

# MOROCCO LAUNCHING ECO-TOURISM INITIATIVES



Focus on eco-tourism is the main objective for Morocco outlined in the Vision 2020 strategic document.

Morocco is part of the "Thousand Gardens of Africa," a project launched by Slow Food to create a totally ecological and eco-sustainable agricultural model through a direct involvement of local communities. **Amongst the new eco-sustainable resorts is Taghazout Bay, a new high level destination in the Atlantic Ocean**, with a total surface of 615 hectares, 7 four-and-five-star hotels, one holiday village, villas and apartments, one surf village, one golf court, malls and one argan cooperative. Other projects deal with the urban development of both Essaouira and Mogador, to create new jobs for their inhabitants.

Vision 2020 is the programmatic document providing many investments in the tourist sector. Its goal is to enhance and preserve the historical heritage and the environment, in order to position Morocco among the top 20 tourist destinations of the world.

**Investments in tourism in 2014 reached 1.6 billion Euros, amongst which 221 million went for rural and natural tourism**, which will bring about 25,000 new jobs. "Tourism in Morocco is 7.5% of our GDP," says Jazia Santissi, Director of the National Tourist Board, "with an annual sale of 5.3 billion Euros, more than half a million jobs, 10.3 million foreign arrivals and a total 20 million presences.

With 250,000 arrivals (+7% compared to 2013) and +10% presences, Italy is ranked fifth in this strategic market, after France, Spain, Belgium and Germany. The goal for 2015 is to reach 12 million international arrivals. The Board is working on a series of developments, including an app and some special projects such as "Marrakchef Express" and "Donnavventura".

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