

PRESS RELEASE

4th November 2015

Opportunities in Eco Tourism need to be identified, seized and explored further

The President of the Malta Chamber of Commerce, Enterprise and Industry Mr Anton Borg said that if quality can be ensured across the entire touristic experience, our islands have a premium to offer through landscape, ecology, geology, history and archaeology.

Mr Borg was addressing an event on 2nd November, at the Exchange Buildings, titled "Eco Tourism – the way forward for Malta?" organised by the German Maltese Business Council within the Malta Chamber of Commerce, Enterprise and Industry. The event was intended to raise further awareness about the concept of Eco-tourism and how it can work for Malta.

"Malta has a lot of unique selling propositions to offer the most exigent of tourists with strong environmental interests such as a combination of conservation, preservation and educational tours and walks, mixed with culture, tradition and history. We can no longer sell our Island solely on the basis of 'sun, sea and sand' as there are several other destinations that can offer this at cheaper rates, and it is certainly not in our interest to compete on price" Mr Borg remarked.

Mr Borg noted that though the concept is relatively new, Maltese businesses are fast learning that rural and ecological practices in tourism are opportunities with significant economic benefits. "I sincerely believe there is a huge untapped potential for Eco Tourism. This opportunity needs to be identified, seized and explored further" Mr Borg concluded.

Addressing the seminar, the Hon. Leo Brincat Minister for Sustainable Development, the Environment and Climate Change said that Government is fully aware that eco-tourism can bring numerous socio-economic benefits to Malta. It offers new opportunities for small-enterprise investment and employment as it increases the national stake in protecting our biological resources.

"We acknowledge the crucial link between tourism and environment" Mr Brincat said. "Moreover, we necessitated that our Green Economy Strategy and Action Plan, which is currently in its final consultation phase, includes proposed actions in Eco-tourism that incentivise the tourism industry to become more carbon neutral and require the tourism entities to make better use of the grey water."

The event was opened by H.E. Mrs Gudrun Maria Sräga Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany and also addressed by Mr Armin Eckermann Chairman – German-Maltese Business Council.

Mr Paul Joseph Pace, Director Corporate Services – Ministry for Tourism, Dr Christian Zammit, Chief of Staff – Ministry for Gozo, Mr John Magri, Manager Quality & Industry HR Development – Malta Tourism Authority, Mrs Stefanie Tress, Eco-Hotel “Hotel Rose” in Germany and Mr Ulrich Rüter, Managing Director for Italy – German National Tourism Board in Milan also addressed the event.

This event was organised in collaboration with the German Embassy in Malta and the Institut für Auslandsbeziehungen and was supported by Robert Arrigo & Sons Ltd and World Express Logistics Ltd.

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