



**Asia-Pacific
Economic Cooperation**

2023/SOM2/SCE/IS03

Agenda Item: -

Tourism Working Group 2023 Work Plan

Purpose: Information

Submitted by: TWG Chair



**Second SOM Steering Committee on
Economic and Technical Cooperation
Meeting
Detroit, United States
23 May 2023**

Overview

In 2023, the Tourism Working Group (TWG) aims to continue to focus on the stimulation and recovery of tourism in the Asia-Pacific region. TWG has identified 2 key priorities for 2023, namely, **(1) the safe resumption of cross-border travel** and **(2) sustainable tourism: rethinking tourism towards a more sustainable path**.

1. Safe resumption of cross-border travel

- According to the latest UNWTO World Tourism Barometer issued in November 2022, the tourism sector has shown a robust recovery globally, with international travel projected to rebound to reach 65% of pre-pandemic levels by the end of 2022. In Asia and the Pacific, arrivals more than tripled in the first nine months of 2022, reflecting the opening of many destinations, though they remained 83% below 2019 levels.
- To support a robust and sustained growth and recovery in the tourism sector, TWG will take forward the recommendations of the **Safe Passage Task Force** towards implementation. Specifically, TWG will seek to identify recommendations in the APEC Policy Support Unit's Study on 'COVID-19 and Cross-Border Mobility in the APEC Region: Addressing Uncertainties at the Border', which TWG can contribute to and promote the implementation of relevant initiatives in this relation.
- In so doing, the TWG will directly support one of APEC 2023's Host Economy's key priorities – **"Interconnected: Building a resilient and interconnected region that advances broad-based economic prosperity"**, particularly in the area of **Restarting Cross-Border Travel**.
- This work will also contribute directly to **ECOTECH Medium-Term Priorities** by fulfilling the following **APA ECOTECH-related Collective Actions**, thereby contributing to the implementation of **Putrajaya Vision 2040**.
"Promote and cooperate on measures that facilitate the safe cross-border movement of people, particularly in the context of changing pandemic related health and travel measures, so as to strengthen tourism, aviation and similarly affected sectors"
- In addition, this work also contributes directly to the implementation of **APEC Connectivity Blueprint**.

2. Sustainable tourism

- The tourism sector is both highly affected by and a contributing factor to the climate crisis. Extreme weather events and biodiversity loss are some of the key challenges facing the tourism sector due to climate change. The COVID-19 pandemic provides the tourism sector with an opportunity to reset and rethink tourism and to put tourism on a more sustainable path. It is high time for TWG to identify and build capacity for men and women to support policies and practices that promote optimal use of environmental resources, biodiversity conservation, climate action and the Bio-Circular-Green economy.
- Guided by the **Bangkok Goals on Bio-Circular-Green (BCG) Economy**, TWG will discuss concrete and practical ways by which the TWG can mainstream sustainability into our work and tangibly contribute to BCG Economy. We plan to invite experts from various fields, from scientists to environmentalists to relevant international organisations, to share their perspectives, discuss and identify tourism's concrete contribution to the BCG economy and sustainability.
- TWG's work to promote sustainable tourism directly supports APEC 2023 Host Year Priority: **"Innovative: Enabling an innovative environment for a sustainable future"**, particularly in such areas as enhancing climate mitigation and resilience, reducing disaster risk and improving emergency preparedness and response, and tackling environmental challenges.
- By promoting sustainable tourism, TWG will also contribute to the **La Serena Roadmap for Women and Inclusive Growth**, whereby tourism can provide access to decent work, narrow the gap in economic development, and advance development in rural and remote areas. Hence, it contributes to achieving gender equality and the economic empowerment of women and girls, consistent with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.
- Sustainable tourism is also highly relevant to APEC's broader inclusive growth agenda, as it can have a very direct impact on place-based communities, Indigenous Peoples as appropriate, as well as rural, remote and/or local communities.
- This focus of TWG will also contribute to **ECOTECH Medium-Term Priority**, particularly by contributing to an **APA ECOTECH-related Collective Action** – *"Advance work on sustainable tourism."* thereby contributing to the implementation of **Putrajaya Vision 2040**.

Given the cross-cutting nature of the above priority areas, TWG aims to mainstream these 2 priority themes for TWG 2023 into all four pillars of APEC Tourism Strategic Plan 2020-2024, namely, (i) Digital Transformation, (ii) Human Capital Development, (iii) Travel Facilitation and Competitiveness (iv) Sustainable Tourism and Economic Growth. TWG will continue to implement projects in support of the APEC Tourism Strategic Plan.

Fora Governance/deliverables in 2023

- Convene two TWG meetings, i) the 61st TWG Meeting to be hosted by the Philippines in April 2023 (dates are to be confirmed), ii) the 62nd TWG Meeting to be hosted by the United States during SOM3 meeting cluster, with discussions focused on safe resumption of cross-border travel and sustainable tourism.
- Continue to follow up and update on the implementation of APEC Tourism Strategic Plan 2020-2024;
- Encourage initiatives/projects which align with TWG Key Priorities 2023 to be proposed and implemented by TWG Members;
- Draft the annual fora report for endorsement by the TWG and APEC SCE in September 2023;
- Conduct discussion and enhance cross-fora collaboration, including partner engagement as relevant to APEC Tourism Strategic Plan 2020-2024;
- Contribute to the biennial reporting on progress in the achievement of La Serena Roadmap objectives;
- Contribute to the biennial reporting on progress towards the achievement of the APEC Putrajaya Vision 2040;
- Contribute to Yearly Review Framework for APEC Connectivity Blueprint 2015-2025 in the fourth quarter of 2023; and

TWG 2023 Work Plan

Itemized Work Plan

Output/Project Title	Mandate (Leaders/Ministers/SOM/SCE Priorities and Decisions, Strategic Plans, ABAC recommendations)	Summary of Activities	Cross-fora collaboration (within APEC and beyond APEC)
ECOTECH Medium-Term Priorities: Promote and cooperate on measures that facilitate the safe cross-border movement of people, particularly in the context of changing pandemic related health and travel measures, so as to strengthen tourism, aviation and similarly affected sectors			
Host Year Priorities: (1). Interconnected: building a resilient and interconnected region that advances broad-based economic prosperity			
Report on Tourism Industry of Asia-Pacific Region in the COVID-19 Recovery Period: Current Situation, Trends and Challenges / TWG 02 2021A Tourism Industry of Asia-Pacific Region in the COVID-19 Recovery Period: Current Situation, Trends and Challenges by China	APEC Tourism Strategic Plan Priority Area 4: Sustainable Tourism and Economic Growth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Final Report of the project will be published in 2023. 	APEC Fora: PPSTI and DESG
Handbook on 'Increasing the Readiness and Resiliency of Tourism Destination Stakeholders in Managing Health Crises in APEC Economies' / TWG 06 2021A Increasing the Readiness and Resiliency of Tourism Destination Stakeholders in Managing Health Crises in APEC Economies by Malaysia	APEC Tourism Strategic Plan Priority Area 2: Human Capital APEC Tourism Strategic Plan Priority Area 4: Sustainable Tourism and Economic Growth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Project conducted Roundtable Discussion and Field Study in November and December 2022 and will be followed by Hybrid Workshop in February 2023. - Results from these activities will be solicited into a Handbook – to be published in the second quarter of 2023. 	APEC Fora: SMEWG, EPWG, TPTWG and HWG
APEC Safe Passage Compendium / TWG 01 2022A Establishing a Safe and Sustainable Future for Travel in the Better Normal –by the Philippines	APEC Tourism Strategic Plan Priority Area 2: Human Capital APEC Tourism Strategic Plan Priority Area 4: Sustainable Tourism and Economic Growth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The project aims to organise a public-private workshop to exchange ideas on opportunities, challenges, and strategies for safe passage. - The project will produce an APEC Safe Passage Compendium <p align="center"><i>(Subject to project quality assessment process and final BMC approval)</i></p>	APEC Fora: PPWE, HWG, TPTWG, and EPWG
ECOTECH Medium-Term Priorities: Promote ecosystems that support MSMEs, including those in the creative industry, to take advantage of the digital economy			
Host Year Priorities: (1). Interconnected: building a resilient and interconnected region that advances broad-based economic prosperity; and (2). Innovative: Enabling an innovation environment for a sustainable future;			
A Community-based Tourism Website to share information of tourism in village/municipalities of APEC economies / TWG 03 2021A Increasing the prospect of tourist business connectivity by applying information technology to create and promote MSMEs Network on community-based tourism (CBT) in the rural areas of APEC economies by Viet Nam	APEC Tourism Strategic Plan Priority Area 1: Digital Transformation APEC Tourism Strategic Plan Priority Area 3: Travel Facilitation and Competitiveness APEC Tourism Strategic Plan Priority Area 4: Sustainable Tourism and Economic Growth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The project delivered a Training Workshop and a Stakeholder Dialogue - A Community-based Tourism Website to share tourism information in village/municipalities of APEC economies is in the development process. The website is scheduled for launch in April 2023. 	APEC Fora: SMEWG, DESG and TELWG
ECOTECH Medium-Term Priorities: Further implement the APEC Disaster Risk Reduction Framework			
Host Year Priorities: (1). Interconnected: building a resilient and interconnected region that advances broad-based economic prosperity; and (3). Inclusive: Affirming an equitable and inclusive future for all			
Final Report on the risks that Sea Level Rise and Extreme Weather Events pose to tourism SMEs and coastal infrastructure as well as best practices in risk mitigation / TWG 04 2021A Assessing the Impact of Rising Sea Levels on Travel and Tourism in APEC Economies by the US	APEC Tourism Strategic Plan Priority Area 4: Sustainable Tourism and Economic Growth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The project will publish a Final Report on the risks that Sea Level Rise and Extreme Weather Events pose to tourism SMEs and coastal infrastructure, as well as best practices in risk mitigation in July 2023. - A Policy Dialogue will be held in August 2023 to present the report and findings. 	APEC Fora: SMEWG, OFWG and EPWG External Organisation: OECD, UNWTO, and the World Bank
Tourism Crisis Communication Plan / TWG 07 2021S Raising Awareness of Tourism Crisis Management in APEC by Japan	APEC Tourism Strategic Plan Priority Area 4: Sustainable Tourism and Economic Growth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A Tourism Crisis Communication Plan will be developed in the first quarter of 2023. 	APEC Fora: EPWG External Organisation: UNWTO
ECOTECH Medium-Term Priorities: Advance work on sustainable tourism			
Host Year Priorities: (1). Interconnected: building a resilient and interconnected region that advances broad-based economic prosperity; and (3). Inclusive: Affirming an equitable and inclusive future for all			
Handbook on Rebuilding Rural Tourism by Utilising Green Recovery Strategies / TWG 05 2021A Rebuilding Rural Tourism in APEC Economies by Utilising Green Recovery Strategies by Malaysia	APEC Tourism Strategic Plan Priority Area 2: Human Capital APEC Tourism Strategic Plan Priority Area 4: Sustainable Tourism and Economic Growth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A Handbook on Rebuilding Rural Tourism by Utilising Green Recovery Strategies will be published in February 2023 - A Virtual Seminar will be held in February 2023 to share the findings from the Handbook. - Training on implementing Green Recovery strategies into post-pandemic recovery in a rural tourism community will be held in May 2023. 	APEC Fora: SMEWG and HRDWG

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TWG 02 2022A A Workshop on Youth Involvement to the Development of Sustainable and Safe Tourism in Rural Areas of APEC Economies by Russia	TWG Strategic Plan 2020 – 2024: human capital development: travel and facilitation competitiveness: sustainable tourism and economic growth: digital transformation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A 2-day online Workshop on Youth Involvement in the Development of Sustainable and Safe Tourism in Rural Areas of APEC Economies will be held in September/October 2023 - A Final Report will be published by November 2023. 	<p>APEC Fora: HRDWG, PPWE, SMEWG and TPTWG</p> <p>External Organisation: PATA, IATA, WTTC, OECD</p>
Best Practices on the Application of Visitor Management Techniques in APEC Economies / TWG 05 2021S Develop and Disseminate Best Practices on the Application of Visitor Management Techniques in APEC Economies by Thailand	<p>APEC Tourism Strategic Plan Priority Area 2: Human Capital</p> <p>APEC Tourism Strategic Plan Priority Area 4: Sustainable Tourism and Economic Growth</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A yearly forum will be organised to present the progress of the project and regulate the regional collaboration network, and develop regional assessment guidelines. 	<p>APEC Fora: SMEWG and HRDWG</p> <p>External Organisation: UNESCO</p>