This would pave way for increased employment opportunities and push the broader policy strategy of decentralization. In addition, the Ministry of Economic Development is looking into the viability of establishing a long-term residency within the Maldivian tourism model, which would provide an additional boost to the local economy and creating wider neutrality for the tourism business cycle.

Apart from expanding the scope of the tourism industry, important work is being carried out in line industries such as Fisheries and Agriculture—both of which are important beneficiaries of the tourism industry. Of note, the Agro National Corporation (AgroNat) is an initiative by the Government of Maldives to collectivize agriculture activity within the economy to guarantee reliable and quality assured produce. This would provide wider market access to local entrepreneurs, including both the domestic and high premium tourism sector.

The COVID-19 crisis is also a critical time to better understand the labour and employment situation in the Maldives. To build better and create greater resiliency to future shocks, the Government has undertaken crucial skill requirement needs within the tourism industry. Policies on current and future skill development and reskilling programs would consider the effect on employment from the COVID crisis, with a special emphasis of creating a larger share for the Maldivian workforce, especially in diversified posts such as management and increasing the participation rate of females within the industry.

The government is also working towards establishing better welfare systems for workers. During the current crisis, the Ministry of Economic Development has rolled out and is currently implementing the Income Support Program —the first of its kind in the Maldives. In line with the experience from the program, the government is also in the process of designing and implementing a permanent unemployment insurance scheme as per the Strategic Action Plan 2019-2023 to better address worker welfare and social protection systems.

Tourism undisputedly still remains the driving force of the Maldivian economy. Being overly reliant on tourism does pose many vulnerabilities to a small island economy such as ours. However, Tourism has been the main creator of jobs, businesses and key promoter of sustainable development practices such as renewable energy. It is also an important industry for empowering communities where rural development is limited, hence promoting equality within these regions. The tourism industry will continue to be the bedrock for national and inclusive socio-economic development. We must work together to promote additional industries in the Maldivian economy, and build stronger foundations for future resiliency against shocks and create more opportunities for Maldivians.



Mr. M.U. Maniku - Chairman Maldives Association of Tourism Industry

It is remarkable to think that in just 2 years, we will be celebrating the 50th year since the inception of Tourism in Maldives. Remarkable in the sense that Tourism, within such a short period of time, has become the highest contributor to our GDP and employment.

Starting from very primitive beginnings, we've now become one of the world's top tourism destinations. Tourism has brought unprecedented development to our rural communities and with the advent of the Local Island Tourism sector, we are witnessing an acceleration of development of local island communities and regions. Furthermore, it is encouraging to hear that the Government plans to bring changes (lower) to Tourism Land Rent in different atolls this year. This will undoubtedly mean that we will see more tourism developments across the Maldives in the near future. This ultimately will lead to more job creation and benefits to local communities.

Nevertheless, the Industry that we've together built up is now facing an unprecedented crisis. For a country that relies heavily on Tourism, COVID-19 has had a devastating impact on our industry and the economy as a whole. Our borders had remained closed from March 2020 till the 15th of July 2020.

However, tourism has now slowly resumed with the Resorts and Liveaboards being able to restart operations from the 15th of July 2020 onwards. I am also encouraged by the news that Guesthouses in local islands would also be able to re-open from the 15th of October 2020 onwards, which will help to rejuvenate local island economies.

It is no secret that tourist arrivals have been quite modest so far. We will of course, truly be able to recover prior to COVID-19 levels, only once an effective vaccine is created and a global vaccination effort is achieved. However, till this is achieved, for the sake of the livelihoods of all, I urge each and every person of our community to work together to keep our domestic infection rate low.

I am sure that as always, together we can overcome this crisis and come out even stronger.



Thoyyib Mohamed - Managing Director Maldives Marketing Public Relations Corporation

"The theme of this year's World Tourism Day is "Tourism and Rural Development". Ensuring that the gains from tourism is passed on to communities has been an important part of the Maldivian tourism industry. This has not been achieved only through opportunities for employment in the industry, but also through the introduction of the guesthouse sector which has brought the industry directly into the communities.

The promotion of culture and heritage is an important part of our tourism marketing efforts. So is the promotion of the guest house sector which has brought multiple benefits to local communities through opportunities that it has created for a new range of small businesses. The importance of this aspect of the industry has never been felt as much as today. Diverse opportunities for employment and income for all communities is essential for a more secure economic environment. We will continue to promote tourism to attract visitors to local communities, capitalizing on the unique natural features and cultural characteristics of different islands and communities in order to ensure that the industry becomes a direct contributor to their economic and social development."





Mohamed Raaidh - Managing Director Maldives Integrated Tourism Development Corporation

“Love Your Local” – towards a sustainable future

Being the 48th Anniversary of the backbone that upholds the GDP of the Maldives – the Tourism industry; in this auspicious occasion and where this great industry is approaching towards Golden Jubilee, I humbly convey my well wishes and greetings to all the respective contributors who work in this remarkable industry.

Not too long after welcoming the year 2020, the world was faced with the unfortunate pandemic of Covid19, bringing a halt to tourism throughout the globe, where many have lost their jobs, particularly affecting the small and mid-sector investments greatly.

Through the process of coping with the Covid19, I would like to highlight that the “Tourism and Rural Development” theme of the year 2020, presented by the UNWTO is extremely ideal for a country such as the Maldives.

With the introduction of “Local Tourism” to the inhabited islands in the year 2010, countless efforts were put into resolving numerous obstacles faced by the islands further from the capital Male’.

MITDC’s aims to plant the seed of tourism in such arduous islands, and work towards establishing developments that fit the bounds of a sustainable tourism model. Especially, creating awareness in these islands about transforming their day-to-day work into a functioning business model, and hence creating various opportunities for sustainable tourism, which will improve the living standard of the community. Sustainable models as such provides market for the local products, facilitating further opportunities for Maldivians to put an effort on various economic activities.

My sincere prayer is that we are all able to get through this dreadful pandemic sooner, and that we are able to expend our utmost determination in working to restore the country’s economic stability, and pave the way for Maldivian Tourism Industry to diversify into various segments and bloom successfully once again. Aameen.

mitdc

MALDIVES INTEGRATED
TOURISM DEVELOPMENT
CORPORATION



Thazmeel Abdul Samad- Managing Director Maldives Tourism Development Corporation

Greetings to all on the occasion of the World Tourism Day 2020!

We are marking this year's World Tourism Day during unprecedented times. Our Tourism industry has been brought to a standstill due to the COVID-19 Pandemic and the impact of this has been extensively felt by our rural communities. As Maldives reopens for tourism, this gives us the opportunity to build more resilience to ensure the sustainability of our Tourism industry.

The theme of this year's World Tourism Day is "Tourism and Rural Development". Tourism industry is the most integral pillar of our economy and the main contributor to GDP and development. As such, planning and facilitating the rural development of the industry within this context, is a great responsibility for us.

MTDC was incepted by the government of Maldives on 9th April of 2006 with the aim of providing an avenue for the average Maldivian citizen to gain a direct benefit from our tourism industry. Our main objective is to share the benefits of resort development and ownership across the Maldives, giving an opportunity for Maldivians to participate in their exciting tourism industry. MTDC is a profitable company that the public could invest in, allowing them to be part of this fast-growing industry.

MTDC is the only public company which enabled tourism developments and opportunities for the communities in the untouched northern and southern atolls of the country. MTDC firmly believes in the importance of creating sustainable job opportunities for Maldivians. Our intention is to create better life conditions for the Maldivian families by providing long term and sustainable jobs which are designed to ensure development for those from the local communities.

MTDC envisions that with our strategies, it will create prospects for a wider distribution of wealth that is created by the tourism industry. With this mandate, MTDC will lead the way to the future of sustainable, self-sufficient tourism, enriching the lives of Maldivians across the country.

As we approach 50 years of Tourism in Maldives, I convey my sincere well wishes and greetings to all the contributors who work tirelessly in our leading industry. On behalf of our corporation we wish you good health and safety during these challenging times.



Abdulla Suood - President Maldives Association of Travel Agents and Tour Operators

This year the World Tourism Day comes with the grave news of the global pandemic that has plagued us for the past few months. Tourism has been a way to connect the international community, raise awareness of the differences we celebrate, and foster love among us all.

Maldives is a country that thrives on the revenue generated by tourism. We've been blessed with support from people all around the world who visit the island for a tropical getaway. They get to experience our unique natural and cultural heritage helping uplift the rural communities that largely depend on Forex from the tourism sector.

As our economy is heavily dependent on tourism, we've mastered the art of a perfect experience to the Tourist, especially now with a slowly weaning global pandemic. Interestingly, COVID has revived the natural beauty Maldives is known for. The dive site and underwater gardens have had a chance to be refreshed, and we've put in efforts to renew it.

It is time to Rediscover our natural beauty and cultural heritage. The resorts are standalone properties on an isolated island, so there is less to worry about when it comes to social distancing.

Our guests' health and Safety is of the utmost importance to us. This is our chance to prove to the world that smart tourism can be the way forward in an uncertain world and that the Maldives can make it possible.

On behalf of our organization we wish your loved one's health and safety during these difficult times!



Yoosuf Riffath – President Association of Travel agents

Since the inception of ATA in 2014, the vision of ATA has been two-fold; further advancement of tourism within all communities in the Maldives and creation of regulations beneficial for all travel agents. We believe the former aligns perfectly with this year's theme of World Tourism Day – Tourism and Rural Development.

ATA further considers the future of tourism to lie within the youth of the country. Thus, ATA has been proactively working towards the development of the youths by providing greater opportunities and accessibility into the industry, alongside offering the technical expertise and knowledge from pioneers of the Tourism Industry.

Whilst Covid-19 has exhibited unprecedented hardships for the Tourism Industry, ATA is confident the road to recovery is certain by fruitful synergy between the government initiatives and stakeholder zeal.

Happy World Tourism Day.



Mohamed Imthiyaz - Acting President Guesthouse Association of Maldives

It is heartwarming to know how local tourism has transformed the small island nation into a promising land. Local tourism is now distributed from the most northern part of the Maldives to the southern, we at GAM believe the benefactor of this tourism is our small communities living remotely across the Maldives. It has been a short journey with thriving development starting from clean water, proper sewage systems, electricity, and signs of basic development that has become part of the development success goals of every small community in the Maldives.

Today we have converted our traditional thinking and applied modern strategies to preserve our culture and heritage creating numerous business opportunities to every small island in the Maldives as a destination brand. We trust that development lies with people, and success is a product created by people and the greatest minds hidden in these rural communities. Today we are not alone, today we are blooming in shades of blue and succeeding in tourism like never before.





Ahmed Afrah - President National Boating Association of Maldives

The impact of tourism on rural development can be clearly observed in Maldives. With the emergence of tourism in outer atolls, there has been rapid development to island communities through employment creation, logistics and economic opportunities. This is a key reason why our Government is eager to develop tourism in various parts of the country.

As the design and build of liveaboards evolve, we are seeing islands in different parts of the country specializing to cater to this need. Several islands have families who possess traditional boat building skills which were passed down through generations. These families utilize their skills to merge traditional techniques with modern techniques to create totally unique Maldivian liveaboards.

Many boat operators are taking bolder risks in exploring uncharted routes to offer their international visitors an exclusive holiday. As a result, islands which were previously left out from popular routes are now enjoying the opportunities which come with the introduction of tourism.

COVID-19 pandemic has brought the tourism industry in Maldives to a standstill and the impact of this has been extensively felt by rural communities. As Maldives reopens for tourism, we urge all stakeholders to work together ensure that all stakeholders benefit on the road to recovery.





Mohamed Ali Janah - President National Federation of Maldivian Employers,

Greetings on the occasion of World Tourism Day 2020!

As we mark the World Tourism Day today, we are regretful to note that the worldwide tourism sector has suffered immensely with the losses of the Covid-19 pandemic exceeding over \$450 billion across the globe. Maldives' tourism industry, accounting for 28% of the GDP, and 60% of Maldives' foreign exchange receipts have been hit the hardest. Currently, Maldives has an established portfolio of approximately 49,000 beds in our tourism industry and the pandemic is preventing us from utilizing our inventory to its maximum potential. We have been affected the worst on both employment and household earnings of our citizens where one-third of males and a quarter of females of our population are engaged in this industry.

Incorporated two years ago, NFME is a non-profit organization of multiple NGOs and disciplines representing key industries of the Maldives which joined hands together to form our federation to collectively work together with the objective of protecting the employers thus working towards creating a conducive environment between the employer and the employee. Our five pioneers include:

- National Boating Association of Maldives (NBAM)
- Maldives Association of Yacht Agents (MAYA)
- Maldives National Association of Construction Industry (MNACI)
- Maldives Sea Food Processors and Exporters Association (MSPEA)
- Restaurant Association of Maldives (RAM).

Additionally, the Association of Travel Agents, ATA, joined as a member recently.

Furthermore, we have been closely working together with International Labour Organisation, ILO to advance social justice and promote decent work for all in the Maldives, and to introduce and represent the employers in the tripartite discussions of ILO. This year's theme "Tourism and Rural Development" is of utmost importance while we are facing this unprecedented calamity. NFME is also a member of the International Organization of Employers (IOE).

We assure you, that we will work hand in hand with the Ministry of Tourism, the tourism sector and all industry stakeholders, including MATI and TEAM to protect the rights of the employers thus giving the necessary protection to everyone working in the tourism sector of the Maldives. We will collectively support to overcome the current challenges, to maintain and revive our industry and our country in these challenging times.





Mauroof Zakir - General Secretary Tourism Employees Association of the Maldives

As tourism workers we welcome the theme "Tourism and rural development" on World Tourism Day. The new UN report on "COVID-19 and Transforming Tourism" sees this crisis as an opportunity to change the relationship between tourism, nature, climate and our local economy. We must build back better!

We must build back better so that we use tourism to benefit our people; and stop tourism using our people and our resources.

We must combine the safe, sustainable recovery of tourism with secure, decent jobs for tourism workers. As tourism workers we can contribute to rural development by collective bargaining with employers in resorts to earn decent wages that also improves the livelihoods of our families in rural areas and helps them develop their farms, fishing and family businesses.

At the same time tourism must expand beyond the luxury resorts to bring more attention to our cultural heritage, food and traditional crafts in rural communities.

We also call on the government to give greater attention to rural development, to improve our local food supply, promote innovative local farming, support sustainable ocean farming, and invest more in value-added fisheries to create new and better jobs.





Abdulla Areef - President Maldives Bodyboarding Association

Tourism is the largest and most profitable industry in the world and even in Maldives. Millions of tourists travel around the world for leisure and other purposes. Year by year the amount of tourist arrivals to Maldives also increases, opening new job opportunities in different fields in the sector.

Surf tourism plays an important role in the tourism sector as the Maldives is known for having one of the best surf breaks in the world with crystal clear water. Surf tourism not only generates income to the country, it also helps the youth who are in the surf industry to foster their skills and earn for their family. Many of them come from the islands where most of the surf breaks are located making this as an important job for their community.

Today, most of the surf breaks are privatized as a result these resources are limited for the youths and the surfers who visit the country. We call the policy makers to survey and negotiate with stakeholders before developing mega projects near surf breaks. The livelihood of surf tourism depends on its sustainability.





Nishfa Nashid - Founder Musicians' Union of Maldives

This year has been one of the most challenging years for many of us. The pandemic has been something that we all can collectively agree is one of the biggest challenges that we have faced.

The Maldives is a beautiful little island nation rich with tradition and culture. The atolls from the North to the South offer a variety of cultural nuances. One thing common about the rural islands is their hospitality. Arts, music, and craftsmanship were limited to the communities they lived in, but since the development of tourism and exposure to their visitors, opportunities arose for them to showcase both their individual and collective talents to the world. Through this, an income was generated, making it beneficial to all the islands.

On this World Tourism Day, our tourism industry is at one of its lowest points economically. We must take this opportunity to start fresh and rebuild. I hope that we can put more emphasis on our talented locals from all walks of life, who are enthusiastic and more than ready to contribute to the Tourism industry. Let's all come together and celebrate and show off our little gem of a paradise.

Happy World Tourism Day!