



MEDIA RELEASE
MINISTRY OF TOURISM, ARTS AND CULTURE MALAYSIA
(MOTAC)

**MALAYSIA CHAMPIONS SUSTAINABLE TOURISM AND COMMUNITY
PROSPERITY AT GTEF 2026**

MACAO, 17 OCTOBER 2026 – Malaysia reaffirmed its commitment to building a sustainable and resilient tourism sector that protects natural and cultural heritage, strengthens local livelihoods and delivers lasting economic benefits at the **12th Global Tourism Economy Forum (GTEF) 2026**.

Representing Malaysia at the Forum, held in Macao SAR from 16 to 17 October 2026, Deputy Minister of Tourism, Arts and Culture, YB Chiew Choon Man, emphasized that tourism success extends beyond visitor arrivals and receipts to the value it creates for people and communities.

Themed “**Crisis · Resilience · Evolution - Building a Tourism Economy for a Shared Future**”, the Forum brings together government leaders, industry representatives and international organisations to address global tourism challenges and shape a more resilient sector.

Speaking at the high-level ministerial panel, “**The Road to 2027: Building a Resilient Tourism Economy**”, YB Chiew highlighted Malaysia’s approach to aligning tourism growth with environmental conservation, cultural preservation and inclusive economic opportunities.

Guided by the **National Tourism Policy 2020–2030** and the **13th Malaysia Plan**, Malaysia continues to advance nature-based and community-based tourism, alongside cultural experiences that create jobs, support local enterprises and deepen appreciation of the country’s heritage.

YB Chiew underscored that sustainability remains central to the **Visit Malaysia 2026–2027 campaign**, with environmental stewardship a shared responsibility across government, industry, communities and visitors. In line with the Malaysia

MADANI aspirations, government investment in the conservation of UNESCO heritage sites and forest reserves helps safeguard these assets for future generations while supporting their long-term tourism value.

Malaysia's cultural diversity also provides a strong foundation for tourism experiences that generate income and encourage local participation. The **Malaysian Homestay Experience Programme** demonstrates how community-led tourism can support rural livelihoods while offering visitors authentic cultural experiences. As of **August 2026**, the programme had recorded **584,000 visits and generated RM41.14 million (USD10.06 million) in income**, reflecting its contribution to local economies.

YB Chiew reaffirmed that Malaysia will continue pursuing tourism growth that creates lasting value, broadens economic opportunities and ensures that local communities share in the sector's success.

The panel also featured Kim Dae-hyun, Vice Minister of Culture, Sports and Tourism of the Republic of Korea; Hamish Keith, Chief Executive Officer of EXO Travel Group; and Mao Xiao (毛嘯), Chief Executive Officer of Shanghai Jinjiang International Hotels Co., Ltd.

Established in 2012, GTEF is an international platform advancing the sustainable development of the global tourism economy. It connects China with the international community through dialogue and cooperation among leaders from government, business, academia and international organisations. Across its previous eleven editions, the Forum attracted more than 15,500 delegates from 88 countries and regions, alongside more than 780 speakers.

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