Global Summit on City Tourism
Catalysing Economic Development and Social Progress

The 6th UNWTO Forum on
Tourism Trends and Outlook

UNWTO / HTC High-Level Symposium
on MICE Tourism

UNWTO Technical Workshop on
Tourism Marketing
Good Idea Good People

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International Tourism – 2012 Results for January to August

A total of 143 countries have now reported data on international arrivals for the first 6 to 9 months of 2012: 118 (83%) have seen arrivals increase, of which 49 (34%) saw double-digit figures, while 25 (17%) have reported a decline. Over 90 countries have reported data at least up to August 2012. Based on this sample of reporting destinations, international arrivals are estimated to have increased by 4% from January to August 2012 compared to the same period in 2011.

All regions but the Middle East showed growth in international arrivals. Strong growth was seen in Asia and the Pacific (+7%), and Africa (+6%), followed by the Americas (+4%) and Europe (+3%). The Middle East (-1%) continues to show signs of recovery, with particularly promising results in Egypt.

Emerging economies (+5%) have regained the lead over advanced ones (+4%) due to strong growth resulting in sub-regions as varied as North Africa (+11%), Central and Eastern Europe (+9%), South Asia (+8%), South-East Asia (+8%), North-East Asia (+7%), Central America (+7%) and South America (+6%).

“International tourist arrivals grew by 4% between January and August 2012 compared to the same period of 2011. The resilience of international tourism in a continuously uncertain economy is further confirmed by the positive data on tourism earning and expenditure.”

John Kester, the Manager of the UNWTO Programme of Tourism Trends and Marketing Strategies
International tourism demand sustains amidst economic uncertainty

In absolute numbers, international tourist arrivals worldwide reached 705 million in the period between January and August 2012, illustrating an increase of 28 million from the same period last year (677 million).

Tourism growth slowed in June (+3%) and July (+1%) in comparison to the first months of the year (average of +5%), but strengthened in August (+4%). This is positive news as August accounts for the highest volume of international tourist arrivals in the year.

Nearly 50 countries that have reported data up to September indicate that growth is continuing at a moderate rate. Globally, international tourism results have so far not been seriously affected by the economic volatility, with growth continuing above the average of 3.8% a year projected for the decade 2010-2020, according to UNWTO’s long-term forecast Tourism Towards 2030.

One Billion Tourists: One billion Opportunities

In 2011, international tourist arrivals reached 990 million (revised due to updated data). With the expected growth of 3% to 4% in 2012, UNWTO remains confident that a record of one billionth tourists will be reached for the first time by December 2012.

The date of 13 December has been designated to symbolically mark the arrival of the one billionth tourists. In order to celebrate this historic milestone, UNWTO launched the campaign One Billion Tourists:

One billion Opportunities, calling on one billion tourists to make their actions count, for more information see http://1billiontourists.unwto.org.

For 2013, growth is expected to continue at a more moderate rate in the range of 2% to 4%. A comprehensive forecast by region will be included in the UNWTO World Tourism Barometer of January 2013.

International Tourism Receipts and Expenditure

Of 111 destinations reporting tourism receipt data for the first part of 2012, 99 countries (89%) saw growth in earnings, of which 47 in double digits (42%), while 12 (11%) saw declines.

Among the 10 largest international tourism earners, receipts grew significantly in Hong Kong (China) (+17%), United States (+8%), Germany (+7%), France (+5%) and the United Kingdom (+4%) in the first six to nine months of the year.

A number of other major destinations reported double-digit growth in receipts, including Japan (+48%), Sweden (+26%), South Africa (+26%), the Republic of Korea (+26%), India (+23%), Poland (+19%), Thailand (+17%), the Russian Federation (+16%), Egypt (+13%), the Czech Republic (+13%), Taiwan (pr. of China) (+11%), Singapore (+10%) and Croatia (+10%).
In regards to expenditure abroad on tourism, demands from both emerging and advanced economy source markets during the first six to nine months of 2012 remained steady. So far, 45 of the 50 largest outbound markets reported data on tourism expenditure abroad for the first half of 2012. Of these, 33 (73%) saw expenditure grow and among these 13 in double digits (29%), while 12 (27%) saw declines.

Among the top 10 international markets by expenditure on travel abroad, substantial growth was seen in China (+30%), Russian Federation (+15%), United States (+9%), Canada (+6%), Germany (+5%), and Australia (+4%) as well as in Japan, where a 7% increase confirmed the recovery of this important market.

Other major advanced economy outbound markets that reported significant growth were Austria (+16%), Belgium (+13%), Switzerland (+11%), Norway (+11%), the Netherlands (+8%), Singapore (+7%), Czech Republic (+7%), Hong Kong (China) (+6%), Finland (+6%), and Sweden (+6%).

Among the emerging economies, in addition to China and Russian Federation, double-digit growth in expenditure was posted by Venezuela (+31%), Poland (+22%), Malaysia (+18%), Argentina (+16%), Philippines (+14%), India (+11%) and Indonesia (+10%).

**Asia and the Pacific**

International tourist arrivals between January and August put Asia and the Pacific at the top of world regions in terms of growth; with 7% more inbound tourists than in the same period last year. South and South-East Asia both recorded an 8% increase in arrivals fuelled by countries such as Thailand (1.2 million more tourists or +9%), Cambodia (0.5 million more or +25%), Vietnam (0.4 million or +10%) and the Philippines (0.3 million or +10%).

North Asia also recorded high growth (+7%) due to excellent arrival figures in Japan (1.7 million more tourists, or +41%) which is recovering from the 2011
Tohoku earthquake and is well on track to returning to the 8 million tourist mark. Korea also saw outstanding growth (1.3 million tourists or +21%), as well as Hong Kong (China) which recovered 1 million more international tourists or + 7%, and Taiwan (People’s Republic of China) which saw nearly 1 million more arrivals, an impressive growth of 24%.

The latest UNWTO Panel of Tourism Experts’ survey of over 320 responses was received from some 100 countries and territories, and faithfully reflected the weakening in international tourism demand observed over the past months. On a scale of 0 to 200, in which 100 implies “equal” or “no change”, tourism experts from around the world evaluated tourism performance in the four month period of May through August with an average score of 115—somewhat below their outlook for the same period (118) given four months ago, but the same as their evaluation at the time for January through April (115). Experts for Asia and the Pacific rated these four months at 129—the same score as they gave to the first four-month period four months ago, but rather below the 138 they anticipated four months ago.

As per the current four months of, September through December, the Panel members are now less optimistic (109) than they were about the preceding period four months ago (118). The prospects for Asia and the Pacific for September-December 2012 (123) are more optimistic than the ratings given last June to prospects for the previous four-month period (138).

This overall outlook is still positive, however this is only thanks to the Panel members from emerging economies (124), as experts from advanced economies have entered into the territory of negative expectations (97).

UNWTO Panel of Tourism Experts

The latest UNWTO Panel of Tourism Experts’ survey of over 320 responses was received from some 100 countries and territories, and faithfully reflected the weakening in international tourism demand observed over the past months. On a scale of 0 to 200, in which 100 implies “equal” or “no change”, tourism experts from around the world evaluated tourism performance in the four month period of May through August with an average score of 115—somewhat below their outlook for the same period (118) given four months ago, but the same as their evaluation at the time for January through April (115). Experts for Asia and the Pacific rated these four months at 129—the same score as they
The 22nd International Meetings Expo

Tokyo, Japan, 11-12 December 2012

The 22nd International Meetings Expo (IME) was held at the Tokyo International Forum from 10-11 December 2012.

The International Meetings Expo - Introduction

The IME is Japan’s most prolific MICE Industry event. The annual exposition aims to offer attendees and exhibitors direct access to Japan’s major meeting and incentive travel organizers an ideal venue to showcase their products to the Japanese meeting market.

This year’s IME was organized by the Japan Tourism Agency, Japan Congress Convention Bureau (JCCB) and the Japan National Tourism Organization (JNTO).

IME 2012 aimed to enhance the MICE industry overall by offering a diverse array of business matching programs, seminars and other regional promotions.

The programs consisted of seminars targeted especially at conference organizers, medical or scientific association meetings as well as meeting planners. In addition, there were several case studies on bidding for and operating conferences and events.

This year’s expo was attended by more than 3,000 selected key organizers and planners in the meeting industry as well as various national associations and organizations, scientific and academic institutions, private corporations, and convention, incentive tour and corporate meeting planners. In addition, a diverse range of MICE-related enterprises and international buyers were also presented at the site.

Exhibitions

Participating exhibitors include, but not limited to, the local cities and bureaus which promote conventions and tourism, convention venues, professional meeting organizers, hotels, convention/event-related IT companies, interpreter/translation service companies, A/V suppliers and other convention-related service providers.
Special Seminars
On the first day of the event, Mr. Markito Takami, Director of MICE Promotion from the Japan Tourism Agency gave a speech regarding the improvement of international competitiveness of the Japanese meeting industry on the first day.

Mr. Naoto Igarashi, SAKURA International Inc., Tokyo Planning & Sales Division, Executive Director, introduced several new event solutions for MICE organizers.

Recent progress in Indonesia’s MICE Industry was presented by Mr. Rizuk Handayan, of the Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy of Republic of Indonesia.

Mr. Noor Ahmad Hamid, Asia Pacific Chapter Regional Director of the International Congress and Convention Association (ICCA) attended IME and participated in the seminar. Director Hamid briefly spoke about what ICCA is as a global leader in the international association business. An overview on membership worldwide and how ICCA members have the competitive edge in winning this business segment were given.

MICE Leaders’ Symposium
Hosted by the Japan Tourism Agency, the MICE Leaders’ Symposium was held on the second day of the expo. Speakers from Japan and other international countries were invited and shared different visions and ideas on the issue of MICE industry.

Commissioner Norifumi Idee from the Japan Tourism Agency introduced Japan’s state policy on MICE which highlighted its economic impact and the importance of future strategy.

A Case study on Vienna and Tokyo was introduced respectively by Marketing Manager Ulrike von Arnold of Vienna Convention Bureau and Secretary General Hiroshi Naka from the Ministry of Finance, who participated in organizing the 2012 Annual Meetings of the IMF and World Bank Group.

The symposium’s final session was panel discussion with the agenda, “what should we do for MICE business in Japan?” Moderated by Makito Takami, Director of Japan Tourism Agency, five panelists participated in the discussion: Marketing Manager Ulrike von Arnold of Vienna Convention Bureau, CEO of Gold Coast Tourism and Asia Pacific Chapter Chair of ICCA, Martin Winter, Asia Pacific Chapter Regional Director Noor Ahmad Hamid of International Congress and Convention Association (ICCA), CEO Hisao Kawashima from Kawashima Associates, CEO Gary Grimmer from GainingEdge. In detail, role and responsibility of city government and convention bureau, stakeholders and suggestions for strengthening Japan’s MICE industry were discussed.
UNWTO Knowledge Network Session
With the main agenda, catalysing economic development and social progress, the Global Summit on City Tourism was held in Istanbul, Turkey, 14-16 November 2012. This year, the goal for hosting the summit was to: First, bring together the UNWTO Affiliate Members and other relevant stakeholders from the private and public sectors, academic and destinations to create a platform for dialogue on the current and potential challenges and opportunities for cities; Second, enable participants to acquire an overview of the current and future strategies for cities and build synergies among all the stakeholders for a shared vision; and third, build together a set of general guidelines by including integrated and relevant content which can be used as a reference for action by world cities. During the summit, UNWTO Knowledge Session and Symposium, Global Summit on City Tourism, Affiliate Members Plenary Session, and UNWTO Awards Ceremony staged as main programs in recognition of tourism’s strong role as a contributor to the economic, social, cultural and territorial city life.

On the first day of the event, the UNWTO Knowledge Network Session-Vision and Strategic Directions for Knowledge Network Members was held before the
The UNWTO Knowledge Network was initially named as WTO International Centre for Advanced Tourism Studies–CIEST (Troino/Mexico DF) in 1966-1984. Between 1989-2010, it has changed to WTO Education Centres, WTO Network of Education Centres, and UNWTO Education and Science Council, respectively. In January 2011, the UNWTO Knowledge Network was established to support the UNWTO and its Members in matters of science, technology, innovation and knowledge management in tourism. Tourism knowledge includes area of travel facilitation, marketing and promotion, climate change, ethics, development or poverty reduction through tourism.

The mission of this network is to bridge the gap between the knowledge generators and those with the capacity to put such theories into practice in four ways. First, lead a community of knowledge where theory creators, policy makers and practitioners proactively participate in the creation, dissemination and application of knowledge related to tourism. Second, support UNWTO, its member states and affiliate members by providing research and analysis for their operations, policy and governance. Third, promote partnership and free exchange of knowledge and best practices among its members and between national, regional and international institutions and organizations. Fourth, develop a repository of recommendations, best practices, standards, codes and norms with wide application for operations, policy and governance in tourism.

Currently, members of the Knowledge Network include 128 institutions, organizations and enterprises from 48 different countries with a demonstrated research competency and extensive experience in development and innovation in tourism.

In this year, the objective of the session was to an open debate on the vision of the future of the Knowledge Network and on setting the direction that should lead to successful results.

After the opening remark, “New membership development strategy: The Knowledge Network within the Affiliate Members” was presented by Donald Hawkins, Vice Chairman, UNWTO Affiliate Members Board and Special Advisor to the Secretary-General for the UNWTO Knowledge Network. Also, following right after the presentation, there was a report on the Knowledge Network program of work for 2012-2013, presented by Eunji Tae, UNWTO Knowledge Network.
members and the UNWTO Themis Foundation. Thus, the Knowledge Network Work-plan is aiming to consolidate the identification of member states knowledge management needs, knowledge network forums, symposiums and seminars in partnership with member states and affiliate members, encourage new member development strategy, and catalyse networking opportunities within interactive virtual homes and social media. In 2013, the Knowledge Network aims to actively participate and open meetings, forums and a summit to foster the connection among the UNWTO, its member states and affiliate members.

With the presentation and an open session discussing about visions and strategic directions with the participants, they have reached to the conclusion that the network will be leading the tourism sector in a right direction, also evaluating the session was great chance to look into where we are today and where we aim to be, debating what issues face as we move into an ambitious initiative forward and defining the programs for the coming years.

**Global Summit on City Tourism**

On 15 November, the summit started at Haliç Congress Center with the opening speeches by Turkish Culture and Tourism Minister Ertaş Türk, Istanbul Mayor Kadir Topbaş, Chairman of TOBB Rifat Hisarcıklıoğlu, and the Secretary-General of UNWTO, Mr. Taleb Rifai.

Günay expressed that “Development of cities is an important objective of tourism. In this perspective, we are working to develop new international destinations to market together with Istanbul”. Istanbul Mayor Kadir Topbaş said, “Now cities should consider tourism as the main target for sustainable development. One of the most important issues of sustainable development is tourism”.

Secretary-General of the UNWTO, Mr. Taleb Rifai announced that the UNWTO is going to publish a report on 21 tourism cities. “Best place to announce the report is Istanbul. We will create a Declaration of Istanbul,” added Mr. Rifai.

The summit was consisted of three sessions talking about the key agendas in each session.

The first session started with the agenda “The Strategic Role of Tourism in the Development of Cities”. There was a keynote speech by a special guest, Mr. Joan Clos, Executive Director of the United Nations Human Settlements Program (UN-HABITAT). In the keynote speech, Mr. Clos noted that tourism cannot work together with war. Tourism works together with peace. He added that tourism will be an important event of 21st century. Also, he brought attention to Mustafa Kemal Atatürk’s great vision by making Turkish Republic as world’s one of the first nation that gives Turkish women equal rights and opportunities, saying that the government should provide more employment opportunities for women and the most important area is tourism.

Next session was followed by a debate with public and private professionals in the tourism sector. The debate topic was “What Makes for Success in the World’s City Destinations?”

Another important agenda “Smart Cities: Innovation and the Future of City Tourism” was discussed at the last session of the summit. By discussing, debating and sharing knowledge and experiences during the three sessions under the main theme “City Tourism”, participants had come to the ramification that tourism sector is now a vital sector globally influencing in social, economic, cultural and in the environment. To successfully lead the tourism sector in the coming future, related initiatives should be correctly planned, developed and efficiently managed. Especially, tourism can be a catalyst for a vigorous economic development and social progress in cities by re-building infrastructure, generating jobs and a skilled labor force, stimulating local business entrepreneurship, developing strong public/private partnerships, attracting other economic activities, creating distinctive local attractions, building a service-friendly culture and promoting these advantages effectively. Recently, the concept of “smart cities” has been a key to success for many city destinations, which means that tourism destinations need creativity for developing new products, addressing niche markets and upgrading the quality of the services and improving the competitiveness overall.
In the evening on 15 November, a UNWTO Awards Ceremony and Gala Dinner were held to celebrate the meaningful event of the summit. The UNWTO Ulysses Awards are given for Excellence and Innovation in Tourism to whom have contributed to the advancement of tourism through knowledge creation and innovation.

In 2012, 13 projects from 10 countries received awards for their creative solutions to various problems encountered in tourism such as ‘Public Administration Policy Innovation’, ‘Institutional Innovation’, ‘Innovation in NGOs’, and ‘Innovation in Research and Technology’.

The representatives from Belgium and Malaysia received their awards from the Minister of Culture and Tourism, Ertuğrul Günay while Istanbul Governor Avni Mutlu gave out the awards to the representatives from Spain and Kenya.

On the last day of the summit, there was an Affiliate Members Plenary Session and UNWTO Knowledge Network Symposium, offering further networking opportunities for members and participants. The UNWTO Knowledge Network Symposium and the Global Summit on City Tourism provided a chance to recognize the changing global context for tourism and set new challenges and priority areas for action and move forward. The event also provided representatives with a greater overall understanding of the complex dynamics linking urban management and city tourism.
The 6th UNWTO Forum on Tourism Trends and Outlook

Guilin, China, 11-13 October 2012

The 6th UNWTO Forum on Tourism Trends and Outlook was held on 11-13 October 2012 in Guilin, China in collaboration with the Pacific Asia Travel Association (PATA), The Hong Kong Polytechnic University’s School of Hotel and Tourism Management, and the Guilin Municipal Government. Overarched with the theme of collaboration and partnership, this forum provided a platform for government offices, NGOs, industry practitioners and academics to share their perspectives, research findings, and practices on collaboration and partnerships in tourism.

Technical Sessions

The technical sessions, held on the first day of the forum aimed to provide practitioners and academics with an occasion to exchange views and experiences on collaboration and partnership in tourism with both research presentations and best practice examples from around the globe. The first day’s three presentations gave complementary perspective in alignment with the Forum’s theme on collaboration and partnership.

Mr. John Kester, Program Manager of Tourism Trends and Marketing Strategies of the UNWTO, provided an overview on recent tourism trends, outlook and issues. Based on UNWTO statistics, a very positive scenario was presented regarding international tourism in 2011. He mentioned that the UNWTO Tourism Confidence Index for the year 2012 is still weak due to the preceding financial crisis, but it is clearly on the positive and has begun to rise.

Professor Haiyan Song, Chair Professor and Associate Dean of the School of Hotel and Tourism Management at Hong Kong Polytechnic University, spoke on ‘mobilizing knowledge for better practice’. He shared his experience in conducting and completing two applied research projects at his home institution, and elaborated on how academic research could be made useful to the industry, through knowledge translation and transfer in both instances.
Mr. John Koldowski, Special Advisor to the CEO of PATA, addressed on collaboration and partnership in tourism in light of the metrics adopted in the new millennium. The presentation highlighted a new paradigm for destination marketing in an era of the internet and the capitalizing of web-based technology for the creation of visitor experiences.

The subsequent sessions for collaboration and partnership in action, products and markets, and innovation and knowledge transfer further elaborated on what was highlighted in the opening presentations.

**Plenary Sessions**

On the second day, the Forum featured a grand opening ceremony, a keynote session with three renowned speakers, and a panel discussion addressing public-private partnerships in destination marketing.

‘Regional collaboration in research and promotion: The European experience’ was presented by Mr Leslie Vella (Chairman, Market Intelligence Group, European Travel Commission, Belgium). He emphasized the benefits of regional collaboration in tourism research and promotion from the European Travel Commission’s (ETC) perspective. He also addressed that regional collaboration further enhances overseas marketing capabilities, which is an essential achievement that should not be underestimated because most travelers opt to travel to countries rather than continents.

Professor Kaye Chon (Chair Professor and Dean, School of Hotel and Tourism Management, The Hong Kong Polytechnic University) presented about ‘University-industry partnership for hospitality and tourism education: The story of Hotel ICON’. He said that academia-industry collaborations are essential to the capacity building of its scientific community for informed practices.

Professor Marion Joppe (School of Hospitality and Tourism Management, University of Guelph, Canada) presented about ‘Collaboration and partnership amongst destination marketing organizations’. Her presentation added a North American perspective to the program’s theme. As an ongoing collaborative practice, destination marketing organizations benefit from access to and the analysis of market intelligence. In sum, collaborative endeavors as such could help develop value-added packages to increase transactions and yield for stakeholders in the partnership.

Overall, centering on the theme of collaboration and partnership, the three keynote speeches delivered rich content for thoughts for policy makers, destination marketers, and academics working in the field of tourism and hospitality. Following the presentations, a variety of questions were raised and entertained during the period of interactions.

A Panel Discussion was held under the theme of Public-Private Partnerships in Destination Marketing. It featured four intervention speeches to set up the context for the intended panel discussion. Following these interventions, the panelists were then invited to either address specific questions on public-private partnerships in tourism, or to share their experiences and perspectives on this theme from their own working regions or organizations.

The forum has successfully held with more than 150 registered and invited delegates representing twenty-eight countries or regions, as well as local audience members.
The Chinese city of Hangzhou was showcased as a premier MICE destination, playing host to the UNWTO/HTC High-Level Asia Pacific Symposium on MICE Tourism from 15-18 October 2012.

The event, opened by Deputy Mayor of Hangzhou Municipal Government Mr. Zhang Jianting, was the first of its kind to bring together government officials and industry experts for four days of knowledge-sharing, interaction and informative presentations.

Presentations ranged in subject matter from Regional Tourism Trends and Outlook to the MICE sector on a global scale and the status of MICE tourism in China. Another key topic of focus was the result of the recently completed UNWTO Study on MICE tourism in Hangzhou, a project led by the UNWTO’s anchor consultant of the study and symposium keynote speaker, Mr. Gary Grimmer.

The position of the city of Hangzhou as a strong MICE destination was reinforced by not only the successful organization of the symposium but also by the prominence given to the event by the Hangzhou Municipal Government.

“We need to understand the nature of the benefits of MICE industry development” said Mr. Li Hong, Director of Hangzhou Tourism Commission. “This is the industry that will make our city more competitive and more prosperous.”

MICE tourism, a sector delivering the traditional benefits associated with tourism-export earnings, employment opportunities and a chance to build international connections through cultural interactions, doors for new business linkages, knowledge interchanges and network development.

Speaking on tourism trends in the region, especially looking ahead to 2030, Mr. Xu Jing, the Director of UNWTO’s Regional Programme for Asia and the Pacific, noted the strength of the region as a MICE hub: “The market demand is there” he noted. “But things do not happen automatically. Political commitment and leadership [in prioritizing the sector] are needed to
institutionalize mechanisms and arrangements that will make MICE prosper.”

Ms. Xu Fan, one of two keynote domestic speakers, highlighted the difference between MICE tourism and other forms of tourism: “The essential difference is that MICE is primarily about business (developing your business, developing new partnerships, etc.), not about leisure. Participants in MICE tourism are demanding – they have different expectations, there are different supply chains, and there is a greater focus on efficiency. We cannot follow the same practices as in leisure tourism.”

Consumer attitudes are changing, Ms. Xu noted, highlighting that many people are now more cautious in consumption and seek both value and transparency in pricing. People are also looking for more ‘green’ events and events that are managed sustainably, ensuring that the benefits (economic, socio-cultural and environmental) flow back to the host region.

This echoed the opening remarks of Director Xu, who noted the importance of a MICE industry that benefits both the host and the tourist: “In 2012, 1 billion travellers will cross international borders,” he noted. “Many of these will be travelling for business. How do these travellers affect the economies, the livelihoods, the environments of the destinations they visit? How do we ensure that these travellers have an experience which benefits them, and also benefits the destination?”

Ms. Xu also noted the importance of keeping the development of MICE tourism in perspective, particularly in the current global climate of economic instability: “Although Asia and the Pacific is a fast growth region, we are not immune to the global economic downturns,” she said. “Global, regional and localized challenges will all need to be considered for the future of MICE tourism development.”

However, the mood of MICE tourism development and management in Asia and the Pacific is positive, noted Director Xu: “Governments in Asia are the role models for how governments should treat tourism,” he stated.

“Our region today is in a key defining period in its history. […] It is important to make the most of the opportunities we face while not forgetting the challenges and responsibilities that go alongside them.”

The UNWTO/HTC High-Level Asia Pacific Symposium on MICE Tourism consisted of 2.5 days of presentations by international and domestic experts as well as a panel session and country-specific best practice case studies from Malaysia, Vietnam, Republic of Korea, India, Indonesia and the Philippines. The main aims of the event were to build networks, enable knowledge-sharing and boost intra regional cooperation among UNWTO’s Asia Pacific Member States.

The participants, which comprised government and private sector representatives from sixteen countries, were treated as an array of Hangzhou’s best tourism products during and after the event, including a visit to a tea plantation and museum, a visit to Longyin Temple, a boat tour on the West Lake and the viewing of the shows “Impression West Lake” and “The Romance of the Song Dynasty.”
Harry Hwang, Deputy Regional Director for Asia and the Pacific made a visit to Pyongyang, DPR Korea recently. The main objective of mission to the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea was to support competitiveness of DPRK as a tourist destination by providing a capacity building opportunity for the tourism-marketing professionals in the country. In order to achieve this objective, UNWTO and the National Tourism Administration of DPRK agreed to organize a workshop in which UNWTO would provide an overview of the latest global tourism trends and marketing tools used in successful destinations. In addition, the UNWTO would present basic marketing practices which could be used by government officials and tour operators.

The workshop in particular was designed to offer suggestions and recommendations to DPRK in developing adequate policies for promoting the country in order to attract more visitors from Europe and South East Asia.

An experienced UNWTO consultant, Mr. Jens Thraenhard, co-founder and President of Dragon Trails based in Beijing joined this mission.

After the 6 days mission to DPRK including 3 days technical tours to various tourist attractions in Pyongyang, Nampo and Kaesung and a successful workshop in coordination with the National Tourism Administration of DPRK, the UNWTO Task Force agrees that strong economic benefits can be derived from increased tourism.

Mr. Thraenhard, from his site inspections and interviews concluded with the following recommendations: To
increase promotions and attract visitor arrivals; to promote packaging to extend average length of stay; to seek to attract high-end travelers to strengthen foreign exchange earnings.

The DPRK’s existing tourism infrastructure including its hotels, restaurants, tour guides, ground transportation and a network of good highways gives DPRK the immediate capability to efficiently handle greater visitor volume than it currently does. The major constraint lies in the insufficiency of its destination marketing, and the consequent international lack of awareness that the DPRK is open to tourism and capable of providing a safe and pleasant travel experiences. Other constraints include visa-issuing procedures limited air access. As most international tourists currently travel via Beijing to Pyongyang, it is required to also apply for a Chinese visa, which is an additional bottleneck.

Key recommendations center on the need for the DPRK’s National Tourism Administration to intensify and target its marketing and promotional efforts in key source markets. International awareness of the DPRK is currently driven by politics and little is known (both at the tourism industry and consumer levels) DPRK as a tourism destination.

An expanded and sharper marketing effort together with active public relations and social media can help the country generate a more positive image that will better attract visitors. The mission report further details strategy for developing a stronger brand image as a tourism destination.

The task force recommends focusing on a hierarchy of short, medium and long haul markets to give DPRK’s inbound tourism greater potential and resilience. Competitive pricing, close attention to the distribution channels for package tours and website development, as well as social media are some important elements of the marketing mix.

The UNWTO Task Force reviewed the country’s overall infrastructure. The report identified areas such as ground transport placing the standard as adequate. The report places priority on upgrading facilities including hotel rooms, souvenir and handicraft shops, trains and airport to ensure they meet the visitors’ expectations. Tour guides were found to be of a high standard while human resource development in other areas merits greater attention.

The UNWTO Task Force recommended simplifying visa-issuing procedures, attracting foreign carriers to Pyongyang, and promoting the attractiveness of the rail trip from Beijing to Pyongyang.

DPRK’s government at the highest level is recommended to consider formulating a National Tourism Policy Statement underlining its support for tourism development and growth as a key industry within the overall economy and identifies the preferred means of implementation.

Lastly, the UNWTO Task Force suggested the DPRK to maintain closer ties with international organizations like UNWTO and PATA in particular as many destinations engage in cooperation to achieve its tourism objectives.
Maritime Silk Road Seminar at the 2012 JATA Tourism Forum and Travel Showcase

An event titled, “Seeking Tourism Potentiality of the Maritime Silk Road, from the aspect of former NHK Chief Director” was held on 21 September at the 2012 JATA Tourism Forum and Travel Showcase at Tokyo Big Sight, organized by the UNWTO Regional Support Office for Asia and the Pacific.

Mr. Hajime Suzuki, the former Chief Director of NHK TV program “Silk Road” and “Maritime Silk Road” in 1980’ was a presenter. Mr. Suzuki is commonly referred to as the “oriental Marco Polo”, as he gained popularity travelling throughout the Silk Road region while filming his TV documentary which drew vast interest in Japan at the time.

Mr. Suzuki, in his opening presentation, talked about his Silk Road journey for the NHK TV program which commenced in Xian, China and continued to the Mediterranean Sea, and employed various means of travel including jeep, camel and horse. He then reminisced about an exciting episode when he and his team found amphora from the sunken ship in Tartou, Syria. The amphora found were used around the same time when Marco Polo journeyed to China 1300 years ago. He then mentioned Syria’s importance as the point of origin of the Silk Road though Syria is facing hard times these days.

He later went on to mention notable points of history such as frankincense from Oman which was given to King Solomon from the Queen of Sheba, and the coin of the Roman Emperor that symbolize the regions cultural and historical virtues of the Maritime Silk Road. He further shared stories of other attractive places along the Maritime Silk Road in Thailand, Malaysia and Indonesia.

Mr. Suzuki concluded, emphasizing the Maritime Silk Road’s tremendous importance as a major asset for the future tourism development, especially in the Asia and the Pacific region. In recent years, the tourism industry has hoped very strongly for the world peace and we all needed the intercultural communication to deepen the mutual understanding, especially in this current global situation.

During his presentation, Mr. Suzuki showed precious photos which he took during his Silk Road journey. Approximately 40 people attended the seminar from the tourism industry, travel writers, and students who are interested in tourism. The content of the seminar was very fruitful for those were looking for new traveling routes and planning traveling packages.

Notice

As of 3 December 2012, Regional Support Office for Asia and the Pacific relocated to the below address:

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Mr. Tadaaki Asanuma, Chief of the UNWTO Regional Support Office for Asia and the Pacific, delivered his speech on “Maritime Silk Road” during the occasion of the 6th UNWTO/PATA Forum on Tourism Trends and Outlook in Guilin, China on October 2012.

In his speech, Mr. Asanuma presented the framework of the Maritime Silk Road Project by addressing the following five categories:

- Travel worldwide area
- Journey back in time
- Culture exchange
- Stimulating the movement of a variety of goods and materials
- Acknowledge and respect cultural differences

Mr. Asanuma further stressed the importance of cooperation between countries in the region, and he spoke of the role of organizations like UNESCO being vital towards the project’s overall success.

Mr. Asanuma, in addition, mentioned that the purpose of UNWTO was to contribute to global prosperity and to foster mutual understanding in the field of tourism. While increasing GDP and employment rates were among key objectives, he emphasized that respecting other people and pursuing peace were very crucial, particularly at this present time, referring: “… since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defenses of peace must be constructed” (UNESCO Constitution).

Lastly, he took an example of Lu Xun (1881-1936), a Chinese author who studied medicine in his youthful time in Japan, where he built up close relationships with a mentor and fellow students. Lu Xun later published an essay titled “Mr. Fujino” which based on his experiences, recalling his mentor respectfully and affectionately. Mr. Asanuma extended that further opportunities for extended intercultural exchange (genuine heart-to-heart communication) among the world’s youth would support greater world peace. He concluded that he would like to witness greater “heart-to-heart” exchange in the tourism industry.
Q1: Could you tell us the role of your organization as it relates to the development of China’s tourism industry?

Since China launched its reform and opening-up program, China’s tourism realized leapfrog development and has made historic achievements, and is currently entering a new period of rapid development. The China National Tourism Administration (CNTA) is the main department responsible for tourism-related work in the State Council (cabinet) of the People’s Republic of China and, under the leadership of the central government, has played an important role in coordinating the development of and formulating relevant policies for the tourism industry as well as promoting the growth of the tourism market according to the following mandates:

Firstly, to coordinate the development of tourism industry, draw up development policies, plans and standards, prepare the draft of relevant laws, regulations and rules and supervise their implementation, and provide guidance for tourism development at local levels; Secondly, to formulate and implement market development strategies for domestic, inbound and outbound tourism programs, publicize China’s tourism image to overseas audience, and organize major promotion activities; provide instructions for the operations of Chinese tourism institutions based in foreign countries; Thirdly, to carry out work related to the survey, planning, development and protection of tourism resources; provide guidance for the planning and designing of major tourism areas, tourism destinations and tourism routes, encourage public participation in recreation and vacation tourism. Fourth, to uphold order in the tourism market, ensure quality of tourism services through supervision and administration, and protect the lawful rights and interests of tourists and tourism operators; Fifth, to promote international tourism exchanges and cooperation, and handle matters related to cooperation with the United Nations World Tourism Organization and other international tourism organizations; Sixth, to draw up policies for the operation of Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan-oriented tourism in collaboration with other competent departments and arrange for their implementation, provide guidance for tourism promotion targeted at the market of Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan; Lastly, to formulate and implement the plan for the development of tourism professionals, provide guidance for work related to tourism training; draw up professional

Chairman of the China National Tourism Administration, Shao Qiwei
requirements and rating standards for tourism workers in collaboration with other competent departments and provide guidance for their implementation.

Q2: Given China’s tremendous diversity, it would seem challenging to integrate local communities. How does your organization manage this? What kind of system does your country adopt?

Tourism is a comprehensive industry, which includes food and beverage, accommodation, transportation, travel, shopping, entertainment and many other services. At the same time, many government departments undertake tourism-related responsibilities, such as the development of tourism resources, the quality of tourism services, tourism market regulation and tourism security. In keeping with the special features of tourism development, CNTA pays attention to coordination, consultation and cooperation in its work and has taken steps to mobilize the initiatives of all quarters. We let relevant departments and regions play their due roles and ensured the sustained and relatively fast growth of the tourism industry. The main approaches we have taken include the following:

Firstly, to strengthen the regulation and guidance of tourism development by implementing laws, carrying out standardized management and formulating tourism plans. The Standing committee of the Chinese National People's Congress is deliberating on the draft of the People's Republic of China's Law on Tourism. The CNTA has also played a facilitating role in the formulation of local tourism regulations with the 31 provinces (autonomous regions and province-level municipalities). The CNTA pays close attention to the role of tourism standards in improving the quality of all aspects of tourism services. Currently, we have promulgated 22 national tourism standards, 18 standards for the tourism industry and 122 local tourism standards. The CNTA has also provided support for local tourism development by drafting tourism development plans covering tourism resources concentrated regions and multiple administrative jurisdictions.

Secondly, to mobilize resources from all quarters to support tourism development by formulating major policy documents. In 2009, the State Council issued the Opinions on Speeding up the Development of Tourism Industry, proposing two major strategic goals, i.e. making tourism a strategic pillar industry of the Chinese economy and a modern service industry with greater public satisfaction. The development of the tourism industry was incorporated into the overall national development strategy. The release of the document has placed tourism higher on the agenda of local authorities and government departments, and provided important guarantee for accelerating the development of tourism industry. In the same year, the State Council also introduced Opinions on Promoting the Development of Hainan as an International Tourism Island.

Thirdly, to promote the scientific development of tourism industry by guiding the efforts of local government. We have learned from our past experience that the local government plays a leading role in tourism development. The importance attached by the local government to the tourism industry is vitally important for its development. In recent years, the Chairman and Vice Chairmen of CNTA have attended several high-level tourism development conferences held by provincial (autonomous regional and municipal) governments and shared their views and suggestions on tourism development with the participants, which greatly boosted the development of tourism industry. Local governments have also put forward policy documents to support the development of tourism.

Fourthly, to promote tourism development by cooperation with other government departments related to the tourism industry. We actively promote tourism's integrated development with the primary industry represented by agriculture, the secondary industry represented by the equipment manufacturing industry and the tertiary industry represented by the transportation, financial, cultural and information industries. The CNTA has signed agreements on strategic cooperation in tourism with the industrial, agricultural, cultural, commercial, financial and information industries, forming synergy for the development of tourism industry.
3. Please provide an overview of China’s outbound tourism market.

The tourism industry is one of the first industries in China to open up to the outside world and operate according to market-based economic mechanisms. In the last ten years or so, in particular, China’s tourism industry has further opened up to the outside and fulfilled all the pledges it has made when joining the World Trade Organization. The relevant areas in tourism continued to open up and exchanges with the rest of the world have also deepened. Up to date, 148 countries and regions have been given the status of Approved Destinations (ADS) for organized tour groups from China, and 114 ADS agreements are currently under implementation. China is already the third largest source of outbound tourists in the world.

In terms of the market on general, the following features can be observed in China’s outbound tourism market. The first is rapid growth. As in the past five years, the number of China’s outbound tourists has grown at 15% annually and in 2011, the figure reached 70.25 million. Second is significant rise of the share of outbound travel for private purposes. In 2011, the number of tourists in this category reached 64.1178 million, accounting for 91.27% of the total. Third is fast development of mid- and long-distance markets. Present’s Chinese tourists can be seen everywhere around the world. Though surrounding countries and regions still attract the bulk of the Chinese tourists, long-distance destinations are displaying more and more allure for them. Mid- and long-distance destinations such as Europe, North America and Oceania are growing rapidly. Fourth is one of the highest rankings in international tourism consumption. According to the figures of the World Tourism Organization, in 2011, the total consumption from China’s outbound tourism reached USD 72.6 billion, and China’s outbound tourism contributed to more than 7% of the world tourism market.

4. What are the main responsibilities of CNTA offices overseas?

The CNTA has 19 overseas offices, which are mostly in countries and regions in Asia, North America, Europe and Oceania. The offices carry out the following four responsibilities: First, organize publicity, promotion and market research in major tourist source countries and regions within their respective jurisdictions, timely understand the needs of the overseas market and convey the information back to home, guide and support local regions and relevant enterprises in actively development and build new industries, routes and products that meet the market demand; Second, to conduct tourism exchanges and cooperation with the competent authorities of the countries they are responsible for to serve as a window and bridge, enhance communication and cooperation with local tourism authorities and relevant international organizations; Third, to provide assistance for the activities carried out by CNTA delegations and delegations of local tourism communities in countries within their jurisdictions, including tourism publicity and promotion, friendly visits, participation in international meetings, study tours and exchange programs; Fourth, to support Chinese embassies and consulates in the host countries in handling emergencies involving Chinese tourists to protect the rights of Chinese tourists overseas.

5. According to Tourism Highlights 2012, China ranked third in International Tourist Arrivals in 2010 recording 57.6 million people. A point of interest is that China was the only Asian country in the Top 10 on the list. How do you view this result and what do you think China’s strong points are compared to other Asian countries?

According to the latest UNWTO statistics, China maintained its position as the third largest country in the world in terms of international tourist arrival in 2011. We are pleased about this result. In my view, the statistics of the UNWTO are the best testimony to the advantages China holds as an international tourist destination, which mainly include the following:

First, distinctive tourism resources and a deep reserve of cultural resources. China occupies a large landmass, picturesque landscape and a magnificent civilization. There are many ethnic groups in China, each with its own customs and traditions. Chinese cuisine is globally reputable, and China’s tourism resources are also rich and diverse. Currently, China has 43 World Heritage
Sites and 24 World Geoparks, ranking the first in both categories worldwide. A sound natural environment and a profound historical and cultural background, which constitute the basic resources for the very survival and development of tourism industry, are also the most attractive elements of Chinese tourism.

Second, a diverse mix of tourism products that is internationally competitive. In recent years, new forms of tourism operations have rapidly emerged, adding to the variety of tourism products in China. While traditional tourism products are being strengthened, recreation and vacation tourism such as ice and snow tourism, hot spring tourism, cruise tourism, ocean resort tourism, MICE tourism, incentive travels, therapeutics tourism and expedition tourism are also thriving. China’s diverse and quality tourism products have well served the needs of foreign tourists. In order to attract foreign tourists, in 2009, we launched 12 main tourism routes, including the Silk Road, Three Gorges of the Yangtse River and Qinghai-Tibet Railway. They all give strong support to the image of China’s tourism.

Third, political stability, social harmony and a better tourism environment. At the recently concluded 18th National Congress of the Communist Party of China (CPC), the new leadership of the CPC Central Committee was elected and China made a successful transition of power at its highest level. This fully shows that China experiences political stability, social harmony and people lead a satisfactory life. As the Chinese economy continues to develop stably and rapidly, transportation, urban development and tourism infrastructure are further improved, making tourism significantly more accessible and convenient. The accommodation capacity in the tourism industry in such areas as travel agencies, hotels, scenic spots as well as vehicle and ship transportation is further improved. These have all created better conditions for the development of China’s inbound tourism. Meanwhile, as the tourism industry further opens up, exchanges and cooperation in tourism between China and other countries and regions will become closer, and the world will also know more about China. Such factors also play an important role in attracting more foreign tourists to China.

6. What are China’s promotional strategies to attract foreign tourists?

The Chinese government attaches great importance to the development of inbound travel market. We have mainly taken the following steps to attract foreign tourists:

We have routine plans for arranging different localities in China to participate in major overseas tourism exhibitions and carry out special promotion campaigns on their tourism products. We invite large-scale overseas tourism operators and mainstream media organizations to China to become more familiar with our tourism products through visits and interviews. In 2012, we participated in 23 international fairs such as the ITB Berlin in Germany. We held 8 overseas promotion campaigns in places like Japan, the Republic of Korea, Southeast Asia and Russia. Nearly 1,000 journalists and tourism business people in 63 groups from Europe, North America and Asia were invited to study the tourism industry in China. By organizing international exchange activities for tourism, we also actively promote China’s tourism image and its tourism products. The annual China International Travel Mart has become one of the biggest and most influential comprehensive tourism fairs in the Asia Pacific. So far, 14 marts have been held and in 2012, 104 countries and regions participated in it. We pay close attention to the role of advertising, and have scaled up investment in launching advertising campaigns targeted at the public as a whole and specialized agencies. In large tourism source markets such as New York, London and Rome, we launched outdoors and mobile advertisements to promote China’s tourism image and produced good results. In recent years, we have innovated in our methods and placed greater emphasis on promoting China’s tourism with the use of website, text message, video, blog, microblog, smart phone application, online game and other new media platforms. We have drafted the Medium- and Long-Term Plan for the Development of Inbound Tourism Market to provide policy guidance for the relevant programs. We have strengthened the building of China’s tourism brands and will soon be launching new national and international tourism promotional campaign image globally, and promote China’s tourism image overseas with coordinated steps.
1. What are your main responsibilities at the UNWTO?

I am the Manager of the UNWTO Programme of Tourism Trends and Marketing Strategies. In short, the first aim of our team is to make sense out of the large amount of data available from various sources, and to examine short-term and long-term trends in tourism. The marketing Strategies element is about how to most effectively perform marketing of tourism destinations and products. For this we developed a series of handbooks for instance product development, segmentation, e-marketing, and branding, and we also organize or participate in conferences and workshops on the subject.

2. What did you do in your career prior to employment with the UNWTO?

Before joining the UNWTO, I worked for seven years in my home country at Statistics Netherlands. I studied social sciences with a specialization in research methods and techniques and I also worked for some years at the university.

3. Regarding the UNWTO World Tourism Barometer which is published every other month, where and how is it utilized in tourism industry?

What we try to do is offer an overview of how tourism demand is developing around the world. For this we collect and analyze data from a large number of destination countries and source markets, from airlines and hotel accommodation, etc. Furthermore, we survey three times a year our UNWTO Panel of Experts to take stock of their evaluation of and outlook for tourism performance in their destination or business. As we envisaged when we started 10 years ago, the UNWTO World Tourism Barometer has develop in a widely appreciated tool used by many UNWTO member countries as reference to compare their own performance with, and industry does use it in the same way. As we deal with data of over 200 destinations worldwide, are not in the position to offer too much detail.
4. What were some of the biggest changes in world and Asian tourism during 2012? And reflecting on this, what keywords come to your mind?

We have been somewhat surprised by the continuing robustness of tourism demand given the still comparative uncertain economic environment, particularly Asia once again led tourism growth. With these results, UNWTO is confident that by the end of the year a total of over one billion tourists will have travelled internationally in one year for the first time. 13 December has been designated to symbolically mark the arrival of the one billionth tourist. In order to celebrate this historic milestone, the UNWTO has launched the campaign One Billion Tourists: One billion Opportunities calling on one billion tourists to make their actions count, for more information see http://1billiontourists.unwto.org.

5. What are your predictions for world and Asian tourism in 2013?

Worldwide we expect growth to continue, but at a slower pace in the range of 2% to 4%. We have not yet prepared regional forecasts made forecast by region, which will be included in the UNWTO World Tourism Barometer of January. However, it is more than likely that Asia and the Pacific will continue to exceed the global average.

6. Do you foresee any newly emerging tourism nations, particularly in Asia? What strategies might other countries need to adopt as a consequence?

Many Asian destinations have shown a very strong development in the past decades. However there are still a number of destinations that have for various reasons not yet been able to fully realize their potential, for instance Myanmar or some of the South Asian destinations. In the coming decade certainly some more destinations will further develop, but from a low base and still need to build infrastructure, to develop products and do the marketing. Other destinations, however, should not be worried by this as there is still a very strong overall growth in demand to be expected, particularly out of China, but also some of the other regional source markets. So in Asia for all destinations it is possible to grow further, provided they continue to shape the appropriate conditions and succeed to further develop attractive products and offering value for money.
The Korea-ASEAN Tourism Partnership Program (KATPP) was initiated following the 'Declaration on the Korea-ASEAN Comprehensive Partnership' drafted at the 2004 Korea-ASEAN Summit. While Korean travellers departing to ASEAN countries has increased, the number of tour guides from ASEAN representative countries with Korean language skills has been limited. Hence, there have been requests from ASEAN countries for further tour guide language training initiatives to elevate the visitor service experience for Korean tourists.

This project has since been further expanded to enhance exchanges between Korea and ASEAN countries in the field of tourism so as to invite public officials from the central or local governments, national tourism organizations, and convention and visitors bureaus of ASEAN member countries.

The program included Korean language classes, field trips to major tourist attractions, professional training which included workshops and seminars, on-site field training; The two-month program was hosted from October to December 2012.

Four participants from different ASEAN countries shared their thoughts regarding the program and tourism industry.

Q1) Please give me your impression on this educational program and seminar: What did you expect to learn from this experience and what was actually gained from it?

“I have already participated in similar program before, so my expectation was somewhat same with what I actually experienced this time in Korea. I had a chance to learn Korean language and also there was a time for country presentation. I had the chance to travel within Korea and learn more about its culture through interacting with people. It was a great experience.”
Q2) Similar to current tourism in Korea utilizing medical service, Korean Wave and many other contents, what could be the best source for strengthening tourism industry of your country?

“First, people in Philippines are well known for their warm hospitality and passionate endeavors which are quite important in the tourism industry. Also, language is another crucial source in the Philippines’ tourism industry since we are English speaking country. It is useful when promoting country to others. Last strong resource is natural environment such as volcanoes and beaches. Those are quite unique resources and uniqueness appeals to tourists.”

Q3) Do you think Asian countries need to cooperate together in order to advance tourism industry? What activities do you think should be done via network among Asian countries?

“ASEAN region has been operating organization called ASEAN Tourism Association (ASEANTA) since 1971 with the aim of promoting ASEAN tourism. ASEANTA is a non-profit tourism association comprising both public and private tourism sector organizations from ASEAN countries.”

“Also, there is an annual event called the ASEAN Tourism Forum (ATF) and this event involves all the tourism industry sectors of the 10 member nations of ASEAN: Brunei Darussalam; Cambodia; Indonesia; Lao PDR; Malaysia; Myanmar; the Philippines; Singapore; Thailand and Viet Nam. Each year, the hosting of ATF is rotated among the member countries and in 2012, ATF marked the 31st anniversary since its inauguration in Malaysia in 1981.”

“Since there already exists a network, I think it’s important to take advantage of it to achieve full potential. Doing so will strengthen the tourism industry within ASEAN, and Asian regions will prosper much more.”

Q1) Please give me your impression on this educational program and seminar: What did you expect to learn from this experience and what was actually gained from it?

“First of all, I would like to thank the KTO for this wonderful opportunity to learn about Korea. Through several field trips, I had direct experience and understanding about what Korea needs and wants in the tourism sector. Also, tourism promotion and marketing strategies of Korea were the most precious things obtained from the program.”

Q2) Similar to current tourism in Korea utilizing medical service, Korean Wave and many other contents, what could be the best source for strengthening tourism industry of your country?

“Cambodia’s drama and music can be one of the tourism sources which are equivalent to the Korean Wave. Also, eco-tourism utilizing natural resources is valuable property for country like us. Nowadays, cultural tourism is a main tourism format in Cambodia.”

Q3) Do you think Asian countries need to cooperate together in order to advance tourism industry? What activities do you think should be done via network among Asian countries?

“ASEAN Tourism Strategic plan was put into action in 2011 and will be valid until 2015. This plan serves as reference for national tourism organizations in carrying out tourism programs in the Southeast Asian region and is a follow-up to a road map for integration of tourism sector. The ASEAN Tourism Management plan which suggests three different working groups: ASEAN tourism promotion and communication; tourism product; and tourism quality development. This kind of ASEAN cooperation has to expand into Asian regions and all regions have to work hand in hand and achieve goal in tourism industry as a whole.”
Q1) Please give me your impression on this educational program and seminar: What did you expect to learn from this experience and what was actually gained from it?

“This program provided me a chance to learn about Korea’s attractions, places of interest, culture and a way of life. I really enjoyed meeting different kinds of people while traveling in Korea. I have gained so many from this program, especially going to places of interests, attractions and a variety of tourists attractions were worthwhile and learning how KTO promote tourism industry to other countries was educational.”

Q2) Similar to current tourism in Korea utilizing medical service, Korean Wave and many other contents, what could be the best source for strengthening tourism industry of your country?

“There are many different kinds of attractions in Indonesia when compared to other neighboring countries. The Ministry has divided into five areas and promoted them actively. To list those five areas, Bromo-Tengger-Semeru is known for volcano; Komodo island has historic animal which can be interesting to tourists, Wakatobi is known for waterpark with diverse coral species, Toraja has cultural constructions and events which portraits original cultures and Kuta-Sanur-Nusa Dua is the area where famous tourism destination Bali is located. These are all rich tourism sources in Indonesia. Moreover, Indonesia focuses intensively on tourism in the format of cultural heritage, nature and ecology, sport, cruise, shopping, health, MICE and culinary.”

Q3) Do you think Asian countries need to cooperate together in order to advance tourism industry? What activities do you think should be done via network among Asian countries?

“Absolutely, integration of tourism in Asian regions is necessary. In order to achieve this goal, Asia needs to permit free visa among Asian countries, utilize low cost carrier actively and strengthen and create integrated type of tour packages which connects Asian countries together.”
1. Field trip to Gyeongbokgung Palace
2. Program completion ceremony
3. Educational seminar
4. Korean traditional experience workshop
5. Kimchi making
6. Taekwondo
Introduction

Tourism is an important source for economic and social development in almost every country worldwide. According to UNWTO statistics provided, international tourist arrivals increased more than 4% in 2011 compared to the previous year and reached a record of 980 million. Despite the global economic crisis which was especially severe in Europe, this figure reflects the positive future of the tourism industry as a key driver of economic growth, development and regional integration.

Consistent with an emerging topic of interest in tourism, in general, the UNWTO’s Regional Program for Asia and the Pacific has extended focus on the importance of Competitiveness and Sustainability.

In order to provide objective guidelines to the Member States for a competitive tourism industry, the Regional Program of Asia and the Pacific of UNWTO aims to develop indicators of tourism competitiveness by benchmarking previous research and projects. In so doing, by developing Tourism Competitive Index, the UNWTO expects to achieve three main goals.

Goal 1: Development of a Reliable Regional Index of Tourism Competitiveness the UNWTO

The UNWTO has yet to develop general indicators of competitiveness; thus, this would be a pioneering project. It is essential that the index include all relevant indicators and these indicators be given valid weightings based on their contribution to the development of tourism. Also, unlike existing indicators, the indicators developed should consider the progression in developing countries. Even though tourism in those countries has moved forward rapidly, the existing ranking of many of these countries in tourism competitiveness stays stagnant while developed countries continue to top the rankings. To avoid this polarization, an assessment of competitiveness which takes into account the current circumstances of each country should be considered.

Goal 2: Establishment of Branches of Research Center in Various Countries of the Region

Developing the Tourism Competitive Index would lead to the organization of research center branches; this would support conducting independent studies within or adjacent the country in which they are located. The center branches could first evaluate the given country or city through the index provided by the main center. The index could then be adjusted according to the subject. Experts could visit the concerned country for adequate time and gather enough relevant data from the visit and from the concerning authorities to conduct an evaluation. When the evaluation is completed, the result would be sent to the main center for a review; following which the results of the research would be sent to the country, specifically explaining reasons for the scores, their weak and strong points, what their future focus for tourism should be, and practical steps for the future of the country's tourism. Experts and professionals will also be sent to the country to discuss these matters with the tourism authorities and help them to decrease the drawbacks. The branch center will evaluate the country every few years to follow up with the research conducted. These centers could also work directly with relevant regional organizations to promote tourism.

Goal 3: Promotion of a Methodology for Tourism Advancement through Regular Forums and Conferences

Regular conferences could be held among the research centers and experts. Conducting the conferences and
forums would be supported by the UNWTO. Participants from Member States and respective organizations could gather to exchange ideas on the index and share successful case studies. In addition, smaller forums of specific themes could be held a few times per year to discuss specific topics and issues inter-regionally. At each conference or forum, existing research updates along with proposed new research projects will be presented to the participants. These conferences and forums will help the research centers to find solutions for problems concerning the index and strengthen evaluation methods. Moreover, it will provide non-participating states or organizations to have a chance to understand and gain more information about the competitiveness index project.

**Previous Research and Projects on Tourism Competitiveness Index Development**

1) Tourism Competitiveness Index of World Economic Forum (WEF)

The World Economic Forum’s (WEF) tourism competitiveness index is a well-known index and data is supported by the UNWTO. In this index, rankings are calculated from both publicly available data and the Executive Opinion Survey, a comprehensive annual survey conducted by the WEF together with its network of Partner Institutes (leading research institutes and business organizations) in countries covered in the Travel & Tourism Competitiveness Report.

Since 2005, the Global Competitiveness Index (GCI) has been used to measure the microeconomic and macroeconomic national competitiveness of countries. There are 12 components, called pillars, in the GCI2. Since WEF compares countries without process of categorization or standardization, it could be difficult to assess conditions of countries in different circumstances. The comparison should be done among countries or cities of similar characteristics and based on clear criteria.

2) Monitoring Center for UNWTO Sustainable Tourism Observatories

In 2004, the UNWTO and the Guilin Municipal Government of China reached an agreement to promote sustainable tourism. Under this agreement, an observatory was established in Yangshuo County, China. Sun Yat-Sen University (SYSU) was entrusted to monitor this observatory by UNWTO, and the Tourism Research Base of SYSU was set up inside the observatory.

In 2010, after a few years of collaboration and monitoring, SYSU and the UNWTO agreed to establish the “Monitoring Center for UNWTO Sustainable Tourism Observatories (MCSTO)” in SYSU under the auspices of UNWTO. Since then, it has worked on developing sustainable tourism in China through finalizing sustainable development indicators in Chinese and holding various forums and conferences.

3) Research on the Competitiveness Index of Urban Tourism by Kyung Hee University

In December 2009, funded by the Seoul Metropolitan Government and in cooperation with UNWTO, Kyung Hee University (KHU) launched a project to develop reliable indicators to evaluate the competitiveness of urban tourism and to compare 12 Asia-Pacific cities.

The purpose of the project was to evaluate and advance the tourism policies and programs of Seoul Metropolitan City. KHU aimed to fulfill four main goals: to analyze previously developed urban tourism competitiveness indicators; to develop reliable and valid indicators and an evaluation method to measure the tourism competitiveness of urban cities; to evaluate tourism competitiveness in 12 Asia-Pacific tourism cities using new indicators of tourism competitiveness; and to make tourism policy suggestions for Seoul to grow as an international tourism city. First, KHU selected 12 cities (Hong Kong/Macao, Bangkok, Singapore, Seoul, Shanghai, Kuala Lumpur, Beijing, Tokyo, Sydney, Osaka, Manila and Auckland), based on the number of international tourist arrivals. KHU collected data from 12 cities with help of UNWTO and this data was standardized according to a specially designed formula developed by the university. Once the data had been standardized, the sum of scores was multiplied by the weights of each dimension. Finally, cities were ranked. Based on the results, the vision, goals and core strategies for Seoul were set.
Ecotourism, a niche tourism market is considered to be one of the fastest growing segments as its sustainability gains awareness. As indicated by the term, ecotourism, it aims to promote a greener tourism industry and an increase in the ecological and socio-cultural awareness and behavior of tourists. The UNWTO (2001) defines ecotourism as: nature-based forms of tourism in which the main motivation of the tourists is the observation and appreciation of nature as well as the traditional cultures prevailing in natural areas. Specialized and small locally-owned businesses are organized as a small group to operate market ecotourism tours. They also put effort to minimize the negative impact on the natural and socio-cultural environment. It supports the protection of natural areas by generating economic benefits for host communities, organizations and authorities that are responsible for conserving natural areas; creating jobs and income opportunities for local communities; and increasing awareness both among locals and tourists of the need to conserve natural and cultural assets.

Ecotourism has gained prominence in the marketplace due to continuing changes in consumer demand and expectations regarding the environment and the impact of tourism activities. Recent studies from the UNEP and the UNWTO show that tourists are increasing preference for categories of ecotourism such as, travel experiences involving well-preserved natural, historical or cultural sites that includes local culture and food, integrating environmental information into their travel, and staying in environmentally-friendly hotels. The development of “ecotourism” has been a beneficial byproduct of the sustainability agenda privilege on the idea that ecologically fragile and natural areas can be protected with the financial returns of ecotourism activities. Despite ecotourism’s growth, however, many tourism operators do not fully understand its concept.

This article will focus on several case studies demonstrating ecotourism in practice and illustrate how tourism operators are aiming to meet the principles of sustainable tourism in the Asia Pacific region and also introducing examples of national ecotourism initiatives.

Case Studies

UNWTO Asia and the Pacific member states and other countries in the region participated in this compendium to facilitate the development and management of ecotourism operations based on the principles of sustainable development. The evaluation was assessed by certain categories the Global Sustainable Tourism Council has implemented. The purpose of the compendium is to provide tourism operators in the Asia Pacific with practical examples of initiatives, products, services and activities which exemplify the criteria in practice. GSTC criteria are mainly comprised of following four parts:

• To demonstrate effective sustainable management
• To maximize social and economic benefits to the local community and minimize negative impacts
• To maximize benefits to cultural heritage and minimize negative impacts
• To maximize benefits to the environment and minimize negative impacts

In total, 32 case studies were received from 16 member states in the Asia and the Pacific region. In total, 12 organizations represented in the accommodation sector,
10 in the tour sector, 4 community based and not for profit ecotourism initiatives, and 6 national initiatives of which several examples will be highlighted below.

**Accommodation Sector**

**Wakatobi Dive Resort, Bali, Indonesia**

Wakatobi Dive Resort was the first year-around tourism operation in Southeast Sulawesi. Its overall motivation is to help preserve an unique marine environment for future generations by creating alternative livelihoods with employment through marine ecotourism. Since the founder established the resort in 1994, the goal has been to pass on the reefs to future generations in a healthier condition. Based on the success of a pilot project launched in 1998 that turned 6 km of reef into an effective no-fishing sanctuary, Wakatobi has continued this special project with the Collaborative Reef Conservation Program, designed to motivate the people living within the Wakatobi region to realize the intrinsic value of the reefs and to inspire villagers to take an active role in protecting the marine ecosystem. Also, the Wakatobi Dive Resort supports social and economic benefits to the local community. The resort sponsors all schools on the island through scholarship programs and regularly makes substantial contributions to social projects, public events, public infrastructure projects and meetings with village councils. Funds are also used to finance cooperatives to help the startup of small businesses. Income spreads into the local community via salaries, reef leases and outsourced services to thousands of people, creating a significant and positive impact.

**Heritance Kandalama, Sri Lanka**

During its 16 years of operation Heritance Kandalama has introduced cleaner production technologies which have succeeded to increase both productivity and sustainability, including the introduction of renewable alternative energy sources such as bio mass and solar power for hot water. The hotel introduced the “Seven R” principles which are: Reject products, activities, procedures and processes that are not essential, Reduce consumption, Reuse for same or different purpose, Reclaim non-reusable resources, Replace with environmentally friendly alternatives, Repair before discarding, and Recycle to convert to a new raw material. These efforts contributed greatly to the natural environment conservation. In addition, Heritance Kandalama has invested funds to nurture 198 acres of conservation forest in the surrounding areas of the hotel which function to absorb carbon as a carbon sink. Implementation of the principles has been changing the lives of local people by spreading the benefits to those who need it. For example, the hotel provided electricity and drinking water to communities, helped build a number of village schools and classrooms. It saw that profits can be made by preserving and protecting natural environments, involving local communities and in result, showed great performance in the ecotourism sector.
Tour Sector

Last Descents River Expeditions, China

Last Descents River Expeditions is western China’s first domestic multi-day river company. With 13 years of history in river exploration in south-western China, the mission of Last Descents is the Last Descents established a mission to share the rivers and culture of the eastern Tibetan Plateau with its visitors. It aims to conserve river corridors and contribute to community development along rivers across the southwestern China. After thoroughly researching existing conservation efforts, it was recognized that river-based ecotourism could be the new solution to maximize the result. Specifically, it could fill the role of sustainably bringing the public to enjoy and engage with free flowing rivers and the communities alongside them. It organizes events such as documenting a river canyon photographically for a gallery showing in Beijing or working together with scholars, media, government, and local communities and organizations to bring a special attention to the public. Also, Last Descents offer traditional charter trips for families, friends, river enthusiasts and corporate groups.

In 2007, Last Descents founded the China Rivers project which is not for profit to demonstrate to local and national governments that river tourism is a legitimate use of rivers and worthy of being considered for development. It provided opportunities for research institutions, media and influential Chinese to visit sections of rivers with significant biological and cultural value that would have otherwise been inaccessible or unavailable. These programs have resulted in bringing positive impact and increasing awareness of ecotourism of rivers across the southwestern China.

Community Based/Not for Profit Sector

Sumbiling Eco Village, Brunei

The Sumbiling Eco Village’s concept is based on promoting awareness and cultivating sustainability. This is achieved through the operation of close-to-nature stays in the rainforest, as well as various rainforest and adventure tours, in cooperation with villagers who would share their culture and way of life with tourists. It was established with the aim of providing continuing opportunities for the local people to improve economically as well as socio-culturally, through the perpetuation and restoration of endangered cultural traits and traditional way of life which is characterized by a strong respect and coexistence with the rainforest. The Village, there are green goals for sustainability. First is to cultivate knowledge and love for the environment; Second, preserve surrounding natural environment by utilizing small, wooden structures to keep the surrounding greenery intact; Third, reduce waste and wastage such as flush-less toilets and new structures built with reused wood; Last, but not least, promote the use of natural alternatives such as rattan and bamboo. As the organization provides the concept, funding, planning and management of the project, villagers provide the manpower, outdoors and cultural expertise, as well as suggestions and ideas which have proven invaluable to the continuing growth and improvement of the project.
National Initiatives

Seoul Metropolitan Government, Republic of Korea

The Seoul Metropolitan Government has put effort to implement ecotourism as an alternative to traditional tourism and a potential means by which to conserve Seoul’s environment and improve the quality of life for residents. Recognizing the need to respond to the severity of climate change and growing environmental issues, the Seoul Metropolitan Government has implemented several projects of ecotourism projects; the Cheonggyecheon Stream Project, introduction of ‘green’ public transport and private vehicles to reduce pollution, creation, transformation and expansion of city parks, increased citizen awareness and participation in environmental issues and assessments, and sustainable development in construction and design of public and private buildings. Today, the organization aims to share with other regional businesses and governments Seoul’s experiences and challenges in improving its natural ecological resources and developing ecotourism.

Conclusion

Ecotourism is a form of tourism which can boost tourism activity in a quality and sustainable way. It seeks for sustainable management, maximizing social and economic benefits, cultural heritage, and the environment. Every part of ecotourism is important to lead to sustainable tourism-social, economic, cultural and environmental.

Responsibility to the local community is a vital point to consider. As seen through the case studies, it involves in giving back to the community in which it operates and interacts by both providing their needs and creating opportunities. Offering tour guide jobs to the locals increases the project by bringing valuable experiences and knowledge of cultural and historical heritage. Most importantly, ecotourism always includes the protection and conservation of ecosystems and biodiversity of destination’s tourism product.
Meetings, Incentive tours, Convention, and Exhibition (MICE) events attract a diverse range of international visitors to host countries and create the opportunity for extended holidays, positive word-of-mouth publicity and re-visitation among other tourism benefits.

Recent major trends in global MICE industry are 1) support from government and strategic planning; 2) frequent international association meetings; 3) infrastructure improvement; 4) active travel within Asian region; 5) explosive growth in Chinese arrivals; and 6) advent of Asia as suitable MICE destinations and the re-launch of the AACVB (Asian Association of Convention and Visitor Bureaus).

1) China

China’s rapid economic growth has boosted its attractiveness as a MICE destination among Asian countries and in the world. Tied to its economic development, China’s rapid infrastructure development and invigoration of inbound, outbound and domestic travel has greatly elevated its tourism industry overall.
According to the National Tourism Administration of the People’s Republic of China (CNTA), the number of travelers to China for business or meeting purposes is expected to exceed the levels of USA and those in many countries including the US as well as many in Europe in the coming years.

The Chinese government has been conscious of the important role of tourism in the country’s socio-economic development, and thus has taken various initiatives to promote the tourism industry. These include signing bilateral agreements with neighboring countries such as Taiwan, enabling Taiwan to set up offices in China and to open the market to its tourists by organizing group leisure tours of a minimum of five people, including a tour leader. The bilateral agreements have also helped in easing visa-issuing procedures, and in branding and positioning China as a tourism hub. It is projected that the number of tourists to China from Asian countries will rise in the future due to the increase in bilateral cooperation and low cultural barriers.

2) Hong Kong

Hong Kong’s strategically geographic location, coupled with its strong business environment, makes it a gateway for neighboring Asian countries, primarily China for international traders across the globe. World-class MICE facilities, such as the Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre, the Asia World-Expo, and the Hong Kong Coliseum, along with a wide range of hotels to suit all kinds of accommodation needs support Hong Kong’s rising preference as a MICE destination.

Moreover, Hong Kong’s liberal economic environment has greatly sponsored the city’s MICE Industry. For instance, on exhibits and products brought into the city is a fully welcomed policy among exhibitors and event organizers.

The Hong Kong Government has taken various initiatives over the years to promote the MICE industry and continued doing so in 2012. In 2007, a steering committee was formed with representatives from the government, travel industry, convention and exhibition industry, and various related institutions to formulate MICE development strategies.

Hong Kong has invested new infrastructure initiatives to further position the Lantau Island as an emerging MICE destination. Many new ventures, such as the Toy Story Land of Hong Kong Disneyland (HKDL), Tai O Heritage Hotel, and a new hotel in Discovery Bay with 325 rooms, have been started there to make the island an attractive MICE destination. MEHK and the HKTB are also taking several initiatives to promote the island as a preferred MICE destination. In 2011, HKTB launched its “Lantau Experience: An Inspirational MICE Destination” initiative to promote the island as a one-stop MICE destination.

3) Japan

Japan MICE Year 2010

As part of “MICE Promotion Action Plan”, formulated in July 2009, the Japan Tourism Agency (JTA) deemed 2010 as “Japan MICE Year”. During the year, it
launched the MICE year logo and the slogan ‘Japan: A Global Crossroads’. Also, as part of the campaign, the JTA initiated many projects for the promotion of MICE, such as holding the ‘Japan MICE Year Commemorative Symposium’ in 2010 in order to focus on getting practical knowledge about MICE by organizing lectures for people working for the MICE and related industries in Japan. With the objective of globalizing domestic conferences it initiated a ‘project for inviting resource persons,’ in which guests working in related fields from abroad are invited to participate in the conferences. This project for overseas promotion will also support overseas activities that are initiated to promote the participation of resources from abroad in domestic conferences.

**Meet Japan 2011**
The JNTO hosts an annual buyers’ program. The event was last held in February 2011 and titled “Meet Japan 2011”. The program provides overseas organizers an opportunity to visit various cities and collect information about Japan’s convention centers.

**Softening of Visa Restrictions on Chinese Visitors**
To revive tourism and attract more visitors, the Foreign Ministry of Japan has abolished financial restrictions on Chinese visitors in September 2011. Consequently, the length of stay of Chinese visitors increased from 15 to 30 days. Previously, visas were granted to Chinese travelers only after reviewing their occupation and income levels.

**Strong Private Sector Consulting and Research Support for the MICE Industry**
In 2011, the MICE Research Institute (MICE RI), the first private sector think tank specializing in MICE was established with a focus on practical research and consulting for the MICE industry. The major activities of the MICE Research Institute include the following:

- planning and consulting services for both domestic and international conferences and exhibitions;
- research on MICE projects overseas;
- publicity and publishing data related to the MICE industry;
- and planning and research for the development of conference and cultural facilities.

One of the best initiatives taken by the MICE RI to support the disaster-struck country was the launch of the “Japan after 3.11” website, which provided updated and accurate information about the situation in Japan to overseas visitors and planners.

4) Republic of Korea

**Ranked as the 6th competitive convention host country according to the Union of International Associations (UIA)** the Republic of Korea is initiating a diverse range of policies to foster MICE industry growth.

One such initiative taken by the Korean Government has been to ease visa restrictions. In 2010, the government introduced a multiple-entry visa that allows Chinese tourists to enter the country freely within three years. Additionally, the government has eased visa restrictions on MICE delegates visiting places such as Jeju Island by designating a special tourism and visa-free zone for more than 180 countries. In 2011, the government also eased visa regulations for tourists from 11 South Asian countries including Myanmar, Cambodia, Sri Lanka, Indonesia, Laos, Nepal, Pakistan, the Philippines, Vietnam, India and Bangladesh.
The South Korean government is focused on upgrading the country’s public transportation system, including express buses, trains and low-cost carriers. The bus transit systems at the expressway service were also introduced during the year, boosting domestic travel by enabling travelers to save time and money via public transportation. Additionally, the government is also working towards expanding overseas routes for low-cost carriers.

To further the nation’s MICE industry standing, the Korean government has declared 2012 as Korea Convention Year. This initiative has been strategically scheduled to overlap with the final year of the Visit Korea Year 2010-2012 campaign, launched to boost the number of inbound tourists to Korea. The Ministry of Culture and Tourism and the KTO, in cooperation with seven MICE Alliances in regional convention destinations, have planned various programs to provide better services and support for MICE participants and organizers.

To promote MICE tourism, the Korea MICE Bureau is endorsing several incentive benefit packages and programs. These include gifting KTO souvenirs such as guidebooks, customizable Korean traditional souvenirs such as decorative knot key chains and fans, Korean Won-denominated MICE cards (which can be recharged at designated information desks and are valid for up to five years), and personalized tour programs and dinners for the convention delegates.

5) Singapore

The MICE sector is a key driver of the Singapore tourism industry. Amidst a challenging global economic climate, Singapore recorded three million business and MICE visitors that contributed USD 4.7 billion (SD 6.0 billion) in tourism receipts in 2008. Although the MICE industry witnessed a slowdown in 2009, owing to the global economic downturn, it resumed its growth trend in 2010, reporting a year-on-year growth of 20%. Based on our research, we estimate the size of Singapore’s business and MICE market was in the range of USD 5.5-6.0 billion in 2010. Moreover, the MICE industry in the country is well poised for future growth, backed by Singapore’s strong business fundamentals and its solid commitment towards MICE.

The Singapore Tourism Board is continuously making efforts to reinvent the country both as a business and leisure destination. During the 1970s, the STB came up with the concept of “Instant Asia”, projecting its multi-cultural characteristic with the presence of Indians, Chinese and Malaysians. In 1983, when it witnessed a decline in the growth of tourism, the STB changed its strategy and started investing in renovating old attractions while developing modern and highly sophisticated infrastructure. Again, in May 2010, the STB launched “YourSingapore”, a new brand identity that focuses on customized visitor experiences. As part of its constant endeavor to add more tourist attractions, Singapore is working towards developing the lush new Gardens of the Bay, the International Cruise Terminal and the world’s first River Safari. These key developments are expected to diversify the range of business events venues in the country by offering more unique experiences to both business and leisure visitors, enhancing Singapore’s overall position as a must-visit destination and major exhibition and convention hub.
ASEAN TOURISM FORUM 2013

The 32nd ASEAN Tourism Forum (ATF) will be hosted in Vientiane, the capital of Lao PDR, from 17-24 January 2013.

The ASEAN Tourism Forum (ATF) is a cooperative regional effort to promote the Association of Southeast Asian nation (ASEAN) region as one tourism destination. Each year, the host of ATF is decided among the ASEAN member states. This year’s event marks the ATF’s 32nd anniversary since its inauguration in Malaysia in 1981.

As part of ASEAN Tourism Minister’s Meeting the attendance of the ASEAN ministers, as well as their counterparts from China, Japan, Korea and India, is an affirmation of each country’s commitment to continue regional cooperation in the tourism sphere.

The ASEAN Tourism Conference (ATC) on 22nd January 2013 is open to all registered delegates. The theme, “ASEAN: Hand In Hand, Conquering Our Future” will be highlighted by panelists and leading experts invited to the event.
In addition, ATF TRAVEX, the longest-running annual ASEAN leisure travel trade event, will take place from 22 to 24 January at the Lao International Trade Exhibition and Convention Centre (Lao ITECC). As a significant component of the ATF program, ATF TRAVEX centers on a trade-only mart; providing opportunities for suppliers of ASEAN travel products to meet qualified buyers from participating countries via prior appointments. More related information is available at http://www.atflaos.com/index.php.

Outbound Travel Mart (OTM) 2013

Outbound Travel Mart (OTM) is held annually at prime locations in the two biggest outbound tourist markets in India – namely Mumbai and New Delhi. This year’s event will take place first in Mumbai from 8-10 February and then in New Delhi from 14-16 February. OTM is India’s leading and only travel show focusing exclusively on outbound tourist markets. Over the years, OTM has been the overseas promotional venue drawing the participation of more than 60 countries and the most awaited overseas travel and tourism event of the year for Indian travel trade, corporate and general visitors. For further information, please visit http://www.otm.co.in/.

Asia-Pacific Incentives & Meetings Expo (AIME)

AIME 2013 will be held from 26-27 February 2013 at the Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre in Australia.

The Asia-Pacific Meetings & Incentives Expo (AIME) is owned by the Melbourne Convention + Visitors Bureau (MCVB), a not-for-profit organization that markets Melbourne and Victoria nationally and internationally as a premier business events destination. AIME brings associations and event planners from around the world to Melbourne annually, for a two-day networking event where the best meetings and incentives destinations and products are showcased to the industry. For more information, please log on to http://www.aime.com.au/en/.

MATT FAIR 2013

MATT FAIR 2013 will be held from 15-17 March 2013 at the Putra World Trade Center in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. This Event is hosted and organized by Malaysian Association of Tour and Travel Agents or MATTA in short which was started in 1975 to promote the interests of the travel and tour industry in Malaysia.

MATT FAIR is a Malaysia’s premier travel extravaganza providing global exposure and endless business opportunities in this exciting era of groundbreaking travel innovations and technological advent. 80,000 or more visitors from Malaysia, ASEAN and the rest of the world are expected to visit the fair. More related information is available at http://www.mattafair.org.my/visit/
Hue Sees Big Rise in Number of Thai Tourists

The central province of Thua Thien Hue saw a large increase in the number of Thai tourists in the first ten months of this year, accounting for 16 percent of all foreign arrivals in the locality.

During the period, the province welcomed almost nearly 715,000 foreign arrivals out of a total of 2.2 million visitors, up 10.6 percent over the same period last year. As a result, the province earned more than 1 trillion VND from the tourism industry, an annual increase of 25.2 percent.

Apart from Thailand, most holiday-makers were from France, Australia, Germany, the US, the UK, Japan, the Republic of Korea, China, Spain and Netherlands.

According to the provincial Department of Culture, Sports and Tourism Phan Tien Dung, the number of Thai visitors to Hue has risen sharply, thanks to improvements in the infrastructure along the East West Economic Corridor, which links Vietnam, Laos and Thailand.

The local tourism sector also received a boost from the agreement on tourism cooperation signed between the Ministers of Culture, Sports and Tourism from Mekong Sub-region nations, which permits tourists to use one visa for Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, Myanmar and Thailand, Dung added.

The number of overseas visitors to Hue arriving by sea has reached 30,435 with the the majority coming from China, Italy, Spain, the UK, the US, Canada and Australia.

The provincial tourism sector has set a target of welcoming 40,000 sea borne visitors to the locality this year.

Bali Eyeing Affluent Chinese Tourists

The tourist industry in Bali has been working fervently to draw wealthy Chinese tourists to spend their holidays on the island.

Chinese tourists are usually perceived as “mass tourists”, spending little money while holidaying overseas.

“The reality is that the country’s middle and upper classes have been growing fast. There are a lot of wealthy Chinese,” said Herdy Sayoga, Deputy Chairman of Bali Village, as quoted by the Antara News Agency.

The number of tourists from China has been increasing steadily, with annual growth rate at between 15 and 24 percent, placing them as the second largest foreign arrivals to Bali after Australians.

In 2011, the number of Chinese tourists increased by 20.32 percent to 236,868 from 196,863 recorded in 2010.

As a new global economic power, China has topped the international tourism market with its outbound tourism growing at escalating rates.
According to data from the World Tourism Organization, approximately 31 million Chinese people made outbound trips to various countries annually. These tourists traveled mostly neighboring to Asia-Pacific countries.

[http://www.thejakartapost.com/bali-daily/2012-09-12/bali-eyeing-affluent-chinese-tourists.html]

India and Bulgaria to Explore Cooperation in Tourism Sector

India and Bulgaria will explore the possibilities of cooperation in the Sector. The initiative was agreed upon at a meeting held between Tourism Minister of Bulgaria Mr. Delian Dobrev and Union Tourism Minister Mr. Subodh Kant Sahay.

In particular, the agreement will explore new opportunities, specifically in Hospitality Training, Promotion, Marketing, Development and Management of Tourist destinations. Both sides shared an overview of the “Tourism Sector” in their respective countries and re-emphasized the sector’s potential for employment generation and economic growth. It was also agreed that increased tourist traffic between the two countries could strengthen the bilateral relations at people to people level. Both sides also exchanged views to explore the possibilities of promoting investment in the field of hotel industry tourism and infrastructural development. India allows 100% FDI in Hotel sector on an automated basis.

The Representatives emphasized the importance of interaction cooperative strategy between tour operators and destination managers was stressed upon to develop better tour packages and promotions. Information about tourism investment opportunities in both the countries was also shared. Both countries agreed that growing opportunities in tourism sector should be showcased to attract investments from the private stake-holders of the two countries. Additionally, the possibility of enhancing air-connectivity between both the countries as they lack of direct air connectivity was also discussed.

The UNWTO Asia Pacific Newsletter Welcomes Your Contribution!

The editor invites articles related to the newsletter's special features:
- Destination Report
- Asia Pacific News Brief
- Sustainable Tourism Development Success Stories
- Upcoming Tourism Conferences and Meetings in the Asia Pacific Region
- Focus on Tourism Policy
# UNWTO Member States in Asia and the Pacific

## South Asia

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## East Asia & the Pacific

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## Associate Members

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## UNWTO Affiliate Members in Asia and the Pacific

### South Asia
- Biman Bangladesh Airlines
- Indian Hotels Co. Ltd. - The Taj Group Of Hotels
- Institute Of Training, Research And Operational Consultancy For Tourism (INSTROCT)
- Iran Air “The Airline Of The Islamic Republic Of Iran”
- Iran Culture Heritage And Tourism Investment Company - Semega
- Marcopolo Tourism Development Company (PJS)
- Pakistan Tourism Development Corporation
- Parsian Tourism & Recreational Centers Co. (PTRCO)
- Stark Communications Private Ltd.
- Tourism Research Center Of University Of Tehran

### East Asia & the Pacific
- Australian Tourism Export Council
- Berjaya University College Of Hospitality
- Busan Convention & Visitors Bureau
- Chamaleon Strategies, Inc - Dragon Trail
- China International Travel Service - Cits
- CQ University Australia
- Department Of Tourism, Leisure, Hotel And Sport Management, Griffith Business School
- Discoverymice
- Guilan Institute Of Tourism
- Hong Kong Tourism Board (HKTB)
- Instituto De FormaçãoTuristica (IFT) - Instituto For Tourist Studies
- James Cook University - School Of Business (Tourism Program)
- Japan Association Of Travel Agents (JATA)
- Japan National Tourist Organization (JNTO)
- Japan Travel Bureau Foundation
- Jeju Tourism Organization (JTO)
- Korea Culture & Tourism Institute (KCTI)
- Korea Tourism Organization
- Kyung Hee University
- Macao University Of Science And Technology - Faculty Of International Tourism
- Pacific Asia Travel Association (PATA)
- Shanghai Institute Of Tourism - Shanghai Normal University
- The Chinese University Of Hong Kong, School Of Hotel And Tourism Management, Faculty Of Business Administration
- The Hong Kong Polytechnic University - School Of Hotel And Tourism Management (HTM)
- Tourism Promotion Organization For Asian-Pacific Cities (TPO)
- Tff Australia Tourism And Transport Forum
- University Of Queensland
- Victoria Tourism Industry Council
- Victoria University - Centre For Tourism And Services Research
UNWTO Publications

Handbook on Tourism Product Development

Tourism products are the basis for a destination’s tourism sector operation unless the tourism product meets the needs and expectations of tourists, the destination cannot realize its full potential. However, only few destinations focus their attention on the development and delivery of the various attractions and activities that make up the tourism product. The UNWTO/ETC Handbook on Tourism Product Development outlines the essential elements in the process of tourism product development planning and implementation, e.g. coordination, consultation, collaboration – co-operation. It illustrates these principles through a range of successful approaches and case studies from around the world and sets out best practice examples and benchmarks by which destinations can assess their own product development system and methods.
Publication Year: 2011

Policy and Practice for Global Tourism

Policy and Practice for Global Tourism is a guide to the major themes in world tourism today. Through 11 chapters, it presents an overview of topics ranging from sustainable tourism to social networks or emerging markets to creating a successful destination brand. Examples of UNWTO’s work in key areas are highlighted throughout the publication, and these are complemented by case studies and opinions from business leaders, destinations management organizations, academics and NGOs.
Publication Year: 2011

Report on Urban Tourism Development in China

China continues to develop as a leading powerhouse in tourism, and it becomes ever more important to examine the various facets of tourism in China in order to understand the potential of this market, and the effect it will have on global tourism. This report analyses the statistics of Chinese inbound metropolitan tourism markets, as well as the outbound trends of metropolitan residents from 2000 to 2007. Twenty of China's best tourism cities are analyzed. Originally released in Chinese by the Shanghai Institute of Tourism in 2009, this English edition provides special insight into China's cities as source markets as well as destinations.
Publication Year: 2011

Religious Tourism in Asia and the Pacific

The Asia-Pacific region is considered the world's religious core with the greatest number of pilgrims and travellers for religious events, for both international and domestic tourism. It is estimated that there are approximately six hundred million national and international religious and spiritual voyages in the world, of which 40% take place in Europe and over half in Asia. According to UNESCO, 60% of the world's population practises a religion and these believers form the demographic base of religious tourism. This study has therefore clearly identified areas of interest that appeal to the religious aspects of travel and it is the responsibility of tourism administrators and travel professionals to glean this information and look at religious tourism as a resource in the same light as the sun, sea and sand holidays that are readily marketed by tourism professionals.
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