Measuring Community Attitudes Towards Tourism

The Cook Islands CAS 2018-2020

UNWTO Workshop: Measuring the Sustainability of Tourism for Asia and the Pacific, Dec 14 2021, Manila

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NZTRI
NEW ZEALAND TOURISM RESEARCH INSTITUTE
THREE RESEARCH PILLARS OF THE TOURISM DECISION SUPPORT SYSTEM (DSS)

- Visitor
- Business
- Community Impacts Awareness & Attitudes

Links with and supports other vital research activity – environment, climate change

www.nztri.org.nz/tourism-research/pacific/
Community time series data is vital

- The *Cook Islands Community Attitudes Towards Tourism Survey* explores the relationships between community and tourism from a number of perspectives including: economic, cultural, environmental and in terms of general quality of life.

- The survey runs annually at present and has been repeated three times with a fourth survey currently running (2018, 2019, 2020 ....2021)

- COVID-19 related questions were inserted into 2020 and 2021 rounds of the survey to get a better understanding of the pandemic impact and community responses.
An innovative and cost-effective approach

• Online data collection is run with the support of Cook Islands Tourism and Vodafone.

• Text blasts sent every week, weekly prizes to encourage participation. Hard copies available if required.

• 2020 - 1,038 responses. Based on the total population aged over 15 (2016 census) of 13,138 the sample size is approximately 8%.

• Current responses for the 2021 survey are approximately 1350.
Analysis and datamining

• The analysis focuses on the following data breakdowns: (1) Cook Island Maori and Non-Cook Island Maori; (2) Age group; (3) Island of residence (Rarotonga and Aitutaki); and (4) employment type* (tourism sector and non-tourism sector)

• Same model ran in Niue 2019 and will be repeated 2021

• End-users: Cook Islands Policy makers, planners, industry and community use the data, also informs NZ agencies in ‘travel bubble’ creation

https://www.nztri.org.nz/tourism-research/pacific/
Which of the following best describes you?

Time series

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2018</th>
<th>2019</th>
<th>2020</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cook Island Maori</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Cook Island Maori</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Which age group are you in? 2020

- 18-29: 22%
- 30-39: 21%
- 40-49: 20%
- 50-59: 19%
- 60-69: 14%
- 70+: 4%
Where do you live in the Cook Islands? 2020

Tourism / Non-tourism

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Tourism Sector</th>
<th>Non-tourism Sector</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rarotonga</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>81%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aitutaki</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Atiu</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Village</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>Percentage (%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arorangi</td>
<td>175</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tupapa</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nikao</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Titikaveka</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ngatangiia</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Matavera</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avatiu</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avarua</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Takuvaine</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vaimaanga</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tutakimoa</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Puaikura</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turangi</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kauare</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Atupa</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Do you work in or own a business in the tourism sector?

- Yes: 41%
- No: 59%

Do you get any income from tourism?

- Yes: 19%
- No: 81%
Do you have family members who work in tourism? 2020

- Yes: 68%
- No: 32%
Do you think that tourism is good for the Cook Islands?

Time series

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Yes (%)</th>
<th>No (%)</th>
<th>Not sure (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2018</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2019</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2020</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Tourism as a source of pride and direct benefit

Time series

I feel proud to live in a place that can attract many visitors
Mean rating: from Strongly Disagree (1) to Strongly Agree (5)

I benefit directly from tourism

Mean rating: from Strongly Disagree (1) to Strongly Agree (5)

2018 2019 2020
I feel proud to live in a place that can attract many visitors

I benefit directly from tourism

Mean rating: from Strongly Disagree (1) to Strongly Agree (5)
Tourism as a source of pride and direct benefit 2020
Tourism / Non-tourism

I feel proud to live in a place that can attract many visitors
Mean rating: from Strongly Disagree (1) to Strongly Agree (5)

Tourism sector: 4.6
Non-tourism sector: 4.2

I benefit directly from tourism
Tourism sector: 4.3
Non-tourism sector: 3.0
Do you think tourists should be allowed back in the Cook Islands?
CI Maori / Non-CI Maori
The current closure of borders by the Cook Islands Government is the right approach.

I am worried that tourists will bring in COVID-19 into the Cook Islands community.

I am confident businesses will do their best to ensure that their guests and their staff are safe from COVID-19.

Reviving tourism is critical to Cook Islands’ economy and the local people.

I am confident that the Cook Islands Government will do its best to ensure that members of the community are safe from COVID-19.

Tourists from New Zealand should be able to travel freely to the Cook Islands if there is no COVID-19 community transmission in either country.

Tourists from countries other than New Zealand should be able to visit the Cook Islands provided they quarantine upon arrival.

Benefits associated with the return of visitors outweigh concerns over the potential health risks.

**Mean rating:** from Strongly Disagree (1) to Strongly Agree (5)

- CI Maori
- Non-CI Maori
If tourists were allowed back in the Cook Islands, how will this affect you and your community?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Positive</th>
<th>56%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Negative</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suggestions on practices to reduce risk</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uncertainty or mixed positive and negative</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not much effect or changes</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **Positive overall**: 7%
- **Back to normal life**: 4%
- **Being able to share our culture and tradition**: 4%
- **Family reunion**: 1%

- **Negative overall**: 4%
- **Higher living cost**: 4%
- **Lose our culture and value and life quality**: 7%
- **Enjoyed the border closure**: 6%
- **Negative overall**: 4%

- **Suggestions on practices to reduce risk**: 20%
- **Creating more job opportunities or giving jobs back**: 46%
- **Economic benefit**: 43%
- **Benefit community well-being**: 9%
- **Tourism industry recovery**: 8%
- **Raised safety concerns and worries**: 73%
- **Over-crowded, traffic and environment damage**: 10%
- **Tourism industry recovery**: 8%
- **Back to normal life**: 4%
- **Benefit community well-being**: 9%
- **Health protocols e.g. Border control, test, vaccine and quarantine**: 55%
- **Community actions e.g. distancing, mask, CookSafe**: 26%
- **Control tourist numbers or allow only specific groups to come back**: 11%
- **Depends on the situation**: 8%
- **Communication and education**: 2%
- **Slow and steady process to welcome tourists back**: 2%
Key Take Aways

• Build close relationships with stakeholders
• Co-develop research tools
• Mix qualitative and quantitative dimensions
• Focus on innovative approaches that can cut costs
• Build capacity to conduct research but also the ability to use it
• Ensure community dimensions are factored in to tourism decision support systems and statistics.
Ngā mihi

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