



## ECOTOURISM

Tourism is a leading economic sector and a major source of employment and income, mostly captured by the Beirut market. Ecotourism income, however, remains small in comparison, but Lebanon enjoys a long-standing regional reputation for its rich and varied rural environment in different regions, each with its own natural setting and culture.

This allows ecotourism to expand tourism income generation to the wider national economy, particularly to remote rural communities.

This can be achieved by:

- attracting captive foreign visitors in Beirut to ecotourism sites (exports);
- attracting tourists from foreign markets directly to ecotourism sites;
- increasing ecotourism site visits by domestic tourists.



## NATURAL SOAP

Natural soap in Lebanon is made from olive oil. Various natural soap products are produced in Lebanon including bar soap, aromatic soaps, liquid soaps and skin care products.

Olive production covers more than 20 per cent of agriculture land in Lebanon and accounts for 7 per cent of the agricultural GDP generating 20,500 tons of olive oil annually.

The market is very competitive with around 544 registered oil mills in Lebanon and 110,000 olive farmers and growers.

Olive oil that is not of food quality is used to make soap by around 40 formal SMEs, and informal SMEs, distributed in rural areas across the country, creating jobs and improving the income of local workers.

### DIRECT CONTRIBUTION OF TOURISM TO GDP



**124,000 jobs**

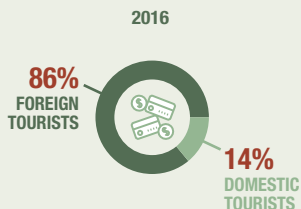
### INTERNATIONAL TOURIST ARRIVALS

### TOURIST SPENDING



**= 10.7% growth**

### TOURISM EXPORTS PROJECTION



### NATURAL SOAP PRODUCTION



**10–40t per year**

**Large firms**



**240–600kg per year**

**Small to medium firms**

### EXPORTS

Lebanon exports natural soap products to the following regions.



EUROPEAN COUNTRIES  
AUSTRALIA  
UNITED STATES  
GULF REGION

### MARKETS



## PRIORITIES ACTIONS IDENTIFIED BY NATIONAL STAKEHOLDERS

For each of the sectors, sectoral stakeholders have agreed to specific actions in the following areas:



- 1 Diversify and add value to ecotourism
- 2 Enhance ecotourism services quality
- 3 Broaden ecotourism linkages to other sectors
- 4 Enhance institutional support and infrastructure for ecotourism
- 5 Promote new ecotourism marketing and communication strategies
- 6 Ensure long-term environmental, social and economic sustainability for the sector



- 1 Develop a specialized MSME cluster for the soap industry to allow firms to become more competitive at the national and international level
- 2 Enhance the infrastructure of soap production
- 3 Support natural soap producers to comply with international standards

