

THURSDAY 21ST MARCH 2013

Turkey goes green



Press Conference ITB



ECOTRANS & Friends party



Cooks at RTM centre in Olympos

Turkey's new Tourism Minister, Ömer Celik, promotes Turkey as a sustainable tourism destination writes Erdmute Prokosch-Sander

A 'Green After Work Party', held on 7 March at ITB Berlin, was the occasion for an international network of eco-experts to come together on the stand of the Turkish Ministry for Culture & Tourism to discuss practical strategies and ways of realising the objective of developing sustainable tourism in Turkey.

With the support of the Turkish Embassy's Cultural Division, RTM Antalya Ltd. / Responsible Tourism Management and the association 'Friends in Germany', the ECOTRANS Expert Network invited some 50 top-class ecotourism professionals to discover - accompanied by delicious Turkish finger-food and excellent, sensitive music from the young Turkish start-up band "Distilled Disorder" - Turkey's unique natural and cultural resources for the development and marketing of sustainable tourism in Turkey.

The guests - a mixture of travel businesses, product developers and sales and marketing experts - were all in agreement: with its 5522 listed cultural monuments, 33 national parks, 16 large nature parks, 59 natural sites and 35 nature reserves, Turkey can become a model - not only in the Mediterranean area: if, as the Minister says, "the understanding of sustainability is newly defined and the available resources are carefully managed and their quality assured through standards and certification". The objective is to achieve year-round capacity utilisation.

All ecotourism professionals know that such ambitious goals can only be achieved by means of strategic networking, targeted training and education, and a community-based tourism supported sales and marketing policy. That is why the ECOTRANS network, together with RTM Antalya, is inviting the key actors and international ecotourism experts to Olympos / Antalya, to attend an international conference which is due to be held on 24 & 25 April 2013.

Here, under the banner 'Olympos 2020', concrete management tools, tried and tested best practice strategies, and clear product definitions will be presented. All innovative potential will be directly put to the test: economic efficiency must be verifiable. And regional organically-produced vegetables will play an important role in Olympos, which is situated in the world-famous market-gardening region of Kumluca.

The 'Olympos 2020' Declaration is destined to become a milestone for innovative and economically efficient development strategies, which can be of help for all culturally and naturally protected destinations in Turkey.

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