ASCAME calls for Proactive Mediterranean Governance to Boost Resilience of Tourism Sector

The COVID-19 pandemic has underscored the importance for global tourism policymakers and industry leaders to **activate a more proactive and decisive approach**, to enhance the sector’s resilience.

The **Mediterranean is the world’s leading tourism area** with nearly 400 million tourists: 32% of all international arrivals and 30% of global revenues. It accounts for 13% of exports, 23% of the services sector and employs more than 20 million people. The region has 20% of the world’s hotel accommodation capacity. It has 10,000 destinations, some 100,000 hotels and one million restaurants. However, despite these numbers, **tourism remains heterogeneous and fragmented between the two shores of the Mediterranean.**

Overall, the pandemic has reminded **tourism policy makers and industry leaders that they are equally crisis managers.** This requires a posture that understands and accepts the imminence of various threats to the sector and the resultant need to activate a proactive approach to enhance its readiness to **meet the challenges of the present and future.**

ASCAME suggests that this decisive leadership should be underscored by meaningful partnerships and synergies; data-driven policies; innovative thinking and adaptation and human capacity-building. Other considerations can include aggressive approaches to product diversification; the establishment of effective, real-time information systems; and a **commitment to sustainable tourism development** that balances multi-interests and future considerations whether economic, social, human, cultural and, indeed, environmental.

The pandemic has highlighted the need for the tourism sector to establish a task force or an action committee that can be immediately activated at the onset of a crisis.

This crucial asset would provide important **advantages in crisis management experiences** in regard to ensuring swift responses, targeted communication, balance of information between warning, assurance and general cross-sectorial cooperation and collaborations. This would allow for the leveraging of diverse strengths, skills and resources to achieve common goals. As a result of strengthened relationships among stakeholders, the **capacity to identify risks** early and implement effective mitigation and recovery strategies is also likely to be enhanced.
ASCAME will focus on key components of the industry where change is mandatory, identifying the steps that need to be taken and **consolidating solutions to be implemented**. And, on top of that, ASCAME will keep on **tackling issues intrinsic to sustainability**, such as economic model variations, climate impact, tourism’s environmental impact, coastal and marine shifts as well as agricultural and carbon neutral policies.