



## INDUSTRY UPDATE

PRESS RELEASE

5 March 2021

# Accor and Expedia Group join forces to expand UNESCO sustainability pledge into 96 countries

3,358 hotels join the drive to champion sustainable practices as environmental consciousness amongst travellers increases

4 min

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Photo: Accor

Expedia Group, the global travel platform and Accor, a world leading hospitality group, in conjunction with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), are joining forces to further extend the UNESCO Sustainable Tourism Pledge (hereinafter also "*The Pledge*"). This strategic tripartite agreement will see 3,358 global Accor hotels join together to promote environmental sustainability and sustainable tourism worldwide.



The UNESCO Sustainable Tourism Pledge promotes responsible practices, community resilience



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single-use plastics and promoting local economy and culture.

The Pledge launched in October 2019 with the Tourism Authority of Thailand, UNESCO and Expedia Group. Accor's hotels join over 500 hotels in Thailand that have signed The Pledge since the Thai microsite was established in 2020.

The expansion of The Pledge comes at a time when travellers' awareness of and demand for tourism sustainability practices continues to grow, with Millennials and GenZ taking the lead with heightened environmental consciousness. Importantly, these young travellers (up to age 40) share heightened concerns over the environmental impact caused by travel when choosing a future trip, which might be attributed to the aftermath caused by COVID-19. With Accor joining this Expedia Group and UNESCO initiative, The Pledge extends to almost 100 countries promoting sustainable tourism globally.

Markus Keller, SVP Sales & Distribution from Accor said, *"We have a responsibility to offer sustainable and tangible solutions to our guests to reduce the impact the hospitality sector has on the environment. Accor and all of the hotels in its network have long-standing commitments in this area, for our decision to remove all single-use plastic items from guest experience in our hotels by 2022. We want to accelerate our efforts, which is why we are today joining the UNESCO Sustainable Tourism Pledge in partnership with Expedia Group."*

*"Our ambition is to continue to drive the change towards positive hospitality wherever we are. Joining The Pledge with 3,358 of our hotels is a continuation of our group's sustainable development program "Planet 21 - Acting Here" which sets concrete and quantitative objectives relating to local sourcing, diversity and water, energy and waste management. Planet 21 was launched in 2011 and is based around four strategic priorities: work with our employees, involve our guests, innovate with our partners and work with local communities; two key issues are tackling food and building sustainability. We look forward to working with our partners on this new Pledge."*

Hotels can be examples of outstanding green practices and forces for positive change in the community. All it takes is to start with a few simple commitments.

*"The UNESCO Sustainable Tourism Pledge aims to turn words into action and is a testimony of our growing commitment to collaborating closely with the hospitality sector in order to enhance environmental and sustainable tourism consciousness and practices across the world. Everyone needs to play their part in*



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Washington, Senior Vice President, Strategic Accounts, Expedia Group

UNESCO also announces today that the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development has provided 2 million euros in support for UNESCO to help expand the Pledge across seven countries (Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cambodia, Georgia, Indonesia, Kenya, Namibia and Vietnam). The programme will help UNESCO's work to make tourism emerge stronger from the COVID-19 crisis and encourage sustainable development in the sector.

UNESCO Director-General Audrey Azoulay commented, *"The collective effort is all the more crucial as the pandemic has hit the tourism and culture sectors hard. We hope that the efforts of Germany, Accor and Expedia, will encourage other major players in the sector to join us and invest to offer more responsible tourism."*

<https://www.youtube.com/embed/MMokrB7MDA4>  
<https://youtu.be/MMokrB7MDA4>

[1] Wakefield Research conducted two studies among 30,000 travellers in 13 countries around the globe in the course of 2020. The first was completed in early March 2020 just prior to global travel restrictions going into place to combat the outbreak of COVID-19. It surveyed 26,000 nationally representative adults (18+) with 2,000 respondents from 13 countries: Australia, Japan, South Korea, France, Germany, Spain, South Africa, UAE, United Kingdom, Argentina, Brazil, Mexico, and the United States. The second study was conducted in May of 2020 and expanded upon the initial finding in light of the pandemic. 8,000 travellers were surveyed — 1,000 each from Australia, France, Germany, Japan, Mexico, Spain, the United Kingdom, and the United States.

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## About UNESCO

UNESCO's mission is to contribute to the building of a culture of peace, the eradication of poverty, sustainable development and intercultural dialogue through education, the sciences, culture, communication and information. UNESCO works to



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of sustainable development encompassing observance of human rights, mutual respect and the alleviation of poverty, all of which are at the heart of UNESCO's mission and activities.

## About Expedia Group

Expedia Group, Inc. (NASDAQ: EXPE) companies power travel for everyone, everywhere through our global platform. Driven by the core belief that travel is a force for good, we help people experience the world in new ways and build lasting connections. We provide industry-leading technology solutions to fuel partner growth and success, while facilitating memorable experiences for travelers. The Expedia Group family of brands includes: Expedia®, Hotels.com®, Expedia® Partner Solutions, Vrbo®, Egencia®, trivago®, Orbitz®, Travelocity®, Hotwire®, Wotif®, ebookers®, CheapTickets®, Expedia Group™ Media Solutions, Expedia Local Expert®, CarRentals.com™, and Expedia Cruises™.

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## About Accor

Accor is a world leading hospitality group consisting of more than 5,000 properties and 10,000 food and beverage venues throughout 110 countries. The group has one of the industry's most diverse and fully-integrated hospitality ecosystems encompassing luxury and premium brands, midscale and economy offerings, unique lifestyle concepts, entertainment and nightlife venues, restaurants and bars, branded private residences, shared accommodation properties, concierge services, co-working spaces and more. Accor also boasts an unrivalled portfolio of distinctive brands and approximately 300,000 team members worldwide. Over 65 million members benefit from the company's comprehensive loyalty program ALL - Accor Live Limitless - a daily lifestyle companion that provides access to a wide variety of rewards, services and experiences. Through its Planet 21 - Acting Here, Accor Solidarity, RiiSE and ALL Heartist Fund initiatives, the group is focused on driving positive action through business ethics, responsible tourism, environmental sustainability, community engagement, diversity and inclusivity. Founded in 1967, Accor SA is headquartered in France and publicly listed on the Euronext Paris Stock Exchange (ISIN code: FR0000120404) and on the OTC Market (Ticker: ACRYF) in the United States. For more information visit [group.accor.com](https://group.accor.com) or follow Accor on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#).

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