

Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation
10th APEC Tourism Ministerial Meeting (TMM 10)

APEC Guidelines for Tourism Stakeholders

Preliminary

In recent years Leaders' have reaffirmed their commitment to foster a peaceful, stable, dynamic, inter-connected and prosperous Asia-Pacific community. The shared sentiment of supporting sustainable economic growth within the region has been given prominence to ensure a collective approach is taken as a driver of growth, integration and innovation in addressing issues within our region.

In accordance with APEC Tourism Ministers' dedication to achieving inclusive growth through responsible use of environmental resources, we continue to pursue sustainable tourism development within the Asia-Pacific Region. Also noting global efforts towards achieving the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals.

In seeking to address issues that pose as an obstacle to fostering inclusive and sustainable development within the APEC region, we look to ensure services in the tourism industry are delivered in an efficient and effective manner. Furthermore, giving prominence to economic sustainable development in a balanced and integrated approach that pursues regional development through collaborative action. Hence, the necessity of ensuring a more deliberate and guided measure for service providers to increase travel and tourism flows in the region to distribute the social and economic benefits of tourism.

Purpose

The tourism industry has grown drastically in recent years, notably having a profound impact on trade within the APEC region. In 2017, the World Travel and Tourism Council stated that the industry alone "... generated more than 10% of global economic activity and providing approximately 292 million jobs worldwide."¹ The tourism industry has the great potential to grow as we look for ways to synergise efforts within the region to realize our collective goal for an integrated Asia Pacific.

In accordance with the 2017-2019 APEC Tourism Working Group Strategic Plan, the guidelines will set out to ensure that member economies efforts to promote an integrated Asia Pacific through sustainable and inclusive measures are steered in an appropriate manner. Stakeholders in the tourism sector are a key catalyst for development in the industry, hence

¹ World Travel and Tourism Council Impact Report 2017.

the need for strategic guidelines that encourage investment in the industry, employment opportunities, human resource development, occupational standards and training tools, effective MSME support etc. By doing so, we address the need to reduce barriers that have a direct impact on visitor exports and tourist flows in the region. The development of improved cooperation and coordination mechanisms will in-turn allow for the benefits of the tourism industry to be shared equally across the region, including among women and indigenous peoples. It is our role to ensure that we help guide policy making in the region to reflect strong support for tourism growth in the region.

The APEC Guidelines for Tourism Stakeholders seeks to add-value to the APEC Guidelines on Ensuring Tourist Safety, which was endorsed by APEC Ministers in 2012. By taking collective approaches to provide conduct benchmarks for different aspects of the tourism industry, we as APEC member economies will achieve our collective vision of promoting regional economic integration.

The Guidelines will be available for use by member economies on a voluntary basis.

Scope

The Guidelines may apply to APEC Tourism Stakeholders in the Tourism industry that fall under the following categories:

- **Tourism Investors**

The growth of tourism flows has required and been facilitated by investment in infrastructure, transportation, accommodation, dining, entertainment and other facilities. Investment by both the private and public sector is critical to make natural and cultural resources accessible.²

- **Community Based Tourism (CBT)**

Community Based Tourism involves interactions between visitor and host community, particularly suited to rural and regional areas. CBT is managed and owned by the community, for the community. It is a form of 'local' tourism, favouring local service providers and suppliers and focused on interpreting and communicating the local culture and environment.³

- **Food & Beverage Sector**

The Food and Beverage service is described as the preparation, presentation and serving of food and beverage to customers.

- **Accommodation Sector**

Refers to the accommodation sector (i.e. hotels, motels, lodges, guesthouses, homestay, back-packers), and includes green accommodation providers that are

² OECD Issues Paper, 'Levering Investment for Sustainable and Inclusive Tourism Growth'.

³ APEC Effective Community Based Tourism, Best Practices Manual, 2010.

environmentally friendly through means of implementing programs within the organizational structure that save water, energy and reduce waste.

- **Tour Operators**
Tour Operators are businesses that combine two or more travel services and sell them through travel agencies or directly to final consumers as a single product for a global price.⁴
- **Non-Governmental Organizations**
Private organizations characterized primarily by humanitarian or cooperative, rather than commercial, objectives. NGOs are a subset of the broader non-profit sector that engage specifically in international development.⁵
- **Shared Economy**
The platforms in the sharing economy use technology to connect people who have private excess capacity to those who want to purchase.⁶

Guiding Principles

- **Respect** local resource custodians, traditions and culture.
- Enhance **sustainable** and **responsible** travel and tourism.
- Encourage **exchange of information** and **open dialogue**.
- Foster **human resource development, skills training** and **occupational standards** tools for a stronger industry workforce.
- Utilize **innovative technologies** to improve social well-being and establish partnerships.
- Identify synergies and utilize resources through **Public Private Partnership** to encourage tourism investment in the APEC region.

⁴ OCED, Glossary of Statistical Terms, 2003

⁵ Harvard Business School, Journal of Economic Perspectives, 2007.

⁶ Regulating the shared economy, Abbey Stemler, Betwixt and between, pg 3.

1. Respectful and Responsible Travel and Tourism

- Acknowledge and understand that the region consists of diverse cultures, traditions, customs, religious and moral beliefs, which underpin the values of respectful and responsible travel and tourism in the Asia-Pacific.
- The conduct of both the hosting community and tourists alike should be harmonious with a common understanding of the respect for law and or customs.
- Give prominence to the significance of sustainability and ensuring service providers are environmentally conscious. Reduce, reuse and refuse are key actions to ensuring the environment in which local communities reside, cultural heritage sites are located and tourism products exist is vital.
- Promote cultural exchanges and preserve local tradition, art, storytelling, and song and dance.
- Explore sustainable initiatives in collaboration with non-governmental organizations to create efficient means of delivering tourism goods and services.

2. Inclusivity in the Travel and Tourism Industry

- Noting that as tourism development is a powerful tool in society we are encouraged to create opportunities for women, youth, people living with disabilities and aging citizens.
- Provide opportunities for local communities in both urban and rural areas to participate in direct employment and providing of goods and services to tourism businesses in the supply chain.
- The cross-cutting nature of the travel and tourism industry requires a robust approach to ensuring marginalized groups have access to finance, entrepreneurial skills and technical advice and assistance.
- Stimulate new opportunities for MSMEs in the tourism industry through consultation with relevant stakeholders.
- Encourage proper mechanisms for fair distribution of resources.
- Strive to make APEC economies traveller-friendly destinations by providing necessary comforts for a diverse range of travellers, such as; the youth traveller, cultural traveller, adventure traveller, and so forth.
- Urge inclusive community-based tourism through initiatives that aim to enhance the livelihoods of local communities.
- Stimulate discussion through dialogues that identifying best practices in delivering inclusive programs and initiatives through tourism and travel. Robust discussions should have concrete outcomes that will help direct the growth of the industry, such as the APEC Guidelines on Voluntourism Best Practices.

3. Collaboration Opportunities and Initiatives

- Acknowledge the private sectors pivotal role is keeping the industry vibrant and robust.

- Encourage to participation in private-public dialogues that initiate discussion on issues such as regulation and legislation that will have a direct impact on the performance of the travel and tourism industry.
- Be encouraged by best practices experiences and identify synergies to add value to existing projects and initiatives.
- Harness tourism investment that will boost competitiveness and expand economic opportunities.

4. Smart Travel and Tourism

- Be mindful of the development and growth of disruptive technology as well as the potential benefits for the travel and tourism industry.
- Acknowledge the potential risks that the shared economy presents in terms of consumer safety, fraud, data privacy, employee protection and anticompetitive behaviour.
- Consult with relevant stakeholders to determine the opportunities that lie within the 'shared economy' through formulation of modernised policy frameworks that take into account the nature of the shared economy.
- The protection of the operator and consumer is vital to ensuring the success of a shared business model in the tourism industry.

5. Administration of Guidelines

- The APEC Guidelines for Tourism Stakeholders will act as a benchmark for APEC economies to ensure the tourism industry continues to grow in a robust, mindful and adaptive manner.
- The TWG encourages APEC economies to observe the Guidelines in the conduct of their tourism activities.
- To promote cross-fora collaboration in APEC, TWG members are encouraged to initiate joint efforts/initiatives between fora and share the experiences of this Guideline.
- Guidelines will be utilized by member economies on a **voluntary** basis. Members will be encouraged to share best practices in the voluntary implementation of the Guidelines at TWG meetings.