



Message from the Chairman



Tourism is an industry that has been ever evolving with the advancements in technology, changing lifestyles and diverse factors of people and cultures over the years.

If we talk about the latest trends in the industry in the Asia Pacific Region, wellness tourism is clearly on the rise. Whether travelers are looking to escape for a two-week yoga and meditation retreat, experience a traditional ayurvedic massage, go for a morning run, or just find some good-quality food on their trip, it's important that those in the travel and hotel industry are aware

of these needs and cater to this important segment.

The wellness tourists are today's trend-setters. This group of unique individuals look for innovative and diverse experiences in comfort and they are well educated about the issues that matter most to them.

Wellness Tourism Market was valued at USD639 billion in the year 2017 alone by the Global Wellness Institute. This segment has had an annual growth of 6.5% during the past years as per available records. Its rapid growth rate is almost double the growth of the entire general travel industry. Statistics show that international wellness tourists spend 50% more on average than a regular international tourist.

Continents such as Europe and North America are dominant in wellness tourism, but the Asia Pacific region is one to watch. Asia Pacific destinations experience the fastest growth in terms of number of visits and expenditure – about 13% per year according to the Travel Daily News.

The long-haul international flights take a lot out of travelers. The air is mostly stale and unpurified, and you are sometimes forced to sit in confined spaces for long periods of time. It is a thoroughly stressful experience, and you arrive totally jet-lagged and exhausted.

Therefore, the concept of wellness tourism is not only about achieving well-being during the holiday; it means travelling well, too. The wellness traveler today expects the overall holiday and the complete journey - from departure to arrival - to be within the wellness concept.

It is an opportune time for the tourism stakeholders of the Asia Pacific region to identify this trend and to make use of the demand to increase the profitability of the business.

Anura Samarawickrema Lokuhetty
Chairman, Asian Council on Tourism

Leaders Discuss Role of Tourism in Asia and Pacific's Development Future

Tourism has significant potential to contribute to Asia and the Pacific's long-term growth prospects through infrastructure development and job creation. But governments should work to ensure the industry grows in a socially and environmentally sustainable way, according to participants at a high-level Asian Development Bank (ADB) seminar.

The Governors' Seminar, titled "The Role of Tourism for Sustainable Development," at the 52nd Annual Meeting of ADB's Board of Governors in Nadi, Fiji, featured as panelists Japan Deputy Prime Minister and Finance Minister Mr. Taro Aso; Indonesia Finance Minister Ms. Sri Mulyani Indrawati; Fiji Attorney-General and Minister for Economy, Civil Service, and Communications Mr. Aiyaz Sayed-Khaiyum; Italy's Director-General for International Financial Relations, Ministry of Economy and Finance, Ms. Gelsomina Vigliotti; and ADB President Mr. Takehiko Nakao.

In 2018, 343 million international tourist arrivals and \$390 billion in international tourist spending went to Asia and the Pacific. International visitors to Asia have risen by 65% between 2010 and 2018 with key Asian destinations being the People's Republic of China; Thailand; Japan; Hong Kong, China; and Malaysia. Asian tourists are also an increasing driver of global tourism with higher incomes and a rapidly growing middle class seeking experiences abroad. Globally, international tourist arrivals are expected to reach 2.44 billion by 2030, a 75% increase over 2018, with Asia and the Pacific projected to account for a third of this number.

Tourism plays a large role in the Asian economy. Spending on hotels and airline tickets was \$92 billion in 2018 with an estimated 78 million new jobs created. The indirect impact such as through tourism-related investment on new hotels or airplane purchases was larger at \$2.94 trillion, creating an estimated 180 million jobs. In Fiji, tourism contributed 14% of the local economy with the indirect impacts accounting for 40% of gross domestic product.

Seminar discussions highlighted several points. Tourism should be encouraged as a key contributor to investment, employment, and tax revenues through investment in both infrastructure and people. For example, world-class airports and airport staff in Bangkok and Kuala Lumpur contribute to the vitality of tourism in Thailand and Malaysia. With land being a key component of sustainable tourism, clear and effective sustainable land use regulations are needed.

Tourism creates millions of jobs, notably for women, young people, and those in remote rural areas. However, workers in tourism need the right skills and good working conditions. The Indian state of Kerala, for example, has a program that has



From left to right at the Governors' Seminar on 4 May 2019: ADB President Mr. Takehiko Nakao; Indonesia Minister of Finance Ms. Sri Mulyani Indrawati; BBC presenter Ms. Zeinab Badawi (moderator); Fiji Attorney-General and Minister for Economy, Civil Service, and Communications Mr. Aiyaz Sayed-Khaiyum; Italy's Director-General for International Financial Relations, Ministry of Economy and Finance, Ms. Gelsomina Vigliotti; and Japan Deputy Prime Minister and Finance Minister Mr. Taro Aso.

trained some 650 residents of poor communities for jobs in local hotels.

Tourism can damage the environment which, over time, reduces visitors and revenues. Governments and the tourism industry can work together to avoid this. In Fiji, the government imposes a 10% tax on tourism-related businesses which funds climate change mitigation projects.

Similarly, cultural heritage needs protection, which could include controlling numbers of visitors to monuments or creating fiscal incentives for businesses to restore historical buildings. To protect the Angkor Wat temple, the Cambodian government created a dedicated authority to better manage the site and maximize the benefit to the local community.

Last, tourism should foster mutual understanding, peace, and safety among people of different backgrounds. Smart travel practices including data sharing is one way to do this. Currently, 16 Asian countries participate in an electronic visa scheme that has increased efficiency at border controls and boosted security.

At the seminar, Mr. Sayed-Khaiyum stressed the importance of ensuring resilience to both natural hazards and the longer-term issue of climate change. "The infrastructure that goes to the hotels—the electricity cables, the water, the sewers, etc.—the government needs to build resilience on that. The other aspect of the environment and climate change is to do with the oceans ... all countries need to make a consolidated effort in respect of climate change." He also pointed to the need to ensure that as much of the value of the tourist spending as possible is retained within the host country by using local products and services.

Ms. Indrawati addressed the issue of ensuring that local culture and heritage are protected as tourist destinations attract visitors from other countries with different attitudes and mores. "This is exactly always the tradeoff between, on the one hand, to be a global player, in global supply chains, and how you are going to maintain the authenticity as well as the participation of your locals," she said. Work to develop local skills to ensure tourism-inspired jobs are high quality is also key.

Panelists raised the importance of good infrastructure to support tourists and, through improved water and wastewater systems, for example, to protect the environment. "There should be development of tourist infrastructure both in quantity and quality," said Mr. Aso. Such infrastructure needs to be disaster-resilient so that when disasters strike, countries do not lose out twice—from missing out on tourism income and having to rebuild their infrastructure and economies.

Ms. Vigliotti noted the common challenges faced by tourist destinations, whether in Europe or Asia and the Pacific. "The challenges for all the tourist destinations ... are the same. You need connectivity, you need good infrastructure, and you

need good maintenance.” She also stressed the importance of governance and a policy center that defines and implements a strategy.

“Asia and the Pacific has some of the world’s most beautiful natural landscapes and unique cultural monuments,” Mr. Nakao said. “As tourism continues to expand rapidly, it will be important to pursue sustainable tourism that protects the environment such as forests and coral reefs, preserves local cultures, and benefits local communities.”

ADB has supported the development of sustainable tourism in the region through financing for infrastructure, regional connectivity, and environmental protection. In the Association of Southeast Asian Nations region, ADB has provided assistance for transport, waste management, and skills training and planning,

which have improved access and environments in secondary tourism destinations. Elsewhere, ADB has, for example, helped protect natural lakes and local livelihoods in the Kyrgyz Republic and Mongolia, supported tourism planning in the Federated States of Micronesia and Myanmar, and worked to improve transport, infrastructure, and utilities to ensure sustainable tourism in Bhutan and India.

ADB is committed to achieving a prosperous, inclusive, resilient, and sustainable Asia and the Pacific, while sustaining its efforts to eradicate extreme poverty. In 2018, it made commitments of new loans and grants amounting to \$21.6 billion. Established in 1966, it is owned by 68 members—49 from the region.

Asian Development Bank (ADB), May 4, 2019

Japan’s Travel Agencies and Hotels Look to Milk Imminent Era Shift to Reiwa with Tours and Souvenirs

Jiji

Travel agencies and hotels are selling commemorative packages to take advantage of the forthcoming change of Imperial era, an opportunity that typically comes only once every several decades.

Leading travel agency JTB Corp. is selling a three-day tour that starts on April 30, the final day of the current Heisei Era, when Emperor Akihito is set to abdicate, and features visits to the Grand Shrines of Ise, a Shinto shrine complex in the city of Ise in Mie Prefecture.

Tour participants will offer prayers at Naiku, where deity and legendary Imperial ancestor Amaterasu Omikami is enshrined, and other areas of the Grand Shrines of Ise early in the mornings of April 30 and May 1, when Crown Prince Naruhito ascends to the Chrysanthemum Throne and the new Reiwa Era begins.

Nippon Travel Agency Co., meanwhile, is offering a train tour between Osaka Station and Izumoshi Station in Izumo, Shimane Prefecture, where the Shinto shrine Izumo Oyashiro is located.

The Salon Car Naniwa train operated by West Japan Railway Co., or JR West, will leave Osaka Station on the night of April 30. Aboard the train participants will celebrate the moment the Heisei Era ends and the Reiwa Era begins at the stroke of midnight.

Commemorative tickets stamped with the dates of Heisei and Reiwa will be given out to them, according to the company.

For both the JTB and NTA tours, 80 to 90 percent of the tickets have already been booked.

Club Tourism International Inc.’s era change tours include one in which participants will view sunset on the last day of Heisei from Tokyo Skytree, the tallest tower in the world, and another allowing customers to watch the sunrise and Mount Fuji on the first day of Reiwa from a chartered plane.



People sign their names at the Grand Shrines of Ise in Mie Prefecture on Monday to commemorate the announcement of Reiwa, the new Imperial era, which will begin on May 1, 2019. | KYODO

“We hope participants will enjoy the precious moments,” an official of the company said.

The Capitol Hotel Tokyu in Tokyo’s Chiyoda Ward, where the Imperial Palace is also located, is selling an overnight package on the night of April 30 for up to two guests staying in a suite, with the most expensive room costing ¥110,000 per person. Despite the high price, the package is almost fully booked, according to hotel officials.

A wedding package offered by Yokohama Bay Hotel Tokyu in Yokohama includes taking commemorative photographs with Yokohama Bay Bridge in the background and going for a cruise in a boat that sails under the bridge. It opened in 1989, the first year of the Heisei Era.

With the hotel selling the package as the last such product for the Heisei Era, the number of reservations for wedding receptions for April jumped 40 percent from a year before.

Kyushu Railway Co., or JR Kyushu, will bring out a set of platform tickets made from cardboard and sell a collection of tickets for all of its 567 stations bearing the numbers “1.5.1,” meaning May 1 in the first year of the Reiwa Era. Currently, cardboard-type tickets are not typically available.

The collection, priced at ¥110,000 per set, includes an additional platform ticket for Heisei Station on the Hohi Main Line in the city of Kumamoto.

On the ticket will be the numbers “31.4.30,” meaning April 30 in the 31st year of Heisei. The station, named after the current era, was opened in 1992, three years after the start of the era.

As it has been bombarded with orders, JR Kyushu has already stopped accepting reservations for the 300 sets it plans to produce.

Japan Times, April 3, 2019

Turkish Airlines Offers Transit Passengers Free Istanbul Tour



AA Photo

Transit passengers from all around the world can enjoy Istanbul's beauty with a free tour organized by Turkish Airlines. Last year, a total of 67,400 passengers benefited from the program, which recently introduced a Bosphorus tour that will run until Oct. 31

Turkey's national flag carrier has extended its free city tours range by offering evening Bosphorus tours to transit passengers in Istanbul.

Within the scope of the "Touristanbul" project, Turkish Airlines enables transit passengers who stay from six to 24 hours in Istanbul Airport to see the historical and natural beauties of the city, Abdullah Yormaz, tour marketing manager of Turkish Airlines, told reporters on May 6, 2019.

Passengers are picked up from the Istanbul Airport by Touristanbul buses and are brought back to the airport after a guided tour of the city.

Aiming to contribute to passenger satisfaction, increase its share in the international transit passenger market and to provide promotional support to tourism, the Turkish Airlines added the Istanbul Bosphorus Strait tour to its daily six tours package, Yormaz said.

Yormaz said that Turkish Airlines has been organizing free city sightseeing tours for international transit passengers in Istanbul since 2009.

Some 5,000 passengers annually benefited from the tour services in 2009, the number has reached 5,000 passengers per month in 2019, he said.

"In 2018, we had the opportunity to introduce 67,400 passengers with the historical and touristic beauties of Istanbul," Yormaz said, noting that passengers from 163 countries joined the free Istanbul tour in 2018, with those from the U.S., U.K., Russia and the Far East taking greatest interest in the tour.

"We formed the Bosphorus tour in order to make our passengers, with long connection times during long night flights, enjoy the historical and natural beauties of the city," he said.

The program starts on May 1, 2019 and will serve passengers during the summer period until Oct. 31, 2019, Yormaz said.

Emphasizing that a total of 67,400 passengers benefited from the project in 2018, Yormaz said that a total of 15,000 passengers took interest in tours in the first four months of 2018. An average of 6,000 tourists are offered tours on a monthly basis with six different programs per day.

According to Yormaz, guests can visit places like Topkapı Palace, Blue Mosque, Hagia Sophia Museum, Istanbul

Science and Technology Museum, Turkish-Islamic Arts Museum and Dolmabahçe Palace.

"Our passengers pay no price for tours or food service. THY renders this service free of charge to passengers. As far as we know, there is no other airline company in the world that offers such tours, food and museum entrances free of charge," he said.

Sudanese Dahir Guled, one of the passengers joining the tour, said he is traveling to Cairo from Sweden. He added that officials at the Istanbul Airport informed him about the tours as well as on THY's website.

"I think it is a great program. Everyone in the world wants to see Turkey and Istanbul, which are at the center of the world. Every year, many people from all over the world come to this country. At the same time, Istanbul has the largest airport in the world. It is so nice to see Turkey and the history of Islam here," Guled said.

Li Danyan, a Chinese traveler, noted that she was traveling from Cameroon to Vietnam with an Istanbul-connected flight and that she took advantage of tours to utilize the time between the two flights. "I really like the program. The Bosphorus tour was really very impressive," she said.

Russian Evgeny Fredynski said he is traveling from Switzerland to Moscow and added that he has a great time whenever he comes to Istanbul.

Stressing that the Istanbul tour is very special, Fredynski said: "We enjoyed a very nice guided-tour of Bosphorus. I will bring my family next time. I like the idea of 'Touristanbul' very much. I had a waiting time of 12 hours at the airport. I went to Karaburun at noon. Now I am enjoying pleasant some moments at the Bosphorus. This is a very useful program for people like me."

Daily Sabah, May 6, 2019

Riau Businesses Gear Up to Support Halal Tourism



The Great Mosque of An Nur in Pekanbaru, Riau. (Shutterstock/antoshkaphoto)

Small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in Riau are rushing to apply for halal certification as the governor plans to develop the province's halal tourism sector.

Wan Helya Rosa, the owner of Kedai Yong Bengkalis in Pekanbaru, said she had applied for halal certification at the Indonesian Ulemas Council's (MUI) Food and Drug Analysis Agency in Riau for her culinary products in support of the plan.

“We support the Riau governor’s halal tourism plan. We’ve finally been certified halal by the MUI in Riau,” she said on April 9, 2019, as quoted by Antara.

Wan said she hoped the government would promote businesses that had been certified as halal.

Zamzami, another local business owner, said he was enthusiastic about the administration’s halal tourism plan.

“I hope the plan comes with an incentive that allows local businesses to apply for halal certification more easily,” he said, adding that he hoped the administration would also push for a policy that reduced single-use plastics.

Riau Governor Syamsuar issued Gubernatorial Instruction No. 18/2019 on halal tourism on April 5, 2019.

“I’ve signed a gubernatorial

instruction establishing Riau as a halal tourism destination,” Syamsuar told a press conference on April 8, 2019, adding that he expected the halal tourism concept to help boost the local economy. “We can at least compete with Thailand, which has more non-Muslim citizens,” he added.

Jakarta Post, April 14, 2019

Chinese Tourists to Japan Switch from Shopping Sprees to Medical Services

By Yi Xiaojun

A few years ago, Chinese tourists engaged in bakugai (explosive shopping spree) in Tokyo’s Ginza district made headlines.

But that seems to be a thing of the past, as more Chinese tourists now seek services and experiences unique to Japan. And one of the most prominent fields is medical services.

“In recent years, a larger number of patients come to Japan for therapy and health checkups,” said Li Xin, vice president of Hibikojyo, a medical service agency based in Tokyo that has offices in several cities in China, including Beijing and Shanghai. This is “because more hospitals in Japan are ready to receive foreign patients and have loosened the admission criteria,” such as accepting more intermediate and advanced cancer patients, he said.

According to the Foreign Ministry, 70 medical visas were issued in 2011, when the government first introduced the special visa category. By 2018, the number had increased to 1,650, 84 percent of which were for visiting Chinese patients.

Foreign visitors entering Japan on tourist visas can also receive medical services, except for long-term therapies or surgeries requiring three months or more treatment, which is permitted under the medical visa. As the Tokyo 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games draw near, the government is eyeing a goal of attracting 40 million foreign visitors next year (2020).

If Japan achieves that goal and 4 percent of them needed medical attention during their visit, that would amount to about 1.6 million patients, of which about 70 percent would be from China, according to Japan Medical Support System for Visitors from Abroad, a private institution providing health care-related support for foreign patients.

Jiyugaoka Clinic, a large cosmetics hospital in Tokyo, started to cultivate its international reputation seven years ago, given the gloomy prospects for growth in domestic patients.

“In 2010, we barely had foreign patients,” said Yoshiaki Furuyama, the clinic’s CEO. “Last year we received more than 1,200 clients from mainland China.”

In a boost to Japan’s medical establishment, experts say



More Chinese patients are visiting Japan on medical visas, seeking better treatment at hospitals and clinics. | GETTY IMAGES

the country’s international recognition as a health care provider is on the rise.

According to the Health Care Index for Country 2019 released by the crowd-sourced global database Numbeo, Japan ranked third among 84 countries in terms of overall quality of its health care system, the standard of personnel and costs. China, however, came 46th in the same rankings.

Due to uneven regional economic development, Chinese people in inland or rural areas don’t have easy access to functional health care services. Instead of queuing in front of the overcrowded top

hospitals in big cities, affluent patients would rather travel overseas to seek better medical care.

And for many Chinese patients, the greatest allure of Japan’s health care and medical service is its quality.

Japan was ranked the highest in five-year survival rates of lung cancer and esophagus cancer patients from 2010 to 2014 based on the data of 37.5 million patients from 71 countries and regions, according to a report published by the U.K.-based medical journal *The Lancet* in early 2018, as cited in the *Mainichi Shimbun*.

With the prospect of better treatment and recovery, Chinese are willing to travel the extra mile — to Japan.

“We’ve learned that the proton beam therapy technique here is more developed than in China,” said Sun Jing, 36, from the northeastern city of Harbin, who has been escorting her 61-year-old father for bile duct cancer treatment at Southern Tohoku General Hospital in Fukushima Prefecture since January. “The doctors walk the patient through by providing explanations in each treatment process, and it has gone smoothly for us so far.”

Li of Hibikojyo said that systematization and the precision of cancer screening tests in Japan are the main attractions to Chinese patients. In some fortunate cases, he added, patients have detected early-stage cancer during the tests and have received timely treatment.

The polite attitude of medical personnel is also a plus.

“When the nurses meet my clients, sometimes they kneel down, because it’s easier to serve sitting patients,” Li said. “Those

patients felt overwhelmingly spoiled. They said they couldn't even imagine it in China."

Zhang Qingqing, a 22-year-old female Chinese student, underwent both an eight-hour general anesthesia surgery and a stitching double-eyelid operation in Kyoto in 2018.

"I chose to receive operations in Japan because I trust the doctors here," Zhang said. "I knew everything was according to plan, and they were very responsible."

Undergoing cosmetic treatment overseas, especially in Japan and South Korea, has become something of a status symbol for well-heeled Chinese of late.

While South Korea has become the leading overseas destination for Chinese cosmetic-surgery tourists, botched procedures and treatment accidents have been highlighted in the media in recent years, prompting more Chinese patients to come to Japan.

"Doctors in Japan care more about the treatment quality than the volume of customers," Naohiko Sakai, a surgeon at Ginza S Aesthetic and Plastic Surgery Clinic in Tokyo, said about the growing Chinese clients bound for Japan for plastic surgery. "The techniques and treatment efficacy here are more reassuring to those patients."

Qu Tuo, president of the Chinese cosmetic surgery agent Amazing Bird, started to become an agent for Chinese beauty patients in Tokyo in 2014. At the time, a large proportion of his clients had experienced failed procedures in South Korea and came to Japan for remedial treatments.

"Those desperate patients found me at that time, coming to me as their last chance," said Qu. "Last fiscal year ending in July, we received nearly 1,600 customers, 40 percent of whom were for repair surgeries."

Good things don't come cheap. In Japan, patients who are

covered by the national health care system are only responsible for basically 30 percent of the actual medical costs. Foreign medical tourists, on the other hand, are required to pay the full amount.

According to the guidelines by the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry, hospitals may charge foreign patients for additional expenses such as for services and documentation fees.

"The medical charges for international patients are often double or triple the Japanese patients' full expenses," Li said.

This is partly because hospitals don't want their limited resources stretched by foreigners, said Toshiki Mano, a professor at Chuo University who is an expert on medical tourism.

"It's also the case that they require extra work" administratively, compared to Japanese patients, he said.

Owing to the language barrier, many overseas patients visiting Japan tend to receive an intermediary company's "one-package services," which usually include transportation, interpretation and escorting fees that further add to the bill.

According to a recent article in the National News Daily, a financial newspaper in China, average spending on cancer treatment in Japan is estimated to be between \$50,000 (¥5.47 million) to \$100,000, triple the cost in China.

Nevertheless, higher medical bills are not stopping the avalanche of Chinese medical tourists flowing into Japan.

"Chinese patients care less about money. What they want are reassuring treatment and services," Sakai said.

Yi Xiaojun is a graduate student at Akita International University, Japan. This article is part of his course work in journalism at the Graduate School of Global Communication Practices. Former AIU student Wei Yaning contributed to the report.

Japan Times, May 16, 2019

New Zealand Tourism Has a Big New Hairy Goal - \$50 Billion a Year by 2025

By Grant Bradley

Tourism aims to be a \$50 billion industry within the next six years following a period of growth a leader says was "beyond all expectations."

But the sector would not just be focussing on the dollar figure, Tourism Industry Aotearoa chief executive Chris Roberts said.

Sustainability of communities, the environment, the economy and visitors – has been placed firmly at the heart of TIA's updated framework.

Roberts said that in 2014 the industry set a "big hairy audacious goal" of earning \$41b a year by 2025. It was now earning \$39.1b a year, fuelled by the surge in the number and spending by international visitors.

Roberts said that on a national



Warriors at Te Puia in Rotorua. Photo / Supplied

scale, the country had made incredible progress towards the original Tourism 2025 goal, set as the country was emerging from the impact of the global financial crisis.

Visitor arrival figures out today show a 2.6 per cent fall in March from the same month a year earlier but visitor

arrivals now exceed 3.8 million a year, leading to complaints from some New Zealanders.

"We recognise the industry's rapid growth has brought challenges as well as benefits. Public infrastructure, already suffering from decades of underinvestment, has struggled to cope," Roberts says in the document released at the Trenz tourism event in Rotorua says.

"Locals may find that their 'hidden gem' destination is now a hit on Instagram and has seen an influx of visitors."

While New Zealanders overwhelmingly support tourism, a survey for the industry done last week showed 26 per cent thought there were too many tourists.



Astro mountain biking in Rotorua. Photo / Mark Smith

The government will later release its new strategy and Roberts said this would complement the industry's focus on sustainability.

Roberts said the industry was increasingly recognising and adopting the Māori values of kaitiakitanga (guardianship), manaakitanga (hospitality) and whanaungatanga (working together).

Figures show that domestic travel spend - about 60 per cent of the total - had increased by 26.6 per cent from 2014.

Roberts said it was important not to forget about Kiwi travellers.

“Looking ahead, we are facing three key issues: managing the growth of tourism; improving management of our natural resources; and acting on carbon and climate change.”

The TIA released 10 priority action areas, from a “long” list of 68 actions for the tourism industry, central and local government to work on over the next three years.

These are:

1. Embedding sustainability

Signing more businesses up to an industry sustainability gate. It aims to be universal so all operators are contributing to overall tourism industry sustainability.

2. Managing destinations

Roberts says all of the country needs to be covered by regional destination management plans.

3. Growing and shaping Demand

It is imperative that government (via Tourism New Zealand), airlines, airports, regions and industry continue to invest in generating and growing visitor demand.

4. Embracing Tikanga Māori

All parts of the tourism industry appropriately incorporate elements of Tikanga Māori within their operations.

5. Living Tiaki

“Having visitors who meet our behavioural and cultural expectations is central to maintaining the support of New Zealand communities for tourism. Tiaki – Care for New Zealand was established by public and private sector agencies.

6. Engaging the community

Tourism businesses must undertake “genuine” two-way engagement with their communities to grow mutual understanding of how they contribute to their place.

7. Measuring and managing industry carbon Use

This is a big problem for a relatively remote destination such as NZ Reducing carbon use will be a key industry priority.

8. Investing in infrastructure and amenities

Ensuring more and better infrastructure is built, including roads, airports, waters systems, amenities and parking. Part of the \$80 million extra a year collected by the government's new border levy will go towards infrastructure.

9. Fostering domestic tourism

Domestic tourism helps to boost tourism in the regions.

10. Investing in tourism data and research

This has previously been identified as a weakness in the industry but is improving. Auckland Airport is proposing a sustainability index and Tourism New Zealand has just released data profiling different visitor groups.

New Zealand Herald, May 14, 2019

HK Start-Ups and Industry Players Gather to Boost Smart Tourism

By Alita Sharon

The event saw start-ups showcase innovative tech and ICT products and solutions to help boost tourism trade.

According to a recent press release, the Hong Kong Science and Technology Parks Corporation (HKSTP) held programs for the Global Acceleration Academy (GAA), and the Airport Accelerator Program.

At the event, participating start-ups showcased innovative products and solutions to the industry and investors that will help drive smart airport and travel technology.

In order to promote the development of Hong Kong's airport and the wisdom of travel technology applications, the GAA launched the three-month a program to help local start-ups and overseas analyse market gaps and provide training.

Together with the support of the Hong Kong Airport Authority (AA), the program was tested in a real interpersonal environment as a proof of concept.

The accelerator program garnered enthusiastic responses, attracting dozens of local and overseas start-ups to apply.

Start-ups showcase their latest developments

On the demonstration day, a total of five participating start-ups showcased their products and solutions aimed at addressing the development and operational challenges in the local tourism industry. The goal is to effectively improve the passenger experience and airport operational efficiency.

The innovative solution centred around intelligent mechanical transportation, automation technology, driverless vehicles, stride sensing technology for security certification and low-power Bluetooth transmission technology.

According to the Chief Technology Officer of Hong Kong

Science and Technology Parks Corporation, the GAA and leading companies in different fields are working together to encourage all industries to apply local innovation and technology as well as enhance the business skills of technology companies.

The aim is to give start-up employees an understanding of the international market.

HKSTP and its partners have stated that they are determined to promote the development of start-ups in Hong Kong, to encourage them to make the best use of government resources.

HKSTP is now actively expanding GAA in scale, strengthening its cooperation with third-party programs in order to nurture the strength of the accelerator.

Overseas start-ups in Hong Kong have been invited to participate in and create a rich vibrant and cosmopolitan Techtronic ecosystem so that more start-ups to create enterprise business benefit.

GAA launch trend report to promote industrial innovation

The GAA also released its first research report, Spotlight-Travel, which analysed innovative technologies to promote tourism development and enhance the passenger experience. The potential of the aspect.

The market trend report analysed the potential for innovation and technology in promoting the development of tourism and to enhance the visitor experience, and elaborate start-ups related products and the program. It also shows the innovative



Image Credits: HKSTP, Press Release

solutions that the Park companies have created to meet relevant market needs.

Several massive companies were involved as consultants in producing the Spotlight-Travel Report.

Looking forward, the GAA will also be publishing reports on other areas of the market in order to promote the development and application of science and technology in different areas of innovation.

In addition, these reports are aimed at helping the industry gain insight into the trends and expectations associated with different industries, start-ups and solution providers.

Smart Tourism in Hong Kong

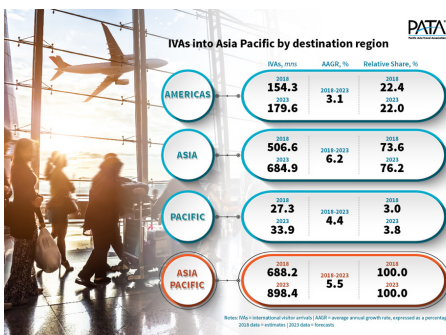
Under its Smart City Blueprint, The HKSAR Government seeks to provide tourist facilitation services through smart technologies. In addition, the aim is to enrich tourists' experiences in Hong Kong through the adoption of smart features using ICT and virtual images.

The Government is working to enhance tourist experience through a smart airport, Wi-Fi Connected City initiative and smart lampposts.

Overall, the goal is to encourage the tourism industry to leverage on innovative technology that can assist in managing visitor flow, providing more personalised tourist services, marketing and promotion, etc. in order enhance the region's competitiveness. Hong Kong wishes to be perceived as an innovative and technologically advanced tourist destination.

OpenGov Asia, February 22, 2019

Growth in International Visitor Arrivals into Asia Pacific Continues Its Strong Expansion and is Expected to Generate Close to 900 Million Arrivals in 2023



Association's (PATA's) 'Asia Pacific Visitor Forecasts 2019-2023', 40 destinations within Asia Pacific collectively are predicted to show an average growth rate of 5.5 percent per annum between 2018 and 2023, to host close to 900 million foreign visitor arrivals into Asia Pacific in that latter year.

Asia will continue its strong growth momentum with an expected annual average growth rate for foreign visitor arrivals of 6.2 percent between 2018 and 2023, while the Pacific and the Americas follow with average growth rates of 4.4 percent and 3.1 percent per year respectively, over the same period.

Driven by its strong average annual growth rate, Asia will receive the bulk of the foreign arrivals between 2018 and 2023. After capturing a relative share

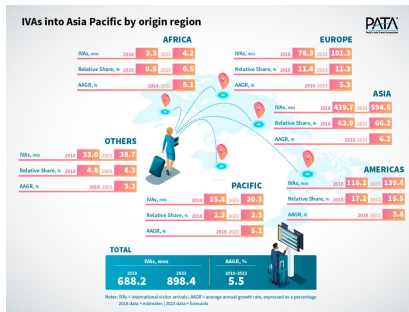
of close to 74 percent of foreign arrivals in 2018, the proportion into Asia is expected to increase to over 76 percent by the end of the forecast period (2023). The impact on the Americas and the Pacific is a slight contraction in their respective relative shares from 22.4 percent in 2018 to just under 20 percent in 2023 for the former, and from four percent to 3.8 percent for the latter, even as their respective numbers of foreign arrivals increase.

Asia will also be the strongest generator of foreign arrivals into Asia Pacific over the forecast period, improving its relative share of arrivals from 63.9 percentage points in 2018, to over 66 percentage points in 2023.

Intra-regional travel flows remain important for both the Americas and Asia, with the former destination region seeing

The overall annual growth rate for international visitors into 40 Asia Pacific destinations is estimated to have been around 7.8 percent in 2018, generating an inbound volume of around 688 million for the year – almost 50 million more foreign arrivals than in 2017.

According to the just released Executive Summary of Pacific Asia Travel



over three-quarters of its foreign arrivals originating within that region in both 2018 and 2023.

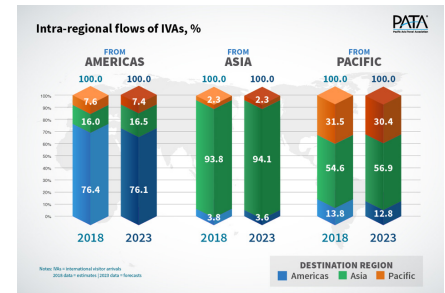
Similarly, for Asia, where intra-regional travel flows will increase in relative terms, from almost 94% in 2018 to over 94% by 2023.

The Pacific destination region differs, in as much as more than half of its inbound IVAs originated in Asia in 2018

with that proportion forecast to increase to around 57% by 2023. Even so, the intra-regional flows from the Pacific to the Pacific remain significant at over 30% in 2023.

Dr. Mario Hardy, the CEO of PATA, points out that “Asia continues to be the engine of growth for foreign arrivals into Asia Pacific, with intra-regional flows in particular, remaining important. This intra-regional activity is true for the Americas as well, but less so for the Pacific which is rapidly becoming more popular with Asian markets.”

He further adds “Once again, we need to be mindful of the fact that in delivering positive and memorable experiences to a rapidly changing inbound market mix, we need to maintain a service ethic and mind-set that is consistently superior and at the same time, tailored to



the very different needs of an increasingly diverse range of visitors”.

In his final remarks, Dr. Hardy reminds us that “In developing a service mindset we need to ask ourselves are we preparing to welcome 898 million foreign arrivals into Asia Pacific in 2023, or should we think of that instead, as one very special visitor, 898 million times. Your perspective on that can make all the difference”.

Next Step for Tbilisi Night Economy: Food Trucks

By Samantha Guthrie

Last spring (2018), Tbilisi City Hall introduced the Night Economy concept, which aims to reinvigorate Tbilisi’s after-hours cultural and social life through policies that encourage safe and regulated night activities. The concept involves restaurants, bars and nightclubs that are most active from 6 pm to 6 am. Leading the project’s implementation from City Hall is Sergi Gvarjaladze, a former journalist, producer, and TV presenter.



Image source: Pazy Food Truck, Facebook

The new “Mayor of the Night” has already proposed several initiatives within Tbilisi Night Economy, including the possibility of issuing permits for street performers and developing a special night bus route (number 22).

The aim of Night Economy is to improve relationships between several sectors of the economy and the city, to capitalize on tourism opportunities and to welcome those interested in nightlife to the capital. “The main goal of our project is to create new jobs and support the development of small and medium businesses, especially in the tourism and restaurant sectors. We want to position Tbilisi as a 24/7 city and organize cultural and sports events for a wider group of people,” Gvarjaladze told GEORGIA TODAY in April 2018.

Now, a new project is being introduced under the Night Economy umbrella – food trucks. Tbilisi Deputy mayor Sophio Khuntsaria announced the plan in late February 2019, saying that specific locations would be allocated for food trucks to operate in Tbilisi. She noted that small businesses have already expressed their support for and interest in the project.

Khuntsaria explained that a survey will be conducted in

each of the city’s ten districts to examine the potential demand for different aspects of Night Economy and to determine what direction the concept’s development should take in different parts of the city.

“Development of the night economy is not just for tourism or for people who are oriented on entertainment – the local population should [also] benefit from working at night,” said Khuntsaria.

In his April interview, Gvarjaladze emphasized that the Night Economy concept would be inclusive of the whole city, not just the central districts, and would in fact help revitalize suburban areas. “Gldani, Varketili, and some other big ‘sleeping’ areas of the city lack cultural life. We aim to change that and to bring new life into these districts. People should have the chance to participate in an active life throughout the city. Another priority is to reuse old, abandoned Soviet-style buildings. Often, they were used for industrial purposes in the past and have since lost their purpose,” said Gvarjaladze.

Food trucks could help fill a market of late-night eating that is mainly dominated now by shawarma stands of varying quality, and often have questionable health and safety standards. They also may encourage more creativity in the Georgian food scene, providing a space for people to play with traditional cuisine and themes and introduce more variety – which would benefit tourists alongside local consumers and entrepreneurs. The current food truck scene in Georgia is primarily limited to trucks or stands that appear for special events, such as on the pedestrian section of Aghmashenebeli St. or on Rustaveli during holidays when the street is closed to traffic. In many cities around the world, food

trucks are an integral part of the culinary environment, offering a quick and easy lunch to hungry workers and serving as a perfect way to soak up alcohol after a night out. If the new project is successful, Tbilisi's residents and visitors can look forward to the flourishing of a new cultural element that could benefit a large section of society.

Georgia Today, February 25, 2019

India's 6-Week-Long Elections Are So Big They've Become A Tourist Draw



Villagers attend a campaign rally for India's ruling Bharatiya Janata Party in Ghazipur, in the northern state of Uttar Pradesh. Lauren Frayer/NPR

In a dusty lot between farm fields, an Indian Cabinet minister wades into a crowd of supporters chanting his name. Local men climb a tree to catch a glimpse of the famous politician. Women in colorful saris fan their babies in 100-degree heat, and applaud.

Rural communities like this one in India's most populous state, Uttar Pradesh, are where Indian elections are hard fought and won. Two-thirds of Indians live in the countryside, and they vote at a higher rate than their urban counterparts.

At this particular rally for the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party, there's a group of Indians who stand out in their designer sunglasses and Western dress. They linger off to the side, separated from the local farmers by a chasm of class and wealth.

They're domestic tourists, here on a tour of their own democracy. With nearly 900 million eligible voters, Indian elections are considered the largest in the world — a festival of democracy with nearly six weeks of rallies, speeches and voting. Increasingly, tourists want to experience this. A handful of tour operators have started offering political tours this election season.

"He dragged me here," says Rian Narvekar, 13, rolling his eyes at his father, beside him. They've traveled all the way from the Indian capital, New Delhi, more than 500 miles away. "He wanted me to experience the elections."

"He lives a very sheltered life," says Rian's father, Rahul Narvekar, 46, an Internet startup executive. "He gets from the house into a car, which is driven by a driver. He's never had this kind of exposure. I wanted myself to experience this, and I wanted him also to experience this."

So Narvekar took his son on a four-day election-themed educational tour of India organized this month by an Indian media company called Firstpost. The tour guide is a veteran political journalist, Ajay Singh, who takes a group of loyal readers —



Rian Narvekar (center, in white hat), 13, interacts with local boys his age while on an election-themed tour of Uttar Pradesh state. Rian's father took him on this tour to understand politics in India's rural heartland. Furkan Latif Khan/NPR

mostly self-described urban elites from cosmopolitan New Delhi and Mumbai — to parts of the country many of them have never visited.

"It's often said that the road to power in Delhi passes through Uttar Pradesh," Narvekar says.

The last day of India's six-week elections is this Sunday (May 19), and ballots will be counted on May 23, 2019. Earlier this month, researchers estimated voter turnout at 67%. Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Bharatiya Janata Party is running for another five-year term in power.

The Firstpost tour takes visitors to campaign rallies in the rural heartland and to the Hindu holy city of Varanasi, which is Modi's own constituency.

As the Narvekar's chat with locals at a BJP rally, a crowd forms around them. Rian asks his father to hold his hand. "I'm uncomfortable," he says. But his father reassures him, and before long, Rian is using his smartphone to record video of boys his age, asking them on camera what they think of the Indian elections.

"What do we have in common? Our age and that we're Indian. That's about it," Rian tells National Public Radio (NPR).

Another of the tourists, Suraj Kishore, who is in his 40s and works in advertising in Mumbai, is shocked to find how tech savvy rural voters are. It has shattered stereotypes for him.

"There was livestreaming happening on Facebook over here! Generally as a society, we think rural India means they don't want to progress. But no — it's pulsating," says Kishore. "It's far more pulsating than urban India, which is happy with eating sushi. I'm just right now filled with so much insight."

Such tours are happening across India — in both rural and urban constituencies and for Indians and foreigners alike.

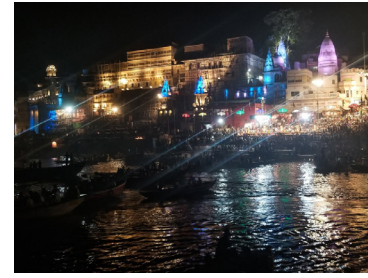
"When we travel, we like to understand the country we're in," says Maddie Borrey, an Australian tourist who joined an election-themed tour of Mumbai in April. "We thought it was a bit off the beaten tourist track, and the better understanding you have, the brighter the experience."

The tour that Borrey takes is a new offering by Reality Tours, a local outfit that also guides tourists through Mumbai's biggest slum, Dharavi. On the election tour, it takes tourists on a walking route past the state legislature of Maharashtra, where Mumbai is the capital, and the local Election Commission headquarters. Tour guides field tourists' questions about how many seats are in the lower house of India's Parliament (545), when voting takes place (in seven stages, from April 11 to May 19) and what ballots look like (they're cast electronically on voting machines that show symbols for each party).

One of the guides on Borrey's tour also tries to educate



Manoj Sinha, a BJP Cabinet minister, works the crowd at a campaign rally in his constituency in Ghazipur. Furkan Latif Khan/NPR



On an election-themed tour of India's heartland, tourists from Mumbai and New Delhi take photos of monuments, Hindu prayer ceremonies and funeral pyres along the banks of the Ganges River. Furkan Latif Khan/NPR

tourists about India's corruption problem by sharing his own experience.

“When I was 18 years old, I was paid 200 rupees [about \$3 at today's exchange rate] to vote for somebody,” guide Balaji Subramanyam explains, as the tourists' eyes grow wide. “I had no idea in those days what politics even means.”

The Firstpost tour culminates in a sunset boat trip along the Ganges River in Varanasi, where thousands of Hindus pray and burn incense nightly. Faithful worship the river as a goddess, Mother Ganga.

As the boat passes funeral pyres burning on the river's banks, a tourist from Mumbai remarks how there may be two Indias — and that this tour gave her a taste of the one in which she does not live.

“We really felt the heat and dust of the elections! It's

very difficult to articulate — overwhelming is one thing I'd say,” says finance executive Kavita Sachwani. “I knew it would be very special, but it surpassed my highest expectations.”

Nearby, a dockworker, Babu Sahani, watches as Sachwani and other tourists from the big city light little oil lamps and set them afloat on the Ganges. Afterward, NPR asks the 18-year-old dockworker if he thinks there are indeed two Indias — his country and theirs.

“There is only one India,” Sahani says. “But those people,” he says — pointing to the tourists — “I think they must be foreigners.”

NPR producers Sushmita Pathak and Furkan Latif Khan contributed to this report.

National Public Radio (NPR), May 15, 2019

Seoul to Promote 'Peace Tourism'

By Kang Seung-woo

City government unveils plans for foreign tourists

In order to put itself on the map as a global tourist destination, the Seoul Metropolitan Government has come up with a fresh tourism policy, mainly targeting international travelers.

Seoul logged solid numbers of foreign tourists to the capital in each of the past two years — 10.5 million in 2017 and 12.1 million in 2018 — that both accounted for nearly 80 percent of the total overseas travelers to the country.

This year, the local government aims to attract 13.5 million foreigners to the capital.

However, compared with main cities in neighboring countries and others in the region, the capital of Asia's fourth-largest economy is still regarded as a tourism underachiever.

In that respect, the city government plans to concentrate its efforts on inventing and expand distinct tourism content, while boosting its competitiveness in global tourism.

“The new tourism policy is expected to contribute to boosting Seoul's reputation as a tourist destination,” Joo Yong-tae, director-general of the city's tourism and sports bureau, said



Banners for the Korea Grand Sale are put up in Myeongdong, Seoul, February 17, 2019. / Korea Times

in a press briefing on February 19, 2019.

First of all, Seoul plans to promote peace tourism, taking advantage of improved inter-Korean relations.

Within this month (February 2019), the local government will form an advisory panel for inter-Korean peace tourism whose job will be focused on unearthing related attractions such as a peace forum that would discuss ways to encourage tours between South and North Korea, a photo exhibition about peace and harmony on the Korean Peninsula and a food festival featuring North Korean delicacies.

In addition, the body will work to devise programs touring the demilitarized zone (DMZ) and the Joint Security Area (JSA) by May — the best place for those who want to peek into the reality of the divided Korean Peninsula and view the pristine landscape.

Seoul also plans to nurture three Vatican-authorized pilgrimage routes as major tourist destinations. The historic Catholic locations in central Seoul were recognized as international pilgrimage destinations last year.

To this end, it will launch overseas promotions such as building up a network with other international pilgrimage sites and



Foreigners tour the DMZ exhibition hall at the Third Tunnel in Paju, Gyeonggi Province in November 2018. / Korea Times file



Foreigners sightsee on a Seoul City Tour Bus in this October 2018 photo. / Korea Times file

offer joint advertising. Two hundred and one guide signs on the ground will be installed and their surroundings will be improved.

The city government will also be committed to coming up with more tour programs allowing foreign tourists to experience and learn about Korea's traditional food, K-pop and K-beauty to deliver the charm of the city. In addition, it will also focus on medical tourism offering high level medical expertise.

Solid foundation for global competitiveness

While expanding its tourism content, Seoul City is also seeking to lay the groundwork to enhance its competitiveness.

After becoming the third-largest convention city in the world from 2015 to 2017, now Seoul is seeking to sit atop the leaderboard. The lucrative meeting, incentive, convention and exhibition (MICE) industry is a fast growing sector. According to the Korea Tourism Organization, MICE participants spend 3.1

times more money and stay 1.4 times longer than tourists.

In April, the local government plans to unveil its mid- and long-term development program for the MICE industry, while the Seoul MICE Alliance (SMA), a partnership between government agencies and companies in the industry, will improve stability in operations. Plus, the Seoul MICE Forum will be founded in July.

In a bid to maximize its capability, Seoul City will set up Seoul Tourism Plaza that will place the Seoul Tourism Organization, foreign tourist offices in Korea and tourism startups together and serve as a hub for tourism. Its master plan will start within this year for completion by 2021.

In addition, Seoul will open an online Seoul tourism channel on YouTube in March and develop 20 new sightseeing routes that will include historic and cultural attractions, filming sites of popular dramas and renowned restaurants.

Korea Times, February 20, 2019

Philippines to Boost Sustainable Tourism

Tourism Promotions Board outlines its renewed thrust for 2019

Now more than ever, Filipinos see a greater wave of foreign tourists in local spots.

Despite this observation becoming a clear indicator that more international tourists are open to flying to these shores, the revitalized Tourism Promotions Board (TPB), the marketing arm of the Department of Tourism (DOT) is even more amped up to highlight the beauty of the Philippines.

To kick-off the New Year 2019 on a productive and forward-looking note, TPB ramps up its efforts to actively promote the Philippines as a major tourism destination.

The TPB Marketing and Promotions sector will participate in numerous international events year in and year out, working hard in placing the Philippines on the global tourism map.

This is also in keeping with the TPB's goal for visiting tourists from key markets such as Europe, North America, Australia, Japan, China and Korea to enjoy an optimal travel experience, thus extending their stay and spending more time in



The Small Lagoon of Miniloc Island in El Nido, Palawan is among the top destinations of the country.

the country.

Foremost among these activities was its recent participation in the Asean Tourism Forum (ATF), a tourism summit held at Ha Long, Vietnam and the Boot show in Düsseldorf, Germany where the Philippines was recognized as the most preferred dive destination.

All strategic programs for 2019 are anchored on the theme of responsible and sustainable tourism — “a balance between business opportunities and social responsibilities” — as set forth by DOT Secretary Bernadette Romulo-

Puyat.

In particular, says TPB Chief Operating Officer Marie Venus Tan, the attached agency aims to pursue sustainable tourism through community based products; revitalize domestic tourism by way of a revived advocacy campaign; and strengthen the country's presence in the MICE space.

For 2019, TPB has its calendar full as it makes its presence felt in the following significant events:

February – MICE Arabia & Luxury Travel Congress and Dubai Sales Calls; March – the ITB Berlin; April – China Outbound Travel and Tourism Market; June – The Meetings Show

UK; July – IBTM Americas; August – Hokkaido Overseas Travel Fair; September – PATA Travel Mart and IMEX America; October – ITB Asia; November – The Global Meetings and Events Expo (IBTM World) Spain.

On top of these are the programmed domestic events such as the Philippine Travel Mart, Travel Tour Expo, The World Street Food Congress 2019, the

Ilog Project, the MICE Buyers Invitational Program, and The TPB-initiated regional travel fairs.

Additionally, TPB will conduct Marketing Educational Seminars in Luzon, Visayas, and Mindanao, to be participated in by regional tourism officers, officials from local government units, and private sector tourism representatives. Here, the TPB will provide the necessary guidance

and active mentoring in properly marketing the tourism attractions of a particular region or province.

Clearly, the TPB, as an attached agency of DOT, looks forward to a dynamic 2019 as it redoubles its efforts — backed by its driven men and women — in marketing the Philippines as a top tourism destination, drawing in tourists the world over.

Manila Times, February 22, 2019

About CACCI

The Confederation of Asia-Pacific Chambers of Commerce and Industry (CACCI) is a regional grouping of apex national chambers of commerce and industry, business associations and business enterprises in Asia and the Western Pacific.

It is a non-governmental organization serving as a forum for promoting the vital role of businessmen in the region, increasing regional business interaction, and enhancing regional economic growth. Since its establishment in 1996, CACCI has grown into a network of national chamber of commerce with a

total now of 29 Primary Members from 27 Asian countries and independent economies.

It cuts across national boundaries to link businessmen and promote economic growth throughout the Asia-Pacific region. CACCI is a non-governmental organization (NGO) granted consultative status, Roster category, under the United Nations.

It is a member of the Conference on NGOs (CoNGO), an association of NGOs with UN consultative status.

About CACCI Asian Council on Tourism

Asian Council of Tourism (ACT) is one of the Product Service Councils under the CACCI umbrella. The PSCs have been formed with the primary aim of promoting greater business interaction among CACCI members who are in the same product or service line. There are currently twelve PSCs that are operating within the CACCI umbrella.

The PSCs meet at least once a year, usually in

conjunction with the Annual CACCI Conference held in various member countries.

The current Chairman of ACT is Mr. Anura Samarawickrema Lokuhetty from Sri Lanka. He is concurrently Chairman of Red Apple Travel & Holidays Lanka (Pvt) Ltd., and Immediate Past President of The Hotels Association of Sri Lanka, the apex body representing all hotels in Sri Lanka.

Published by the Secretariat, Confederation of Asia-Pacific Chambers of Commerce and Industry

Ernest Lin, Director General; Amador R. Honrado, Jr., Editor

Wendy Yang, Contributing Editor; Teresa Liu, Assistant Editor

7F-2, No. 760, Sec. 4 Bade Road, Taipei 10567, Taiwan; Tel: (886 2) 2760-1139; Fax: (886 2) 2760-7569

Email: cacci@cacci.org.tw; Website: www.cacci.biz