

Global Partnership for Sustainable Tourism*

Project summary

Highlights

- Activities and expected results
- Organizational and financial framework
- Members benefits and involvement opportunities

Executive Summary

► *The Global Partnership for Sustainable Tourism*

The Global Partnership for Sustainable Tourism aims to transform the way tourism is done worldwide. It will focus on policy, projects, tools, and networks for all tourism stakeholders, at all scales, by working on

- policy frameworks,
- climate change,
- environment & biodiversity,
- poverty alleviation,
- cultural and natural heritage,
- private sector sustainable practices, and
- finance & investment.

Members will create and benefit from an unparalleled combination of expertise, networks, and a positive public image. The Partnership builds upon the strong accomplishments of the concluding International Task Force on Sustainable Tourism Development (ITF-STD), including its continuing activities, network, expertise, and policy recommendations for sustainable tourism development.

The indispensable criterion for being a member is the demonstrated commitment to sustainable tourism.

The Partnership will be a United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD) Type II Partnership, hence a multi-stakeholder, voluntary initiative. Its organizational structure will consist of an Annual General Assembly with a Steering Committee, which will be the executive body and will implement decisions of the Annual General Assembly. An Advisory Committee will provide guidance and advice to the Steering Committee. The Secretariat, to be based in the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP-DTIE), will support all activities and provide various services to members.

The Partnership will be financed primarily by direct financial contributions and in-kind support from members. For the first year to set up and launch member services, it is estimated that the Partnership requires a budget of 430,000 US dollars.

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Abbreviations

CSD	Commission for Sustainable Development (United Nations)
ITF-STD	International Task Force on Sustainable Tourism Development
NGO	Non-governmental organization
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
UNDESA	United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNIDO	United Nations Industrial Development Organization
UNWTO	United Nations World Tourism Organization

1 Why a Global Partnership for Sustainable Tourism?

► *to create synergies for all tourism partners*

1.1 Window of opportunity

Many isolated projects and initiatives limit the impact and efficiency for sustainability in the tourism sector.

In recent years, tourism stakeholders have sought to address the social, cultural and environmental problems associated with tourism through hundreds of isolated efforts around the world. Many of these initiatives have shown that if properly managed, tourism can help conserve nature and culture, produce wealth for local communities, countries, employees, and owners and greatly reduce the negative impacts associated with operations.

However, because most of these solutions have been local and isolated, businesses, communities, and countries, as well as policy makers, destination managers, and managers, have been unable to find the solutions to their problems that may have been developed elsewhere in the world. There are many separate projects and initiatives, leading to information overload and misunderstandings, limited results, and the loss of time and money duplicating what has already been done. There is confusion about concepts, solutions, and in general, frustration and a loss of trust in tourism development work.

“The World Tourism Organization foresees 1.5 billion tourists per year by 2020, with a growth rate of tourism activities between 15% and 20% per year, implying a doubling of infrastructure within a period of 3 to 5 years. It is therefore crucial that all tourism stakeholders continue to work together to confront this reality and ensure the sustainability of the sector.”

Etienne Coffin, Ministry of Economy, Industry and Employment, in charge of tourism, France

1.2 The Partnership's solution

The Partnership links all tourism stakeholders, which will enable it to adapt, replicate, and scale up successful projects initiated by partners in other regions, thus fostering high-impact results.

The answer is to develop a Global Partnership to share knowledge, collect successful initiatives, adapt them, scale them up, and replicate them to meet global needs. This Partnership will bring together tourism sectors in all regions, including intergovernmental organizations, governments at all levels, destination managers, environmental and social organizations, and business organizations.

This global effort of all partners will be able to identify and disseminate successful initiatives from any corner of the world and make them available elsewhere, apply the policy recommendations and lessons learned in integrating sustainability in tourism, and develop new tools and projects where no existing solution has been found.

“The Partnership will be an up-to-date, dynamic forum where countries that are interested in tourism that is truly sustainable will be able to learn from the successful efforts of the other members and obtain technical assistance, and which will promote constant dialogue, the exchange of experiences, and seeking solutions to the problems that are common to the tourism sector.”

Gina Guillen Grillo, Senior Advisor to the Minister of Tourism, Costa Rica

2 What is the Partnership about?

► *To transform tourism worldwide*

The Partnership will build upon the strong accomplishments and vision of the ITF-STD.

The vision of sustainability of tourism of the International Task Force on Sustainable Tourism Development (ITF-STD)¹¹ is reflected in its policy recommendations, activities, and projects. The Partnership will build on this vision through a portfolio of activities that include and target the tourist industry, the public sector, and consumers, in accordance with the policy recommendations. It is anticipated that different stakeholders will form groups focused on executing one or more of these sets of activities. The Partnership will collaborate with a wide range of partners to provide both business-oriented and science-based information on tourism issues and their contribution to sustainable development. Academic institutions will be invited to join the Partnership in order to increase the knowledge available on sustainable tourism issues, as well as to propose projects on the ground.

Vision: To be the leading international tourism Partnership uniting the private sector, governments, academia, and NGOs to enhance sustainability within the tourism sector.

¹¹ The Marrakech ITF-STD will end its term in 2010 and will be transformed into this new Partnership for Sustainable Tourism. The members of the Task Force are asked to become the founding members.

The Partnership's network capacity, implementation, and innovation will enable it to help transform the way tourism is done worldwide, at all scales.

The Partnership will help build synergies to promote long-term economic viability of the sector, which depends on an unspoilt environment and a healthy social cultural context.

The Partnership will work on policy, projects, new tools, and networks

2.1 Expected results and objectives

The Partnership's strong multi-stakeholder network will enable capacity development, implementation, and innovation to transform the way tourism is done worldwide, at all scales. The expected results are:

- *Networks*: Build partnerships and networks
- *Transfer*: Quickly scale up and replicate successful projects and tools from one part of the world to another one.
- *Capacity*: Develop new methods, policies, networks, and capacity-building activities
- *Innovation*: Implement and monitor management practices and technologies
- *Mainstream*: Spread throughout the world policy frameworks for sustainable tourism and best practice.

The main Partnership objective is to mainstream sustainability in the tourism sector. The overall strategy of the Partnership is to build synergies among various initiatives on sustainable tourism that were initiated or supported by the Task Force, develop new initiatives, and ensure overall efficiency by:

- facilitating the development and implementation of a coherent programme of work for the partnership addressing the needs of the individual initiatives;
- preventing unnecessary duplication of work;
- promoting and facilitating links to replicate successful activities and innovative concepts; and
- improving the visibility and augmenting the impacts of each initiative.

2.3 Activities and implementation areas

The Partnership will have four main activities:

1. Implementing policy recommendations and frameworks;
2. Scaling up and replicating successful projects, publications, training materials, and tools in other regions;
3. Developing new projects and tools that will foster sustainable tourism and monitoring their results;
4. Building networks and partnerships. Regional networks and resource centres will be important to achieving the success of activities and projects.

...within its seven strategic thematic action lines.

The Partnership aims to reach its objectives of transforming the way tourism is done worldwide through following seven thematic action lines:

Policy Frameworks	Promote good policy frameworks for sustainable tourism development.
Climate Change	Increase awareness of the links between tourism and climate change, and facilitate actions to reduce emissions from tourism and help destinations adapt to change.
Environment & Biodiversity	Increase awareness of the impacts of tourism on the environment and biodiversity, focusing on prevention initiatives, notably in protected & ecologically sensitive areas.
Poverty	Promote sustainable tourism as a means for poverty alleviation.
Heritage	Facilitate the promotion of cultural and natural heritage through tourism, while strengthening living cultures and conserving biodiversity.
Private Sector	Assist the tourism private sector and its supply chain in becoming more sustainable (including water, energy, and social foot printing).
Finance & Investment	Make sustainability a requisite for finance and investment in tourism, and tourism a component of the sustainable development economy.

2.3 Key stakeholders and their benefits

The Partnership will benefit all tourism stakeholders.

The projects will benefit all tourism stakeholders including:

- *Governments at all levels:* support for implementing policy frameworks as well as the Task Force’s final policy recommendations, and carrying out regional, and national activities ; international outreach; higher retention in-country of tourism income, and increased conservation of natural habitats and cultural attractions.
- *Private sector:* increased visibility and image, financial opportunities to move towards sustainability, knowledge sharing, reduced negative impacts, increased market share, and reduced operating costs.
- *Destination communities both rural and urban:* reduced cumulative negative impacts from tourism, higher quality employment and peripheral benefits, increased cultural recognition.
- *Natural and cultural heritage site and protected area managers:* positive environmental and cultural impacts of tourism on heritage sites.
- *Women:* opportunities for more and higher-quality employment and independent entrepreneurial activities.

- *Indigenous peoples*: better control over tourism activities in general (including the right to say “no”), as well as tourism’s environmental, cultural, and social impacts; quality employment in impoverished areas.
- *Developing country economies*: wider distribution of income to impoverished communities; higher retention in-country of tourism income, and increased conservation of natural habitats and cultural attractions; increased visibility of the national tourism sector.
- *Consumers*: greater awareness of sustainable tourism activities and the impacts of their choices.

3 What is the organizational and financial framework?

► *A United Nations Partnership uniting all tourism stakeholders*

The Partnership will be a Type II United Nations Partnership, and will build upon success stories and expertise of the partners.

The tentatively entitled “Global Partnership for Sustainable Tourism” will be established as a UN Type II Partnership² under the United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD). The members – the partners – will be countries, international business organizations, intergovernmental organizations, non-governmental organizations, and other organizations with a demonstrated commitment to sustainable tourism.

The Partnership will build upon the Marrakech International Task Force on Sustainable Tourism Development (more than 40 members) with its in-depth technical, management, and communication expertise, its successful results-delivery of nearly 40 projects within three years, as well as policy recommendations on sustainable tourism development.

² Voluntary multi-stakeholder initiatives contributing to the implementation of Agenda 21, Rio+5 and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation (JPOI)

3.1 Organizational structure and decision making process

It is proposed that management and coordination be organized as follows:

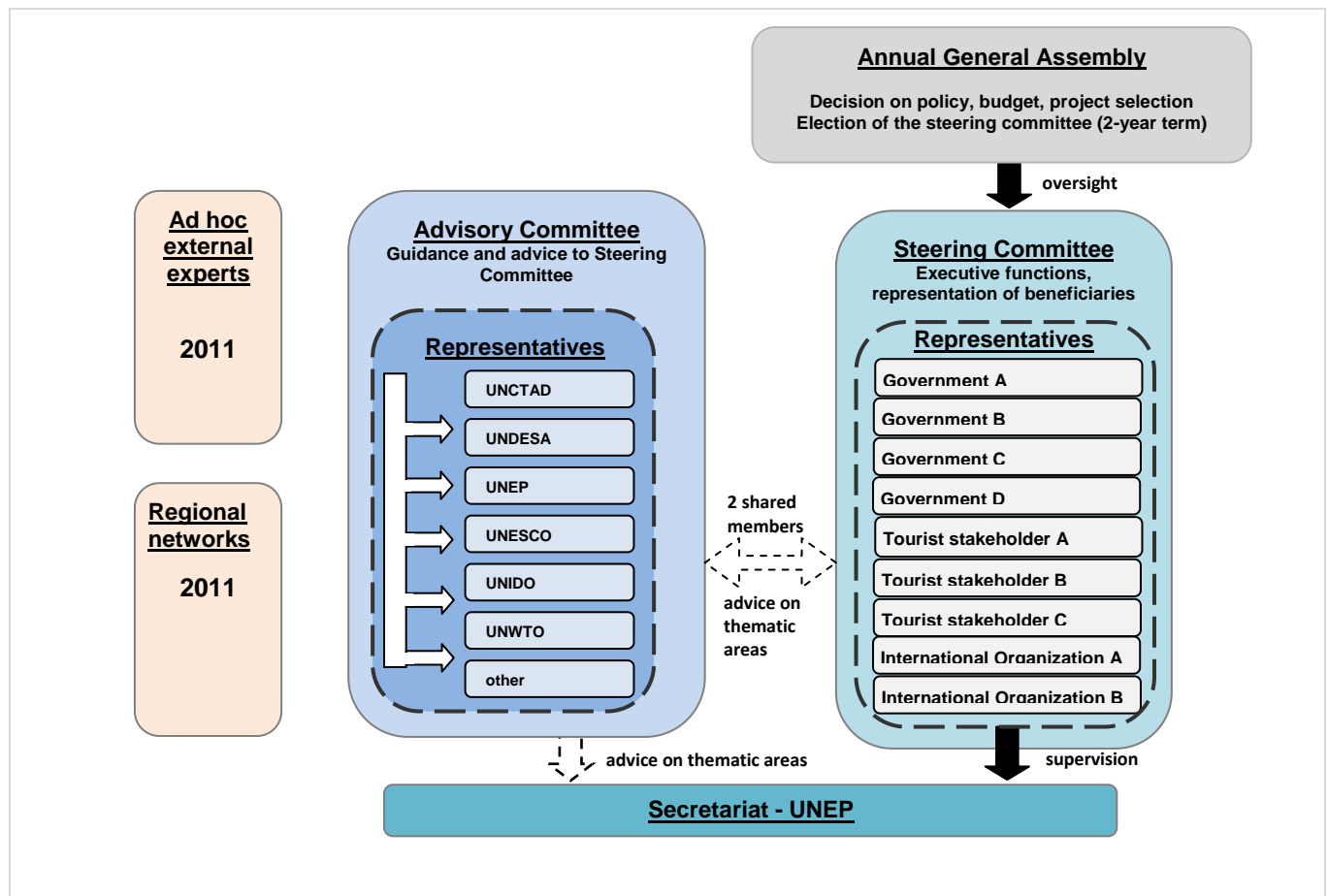


Figure 1: Organigram of the Partnership

The Partnership is organized around the Annual General Assembly with the Advisory Committee for guidance and advice to the Steering Committee, which is the executive body charged with implementing the decisions of the Annual General Assembly. The Secretariat will support all activities and bodies.

3.2 Resource mobilization

The Partnership requires 430.000 US dollars for the first year to set up and launch member services and projects.

Financial resources constitute a critical underpinning in delivering benefits for partners through this Partnership. In this context, the Secretariat and the Steering Committee will strengthen its engagement directly with selected tourism organizations, destinations, and countries in raising the funds necessary for the implementation of the Partnership.

The budget for the start-up phase in 2011 will be prepared for the first Annual General Meeting, which will decide upon it.

3.3 Financing and expenditure structure

The Partnership will be financed primarily by direct financial contributions and in-kind support from members.

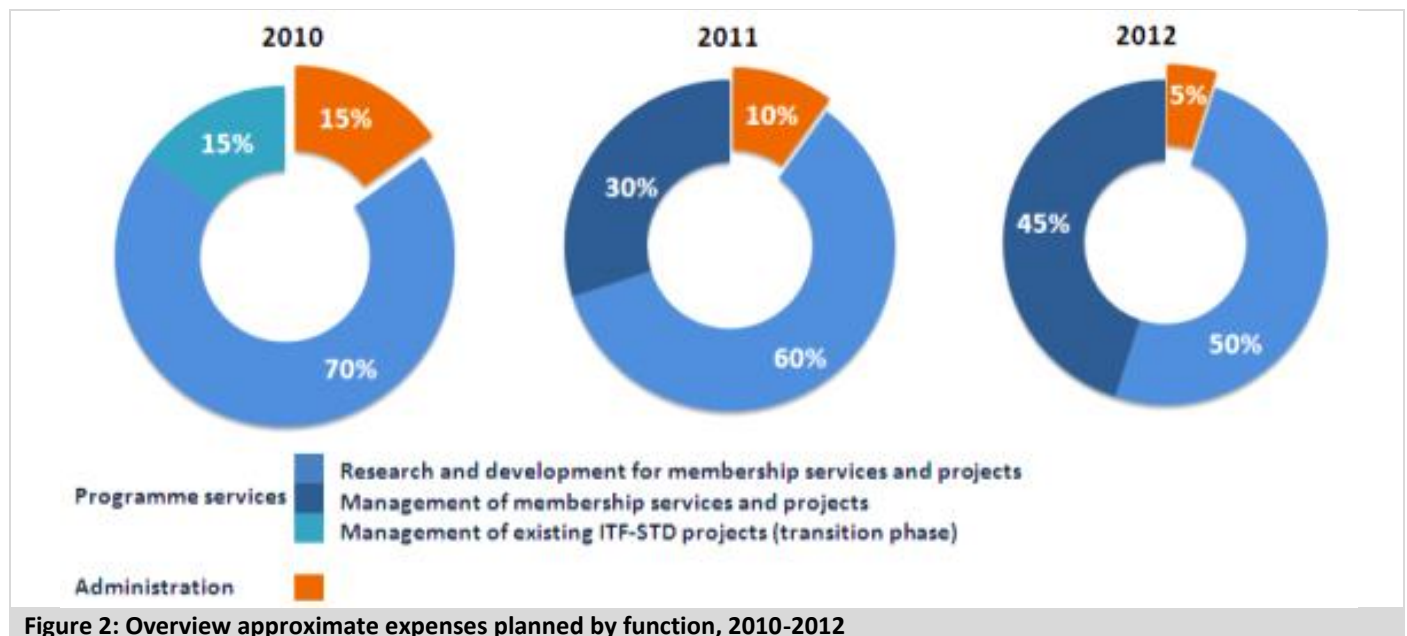
The majority of expenditure will be used for Partnership services and projects.

The financial structure of the Partnership will be managed in conformity with UN rules and regulations. The overall budget and the choice of projects to be financed will be approved by the Annual General Assembly. Implementation will be executed by the Secretariat, under the coordination of the Steering Committee. Financial controls will be those of the United Nations. Financial resources will come from two main sources:

- *direct financial support* from national, regional, and multilateral members;
- *in-kind support* from participating members;

The Partnership will be supported in the start-up period (2010) by direct financial support from the members of the Partnership, who will share its management costs through voluntary contributions. The budget will be defined every year by the General Assembly, and the Steering Committee will allocate the funds between the different costs including the projects.

The Partnership will have a results-oriented structure, in which its long-term funding and success will directly depend on its ability to deliver high-quality, useful tools in accordance with its objectives, thematic areas, and policy recommendations. Most of the Partnership projects will be funded directly by the different partners. However, the Partnership will facilitate fundraising by supporting members to get access to finance opportunities through the membership services platform. The planned approximate allocation of expenditure is as follows:



4 What is the communication strategy?

▶ *A global-local and cross-media approach*

Information, public relations, and marketing activities will be disseminated through a variety of media channels.

The Partnership will communicate its activities through cross-media channels with the objective of (i) providing information and knowledge to members, and (ii) giving visibility to the Partnership and its members. Key communication activities include:

- *Online activities:* The Partnership will provide a knowledge and information website that will support the Partnership's mission and boost its visibility, including a project and member directory, access to information on funding, literature, further education, and a news section. The Partnership will also send a newsletter to its members and interested parties.
- *Research:* The Partnership will develop publications under specific projects, as well as relevant publications as suggested by the partnership members. Members will have access to all publications and studies at no costs.
- *Outreach events/ advocacy:* The Partnership and its members will organise events and participate on key tourism and related sector events to promote the Partnership, its activities, and members.

5 Become member

► Shape tourism's sustainable future

Members benefit from an unparalleled combination of expertise, networks, and positive public image.

5.1 Members' benefits

Being a member of the Partnership fosters legitimacy as a leading entity in tourism and environmental issues and offers:

Expertise in environmental, social cultural and economic issues

- the UN's specialized agencies and ad hoc experts will be providing support through the advisory committee and will serve as the authoritative advocates for mainstreaming sustainability in tourism with access to public, private and government institutions for a larger dissemination spectrum.

Extensive networks

- Some Partnership members have already established partnerships and synergies with other UN agencies, governments, NGOs, as well as network such as tourism schools, network of experts and youth groups.

Positive and neutral images

- UN Partnerships are seen by many as entities with a positive and neutral image of an honest broker and assuring quality in their areas of expertise including tourism and environment.

"The Partnership offers a unique opportunity for engaging like-minded organizations and countries so we can join forces, learn from each other, avoid replicating unnecessary efforts and together do much more than what we could do in isolation. We applaud and highly support this effort."

**Ronald Sanabria, Vice-president,
Rainforest Alliance**

"The sustainable development of the tourism sector is critical to future social and economic opportunities for investors and residents alike in Bahamas. I am pleased to be associated with the efforts of the Global Partnership for Sustainable Tourism to share sustainable tourism experiences with other destinations in order to conserve biodiversity, alleviate poverty, protect cultures, and enhance the quality of life of local communities."

**Earlston McPhee, Director, Sustainable
Tourism Planning, Ministry of Tourism and
Aviation, The Bahamas**

Members' involvements will shape the tourism sector for tomorrow's economic, socio-cultural, and environmental opportunities and challenges.

5.2 Members' contribution opportunities

The Partnership is an alliance that relies upon partnerships and cooperation to transform the way tourism is done worldwide, at all scales, by consumers, by enterprises, and by the governments that plan and regulate destinations. By becoming a member you have various ways to become involved, from in-kind services and support to cash contributions, amongst others:

Sponsorship e.g. events, publications, travel costs	Contribute financially	Set-up cooperations	Include Partnership projects in your programme	Promote the Partnership
Participate in workshops	Provide in-kind support	Provide tools and methodologies	Give advice and technical assistance	Direct execute your Partnership projects

5.3 Membership criteria

The indispensable criterion for membership is the demonstrated commitment to sustainable tourism.

Membership should depend on the ability of the potential partner to contribute to the objectives, thematic areas, or policy recommendations of the Partnership. Key membership criteria include:

- commitment to developing sustainable tourism (obligatory);
- ability to contribute to the objectives, thematic areas, or policy recommendations of the Partnership;
- the demonstrated ability to implement projects in the thematic areas;
- willingness to provide financial or counterpart support for projects or general operating costs;
- area of geographic influence, especially with respect to the ability to offer successful projects for replication or to replicate projects from other regions;
- ability to reach under-served beneficiaries;
- work in sustainable tourism in any of the membership groups (governments at all levels, private sector, multilateral or intergovernmental organizations, non-governmental organizations, etc.).

Annex 1: Partnership membership services platform³

► *Advocacy, projects, new tools, networks, and marketing*

Policy & advocacy

Drive debate on sustainability in tourism policies

- Support for the implementation of the **policy recommendations** for sustainable tourism development
- Promotion of **policies, actions, and investments** to enhance the sustainability of the tourism sector

Project support

Improve your results delivery

- **Technical and project guidance**
- **Identification of funding opportunities**
- **Development of new tools**
- **Information and knowledge generation and dissemination** on policies, actions, and investments for sustainable tourism development

Networking & events

Connect with partners worldwide

- **Project directory** summarizing projects, contacts, networking opportunities, and success factors
- **Members directory**
- **General Annual Assembly**
- **Workshops, trainings, events**
- **Joint fundraising opportunities**

Communication Tools

Promote your interests

- **Use of logo** for Partnership projects
- **Marketing** for your products and activities through the Partnership website
- **Communication kit** for members to promote activities and expansion of the Partnership

*from 2011 onwards

³ From 2011 onwards

Annex 2: Partners that expressed interest in the Partnership⁴

(Subcategories in alphabetical order)

Countries:

- Bahamas
- Brazil
- Cambodia
- China
- Costa Rica
- Croatia
- France
- Madagascar
- Mali
- Morocco
- Mozambique
- Norway
- Republic of Korea
- United Kingdom

International business organizations

- Fédération Universelle des Agences de Voyage
- Roteiros de Charme Hotel Association
- Tour Operators Initiative (TOI)

Non-governmental organizations

- Bureau International du Tourisme Social (BITS)
- Ecotrans
- Rainforest Alliance,
- Social and Environmental Responsibility Centre (SERC)
- Tourism Concern
- World Wildlife Fund (WWF)

Organizations:

- Agence de l'Environnement et de la Maîtrise de l'Energie (ADEME)
- Agence Française de Développement (AFD)
- Central American Integration System (SICA)
- Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ)
- Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC)
- European Commission (EC)
- GRID-Arendal
- International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN)
- Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)
- Plan Bleu
- United Nations Conference for Trade and Development (UNCTAD)
- United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)
- United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)
- United Nations Foundation
- United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO)
- United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO)

⁴ As of March 31st, 2010

Are you interested in becoming a member? Please contact us:

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