

Co-Lab Rhodes: Work programme for sustainable transformation of island presented

- **Rhodes: climate-neutral by 2030, largely plastic-free by 2027**
- **Investment of 250 million euros in sustainable transformation**
- **Holistic approach: Environmental and social challenges as well as local economy in focus**

Athens/Hanover, 28 March 2024. George Chatzimarkos (Governor of the South Aegean Region), Sebastian Ebel (CEO of TUI Group) and Thomas Ellerbeck (Chairman of the TUI Care Foundation) today presented the work programme of Co-Lab Rhodes, the joint initiative for the sustainable transformation of the island, in Athens. In front of members of the Greek government as well as members of the Greek Parliament and representatives of the Greek tourism industry, they present and discuss for the first time how Rhodes is to become a beacon for sustainable transformation. With its holistic approach, the Co-Lab will address the protection of natural resources and the reduction of emissions as well as the strengthening of the local economy and the safeguarding of social standards. From reforestation projects to plastic avoidance, from the digitalisation of services to the upskilling of employees in the tourism industry, the presented work programme contains targeted measures for the sustainable transformation of Rhodes.

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The programme sets ambitious goals for Rhodes. The island will be climate-neutral by 2030. Plastic will largely disappear from the island by 2027. The island is to be fully accessible for people with disabilities by 2025. Beaches will be redesigned for this purpose. Agricultural production on the island is also set to increase by 50 per cent. If more fruit and vegetables are grown on the island and no longer delivered from the mainland, fewer emissions will be produced. At the same time, additional employment opportunities will be created on the island.

"With this programme, Rhodes will become a beacon for sustainable tourism. The cooperation with our local partners and in Athens shows how the public sector and companies can work together to move things forward. We need close and open dialogue with the destinations in order to make the entire travel value chain more sustainable. Co-Lab Rhodes is therefore already a model for the TUI Group," says Sebastian Ebel, CEO of the TUI Group.

George Chatzimarkos, Governor of the South Aegean Region, explains: "The tourism of the future is sustainable. It minimises its impact on the environment and maximises its positive impact on local people and the local economy. Our work programme brings these three objectives together. With a holistic approach, we are not only improving tourism on our island, but we are also making Rhodes a better island for its inhabitants – and a role model for other destinations."

During his presentation in Athens, Governor Chatzimarkos announced that the budget for the sustainable transformation of Rhodes will amount to 250 million euros and that the funds will come from Greek government programmes. Among the projects that will be financed are:

- the electrification of the island's bus fleet and the modernisation of hotels to improve their energy footprint;
- the development of a waste management system on the island to increase the recycling rate and convert up to 20,000 tonnes of organic waste into energy in a new biogas plant;
- the modernisation of cultural facilities such as the medieval town centre of Rhodes and the Temple of Apollo, as well as the reopening of the island's National Theatre.

Thomas Ellerbeck, Chairman of the TUI Care Foundation and member of the Group Executive Committee of TUI Group, says: "Sustainability is not only part of our responsibility to the next generation, but also a crucial factor for the future of tourism. On the one hand, we need to ensure that tourism goes hand in hand with the protection and care of our natural and cultural resources. At the same time, initiatives such as Co-Lab Rhodes allow us to show that responsible tourism and economic success do not have to be opposites, but can be mutually reinforcing. By investing in sustainable infrastructure, educational programmes and the protection of biodiversity, we are not only creating unforgettable holiday experiences, but also a future worth living for the people of Rhodes."

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As a founding partner of Co-Lab Rhodes, the independent TUI Care Foundation will realise three projects in collaboration with local partners. Together with the government of the South Aegean, it is planning a reforestation project covering an area of one million square metres. Native, fire-tolerant trees are to be planted for the future TUI Forest. As part of the project, nature-based tourism experiences in the forest will be developed for the local population and holidaymakers. There will also be environmental programmes for children and young people to raise their awareness of nature conservation. 99 schools on Rhodes with 17,000 pupils are to be reached with the programme by 2026. 2,000 trainers will be trained for the programme. In addition, the TUI Care Foundation will support local farmers in growing fruit and vegetables more sustainably as part of its "Field-to-Fork" activities.

The objectives of the Co-Lab were discussed intensively in advance with local representatives of the tourism industry on the island: To this end, separate events were held with hotel owners and providers of transport services, among others. This was preceded by a strategy process in which the most important fields and levers necessary for a sustainable transformation of the island were identified. The launch of Co-Lab Rhodes was announced in 2022. The local Co-Lab team started work at the end of the same year.

About TUI Group

TUI Group is a leading global tourism group and operates worldwide. The Group is headquartered in Germany. TUI shares are listed on the FTSE 250, an index of the London Stock Exchange, on the regulated market of the Hanover Stock Exchange and on the Open Market segment of the Frankfurt Stock Exchange. The TUI Group offers integrated services from a single source for its 19 million customers.

The entire tourism value chain is covered under one roof. This includes over 400 hotels and resorts with premium brands such as RIU, TUI Blue and Robinson and 16 cruise ships, from the MS Europa and the MS Europa 2 in the luxury class and expedition ships to the Mein Schiff fleet of TUI Cruises and cruise ships at Marella Cruises in Great Britain. The Group also includes leading tour operator brands and online marketing platforms across Europe, five airlines with more than 130 modern medium and long-haul aircraft and around 1,200 travel agencies. In addition to expanding its core business with hotels, cruises via successful joint ventures and activities in holiday destinations, TUI is increasingly focusing on the expansion of digital platforms. The Group is transforming itself into a digital company.

Global responsibility for sustainable economic, ecological and social action is at the core of our corporate culture. The TUI Care Foundation, initiated by TUI, focuses on the positive effects of tourism, on education and training and on strengthening environmental and social standards with projects in 25 countries. It thus supports holiday destinations in their development.

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