

## Media release

### Spirit of optimism at World Tourism Forum Lucerne

**The second World Tourism Forum Lucerne – dedicated to the topic “Sustainability in tourism: Challenges, pathways and intelligent business models” and attended by 230 participants from around the world – drew to a close at the Swiss Museum of Transport in Lucerne. Besides a series of keynote addresses, the Forum centred on numerous interactive workshops, breakout sessions and a *World Café*, not to mention networking events at the highest level held throughout the three days.**

Lucerne, 15 April 2011 – “We saw that it is essential for all stakeholders to work together if we’re going to make any decisive progress in the areas of sustainability and talent management”, concludes Martin Barth, General Manager of World Tourism Forum Lucerne. The event attracted 230 decision-makers from 30 countries to Lucerne, clearly surpassing the number and the importance of participants of the first event in 2009. The three-day Forum offered a comprehensive overview of trends and developments in tourism.

#### **Sustainability study shows there’s a need for action**

A study Lucerne University of Applied Sciences and Arts commissioned for the Forum confirmed: While sustainability is not yet the main criterion for travellers when they book a holiday, already 22 percent of those surveyed worldwide rated it among the top three criteria for making their decision. Based on these findings, the tourism industry can conclude that the cost of sustainability must either be built into the price of products or that a greater effort is needed to make buyers aware of its importance.

#### **Talent management as main challenge for the future**

Professor Tim Jackson, a member of the UK Sustainable Development Commission and a government advisor, proclaimed in his opening speech that growth should not be the sole objective of today’s business policy. Nevertheless, all those present agreed that growth is indispensable. “Identifying, retaining, and developing young talent is bound to become a topic of strategic importance, especially in the years ahead when birth rates will decline”, says Bernhard Zen-Ruffinen, President of EMEA Korn/Ferry International, one of the Forum’s Talent Management partners, with conviction. “Today, every company must have a talent agenda.”

#### **Cooperation and innovation as driving forces in future business models**

Participants in the Future Workshop, held at the end of World Tourism Forum, agreed that a joint course of action is the only approach to sustainability with which the tourism industry can hope to bring about fundamental change. This approach becomes absolutely vital in the face of issues such as resource scarcity and social responsibility. Everyone must pitch in, and government must do its part by offering incentives to effectively promote innovation in sustainability. And consumers will need to be informed and educated so that they will naturally be choosing sustainable products a decade from now.

#### **World Tourism Forum Lucerne as the industry’s think tank**

A survey of tourism leaders present at the Forum showed that holding a summit of tourism executives and young talents clearly addresses a need because the challenges facing the industry over the next decade are highly complex, making a joint approach indispensable. In view of this, “World Tourism Forum Lucerne must become the think tank for the industry”, explains Martin Barth, the Forum’s General Manager.



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### About World Tourism Forum Lucerne

As a think tank, the Forum offers decision makers from business, government, academia and finance a platform for discussing the strategic challenges facing the tourism industry in the years ahead. It is the only tourism Forum in which leading decision makers and promising young talents have the opportunity to interact as part of a talent management programme. World Tourism Forum Lucerne relies on the support of an international Advisory Council whose members include Samih Sawiris (Chairman & CEO of Orascom Development Holding AG), Thea Chiesa (Head of Aviation, Travel and Tourism World Economic Forum), Andreas Meyer (CEO of Swiss Federal Railways), Sir David Michels (Deputy Chairman of Marks & Spencer Plc. and former CEO of Hilton Group), and Geoffrey Lipman (Special Advisor to the Secretary General of UNWTO, Director of greenearth.travel). This marks the second time that World Tourism Forum Lucerne will be held at the Swiss Museum of Transport in Lucerne. The organiser is Lucerne University of Applied Sciences and Arts. Participation is limited to 250 persons. For more information, visit: [www.wtflucerne.org](http://www.wtflucerne.org).

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