



# Sustainable Tourism in Southern Tunisia

## IPD SUPPORTS THE DAHAR REGION ON ITS WAY TO BECOMING A SUSTAINABLE DESTINATION

Promoting sustainable tourism is the goal of the Import Promotion Desk (IPD). In Tunisia, IPD has a committed partner at its side, the Fédération Tourisme Authentique Destination Dahar (FTADD), which works to promote sustainable tourism.



### CAPACITY BUILDING:

- + Development of a charter for sustainable tourism for the Dahar region
- + FTADD capacity building on sustainability and quality criteria for accommodations
- + „Training of Trainers“ concept for broad knowledge transfer and on-site evaluation of accommodations
- + Training on connecting SMEs to online booking platforms and developing an „Authentic Dahar“ supplier directory

Together with IPD and the consulting firm AGEG Tourism for Sustainability Consulting, significant improvements have been made by FTADD, e.g. training of its members and promotion of the Destination Dahar in the EU travel market. First highlights were the international awards: „UNESCO/Global Geoparks Network Grant 2021“ and „Green Destinations Story Award 2022“ (first place in the category Communities & Culture) followed by participation in the „Green Destinations Story Award 2023“ and inclusion among the top 100 Green Destinations.

### CHALLENGE



### STRENGTHENING MICRO ENTERPRISES IN RURAL REGIONS

Since 2020, IPD has been supporting FTADD, the Destination Management Organization (DMO) of the Dahar region. It encompasses the mountainous area of Djebel Dahar, a mountain range in south-eastern Tunisia. With its combination of Saharan dunes, mountain plateau and traditional villages in small valleys, the Dahar region is scenic. It also has the rich historical and cultural heritage of the Amazigh, one of the indigenous ethnic groups of North Africa. The potential for sustainable tourism is great: authentic accommodations, impressive cultural heritage, living traditions – all this in combination with the breath-taking landscape form the perfect setting for tourism experiences that appeal to the target group of culturally interested hikers and trekkers.

The key challenge for FTADD is to empower small to micro tourism enterprises in Dahar, such as accommodation and activity providers, to create sustainable experiences. DMOs, like FTADD, play a central role in the sustainable tourism development of a region. Therefore, IPD works closely with FTADD to strengthen its organizational structure, promote the expansion of services to member companies, and train and prepare FTADD and their members in the field of sustainable tourism to meet the requirements of the European market.

Funded by



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»Thanks to the cooperation with IPD and AGEG we learned a lot. We are extremely motivated to work further to implement sustainability in the Dahar region.«

**Mohamed Hedi Kallali**, Executive Director FTADD



**APPROACH**

**“TRAINING OF TRAINERS“ CONCEPT FOR BROAD KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER**

With the support of the consulting firm AGEG TSC, a charter for sustainable tourism in Dahar was first developed and then signed by all FTADD members. During a capacity building workshop all participants were trained on the details of the charter and committed themselves to its implementation. In a later phase of the cooperation, a major focus was placed on accommodation in Dahar. On the one hand, this involved knowledge transfer on the topic of sustainable hospitality operations, and on the other hand, a site inspection of the accommodation to provide detailed feedback to the owners. The goal of IPD in all projects is to further develop the competencies of the DMOs.

Accordingly, capacity building on sustainability criteria in accommodations for FTADD staff took place first. Then, a „Training of Trainers“ workshop on sustainable accommodations was conducted. This was attended by several FTADD representatives and five external trainers. They shared their knowledge as „trainers“ with selected guest house owners. This enabled FTADD to evaluate the majority of accommodations in the region, in the categories „Equipment and Decoration“, „Food & Beverage“, „Guest Information“ and „Service Quality“ and, above all, provide feedback. A detailed handbook with training materials and best practice examples was developed to further optimize the accommodations.

In addition, FTADD also worked on destination promotion: the developed directory “Authentic Dahar” lists, among other information, all accommodation providers, tour operators and tour guides of the region.

**EFFECT**

**GREAT COMMITMENT IS REWARDED IN A WAY THAT ATTRACTS PUBLIC RECOGNITION**

The small FTADD team has already made a big difference. It has united its member companies behind the big goal of sustainability and the member companies are engaged in many ways to make their services more sustainable and better. The improvements in services already achieved and the connection to Airbnb and Ecobnb will make Destination Dahar better known and more attractive in the European travel market.

In addition, FTADD submitted its progress in implementing sustainability goals to the Green Destinations Sustainable Top 100 Awards and is now ranked first in the „Communities & Culture“ category of the top 100 sustainable destinations worldwide. It won with the good practice story about the measures supported by the DMO to create jobs in the region and thus preserve the local Amazigh culture in Dahar. More sustainability goals were worked on in 2022 - and FTADD was also named among the top 100 green destinations worldwide in the second part of the Green Destinations Top 100.

**RESULTS**

- + Support and qualitative improvement of small and micro enterprises
- + Improving connectivity to booking platforms of small and micro enterprises
- + Successful cooperation with local partners
- + Sustainable tourism development in rural areas



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