AN INTEGRATED STATISTICAL FRAMEWORK FOR MEASURING SUSTAINABILITY: THE CASE OF TOURISM

Implementation of MST: Regional sectoral approach to Governance and Policy Arrangements for Measuring Sustainability - the experience of the Pacific Region

PRESENTATION OUTLINE

1. Brief SPTO and Pacific Tourism Overview
2. Regional leadership for Sustainable Tourism
3. Our Regional Integrated Approach to MST
4. Barriers to Tourism Development & Measuring Sustainability
5. Benefits of An Integrated Approach to MST
6. Lessons Learnt from the Pacific
ABOUT SPTO

- Intergovernmental regional organisation for tourism marketing and development in the region
- Mandate: Market and Develop Tourism in the Pacific
- 20 Pacific Island Member Countries
- Over 100 Private Sector members

Core areas of focus:
1. Marketing
2. Research and Statistics and
3. Sustainable Tourism Planning and Development
- International, regional and national level partnerships

Brief Overview of Tourism in the Pacific Region

Tourism has been a major economic sector for the Pacific: GDP, tourism earnings, employment
- Pre-covid 2019: Total Visitor Arrivals stood at 2.2m, 4 billion USD Tourism Earnings
- Main markets: NZ, Aust, USA, Europe, Asia
Brief Overview of Tourism in the Pacific Region

Pacific Tourism Performance, 2020

-83% International Tourist Air Arrivals dropped by US$77 million

-73% International Cruise Visitor Arrivals dropped by US$83.5 million

-80% Total Visitor Arrivals (Air + Cruise) plunged by -2.4 million

Tourism Receipts dropped by -US$ 3.3 million. Most of the receipts were generated within the March Quarter, prior to widespread Travel & Border Restrictions.

Tourism Receipts (Annual): 2019 vs 2020

In 2020, Tourism Receipts (Annual) dropped by an estimated -83.0%. This was largely due to widespread Travel & Border restrictions put in place due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
Regional leadership in sustainable tourism

1. UN 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda inspired regional programme restructure in 2015

2. SPTO operationalized its sustainability programme in 2017, coincided with International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development

3. High level commitment for a sustainable tourism future for the Pacific, Oct 2019 Council of Tourism Ministers & Board of Directors calling for a regional policy and collective action


Our Regional Integrated Approach to MST

International Commitments: SDGs, SAMOA Pathway, Paris Agreement etc.

Pacific Sustainable Tourism Policy Framework

Setting Regional Priorities

Policy/Strategy Development

Monitoring & Risk Management

Pacific Tourism Statistics Strategy

Sustainability Indicators/Standards

National Priorities/Targets
National Development Plans/Tourism Sector Plans etc.
Setting our Regional Priorities
Integrated Approach

- Sustainable Tourism
  - Regional Stakeholder Consultation (early 2020)
  - Virtual Stakeholder Consultation
  - Review
  - Pacific Sustainable Tourism Policy Framework

- Tourism Statistics
  - Virtual Stakeholder Consultation
  - Review
  - Pacific Tourism Statistics Strategy

Importance of Governance Levels & Roles in MST

REGIONAL
- Inspirational leadership and cooperation for regional & global goals
- SPTO – SPC & Regional Reference Group
- PTES as guide, reviewed and informed by MST

NATIONAL
- Country driven response and stakeholder buy-in to inspire national & regional progress
- NSOs, NTOs and National Tourism Working Groups
- National Tourism Statistics Strategies

INDUSTRY
- Commitment to individual and national goals
- Owner and Staff of tourism businesses
- Business Plan
Barriers to Tourism Development & Measuring Sustainability

- **Sustainable Tourism Development**
  - Resources
  - Stakeholder Awareness
  - Geographic Isolation
  - Vulnerability
  - Scale of development/Size of Private Sector

- **Measuring Sustainability**
  - Data collection systems
  - Varied timelines and Data Management Systems
  - Capacity
  - Data Quality/Gaps
  - Coordination

Benefits of an Integrated Approach to MST

1. Sets a shared vision and agenda for sustainable development
2. Mobilises collective action and encourages spirit of learning and sharing
3. Sets the frameworks to guide national and industry level efforts
4. Provides a common platform to recognise actions and best practices
5. Strengthens cross sectoral collaboration, tourism & statistics dialogue (Producer-User Partnerships)
6. Instills ownership through a bottom up approach
Lessons Learnt from the Pacific

1. Our Member Countries are small and do not have the resources to develop sophisticated measurement systems. Setting up the regional policy frameworks provides clarity on individual issues/challenges.

2. Measuring sustainability is still new to the Pacific and starting this process with establishing regional governance and policies help inform national efforts and showcase Pacific initiatives at global level.

3. The role of statistics in the development of tourism is crucial. Without statistics, the Pacific is exposed to:
   • Mass/overtourism
   • Places prosperity in the hands of a few
   • Tourism that increases inequalities
   • Tourism that is destructive to the Pacific natural and cultural heritage

4. Setting the priorities first through the PSTPF ensured that the data/statistics development is responsive to the user needs.

5. The stakeholder engagement process provided through open virtual participation, inspired learning and appreciation of stakeholder needs and roles in the process

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PTSS Download Here