



GROWING OPTIMISM AS MAURITIUS PREPARES TO OPEN BORDERS

International travel is expected to recover to more than 50% of pre COVID levels before the end of the year. The International Air Transport Association (IATA) and Tourism Economics released a more optimistic forecast than originally expected. This comes just as Mauritius starts to prepare for the reopening of borders.

Consultations have intensified among tourism partners in Mauritius with a view to open borders to international travel around mid-2021. Working groups have been set up to define travel protocols, evaluate optimal air connectivity options as well as design global communications campaigns for the restart of tourism.

IATA believes that travel will recover faster than expected because of the rapidly growing vaccinated population and advancement in testing. Developed countries are expected to vaccinate more than 50% of their population by the third quarter of 2021. Mauritius has secured enough vaccine orders to meet its vaccination targets and achieve herd immunity within the next few months.

Preparations in Mauritius are progressing amidst this growing optimism. It looks like people have retained the desire to travel. As soon as countries are announcing the reopening of borders there have been sudden surges in booking numbers. IATA quoted the rapid growth in outbound travel between the UK and Portugal as an example.

Analysts say that some people have accumulated savings during the lockdown which may total up to 10% of GDP in some countries. IATA expects that global passenger numbers are expected to surpass pre-COVID-19 levels as early as in 2023.

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