



**Asia-Pacific  
Economic Cooperation**

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**2022/TMM/STMT**

## **Statement of the Chair - 11<sup>th</sup> Tourism Ministerial Meeting 2022**



**11<sup>th</sup> Tourism Ministerial Meeting  
Bangkok, Thailand  
19 August 2022**

**11<sup>th</sup> APEC Tourism Ministerial Meeting**  
**Statement of the Chair on**  
**‘Tourism of the future: Regenerative Tourism’**

1. The Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Tourism Ministers and senior representatives attended the 11th APEC Tourism Ministerial Meeting (TMM) in Bangkok, Thailand, on 19 August 2022. The Meeting was chaired by His Excellency Mr. Phiphat Ratchakitprakarn, Minister of Tourism and Sports of Thailand.
2. Varying views were expressed on the prevailing situation. The meeting expressed its concern over the endless cycles of COVID-19 and current economic challenges that have placed hurdles in the path of global and regional tourism recovery, as the tourism sector is facing falls in longer haul visitation due to rising fuel and food prices feeding directly to the increased cost of travel, and inflation eroding levels of tourism and leisure spending. Views were also expressed that a conducive environment is essential to advancing economic cooperation, allowing the flow of goods, investment, and people, which was especially the case for sectors such as tourism.
3. Cognizant of the role of tourism, and regenerative tourism, in expediting sustained economic recovery, the meeting strongly supported the need for meaningful actions and achieved consensus on the following:
4. We gathered for this meeting under the theme of APEC 2022 “Open. Connect. Balance.” as Thailand advances its priorities to develop the region through an inclusive and sustainable growth, to implement the APEC Putrajaya Vision 2040, including through the Aotearoa Plan of Action, while driving APEC towards a sustainable and balanced post-COVID-19 era through the concept of Bio-Circular-Green Economy, also known as the BCG Economy Model. We also underscored the importance of the implementation of the APEC Connectivity Blue Print 2015-2025, which outlines “People-to-people Connectivity” and “reduce uncertainties relating to tourism”.
5. At the top of the APEC 2022 agenda is our region’s response to COVID-19 and ongoing challenges. The opportunity to build a better and more resilient future will continue to be our main endeavor. Significant new uncertainties and challenges have heightened the need to harness our cooperation and advance work on sustainable tourism, to achieve our vision of an open, dynamic, resilient and peaceful Asia-Pacific community by 2040. We will continue to convene inclusive dialogues amongst sustainability champions, and to reflect on the pathways and progress towards rebuilding a stronger and more resilient tourism sector. Our dialogue canvasses the existing challenges that have been exacerbated by COVID-19. Together we will work to rebuild tourism for the future.
6. Ensuring that no one is left behind is a key strategic pathway towards the rapid recovery. We, therefore, commit to promote safe, accessible and inclusive tourism for all. We will strive to ensure that our tourist destinations, facilities, products and services are increasingly accessible to everyone, regardless of their physical limitations, disabilities or age. Implementing universal design and inclusive communications can open tourism and travel to a substantial new market of people with disabilities, aging citizens, totaling an approximate 435 million people in the Asia-Pacific region alone. This can give our tourism industries an immense opportunity to develop and grow.

7. As various sectors cut across tourism, a strategy to achieve gender equality and gender mainstreaming in tourism policies need to be considered within its broader policy context, with leadership from policymakers at different levels, whose support can help ensure that the impacts on tourism-related policy initiatives are also considered.
8. Gender equality and women's empowerment are critical to an inclusive and sustainable recovery from COVID-19. Women have been disproportionately impacted by COVID-19 and, as the majority of the tourism workforce worldwide, women were also immensely impacted by business closures and reduced operations within this sector. With women being slower to return to pre-pandemic employment levels than men, it is critical that the recovery of the tourism sector is gender-responsive, including ensuring and advancing women's full and equal participation and leadership in tourism enterprises, and women-owned and led businesses have equitable and sustained market access and linkages, in accordance with the La Serena Roadmap for Women and Inclusive Growth.
9. We will conserve the unique biodiversity of each place, and respect the rich cultural diversity and knowledge of local communities, and will empower them to seize the economic opportunities that tourism can provide. Their cultures, languages, art forms and music are unique and can help draw many tourists to our region. We will promote their entrepreneurship, help strengthen their business skills and capacities in communities, and ensure tourism is respectful and environmentally sustainable. We concur that the next phase of tourism requires an approach that is firmly anchored 'at place'. Thus, policies for place-based tourism that support inclusivity and equity need to uphold the values of a destination, the existing frameworks and governance, the priorities of local communities, and the values that they uphold. We will cooperate to further develop APEC's work in these areas for other groups with untapped economic potential, such as Indigenous Peoples as appropriate, people with disabilities, and those from remote and rural communities.
10. Managing the next phase of tourism will ensure that tourism contributes to all types of wellbeing locally. We, therefore, welcome the "Policy Recommendations for Tourism of the Future: Regenerative Tourism" (Annex A) which reflects the concerted enthusiasm of all APEC Economies in pursuit of a strong, balanced, secure, sustainable, and inclusive growth, outlined in the APEC Putrajaya Vision 2040. The document is also congruent with Thailand's BCG model as well as the APEC 2022 theme: Open. Connect. Balance. Focusing on priorities and implications through more place-based and meaningful forms of better tourism to enhance the connectivity of the entire tourism eco-system, the policy recommendations may serve as guidance for APEC Economies to develop tourism as a key driver to enhance the multi-faceted well-being of APEC population as a whole.
11. We uphold that transformative change towards regenerative pathways requires more than a simple scaling-up of sustainability initiatives. It entails addressing overarching levers and leverage points to change systems. We reaffirm the end state of this regenerative process is that tourism must support positive change and sustainable economic development.
12. On the transition pathway towards the desired future, we encourage economies to support businesses in the face of changing business conditions. Together, we will intensify capacity building to help people to adapt to the changing market conditions, digital economy and new ways of working, including through APEC projects. Governments can support businesses in this transition. The future phase will involve applying experience and knowledge from key resilience activities and continuing to adapt. Thus, we encourage economies to strengthen exchanges and cooperation among tourism enterprises and personnel on sustainability, inclusiveness, increased digitalization, and ongoing investment in tourism.

13. We also welcome the updated APEC Guidelines for Tourism Stakeholders (Annex B). The guidelines for tourism stakeholders are founded on the values of sustainability, inclusivity, respect, responsibility, openness, innovation and partnership of their respective tourism sectors. We endeavor to use the guidelines to improve cooperation and coordination mechanisms to optimize the benefits of tourism within and across all APEC economies.
14. We commend the APEC Tourism Working Group for its efforts towards implementing the APEC Tourism Strategic Plan 2020 – 2024, that focuses on four pillars: (i) Digital transformation, (ii) Human capital development, (iii) Travel facilitation and competitiveness, (iv) Sustainable tourism and economic growth.
15. We recognize the importance of cross-fora collaboration and participation from APEC tourism stakeholders. We, therefore, encourage TWG to explore joint initiatives and enhance collaboration between fora such as: Transportation Working Group, SME Working Group, Oceans and Fisheries Working Group, Human Resource Development Working Group, Digital Economy Steering Group, Group on Services, Policy Partnership on Science, Technology and Innovation, Policy Partnership on Women in the Economy and other relevant groups, including the APEC Business Advisory Council.
16. We welcome the report of the TWG Lead Shepherd on TWG activities since we last met in 2018 and acknowledge the involvement and contributions made by APEC economies in vibrant policy discussions that generate sharing of best practices and recommendations to promote and strengthen the tourism cooperation across the region.
17. We recognize and express our sincere appreciation and support for the valuable efforts and the involvement of APEC Safe Passage Taskforce to facilitate the resumption of safe and seamless travel as well as the movement of people across borders amidst the COVID-19 pandemic.
18. We express our sincere appreciation to honored guests attending the 11th APEC Tourism Ministerial Meeting from World Travel and Tourism Council, Pacific Asia Travel Association, International Air Transport Association and other international and regional tourism organizations. We recognize that the involvement of other multilateral and regional tourism organizations and the private sector has made a great contribution to economic growth and tourism prosperity.
19. We also express our sincere gratitude to the APEC Secretariat and the TWG Lead Shepherd for their praiseworthy efforts and valuable contribution to the success of the meeting. We sincerely thank the Host Economy, Thailand, for its endeavor and hospitality to convene a productive and successful TWG and TMM meetings.
20. We look forward to the next APEC Tourism Ministerial meeting to be held in 2024 and encourage the future host to ensure themes discussed today are given continuity in imminent tourism meetings.