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**PRESS RELEASE**

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**IGAD Unveils Transformative Sustainable Tourism Master Plan (STMP) 2024-2034**

**19 September 2024, ADDIS ABABA, Ethiopia:** Ministers responsible for tourism across the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) region have today launched the much-anticipated **Sustainable Tourism Master Plan (STMP) 2024-2034**, marking a transformative step for the region's tourism industry. The launch ceremony, hosted in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, brought together high-level dignitaries, including the IGAD Executive Secretary, **H.E. Dr. Workneh Gebeyehu**, alongside **H.E. Mohamed Warsama Dirieh**, Minister of Commerce and Tourism, Djibouti, Republic of Djibouti, **H.E. Ambassador Nasise Challi**, Minister of Tourism, Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, **Hon. Daud Aweys Jama**, Minister of Information Culture and Tourism, Federal Government of Somalia, **H.E. Rizik Zakaria Hassan**, Minister of Wildlife Conservation and Tourism, Republic of South Sudan, **H.E. Bahinduka Martin Mugarra**, Minister of State for Tourism, Wildlife and Antiquities, Republic of Uganda, and the UNECA Regional Director.

Jointly developed with the **United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA)**, the STMP lays out a strategic vision for sustainable tourism across the IGAD member states, aiming to position the region as a competitive and cohesive tourism destination on the global stage. It further underscores the plan's role in driving socio-economic growth, reducing poverty, and promoting regional integration. Speaking at the event, IGAD Executive Secretary **H.E. Dr. Workneh Gebeyehu** underscored the immense tourism potential of the IGAD region, citing its rich cultural heritage, unique archaeological sites, and diverse natural landscapes.

"Despite these remarkable assets, our region's global tourism share remains limited. The STMP 2024-2034 is a comprehensive response to this challenge. It seeks to attract investment, foster regional cooperation, and establish tourism as a cornerstone of economic development," said Dr. Workneh.

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In a significant moment during the event, **H.E. Abiy Ahmed Ali**, Prime Minister of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, was named **IGAD Tourism Champion** for a three-year term. His leadership is expected to play a pivotal role in steering the tourism sector towards sustainability, promoting economic growth, cultural preservation, and environmental stewardship.

The STMP launch aligns closely with **IGAD Vision 2050** and other regional socio-economic frameworks, aiming to cement tourism's place as a key driver in the IGAD development agenda.

As the IGAD region embarks on this journey, the success of the STMP will rely on the active collaboration of member states, the private sector, civil society, and development partners. UNECA's Regional Director reaffirmed the importance of partnership and shared responsibility in ensuring the plan's success.

The IGAD region is now poised to unlock the full potential of its tourism sector, creating jobs, boosting income, and enhancing regional stability through sustainable practices.



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