

Monday  
21<sup>st</sup>  
March  
2011

EA group seminar on:

# Developing an effective EU Sustainable Tourism policy



Isle of Arran  
Scotland

Isle of Arran declaration  
**Developing an effective EU Sustainable Tourism policy**  
Isle of Arran, Scotland  
Monday 21 March 2011

The Members of the European Alliance Group (EA Group) in the Committee of the Regions at its meeting in the Isle of Arran, Scotland on 21 March 2011 reiterated their commitment to the development of an effective EU sustainable Tourism policy.

The EA Group underlines that tourism is a global phenomenon that is shaped locally but must distinguish itself in the face of diverse competition. For this reasons, the EA group believes that the development of coherent sustainable tourism policy will lead to tangible benefits to both the local economy and indeed the local environment.

Tourism contributes substantially to Local, Regional, National and EU GDP and employment. The EA Group recognises tourism's key role in promoting regional development and territorial cohesion and welcomes the European Commission intention to define a new political framework aimed at making the European tourism highly competitive, sustainable and accessible to all

The EA Group, while highlighting the cross-cutting nature of tourism, calls for a more horizontal coordination across different policy areas such as transport and communication, agriculture and environmental protection, public health, social policy, etc. which are within the remit of responsibility of local and regional authorities.

The EA Group underlines the importance of culture as one of the main factors attracting tourists and emphasises the need to promote Europe's cultural and natural heritage in our regions, cities and rural areas which provide a showcase for our diversity, as well as of modernising the sustainable transport infrastructure to improve connectivity of different destinations, also those, which are difficult to reach out such as rural areas or islands.

The EA Group highlights the important role played by local and regional authorities when it comes to promoting environmentally and socially sustainable model of tourism and planning concrete projects. The EA Group supports setting up a network of regions and partnerships which take into account all players, institutional or private in the field of sustainable tourism.

The EA Group is convinced that much remain to be done to fully tap the potential of making tourism accessible to all social groups.

The EA Group urges the European commission to make adequate funding available for sustainable tourism within the next financial framework and encourages member states and local and regional authorities to fully exploit existing financial instruments to promote more innovative approaches and boost the competitiveness of the tourist sector.