

15.04.2025

PR 2511

## PRESS RELEASE

### **A New Strategic Plan for the Blue Lagoon**

#### **MTA partners with Mizzi Studio to deliver a new and holistic strategic plan for the Blue Lagoon, ensuring its ecological balance and support for respectful public access.**

The Malta Tourism Authority (MTA) has appointed internationally acclaimed architecture and design practice Mizzi Studio to deliver a Strategic Plan for the Blue Lagoon, Comino. The project aims to restore, upgrade, and sustainably protect and preserve its delicate ecosystem and natural beauty. This will include the replacement of existing installations with ecologically sensitive and visually appropriate facilities.

With its crystal-clear waters and surrounding coastal garigue habitats, the Blue Lagoon is one of Malta's most widely recognised natural sites. It is a designated Natura 2000 protected area and part of the EU's conservation network.

Mizzi Studio brings extensive international experience to the delivery of architectural interventions in environmentally and culturally protected sites. The studio designed The Royal Parks family of kiosks in London, the largest food and beverage transformation in a Grade 1 Listed, historically significant site. Mizzi were recently appointed by The Royal Botanic Gardens of Kew, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, to design the Carbon Garden and the Pavilion.

The Blue Lagoon Strategic Plan is key to MTA's drive to alleviate pressure on the site through thoughtful, restorative, and low-impact interventions. In parallel, it also encourages sustainable visitor access to other key cultural and sensitive sites across Comino. The government will kick off with the implementation of some new measures this summer, particularly the reduction of daily visitor numbers and restricting ferry operations. Site enhancements are scheduled to be implemented in 2026.

Design-wise, the fundamental inspiration is to match the island's existing ecological and geological context, respecting the landscape with the use of complementary traditional and natural materials. The scope is also to increase orderliness and public safety, rethinking paths and facilities along existing hardstanding areas, as well as giving CRPD-compliant access to all.

More specifically, the project will upgrade sanitation, create resting points, reorganise food and beverage outlets and introduce an information and enforcement centre. Visual clutter will be reduced through a coherent contextual language and unified signage.

Designs are currently being developed and will be shared publicly in coming months, with active engagement of environmental NGOs and other stakeholders.

Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Tourism Ian Borg said: "Our whole mindset about Comino needs to change. It is a unique and fragile place and we must see it and treat it as such. Accordingly, this initiative is a decisive step towards its protection and

restoration through inclusive access, ecological sensitivity, and long-term stewardship. Access for locals will be a priority, fostering a renewed sense of belonging. The collaboration between Mizzi Studio and the Malta Tourism Authority, together with a wide network of national entities and NGOs, is testimony to our commitment to a new respectful and regenerative standard of public access. As a government-wide initiative, it ties our tourism strategy with marine enforcement, environmental regulation, and infrastructural investment. It ensures that the Blue Lagoon and Comino more broadly are safeguarded with integrity, order, and care for posterity."

MTA CEO Carlo Micallef concurred with the Deputy Prime Minister's observations and added that the proposed strategy for Comino fell squarely in line with the objectives of the Malta Tourism Strategy 2021-2030. The Strategy places a strong emphasis on Rethinking for Revitalising and this is precisely what the measures being introduced in Comino will be doing. The Blue Lagoon is a unique and precious feature of the Maltese tourism experience which is sought by many. Introducing measures which continue to keep it accessible and enjoyable whilst safeguarding it from excessive human activity will be a win win scenario and subsequent steps in raising the profile and character of the services in the Blue Lagoon will go further in this direction.

Jonathan Mizzi, Director, Mizzi Studio, said: "This project is all about crafting ecological design that restores calm and dignity to the site. Every aspect of the design will embed safeguarding principles to ensure long-term ecological protection. We want the Blue Lagoon to feel welcoming and balanced—so that locals will once again feel a sense of joy, pride, and belonging—returning to Comino with the same affection and awe they once felt as children.

The journey will not be easy but the vision is proudly simple: a Blue Lagoon and a Comino that breathe again, where nature and history lead and people gently follow."