UNWTO/GTERC

Asia Tourism Trends
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As we launch the 3rd edition of the UNWTO/GTERC Asia Tourism Trends report, international and regional tourism continues its dynamic expansion, greatly contributing to economic growth, job creation and development in nations all around the world. Today, tourism accounts for 10% of global GDP, 7% of total exports and one in 11 jobs across the world. In 2015, international tourist arrivals reached nearly 1.2 billion. By 2030, 1.8 billion travelers are expected to cross international borders.

Asia and the Pacific continues to be one of the fastest growing tourism regions in the world. In 2015, international tourist arrivals to the region grew by 6% to reach 279 million up from a mere 110 million in 2000. By 2030, according to UNWTO Tourism Towards 2030 report this number will reach 535 million, a very realistic forecast in view of current growth. Asia and the Pacific, and in particular China, is fast becoming the main source market for many destinations, namely within the region. Around 80% of international tourism in Asia is intra-regional.

The UNWTO/GTERC Asia Tourism Trends 2016 Edition looks into the driving forces shaping tourism in the region. Growing disposable income, technological advances, socio-economic influences, and changing tourism policies have all contributed to the growth and success of tourism in the region. In line with the theme of this year’s Global Tourism Economy Forum (GTEF), which celebrates its 5th anniversary, the report examines particularly the characteristics and aspirations of a new group of travellers, the ‘consumer class’, and the young and technology savvy group of ‘millennials’.

Such robust growth translates into increased challenges in terms of investment in infrastructure and human capital. New infrastructure initiatives, such as China’s ‘one belt, one road’ will surely revive the overland and maritime Silk Road destinations creating hubs for investment, development and tourism promotion. However, beyond the infrastructure, a core component of tourism, often overlooked, is the importance of investment in people. The investment trends in both infrastructure and human capital development are also analyzed in this report, specifically their impacts on the sector today and in the future.

2017 has been declared by the United Nations as the International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development. I trust that the UNWTO/GTERC Asian Tourism Trends 2016 Edition will add value to the core principles of sustainable tourism development and will prove to be of great use to all stakeholders in the region and beyond. Tourism has a key role to play in making the world a better place for people and the planet. As we embrace the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) approved by world leaders in 2015 to guide our common action towards 2030, I trust that Asia and the Pacific will have a leading role in making tourism a key contributor to the SDGs and thus invite you all to work together on this endeavor.

On behalf of the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Global Tourism Economy Research Centre (GTERC) and specifically Ms. Pansy Ho, Chairman of the GTERC and to her team, for making this study possible and for the continued support to UNWTO.
Foreword
Pansy Ho
Chairman, Global Tourism Economy Research Centre (GTERC)

GTERC is delighted to be presenting this third edition of the Asia Tourism Trends in collaboration with UNWTO.

In 2012, one billion travellers crossed borders in a single year, marking a historic milestone for international tourism. In 2015, nearly 1.2 billion travellers crossed border; the momentum continued. By 2030, 1.8 billion travelers are expected to cross international borders; the impetus for economic growth will remain unabated and the tourism landscape will continue to be reshaped.

Culturally diverse and economically robust, Asia and the Pacific received nearly one-fourth of the world’s total in 2015, to the tune of 279 million international travellers, out of which 80% (about 225 million) was a result of intra-regional tourism. By 2030, Asia Pacific is expected to receive 535 million international visitors, at the rate of +4.9% per year.

As interesting as they are, these statistics are only a means to an end, which is to provide understanding about a new phenomenon in global travel – the growing consumer class, and how this group of tourism consumers acts and reacts against the backdrop of powerful forces such as expanding disposable income; technological advances; improved infrastructure development, connectivity and travel facilitation; and increased market openness. Chinese Premier Li Keqiang’s remark “[…] travel is no longer a luxury for the few, but rather a necessary consumption for the average Chinese […]” at the First World Conference on Tourism for Development in Beijing in May 2016 should strike a chord with everyone in the world.

2016 marks the third year of collaboration between UNWTO and GTERC on the Asia Tourism Trends report. I am deeply honored to have the opportunity to collaborate with Secretary-General Taleb Rifai who has been the driving force behind this joint project, generously offering his insights and foresights in tourism on a global scale, and the quintessential leader of a research team which epitomizes the highest level of expertise and professionalism.
The UNWTO/GTERC Asia Tourism Trends 2016 Edition, the third in the series, to be released in Macao (China) at the Global Tourism Economy Forum (GTEF) in October 2016 is the result of a collaborative research project between the Regional Programme for Asia and the Pacific and the Tourism Market Trends Programme of the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO). The work was carried out under the supervision of Mr. Xu Jing and Mr. John Kester, the Directors of the two respective programmes.

Representatives of UNWTO who contributed to this report include: Mr. Michel Julian, Mr. Javier Ruescas, Mr. Baeho Kim and Ms. Julia Baunemann, from the Tourism Market Trends Programme and Mr. Omar Nawaz, Ms. Hyeon-Jin Lee, and Ms. Harmony Lamm from the Regional Programme for Asia and the Pacific. The UNWTO wishes to acknowledge the support of Ms. Barbara CY Laam and Mr. Jason Wang of GTERC and also expresses its deep appreciation to the following experts for their invaluable contribution:

Mr. Peter Jordan: “Embracing the consumer class in tourism and the era of the millennial traveller”.

Mr. Ludwig G. Rieder: “Investment in tourism infrastructure in Asia and the Pacific”.

Mr. Peter Semone: “Investment in tourism human capital development in Asia and the Pacific”.

Acknowledgements
Income levels in Asia have surged since the past decade, with the region’s per capita GDP almost doubling, from USD 3,190 in 2005 to USD 5,960 in 2015, an increase of 87%.

In terms of population the largest subregions are South Asia (44%) and North-East Asia (39%), mainly due to the large populations of India (1.3 billion inhabitants) and China (1.4 billion), the two most populated countries in the world.

Rapid economic growth in the region, coupled with increased market openness, air connectivity and travel facilitation, has led to a surge in both inbound and outbound travel in Asia and the Pacific.
International tourist arrivals: recent trends

Asia and the Pacific is the second most visited region in the world after Europe and has been one of the fastest growing in recent years. It received 279 million international tourists in 2015, nearly one-fourth of the world’s total.

Between 2005 and 2015 Asia and the Pacific outperformed all world regions in terms of growth, with arrivals increasing an average 6% per year, compared to the world average of 4%. In 2015 the region recorded 6% growth in international arrivals, or 15 million more than in 2014, making it the sixth year of consistently robust growth.

Most countries in Asia and the Pacific have benefited from tourism development in the last decades, enjoying healthy growth in international arrivals, supported by increased capacity, air connectivity and infrastructure development. Over half of all international tourist arrivals recorded in Asia and the Pacific are in North-East Asian destinations (142 million arrivals), while South-East Asia accounts for 37% (105 million), South Asia for 7% (18 million) and Oceania for 5% (14 million).

By subregion, South-East Asia (+8%) and Oceania (+7%) enjoyed the highest growth in 2015 putting them among the fastest-growing subregions in the world. North-East Asia and South Asia both recorded 4% growth in international arrivals last year.

The UNWTO ranking of international tourist arrivals features only one Asian destination in the top ten: China (4th) with 57 million international tourist arrivals in 2015, although Thailand, Hong Kong (China) and Malaysia rank 11th, 13th and 14th respectively with 30, 27 and 26 million arrivals.
International tourism receipts: Asia and the Pacific maintains sustained growth

The success of inbound tourism in Asia and the Pacific is confirmed by the growth in international tourism receipts over the period 2000-2015. The region earned USD 418 billion in receipts in 2015, or 33% of the world total – a share that has almost doubled since 2000 (from 17%).

In real terms (local currencies and constant prices) the region’s receipts increased by 4% in 2015 – the second highest relative growth across world regions that year. Asia’s share of tourism receipts (33%) is above its share of world arrivals (24%) indicating that tourism spending in that region is above the world average.

North-East Asia is the top tourism earner of all Asia and the Pacific’s subregions, accounting for some 57% of the region’s total tourism receipts, followed by South-East Asia (26%). Oceania and South Asia account for 10% and 8% of receipts respectively. North-East Asia’s proportion of tourism receipts (57%) is higher than that of international arrivals (50%) reflecting above-average expenditure by inbound tourists in that subregion.

Looking at individual destinations, China is by far the leading tourism earner in Asia, with USD 114 billion in tourism receipts reported in 2015 putting it in second place in the world ranking by receipts, one higher than in 2014. China enjoyed 8% growth in tourism receipts in 2015. Thailand is the 2nd tourism earner in Asia and the Pacific and 6th in the world with USD 45 billion in tourism receipts. Hong Kong (China) ranks third in the region and 9th in the world with a figure of USD 36 billion.

Leading destinations in Asia and the Pacific

China is the top destination in Asia and the Pacific and number four worldwide ranked by tourist arrivals volume (57 million in 2015). Thailand is the 2nd largest in Asia Pacific (30 million arrivals), followed by Hong Kong (China) (27 million), Malaysia (26 million), and Japan (20 million).

In 2015, intraregional tourism in Asia and the Pacific accounted for some 225 million international tourist arrivals, or 80% of the region’s total. Arrivals from other regions represented 20%, or about 53 million. Interregional flows are dominated by European markets, which generated 12% of arrivals from outside Asia (32 million arrivals), followed by the Americas with 16 million, or 6%.

Despite slower growth than in previous years, Europe continues to be the main interregional source of travel to Asia and the Pacific. European arrivals are most significant in South Asia, where they account for 34% of the total arrivals and but also in Oceania (16%) and South-East Asia (13%).

Mode of transport

Airline travel remains the dominant mode of transport for tourists travelling to Asia and the Pacific, accounting for 61% of all arrivals in 2015. The share of air travel has increased in the last few years, largely due to the boom in low-cost carrier (LCC) services, while travel by land has been steadily declining.

The proportion of sea travel has declined over the past couple of decades – from around 9% in 1995 to only 6% in 2015, although it has grown faster in recent years.

Purpose of visit

Like in other parts of the world, travel related to ‘leisure, recreation and holidays’ generates the highest share of arrivals in Asia and the Pacific (53%) – well above other categories such as ‘visiting friends and relatives (VFR), trips for health, religious and other’ reasons (23%), or ‘business and professional’ travel (12%). For an additional 11% of trips, the purpose is not specified.

Outbound tourism

In 2015, outbound travel from Asia and the Pacific – measured by the arrivals generated in different destinations worldwide – reached a total of 290 million, or 7% more than in the previous year. This is a continuation of robust growth rates since 2010 – the year of travel and tourism’s recovery after the economic crisis, which had dented demand for travel abroad.

In 2015, intraregional travel (within the region) accounted for 78% of outbound flows from Asia Pacific markets and increased by 6% in 2015, while interregional travel (outside the region) accounted for 22% and was up 8%.
International tourism expenditure and trips

Asia and the Pacific generated USD 495 billion in international tourism expenditure in 2015 – whether by overnight or same-day travellers – or some 39% of the world total, up from 20% in 2000, after several years of double-digit growth.

China has emerged as the fastest growing source market in recent years and the top spender in international tourism since 2012, both in Asia and the Pacific and globally. Boosted by rising disposable incomes, an appreciating currency, improved travel facilitation and an easing of restrictions on foreign travel, travel has grown exponentially over the last two decades.

Tourism prospects

According to data reported to UNWTO by destinations around the world, international tourist arrivals grew by 5% globally in the first four months of 2016, consolidating the increase recorded in 2015 (+4%).

Asia and the Pacific recorded 9% growth in arrivals in the first four months of 2016, the highest across world regions and significantly above the upper limit of UNWTO’s forecast for the region this year (+4% to +5%).

In Asia and the Pacific, international tourist arrivals are forecast to increase by 331 million to reach 535 million by 2030 (+4.9% per year), making it the region with the highest absolute gain in arrivals. The largest increase will come from North-East Asia, adding 9 million arrivals a year.
Embracing the consumer class in tourism and the era of the millennial traveller

Asia and the Pacific has shown unprecedented growth in tourism, far above the world average, fuelled by demographic, economic and technological changes in recent decades. The “consumer class” with its specific characteristics has now been recognized by professionals and academics alike as the engine of this growth.

Much of the discussion surrounding the emergence of the “consumer class” has focused on China in particular. Given the significant size of China’s population and rapid economic growth, it is understandable that there has been much focus on the evolution of the country’s class-structure, with a view to identifying the characteristics that denote groups of citizens according to their consumer behaviour.

The characteristics of China’s consumer class - its sheer size, urbanised nature, connectedness and spending behaviour - are indeed common to Asia’s consumer class on a broader scale. Nevertheless, when taken as a whole, it is arguably the youthfulness of Asia’s consumers, the millennials, which is their defining characteristic. With a rising income and propensity to travel to an expanding array of destinations across the globe, young Asian travellers are slowly setting the pace of global tourism as a whole.

The technological revolution and the ensuing influence of the social media have been major contributory factors in this growth. Since millennials have grown up during the era of globalisation, as brands, technology and popular culture have become homogenized many in this generation have been motivated to travel by a desire to return to their roots, with the sharing economy adding the common touch.

According to figures compiled by the United Nations, Asia is home to 1.4 billion millennials (defined in the respective dataset as aged 15-34 years) – with India accounting for 459 million, China 414 million, Indonesia 85 million, 35 million in the Philippines, and 32 million in Viet Nam.

Impact of consumer class and millennials in Asia

It is clear that travel is an ever-greater importance in the psychology and significant form of self-expression and self-actualisation of both consumers and millennials.

Since travel has become an important means of self-expression, it follows that the travel products and services that are consumed in the region are becoming increasingly personalised too.

The rise of the free and independent traveler (FIT) who uses online travel agents (OTAs), instead of the traditional package tour operators, has changed the physiognomy of the market place. In particular, this has heightened the
need for destinations and companies to respond with technological solutions throughout the customer journey.

Demand driven by FIT travellers (especially millennials), the expansion of mobile technology and distribution platforms has also led to the rise of the sharing economy, a major impact of Asia’s consumer class on the tourism sector in the region.

Another effect of the consumer class on tourism in Asia and beyond is a major diversification in destinations. As UNWTO has noted in the past, when consumers acquire the means to travel, they tend to travel intra-regionally at first.

The diversification of destinations and the empowerment of secondary and tertiary cities in the region to cater to increased travellers have partly been driven by the rapid expansion of air transport infrastructure and emergence of low cost carriers (LCCs).

Investment in tourism infrastructure

The study attempts to identify the likely investment requirements in tourism transportation and accommodation services infrastructure given the projected growth of tourism in Asia and the Pacific and Central Asia to 2030. The category of Central Asia is not a UNWTO subregion in Asia and the Pacific, but was created specifically for the analysis of this chapter. It consists of eight countries which fall under UNWTO’s category of Central/Eastern Europe, and analyzed here in view of their role in the development of China’s One Belt-One Road initiative and the UNWTO sponsored Silk Road programme. These countries include Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan.

Transportation infrastructure

The region’s international air transportation system is dominated by 78 primary international airports that accounted for over 57% of the total estimated 2,270 million passenger movements in 2015 and for more than 80% of international movements.

According to data from UNWTO on mode of transport used by international travelers in the region, about 61% of international tourists used air transport, followed by road transport with 32.6%, water transport with 6%, and rail with 0.25%.
Requirements

Centre for Aviation (CAPA) Global Airport Construction Review for 1Q2016 indicated that there were around 100 airport construction projects in the pipeline across Asia and the Pacific region ranging from simple runway/apron resurfacing or small terminal upgrades, to a series of new runways and big terminals or even an airport city with total investment of around USD 77 billion. Given the completion of the pipeline of projects by 2020, there will still be a supply deficit in North-East Asia of 7.2%, and in South-East Asia of 29.4%. Flexing demand out to 2030, indicates a shortfall of around 2,005 million in design passenger terminal capacity requirements, that would require an investment of USD 300.3 billion at 2016 prices to close.

Land and sea based transportation infrastructure

Optimizing existing airport capacities, expanding existing runway and terminal capacities, developing Greenfield airport projects, and alternative transportation modes such as high-speed rail and road expressways are the main strategies being deployed to address congestion while meeting future demand requirements.

In this context, the countries of Asia with the support of UNESCAP and the Asian Development Bank are designing and implementing the 141,271 km Asian Highway System designed to interconnect with standard highway quality roads, in 32 Asian countries and linking it to the Middle East and Europe.

Aside from the above regional projects sponsored by international development and financing agencies, China has moved to develop its Belt and Road Initiative designed, through investment in road, rail and sea port infrastructure, including a 10,600 km of road and rail network, to create a land bridge between it and the major Eurasian economies (based on the old Silk land route), as well as a sea route (based on the old maritime Silk route) connecting China with South-East Asia, South Asia, Africa and Europe.

Accommodation infrastructure demand and supply

The region had over 131,094 government registered hotel accommodation establishments providing 5.85 million rooms to the market in 2015. Based on growth assumptions, room capacity will need to increase by 610,255 rooms by 2020 over 2014, and by additional 2.96 million rooms over 2020, by 2030. North-East Asia and South-East Asia are expected to account for over 87% of the additional rooms requirement over these periods.

Case studies

China, the Philippines and Kazakhstan have been selected as the case studies taking into account geographic circumstances, approach to tourism investment, and availability of information. These three case studies have been selected to illustrate varied approaches towards investing in tourism transportation and accommodation infrastructure.

As indicated in the case studies, tourism infrastructure investment programs are usually set within a broader socio-economic infrastructure development framework either at the national, subregional or regional level. In this context, the general policy is for the public sector to provide the transportation infrastructure, and for the private sector to provide the accommodation infrastructure.

Technological developments in transportation and accommodation (sharing economy) infrastructure will also impact on the investment requirements to 2030. Good examples of this in the transportation area are Uber and Lyft, and in the accommodation area, Airbnb. Uber is reported to control about 17% of the USD 100 billion global taxi/limousine market, while Airbnb is reported to have added more new listings to its accommodation inventory than the largest hotel companies over the same period.
Factors impacting on investment in destination human capital development in Asia and the Pacific

Policy

At a national and regional level destination human capital development needs to be underpinned by a policy framework to support the development and implementation of a strategy supported by investment planning and a legislative timetable to support the key actions identified by the stakeholders.

Economic and social factors

In Asia and the Pacific, Australia, Brunei Darussalam, China, Hong Kong (China), Japan, Republic of Korea, Macao (China), Malaysia, New Zealand, Palau, Singapore and Taiwan Province of China enjoy GDP per capita above US$ 6,000. All other economies in the region, from Indonesia to Vietnam record GDP per capita under USD 6,000. This makes for a very diverse destination human capital (DHC) landscape across the region.
Training and education

Access to education and training are recognised as key drivers in ending long term, cyclical poverty in both developing and developed countries. One of the greatest challenges for human capital development is the quality and quantity of teachers and trainers in tourism and hospitality education and training.

The China Hospitality Education Initiative (CHEI) is a good example of how industry and educators can collaborate for better educational results. CHEI develops unique and China-centric educational resources that focus on soft skills including critical thinking, problem solving, non-verbal communications and conversational English.

Workforce

Traditionally, career paths in tourism and hospitality centred on front or back of house positions within tourism companies, hotels and restaurants. With the advent of the Internet and exponential growth of social media, careers in the industry have taken on a completely new dimension. Personality, interpersonal relations, self-confidence, creativity and technological know-how are now highly valued along with solid technical competence.

Technology tourism and human capital development

Today, tourism is a multifaceted, technology driven, competitive global industry, which requires a very different type of worker with a much broader creative mind-set. Twenty-first century tourism education and training requires modern delivery mechanisms.

Technology pervades every area of tourism and must be given the highest priority when developing the workforce for the industry. More big changes are ahead – 52% of all smart phones are owned in Asia and the Pacific where the growth rate, though slowing, lingers at 23%. Large hotel groups are turning to Facebook to improve their customer service. And national tourism organisations increasingly manage their destinations through websites.

The way forward requires the following:

- There is a clear need for improved research and data collection which can provide evidence of tourism’s significant contribution to employment and serve as a meaningful benchmark for destinations committed to improving their human capital.

- Despite numerous regional and international efforts, there remains a need for the creation of additional networks for education and training providers. Hospitality and tourism schools are the notable backbone of any destination human capital development effort.

- With the onset of the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) and other regional development frameworks in Asia and the Pacific, there is an opportunity to develop regional training approaches allowing for regional certification and possibly even improved labour mobility.

- There is concern within the tourism sector that companies are missing out on the best new talent due to negative perceptions of the career opportunities available – this must be rectified.

- Improved partnerships and engagement between stakeholders from the public sector, industry, associations, education and training providers and civil society is perhaps the single most important element in destination human capital.

Key tourism agenda in Asia and the Pacific

Attention is paid to the key research areas which have resulted in publications and reports by the Regional Programme for Asia and the Pacific either completed or due for completion in the course of the year. The research and studies are also associated with the organization of events such as conferences, seminars and workshops which are also outlined. UNWTO will be celebrating 2017 as the International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development as declared by the United Nations. For more details please refer to:

Asia and the Pacific makes robust gains

While international tourist arrivals maintained a steady growth in 2015 with a slightly higher increase (4.4%) compared to the previous year (4.2%), Asia and the Pacific registered an above average growth of 6%, appreciably higher than in 2014 (5%) which accounted for an additional 15 million visitors to the region.

Asia and the Pacific is the second most visited region in the world after Europe and has been one of the fastest growing in recent years. It received 279 million international tourists in 2015, nearly one-fourth of the world’s total. By subregion, South-East Asia (+8%) and Oceania (+7%) enjoyed the highest growth in 2015 putting them among the fastest-growing subregions in the world.

Most countries in Asia and the Pacific have benefited from tourism development in the last decades, enjoying healthy growth in international arrivals, supported by increased capacity, air connectivity and infrastructure development.

However, as in the past, Asia and the Pacific remains its main source market: in 2015, intraregional tourism in Asia and the Pacific accounted for some 225 million international tourist arrivals, or 80% of the region’s total. Arrivals from other regions represented 20%, or about 53 million.

The above is a reflection of the strong socio-economic environment where Asia and the Pacific registered the fastest economic growth across world regions, largely driven by China and India. The region’s GDP grew above 5.0% almost every year in the period 2000 to 2015.

Most of Asia and the Pacific’s GDP is generated in North-East Asia (71%), particularly by China (45%) and Japan (17%), which are Asia’s leading economies. India (South Asia) contributes 9% to regional GDP, the Republic of Korea 6% and Australia (Oceania) 5%. In 2015, the region’s economy grew 5%, with China (+6.9%) and India (+7.3%) contributing most to growth in absolute terms, measured in US dollars.

Income levels in Asia have surged since the past decade, with the region’s per capita GDP almost doubling, from USD 3,190 in 2005 to USD 5,960 in 2015, an increase of 87%.

The success of inbound tourism in Asia and the Pacific is confirmed by the growth in international tourism receipts over the period 2000-2015. The region earned USD 418 billion in receipts in 2015, or 33% of the world total — a share that has almost doubled since 2000 (from 17%).
Embracing the consumer class in tourism and the era of the millennial traveller

The consequences of the Asian economic boom that has been closely associated with a paradigm shift from a post-industrial to a new technological era have led to the emergence and fast expansion of an affluent middle-class in countries across the region – new segments of the population with sufficient disposable incomes to travel. This has also been accompanied by a socio-cultural shift in the number of holidays available to the general public in Asia in the last two decades where many countries in the region have liberalized the duration of “paid vacations” thereby increasing the leisure time of employees which has greatly benefitted tourism. All these forces have led to a new sector with its own characteristics, the consumer-class, propelled by another rising group, the technology savvy millennials, that has emerged recently, changing the face of Asian tourism.

Investment trends in Asia and the Pacific

The above-average growth of the Asian tourism market as highlighted above is not without its challenges. Infrastructure development to cater to the rising demand is a major concern. This has also been allied to changing economic trends where in the wake of the technological revolution the traditional “players” or stakeholders in tourism are gradually being replaced by young entrepreneurs whose modus operandi requires further understanding and research. Furthermore it is a volatile market that is prone to constant mergers and acquisitions.

However, the greatest test to the Asian tourism market in terms of growth comes from the challenges and opportunities in terms of Human Capital Development. Education, training, policy, and planning all need to be geared to the growing demand. Unlike investment in transport and accommodation which can be considered the tangible component, human resources constitute the intangible element that requires more time and energy notwithstanding the costs that are not easily discernable. These two fundamental themes are dealt with separately under chapter three.

Agenda of tourism activities

Chapter 4 details in its agenda of activities some key issues and elements pertaining to research, conferences, seminars, workshops, and publications undertaken by the Regional Programme for Asia and the Pacific and the Tourism Market Trends Programme.
The World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) is a specialized agency of the United Nations. As the leading international organization in the field of tourism, UNWTO promotes responsible, sustainable and universally accessible tourism. It serves as a global forum for tourism policy issues and a practical source of tourism know-how. UNWTO's membership includes 157 Member States, 6 Associate Members, 2 permanent observers and 500 Affiliate Members representing the private sector, educational institutions, tourism associations and local tourism authorities.

Global Tourism Economy Research Centre (GTERC) is a permanent, independent, non-profit international research organization based in Macau, China, with a special purview on tourism and travel development in Asia as it relates and contributes to positive and sustainable global economic growth; GTERC also functions as the Secretariat of the Global Tourism Economy Forum.