

**PRESS RELEASE**  
For immediate release

## **MONTREAL, FIRST CANADIAN CITY TO JOIN THE GLOBAL DESTINATION SUSTAINABILITY INDEX**

**5<sup>th</sup> of June 2020. Montréal – host of World Environment Day 2020 – becomes the first Canadian city to join the Global Destination Sustainability Index (GDS-Index). The destination now forms part of the global destination sustainability movement, that seeks to engage, inspire and enable urban centers to become more regenerative places to visit, meet and thrive in. The GDS-Index is delighted that Montréal has chosen such a significant day to announce its membership of the global performance improvement program.**

Initiated by Tourisme Montréal, a private, non-profit organization that plays a leading role in the management and development of Montréal's tourism offer, the initiative will:

- Benchmark the sustainability performance of Montréal, in tourism, meetings and events
- Support the development of a sustainability strategy for Tourisme Montréal, that reunites the city's key stakeholders behind a bold initiative
- Increase awareness of, and integrate, the 17 Sustainable Development Goals into the events and visitor economy
- Inspire clients to prize destinations with solid event sustainability initiatives
- Share the responsible business initiatives and regenerative practices of Tourisme Montréal with their clients, peers, and the world

The breaking of the COVID-19 crisis has brought devastating effects on economies worldwide – not least for the tourism sector. However, even in the face of that adversity, Tourisme Montréal had already started to think forward, posing itself questions to reboot the sector, such as “How can we use tourism and events to transform our society?” and “How can tourism be pivotal to the solution?”

Tourisme Montréal's journey towards regeneration and sustainability provides an opportunity for renewed city-wide collaboration behind bold initiatives that promote the greatest assets of Montréal – innovation, creativity, as well as its position as the leading destination for business events in North America.

Guy Bigwood, Managing Director of the GDS-Index, comments: “Montréal is already recognized as a pioneer, with tangible assets in innovation and creativity, great cooperation between Tourisme Montréal and its partners and suppliers. Tourisme Montréal has a great opportunity to create new advantage and push the city forward to become the leading sustainable destination in North America. We are delighted that they have decided to join the GDS-Index and even more that they have chosen such a momentous day to do so.”

Yves Lalumière, CEO of Tourisme Montréal, mentions: “Tourisme Montréal has always stood for innovation and forward-thinking. We strongly believe that committing to such strategy, alongside our partners, members and suppliers, will create a positive impact on the local communities, promote the harmonious cohabitation of residents and tourists, encourage responsible tourism and develop sustainable commercial actions that are conducive to growth. Following the impact of the pandemic on the tourist industry, there is no doubt that we must build it back upon the principles of sustainable development.”

### **ABOUT THE GLOBAL DESTINATION SUSTAINABILITY INDEX (GDS-INDEX)**

The GDS-Index is a collaborative partnership between ICCA, ICCA's Scandinavian Chapter, IMEX, ECM and MCI Group. It measures, benchmarks and improves the sustainability strategy and performance of meetings, events and business tourism destinations. Founded by pioneering Scandinavian Convention Bureaus through ICCA's Scandinavian Chapter, its purpose is to engage, inspire and enable destinations to become more sustainable places to visit, meet and thrive in.

[www.gds-index.com](http://www.gds-index.com).

### **ABOUT THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (SDGs)**

In 2015, countries adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals. The SDGs are a blueprint and a call for action by all countries – poor, rich and middle-income – to promote prosperity while protecting the planet. They recognize that ending poverty must go hand-in-hand with strategies that build economic growth and address a range of social needs including education, health, social protection, and job opportunities, while tackling climate change and environmental protection.

<https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/>

### **ABOUT TOURISME MONTRÉAL**

Tourisme Montréal is a private, non-profit organization that has been positioning Montréal as an international-calibre leisure and business travel destination for the past 100 years. The organization leads innovative tourist welcome strategies with a twofold objective: ensuring that visitors enjoy a quality experience and balancing economic growth with the city's long-term interests. Uniting more than 1,000 tourism professionals, Tourisme Montréal plays a leading role in the management and development of Montréal's tourism business, and makes recommendations on issues surrounding the city's economic, urban and cultural development. For more information, go to [www.mtl.org](http://www.mtl.org).

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