

## Press release

### **Greece Takes Bold Strides Towards Sustainable Tourism: ECTAA and Greek Tourism Board Unveil Success of "Greening The Greek Experience" Roundtable**

*Brussels, December 19, 2023* – In a step forward for sustainable tourism, Greece is ushering in a new era in its tourism strategy, focusing on nature conservation, community respect, and human-centric considerations. This strategic shift positions Greece as a frontrunner in global tourist destinations and experiences.

Building on the success of the first edition, the European Travel Agents' and Tour Operators' Association (ECTAA) collaborated with the Greek National Tourism Organisation (GNTO) to host the second roundtable on "Greening The Greek Experience" on December 14th.

Themed "A Collaborative Approach to Sustainable Tourism," the event featured distinguished speakers who shared valuable insights and strategies for fostering sustainable tourism.

The second edition of the Roundtable focused on local initiatives spanning the entire tourism value chain. Prominent industry leaders, such as Alexandros Angelopoulos (CEO of Aldemar Resorts), Vangelis Vassiliou (Senior Sales Manager | Central Europe Greccotel Hotels & Resorts), Efstathios Kontos (Tilos Municipality), Tina Kyriakis (founder of Alternative Athens), Anastasios Gourgouras, (Owner Milia Mountain Resort & Restaurant) and Kyriaki Boulasidou (Director Greek National Tourism Organisation Benelux), engaged in discussions on crucial sustainability measures.

During the Roundtable, the speakers stressed the importance of small initial steps in the sustainability journey citing examples as *Alternative Athens* a start-up compagnie – DMC specializing in thematic tourism and *Milia Mountain Resort* an eco-lodge with attention to sustainability. They highlighted *Aldemar's* Care Corporate Social Responsibility program, which aims to maximize social and economic benefits for communities while responsibly managing environmental impact. *Greccotel's* commitment to reducing carbon footprints through locally sourced products was also emphasized, showcasing the substantial commitment of large hotel chains to sustainability.

Kyriaki Boulasidou, Director of the GNTO Office Benelux, expressed considerable optimism, stating, "Greek tourism actors, with the support of the Greek Government, are completely committed to ensuring that the country becomes a fully sustainable, year-round destination. The exemplary Zero Waste initiatives on the island of Tilos illustrate how small local communities can actively invest in sustainable tourism.

As Greece charts its course towards a sustainable future for tourism, stakeholders and participants are invited to actively participate in shaping the future of tourism in Greece. This collaborative effort signifies a bold step towards a more sustainable and responsible tourism industry.

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### **About ECTAA**

ECTAA represents some 80,000 travel agents and tour operators in Europe, which provide consultancy and sell transport, accommodation, leisure and other tourism services as well as combined products to leisure and business customers.

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