

WTCF Summit explores smart tourism effects on city innovation, development

The eighth World Tourism Cities Federation (WTCF) Summit, which was recently held in Helsinki, Finland under the theme *Smart Tourism - Road to City Innovation and Development*, featured talks centred around smart tourism; its influence on world travel and how it facilitates the promotion of service, management and marketing for international cities.



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The WTCF is a non-governmental international tourism organisation initiated by the world's most renowned destinations. It currently has 218 members covering 73 countries and regions around the world as well as the entire industrial chain of the world's tourism. More than 500 delegates from nearly 100 cities across 56 countries attended the global tourism event. Delegates included 37 mayors as well as heads of international organisations like the United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO).

Representing Cape Town at the conference were Cape Town Tourism CEO, Enver Duminy, and mayoral committee member for economic opportunities and asset management, including tourism, Alderman James Vos.

World tourism is developing quite rapidly. According to statistics from the UNWTO, the total number of global tourists in 2018 was 1.32 billion, and this number is expected to reach 1.8 billion by 2030. Leading destinations like Cape Town, what the WTCF calls "tourist cities", are a primary source of the world's tourism. According to Wang Hong, Executive Vice Chairperson of the WTCF Council and the Vice Mayor of Beijing, this was the inspiration for this year's theme.

Delegates shared their experiences of smart tourism and travel-friendly cities with discussions on **how the innovation and development of global cities could have great significance in facilitating the sustainable development of the world's tourism sector.**

Speaking at the conference, Alderman Vos said: "Helsinki, our WTCF hosts, and Cape Town share World Design Capital designations. It has been encouraging that we were able to take up the opportunity to be here in Finland. This visit allows us to explore collaboration between the cities from tourism to trade. Cape Town has also been recognised for its accomplishments beyond tourism in recent years and, being at the 8th annual WTCF conference, it was great to be able to share our approaches to promoting sustainable destination management."

Enver Duminy, CEO of Cape Town Town Tourism, added: "As a leading global international tourism organisation, the WTCF has actively built a platform where multilateral co-operation and sharing of knowledge between global tourism leaders can take place. In addition to sharing and learning about various sustainable tourism activities being undertaken by Cape Town's global tourism peers, it was also pleasing to hear their warm responses recognising our unique beauty, food, and culture."

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