

UNWTO COMMISSION FOR SOUTH ASIA

Fifty-sixth Meeting

Chengdu, China

11 September 2017

Item 8 of the Provisional Agenda

UPDATES ON REGIONAL ACTIVITIES

Note by the Secretary-General

The Secretary-General submits to the Commission for South Asia information on UNWTO's activities in the Asia-Pacific region in 2017 but particularly since May 2017 when the 27th CAP-CSA Joint meeting was held in Chittagong, Bangladesh.

Regional Activities

This document covers the major activities the UNWTO has undertaken in the Asia-Pacific region in 2017 but particularly since the 29th Joint Meeting of the UNWTO Commission for East Asia and the Pacific and the UNWTO Commission for South Asia which was held in Chittagong, Bangladesh in May 2017. It also provides some information on on-going and upcoming events scheduled for the rest of 2017 and beyond.

29th CAP-CSA Joint Meeting and the UNWTO Regional Forum on Crisis Communication (Chittagong, Bangladesh, 17 May, 2017)

At the Joint Commission Meeting, the main highlight was the discussion on the *International Year for Sustainable Tourism for Development 2017* during which member countries shared their activities on the subject of sustainability for the promotion of the International Year. The Meeting also discussed major statutory matters of much interest to members such as the review of the amendment procedure of the Organization's statutes, the UNWTO convention on tourism ethics and the preparations for the twenty-second session of the General Assembly.

The ***UNWTO Regional Forum on Crisis Communication*** was organised in response to members' request for communication strategies in times of crisis. It was prompted by the on-going geopolitical tensions, terrorist attacks, man-made or natural disasters, fluctuations in fuel prices and health scares in various parts of the world which have become recurrent issues of great concern leaving the world at large in a constant state of uncertainty.

The primary objective of the Forum was thus to equip member States in the region and all other stakeholders with the requisite crisis response tools in preparation for unexpected contingencies and crisis situations which can affect travel and tourism in their respective destinations.

6th UNWTO International Conference on Tourism Statistics: Measuring Sustainable Tourism (Manila, Philippines, 21-23 June 2017)

The 6th UNWTO International Conference on Tourism Statistics was jointly organized by UNWTO and the Government of the Philippines to address the measurement of sustainable tourism as the overarching theme in line with the UN's declaration of 2017 as the International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development.

The objective of the Conference was to expand the methodology and knowledge as well as the implementation of tourism statistics in terms of sustainability; and to inform politicians and decision-makers about the new developments in the measurement of sustainable tourism while expounding definitions, concepts, classifications on sustainability in tourism for statistical purposes.

To achieve this objective the Conference built on a wide range of measurement initiatives worldwide that have been drawn together through the Measuring Sustainable Tourism (MST) project which started in 2015 by UNWTO, with the support of the United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD). MST has the aim of developing and implementing an international statistical framework for measuring tourism's role in sustainable development. In other words, the Statistical Framework for Measuring Sustainable Tourism (MST Framework) aims to integrate and extend the current statistical framework beyond its primarily economic focus, to incorporate environmental and social dimensions at all relevant spatial levels: global, national and sub-national.

The Conference brought together a record number of nearly 1,500 participants including statisticians (particularly professionals and practitioners in tourism statistics and sustainability measurement), national, regional and local government policymakers in national tourism administrations and statistical offices; non-governmental organizations and academic institutions; international, regional and intergovernmental agencies; as well as representatives of the private sector, academic and specialized consultants involved in the creation and/or implementation of tourism statistics.

The participants endorsed the *Manila Call for Action on Measuring Sustainable Tourism*. This is a statement recalling the progress achieved to this point and the main areas to be addressed by all stakeholders.

Asia-Pacific Tourism Marketing Evaluation Workshop (Changshu, China, 6-8 July, 2017)

The Asia-Pacific Tourism Evaluating Workshop was jointly organized by the Monitoring Centre for UNWTO Sustainable Tourism Observatories (MCSTO) and the Changshu Municipal People's Government in collaboration with UNWTO; and was attended by representatives from 18 member States from the region.

It was organized in response to a request from Member States during the 28th CAP-CSA Joint Meeting in Nara (Japan) in June 2016 to evaluate tourism marketing and promotional activities in the Asia-Pacific region and to draw lessons from the best practices of different NTAs and NTOs. It was the first time that the UNWTO/ETC recently published Handbook on Key Performance Indicators for Tourism Marketing Evaluation was used as a technical reference tool for the Workshop.

The presentations of the participating countries from the region focused on the quality and quantity of tourism products, the diversity of domestic, regional and international source markets, image and positioning, branding, quality and distribution of promotional materials (including e-marketing) and institutional mechanisms for marketing and promotion including public-private partnership.

The Workshop concluded with recommendations to establish or improve marketing measurement and evaluation. These are applicable to organizations where marketing evaluation is comparatively well developed as well as those organizations that are at the early stages of establishing a marketing evaluation

programme. These included the development of marketing evaluation based on a suitable measurement framework; ensuring marketing strategy forms the basis of organizations' marketing evaluation; taking account of the role that different channels play in achieving specific objectives; allocation of specific metrics and definition of targets; development of an approach to overarching marketing evaluation; considering the use of digital search trends and insights as a proxy for intent; and the development of a measurement-focused culture to maintain the focus on outcomes and impact.

The Second International Rural Tourism Conference (Huzhou, China 16 – 18 July 2017).

UNWTO organized this conference in collaboration with Pacific Asia Travel Association (PATA) and the support of Huzhou City of China.

Discussions over the three-day event centred on policy, planning, product development and marketing of rural tourism – topics which were of interest to both public sector participants and private sector tourism stakeholders alike.

At the Conference, the UNWTO presented the “**Report on International Rural Tourism Development: An Asia Pacific Perspective**” which showcases the power of tourism to help millions of people escape poverty and improve their livelihoods. It was produced with the support of Huzhou City and in partnership with PATA. The report presents best practices and successful strategies in rural tourism development throughout Asia and the Pacific. It was prepared in celebration of 2017 as the International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development as decreed by the United Nations.

Technical Assistance Missions

Development of a Sustainable Tourism Policy for Fiji

The Ministry of Industry, Trade and Tourism (MITT) of Fiji requested technical assistance from the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) for the formulation of a project proposal to develop a Sustainable Tourism Policy for Fiji. The request stems from the Fijian Government's plan to ensure that all parties within Fiji's tourism value chain are on the same page when it comes to sustainable tourism development,

To achieve the purpose of this request, UNWTO undertook a mission to Fiji by dispatching a sustainable tourism development expert and a physical planner with the following objectives:

- To determine to what extent the current policy and strategy framework in Fiji facilitates the long-term sustainability of the tourism sector; and to identify gaps, needs and options for sustainable tourism governance and management;
- To provide recommendations to key stakeholders in Fiji to enable them to examine options and scenarios for sustainable tourism governance, to

refine them based on field findings, and to identify actions that promote and support reforms to sustainable tourism governance and management;

- To prepare a project proposal for the formulation of a long-term Sustainable Tourism Policy, incorporating details on the scale of the project (expert input, cost and timeframe) and an Action Plan detailing specific activities and recommendations in the short to medium term. This will include recommendations for legislation and regulation, and identification of institutional responsibilities at central and local levels, among others.

Upon the termination of the field mission, UNWTO submitted the mission report to the Ministry, for further discussion and planning at the launch of the International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development in January 2017 in Madrid, Spain.

International Tourism Marketing Strategy for Yunnan Province

Even though Yunnan Province has witnessed a rapid growth of domestic tourist arrivals over the past years, the number of international tourist arrivals has staggered. To regain a strong growth of the latter, the Yunnan Provincial Tourism Development Committee together with other tourism stakeholders in the Province wishes to pay specific attention to the marketing of international tourism, hence the need to develop a coherent and powerful International Tourism Marketing Strategy for Yunnan Province. It will include a well-defined destination brand approach, to act as the basis for the development and promotion of the provincial tourism product offer to international markets.

The Strategy will build on an assessment of the available tourism product in the Province and its appeal to different international market segments, and will make recommendations for product improvements, diversification and packaging, while taking into account the preferences and demands of different markets. Furthermore, the strategy will look into the product, place, price and promotion of the tourism offer, and provide advice and strategic guidelines on multi-stakeholder collaboration for developing and marketing the tourism brand of Yunnan. It will also identify the training needs to strengthen the marketing capacity, and make specific recommendations on using E-marketing tools, among others.

The project document has been submitted to the Provincial Government of Yunnan pending its approval.

Technical review mission on tourism development for Muping District and Changdao Islands (Shandong Province, China, August, 2017)

The city of Yantai is one of the cities in Shandong Province with a flourishing tourism sector and a high potential for further tourism development. Two destinations in Yantai - Muping District and Changdao Islands, have identified

the need for further guidance for the sustainable development of the tourism sector for the coming years.

Within the framework of the collaboration between Shandong Province and UNWTO, UNWTO has been requested to field technical review missions to Muping District and Changdao Islands to prepare an Assessment Report detailing specific activities and recommendations for the sustainable development of the tourism sector in these two destinations for the short and medium term.

The main objectives of the missions are:

- To carry out a rapid situation analysis of the tourism sector in Muping District and Changdao Islands and formulate an Assessment Report detailing activities and recommendations for the sustainable development of tourism in each destination in the short and medium term.
- To participate in meetings with the Provincial Tourism Administration, the City Tourism Administration, the Tourism Authorities for Muping and Changdao Islands and other interested agencies to discuss and advise on their input to the sustainable development of the tourism sector in Muping District and Changdao Islands.

The Update of the Tourism Development Master Plan of the I. R. of Iran

The Iran Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts and Tourism Organization (ICHTO), envisaging Iran's current 5-year National Plan, has decided to revive its Tourism Development Master Plan with a view to achieving the Government's ambitious goal to increase international tourist arrivals from currently 5 to 20 million in less than ten years.

In light of this and upon a request received from ICHTO, UNWTO will field a project formulation mission to prepare a project document for the preparation of a Tourism Development Master Plan for the period 2018-2027.

This will be a follow up to the 10-year Tourism Development Master Plan which the Organization formulated for Iran in 2001 and which has enabled the Iranian Government to draw objectives and to follow a roadmap for developing tourism in the country. This current request is thus meant to update the Tourism Master Plan.

The main objectives of the mission are:

- To formulate a project document and a detailed work programme for the update of the current Tourism Development Master Plan for Iran;
- To make arrangements and participate in meetings with ICHTO, other tourism stakeholders and the private sector to discuss their input in the formulation and implementation of the Tourism Development Master Plan;

- To advise on the formation of a possible Technical Committee that would oversee and lead all decision-making with regard to project funding, activities and implementation, including overall review and monitoring.

The project formulation mission is currently underway.

Publications

International Rural Tourism Development: An Asia-Pacific Perspective

This publication released on the occasion of the International Year for Sustainable Tourism for Development 2017, draws attention to rural/urban relationships, community empowerment and poverty alleviation through rural tourism development. The report also shines a light on rural tourism development in the Asia Pacific region with 14 specific case studies that show how communities have adapted a sustainable approach to rural tourism that stimulates economic growth, creates employment and improves the livelihood of communities

Managing Growth and Sustainable Tourism Governance in Asia and the Pacific

The Asia-Pacific region has seen an unprecedented growth in tourism in recent years with the positive trend projected to continue in the future. Managing this growth has implications on planning and policy decisions that are closely dependent on sustainable tourism governance.

The report analyzes various conceptual aspects of governance in tourism related to the public and private sectors in Asia and the Pacific and its implementation at national, regional and local levels in the area. In addition, 13 country destinations in Asia and the Pacific are covered as case studies in the report, highlighting different approaches to sustainable tourism governance as practiced by the national tourism administrations and organizations concerned.

The lessons learned from the various case studies give an opportunity to public and private sector stakeholders to manage future tourism growth in a sustainable and responsible manner.

Penetrating the Chinese Outbound Market: Successful Practices and Solutions

This report gives a background to the growth of Chinese tourism in terms of policy decisions, demographics, socio-economic evolution, catchment areas, and market trends, all of which have a strong bearing on the position that China occupies in the world today as the leading tourism outbound market.

Of particular interest has been the growth of the millennial tourists from China who, as FIT travellers, hold a pre-eminent position in Chinese outbound traffic. The report also outlines case studies, primarily of Asia-Pacific destinations but with a few from Europe and America, which illustrate how they have successfully penetrated the Chinese outbound market with innovative promotional and marketing techniques.

Upcoming events

- Global Tourism Economy Forum 2017 (16-17 September 2017, Macao, China)
- Tourism EXPO Japan (21-24 September 2017, Tokyo, Japan)
- 11th UNWTO/PATA Forum on Tourism Trends and Outlook (12-14 October 2017, Guilin, China)
- 6th Global Summit on Urban Tourism (4-6 December 2017, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia)
- Second UNWTO/UNESCO World Conference on Tourism and Culture: Fostering Sustainable Development, (11-12 December 2017, Muscat, Sultanate of Oman)