TSCA Welcomes Commencement of EU EmpCo Rules as a Major Step Forward for Consumer Confidence and Sustainable Tourism

The TSCA has welcomed the commencement of EmpCo, describing it as a significant milestone in reducing greenwashing across the global tourism industry.

AMSTERDAM, NETHERLANDS, September 29, 2026 / EINPresswire.com/ -- The Tourism Sustainability Certifications Alliance (TSCA) has welcomed the commencement of the European Union's Empowering Consumers for the Green Transition Directive (EmpCo), whose rules apply from 27 September 2026, describing it as a significant milestone in strengthening consumer confidence, improving transparency and reducing greenwashing across the global tourism industry.

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>
> *Elissa Keenan, Chairperson TSCA*

The new Directive introduces stronger protections against misleading environmental claims and aims to ensure consumers receive clear, credible and verifiable information when making purchasing decisions. For travellers increasingly seeking sustainable tourism experiences, the Directive represents an important step toward a marketplace where sustainability claims are supported by evidence rather than marketing language alone.

TSCA believes the legislation should be viewed as a positive development for both consumers and responsible tourism operators.

"Sustainability has become one of the most important considerations influencing travel

decisions around the world," said TSCA Chair Elissa Keenan. "Consumers increasingly want confidence that the environmental and social commitments promoted by tourism businesses are genuine. EmpCo helps create a marketplace where transparency, evidence and credibility are rewarded, ultimately benefiting both travellers and responsible tourism operators."

The Directive is expected to strengthen trust in sustainability communications by discouraging vague or unsubstantiated environmental claims and encouraging businesses to provide clear evidence of their sustainability performance. This is particularly important in tourism, where operators frequently communicate achievements relating to environmental stewardship, community development, cultural heritage preservation and responsible business practices.

Importantly, the legislation applies not only to businesses located within the European Union but also to tourism operators worldwide that market to European consumers or work with European travel distributors and wholesalers. As a result, tourism businesses across the globe are reviewing how sustainability information is communicated to ensure it is accurate, transparent and supported by objective evidence.

TSCA was established by the world's leading sustainable tourism certification organisations to promote consistency, credibility and continuous improvement across sustainable tourism certification. Together, TSCA members represent more than 19,000 certified tourism businesses, attractions and destinations worldwide and have worked collaboratively to strengthen standards, auditing practices and assurance processes across the sector.

According to TSCA, independent certification will play an increasingly important role in helping tourism businesses communicate sustainability achievements with confidence. Certification provides a structured process through which sustainability practices are assessed against internationally recognised criteria and independently verified by qualified third-party auditors. This enables businesses to demonstrate that sustainability claims are supported by documented evidence and objective assessment rather than self-declaration.

EmpCo strengthens the requirements around sustainability labels, putting greater emphasis on transparency, robust governance and independent third-party assurance. Under EmpCo, sustainability labels may only be displayed if they have been established by a public authority, or are a certification scheme based on independent third-party verification, open and transparent participation conditions and procedures to deal with non-compliance.

TSCA members operate certification schemes aligned with ISO/IEC 17065, the internationally recognised standard for bodies certifying products, processes and services. The TSCA standards require independent assessment, robust conflict-of-interest controls and objective certification decision-making, providing confidence in the integrity of certification outcomes.

"The tourism industry has an extraordinary opportunity to contribute positively to environmental protection, cultural preservation and community prosperity," said Keenan. "As

expectations continue to evolve, consumers deserve reliable information that helps them identify businesses genuinely committed to sustainable practices. We welcome EmpCo because it supports that objective and helps strengthen trust across the tourism value chain."

TSCA and its member organisations remain committed to supporting tourism businesses and destinations through internationally recognised standards, independent verification and transparent communication practices that build confidence among consumers, industry partners and regulators alike.

For more information about the TSCA Minimum Standards, visit:
https://tourismsustainability.org/standard/

Web: tourismsustainability.org

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