

# The Challenge of Implementing Regional Tourism Plans and Strategies in Southeast Asia

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## **Abstract**

Master plans and strategies have been developed as a means of providing policy and planning direction in tourism planning and development. The value of these plans has previously been assessed based on how effectively they are implemented within a specified time and budget, especially at the subnational level. However, many master plans and strategies are not adequately implemented resulting in a situation where many of them just “sit on the shelf”. Lack of implementation is the result of several factors including lack of political will, inadequate competencies on the part of those responsible for implementation, scarce resources, poorly functioning administrative structures and in some cases policies and strategies that are not seen as responding to sub national issues and concerns.

In this article, the authors reflect on a variety of plans that they have worked on in Southeast Asia to provide some future direction for more effective development and implementation of such plans. Based on this experience there are a number of lessons learned identified and discussed in the article: the need for strategic and data gathering and analysis; integrated stakeholder management; incorporating change management and tactical planning into the decision-making process; increasing the capacity of supply chains; the adoption of new destination governance models; and increasing the capacity of those involved in tourism planning and development.

**Keywords:** tourism, tourism development, implementation, stakeholder management, planning, tourism planning and development, Southeast Asia, ASEAN

## **TOURISM PLANNING IN SOUTHEAST ASIA**

The authors have been involved in tourism planning in the Southeast Asian region for over 20 years. Walter Jamieson led the first Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Tourism Strategic Plan (ATSP 2011-2015) and the first ASEAN Tourism Marketing Strategy (ATMS 2012-2015). Walter Jamieson and Michelle Jamieson completed the ATMS 2017-2020, adopted by the 10

member economies in July 2017(the ATSP 2016-2025 was not developed by the authors but another consultant). Walter was also the consultant on the updating of the Greater Mekong Subregion (GMS) Tourism Sector Strategy 2016-2025.

The ASEAN countries, in the case of the GMS,have taken a lead in working together to ensure that the region and the subregion benefit from the full potential of tourism development. This activity represents a significant initiative that requiresregional cooperation and partnerships on a range of tourism issueswithin the context of a larger set of regional policy and cooperative engagements.

Figure 1 provides the sequence of regional plans and strategies discussed in this article.

Figure 1: Regional Plans and Strategies



**The ASEAN Region**

With a population of more than 600 million, the Southeast Asian region includes 10 countries - Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Singapore, Philippines, Thailand, and Viet Nam – which are all members of ASEAN. Established 50 years ago, ASEAN was primarily a means to assist political and security issues in the region. Within ASEAN there is a strong focus on collaboration between all the member economies in order to achieve sustainable economic growth, and social and cultural progress in the region. The functional areas of ASEAN have a wide focus, with tourism recognized as an important development area.

Southeast Asian countries have varying levels of development and capacity, meaning there are challenges to preparing strategies and policies that effectively represent the region and are implementable. Between the top economies as measured by GDP, such as Singapore, and the developing countries such as Myanmar and Cambodia, there are considerable differences

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in capacity. These disparities influence the opportunities for the full realization of a single ASEAN tourism destination. In spite of this reality, important advances have been made in developing a unified regional destination.

### **ASEAN TOURISM CONTEXT**

The rate of growth of tourism in Southeast Asia shows a steady increase and potential for further development. According to the UNWTO World Tourism Barometer (2017), Southeast Asia welcomed 113.2 million international visitors in 2016, an increase of 8.6% from 2015. As the influx of visitors continues and the impacts of “overtourism” are now being felt in several parts of the region, the countries recognize the need to ensure that their tourism development is responsible and inclusive.

The total contribution of travel and tourism to GDP, as reported by the World Travel & Tourism Council, was \$301.1 billion in 2016. Tourism in Southeast Asia in 2016 made a total contribution of 11.8% to GDP, which is forecast to rise 6.9% in 2017 (WTTC, 2017). More than 30 million jobs contributed to travel and tourism in the ASEAN region in 2016 and this is expected to increase by 3.7% in 2017, to over 31 million (WTTC, 2017). Travel and tourism are projected to account for 15% of GDP by 2025, based on the ASEAN Tourism Strategic Plan 2016-2025.

As part of ongoing efforts, ASEAN is working to fulfill the United Nations' 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). There is a strong commitment to reducing poverty and narrowing the development gap within and between countries, promoting sustainable development of micro, small and medium enterprises, promoting sustainable tourism cooperation, and enhancing cultural exchange and cooperation (ASEAN, 2016).

### **ASEAN Tourism Strategic Plans (ATSP)**

One of the first stages in fully realizing the tourism potential of the region was the development of the first comprehensive tourism strategic plan, the ASEAN Tourism Strategic Plan (ATSP) 2011-2015. The development of the plan involved a highly participative process to ensure all 10 member economies were engaged and represented, along with consultations with a variety of public and private sector stakeholders. The plan set out a balanced set of actions and activities guided by the vision: “by 2015, ASEAN will provide an increasing number of visitors to the region with authentic and diverse products, enhanced connectivity, a safe and secure environment, increased quality of services, while at the same time ensuring an increased quality of life and opportunities for residents through responsible and sustainable tourism development by working effectively with a wide range of stakeholders.”

The plan was organized around three sets of strategic directions:

- The development of experiential and innovative regional products and

creative marketing and investment strategies;

- Increasing the quality of human resources, services and facilities in the region; and
- Enhancing and accelerating travel facilitation and ASEAN connectivity.

To continue the momentum from 2011-2015, the ATSP 2016-2025 was developed, putting significant focus on the marketing and development of experiences to increase traveler arrivals. The ATSP 2016-2025 presents a vision for ASEAN tourism over the next decade: “by 2025, ASEAN will be a quality tourism destination offering a unique, diverse ASEAN experience, and will be committed to responsible, sustainable, inclusive and balanced tourism development, to contribute significantly to the socioeconomic well-being of ASEAN people.”

The plan had two strategic directions that included a variety of strategic actions: enhance the competitiveness of ASEAN as a single tourism destination and ensure that ASEAN tourism is sustainable and inclusive (note: the ATSP 2016-2025 was not completed by the authors).

### **ASEAN Tourism Marketing Strategy (ATMS)**

The themes proposed in the ATMS 2012-2015 were closely aligned and followed the same development process as the ATSP 2011-2015, which were adventure travel, senior long stay, business travel and experiential travel. As part of the report *ASEAN Short Term Marketing Strategy for the Experiential and Creative Markets* (2013), food was identified as a theme and an area of focus.

The ATMS 2017-2020 built on the previous marketing strategy. Part of the challenge for positioning ASEAN is a lack of financial and regional human resources allocated to the overall marketing tasks. Based on this reality, the ATMS takes a realistic approach, focusing on digital activities and utilizing partnerships that allow for the successful implementation of marketing activities. As major promotions are designed for the region, destinations continue to develop their individual tourism and marketing strategies, themes and experiences, creating a need for carefully balancing themes and directions.

### **Greater Mekong Subregion**

Within the ASEAN region there is another grouping of countries that work together, known as the Greater Mekong Subregion (GMS), which comprises Cambodia, Yunnan Province and Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region in the People's Republic of China (PRC), the Lao People's Democratic Republic (Lao PDR), Myanmar, Thailand and Viet Nam, all connected by the Mekong River. The GMS works to develop the Greater Mekong Subregion as a single tourism destination. The GMS recently adopted the Greater Mekong Subregion (GMS) Tourism Sector Strategy 2016-2025 (MTCO, 2017). The vision for the region is:

“Tourism in the Greater Mekong Subregion is integrated, prosperous, equitable, and resilient, with effective partnerships and knowledge management”. The strategy outlines five strategic directions that allow for a “competitive, balanced and sustainable destination”: human resource development; infrastructure improvement; traveler experience and service enhancement; creative marketing and promotion; and travel facilitation. The GMS, through the Mekong Tourism Coordinating Office (MTCO), is carrying out a marketing strategy based on the *Experience Mekong: Greater Mekong Subregion Tourism Marketing Strategy and Action Plan 2015–2020* (MTCO, 2015).

### **Strategic Reflections**

As would be expected given the largely similar geographic concerns of the two regional groupings, the overall strategic directions and approaches share similarities, especially the value placed on sustainable and inclusive development. Both regions are experiencing considerable growth, with tourism seen as a significant potential generator of economic and social development. The ASEAN and GMS planning initiatives are concerned with directing tourism to secondary destinations thereby assisting the distribution of revenue from tourism activities, a challenge common to both regions. Capacity issues are also common to both.

The significant investment in time and energy spent developing these various strategies is to be applauded. The challenge, as with many exercises dealing with less-developed countries, is related to the ability of the regions, but more importantly the subnational levels of tourism planning and development, to implement the original plans and strategies.

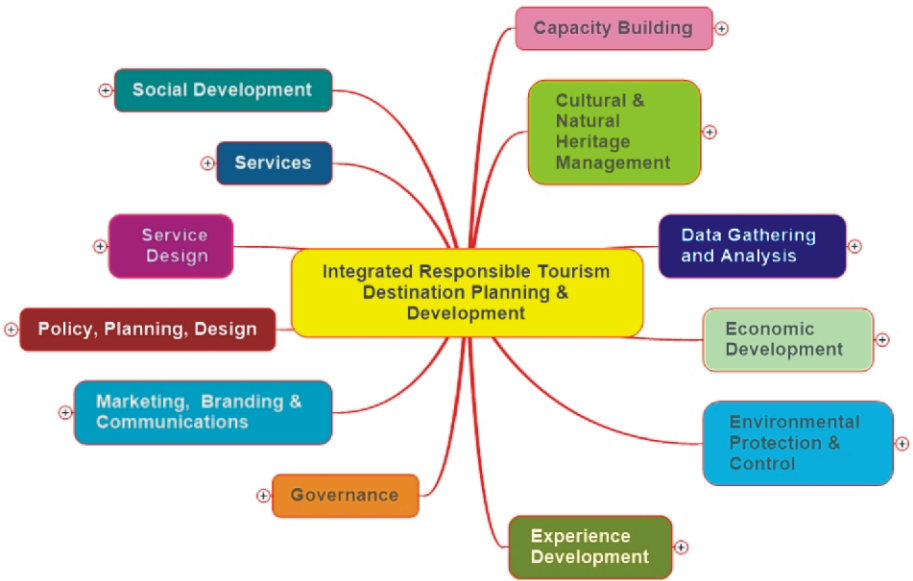
### **IMPLEMENTING REGIONAL PLANS AND STRATEGIES**

In most countries it is the responsibility of subnational authorities (provinces, states, districts, cities etc.) to ensure that regional and national plans are implemented. However, too often, regional and national plans are more sophisticated and complex than the appropriate regulatory frameworks and levels of capacity at the local level, resulting in the plans literally “sitting on the shelf”. Problems with implementation are in fact due to the gap between the capacities and skills of those responsible for implementation and their political masters, who may or may not share the appropriateness, urgency or relevance of larger scale tourism plans.

In order to develop a context for the implementation of regional strategies and plans, the authors have developed a conceptual mind map of integrated responsible tourism destination planning and development, shown in Figure 2. This conceptual mind map outlines a number of issues that need to be

considered in any systemic approach to policy and plan implementation at the destination level. The issue of destination planning and development is a major topic with a number of perspectives and definitions. As discussed later, the concept is moving beyond the narrow definition of existing destination marketing organizations. For a thorough discussion of destination management please refer to *Destination management: plans and practitioners perspectives in New Zealand* (Pearce, 2016).

Figure 2: Integrated Responsible Tourism Destination Management



Based on this conceptual framework, Table 1 outlines the activities and concerns behind the various dimensions of the destination management process, which is useful in understandingthe range of responsibilities and stakeholders and the need for an integrated approach.

Table 1: Planning Dimensions and Related Competencies Required in the Implementation of Regional Strategies at Destination Level

Planning Dimensions	Related Competencies
Capacity Building	Competency-based learning, degree programs, on-the-job training, exchanges, vocational, talent management, training, on-going professional development, distance learning, certificates, diplomas, mentoring.
Cultural & Natural Heritage Management	Heritage site management, interpretation, storytelling, carrying capacities, festivals and events, tangible and intangible heritage, living cultures, visitor management plans.
Data Gathering & Analysis, IT	Analysis, customer motivation, data gathering, futures, KPIs, prototyping and testing, strategic research.
Economic Development	Establishing cooperatives, incentives, local and regional funding schemes, poverty reduction, SME development, tax schemes.

Environmental Protection & Control	Carrying capacities, climate change, environmental controls, smart buildings, greening, resilience.
Experience Development	<i>Design:</i> Circuits, clusters, experience design, packages, routes, trails, venue management, design thinking.  <i>Management:</i> MICE, events, food & beverage, entertainment, general shopping, local handicrafts, theme parks, culture, nature, adventure, marine.
Governance	Agile decision making, destination management, NGOs, partnerships, stakeholder management, integrated/whole government approaches, eGovernment.
Marketing, Branding & Communications	Brand development, market research, monitoring, promotion, distribution, digital media, media relations, social media.
Policy, Planning, Design	Carrying capacity, development control, land-use planning, master planning, placemaking, public participation, resilience planning, tactical planning, urban design, building design, signage, wayfinding, greening, support for innovation.
Service Design	Customer journey assessment, customer relations management, experience design, quality assurance and control, service audits, standards development.
Services	<i>Private:</i> Accommodation, para transit, food and beverage, entertainment, financial services, health services, information and communication technology, recreational facilities, sharing economy services.  <i>Public:</i> Water, electrical, emergency services, environmental management, garbage removal, disposal & recycling, hospitals, internet provision, open space, disaster planning, fire, police, ICT, public transit.
Social Development	Empowerment and gender programs, community development, cooperatives, social enterprises, social investment.

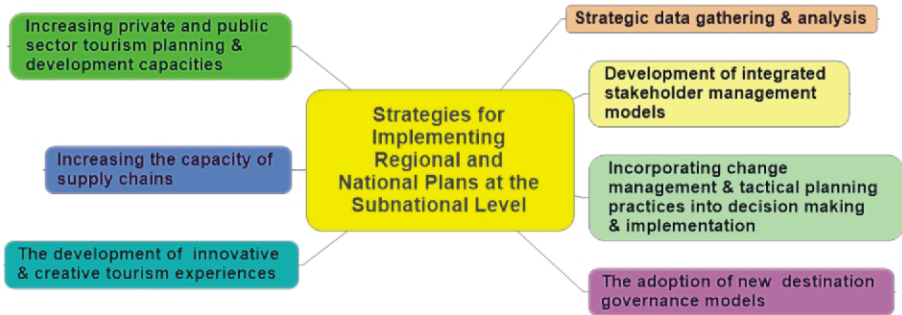
Given the complex nature of the implementation process, if the region is to move towards more effective tourism development implementation there must be recognition that an enabling environment and framework must be designed in order to meet a series of regional imperatives, illustrated in Figure 3.

Figure 3: ASEAN Regional Imperatives



Figure 4 provides the authors' insight into the issues that are felt to be essential in meeting the regional imperatives presented in Figure 4. Many of these insights are designed to provide an enabling environment to ensure that regional and national plans are effectively put in place.

Figure 4: Essential Sub National Tourism Issues



### Strategic Data Gathering and Analysis

Many regional plans are developed with a comprehensive situation analysis incorporating fact and evidence-based approaches, a sophisticated provision of relevant statistics, trends and forces, and an understanding of the concerns of stakeholders.

The implementation requires careful attention to both planned and unintended impacts as well as ongoing analysis and an understanding of changing global trends and forces. However, some Southeast Asian countries lack even the most basic capacities and structures to respond to the relative level of sophistication of the regional planning processes. Data in many cases is difficult to access and may in many cases be nonexistent. In some situations, even the most basic of data sets such as international tourism arrivals may be inadequately collected, making it difficult to provide an evidence-based platform for decision-making. Given this reality, funding structures and capacities are needed for the collection and analysis of finer grained data to guide decision-making and implementation at subnational levels.

Capacity building in ASEAN and GMS must be seen as a long-term process that requires tourism authorities and other stakeholders to convince governments to provide the necessary financial and human resources, and for the private sector to cooperate in providing the necessary data. Even if the data gathering and analysis capacities were in place, many of the officials responsible for actual planning and development do not have the necessary knowledge or capacity to use the data effectively. In both the short and long term, international and local universities and research groups can play an important role, working together to develop research and capacity building and data gathering and analysis programs.

### Development of Integrated Stakeholder Management Models

Too often at the local and state/provincial level simplistic, opportunistic and politically motivated approaches to stakeholder management occur. Many authorities feel that it is sufficient to bring people around the table and hold a few information sessions. While these types of process may be sufficient to

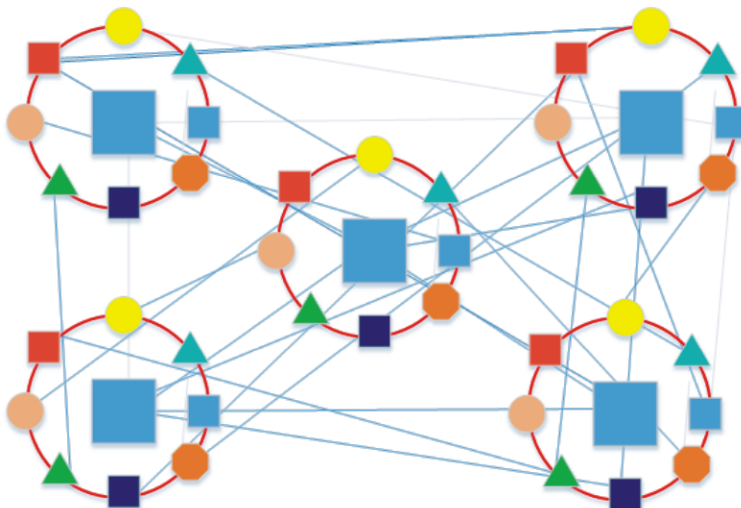


meet political imperatives, given the complexity of the tourism planning and development process it is necessary that all stakeholders, including small and medium-sized businesses, domestic and international visitors, service providers, government ministries, and the private, public and nonprofit sectors responsible for delivering tourism experiences, have an equal place at the table.

Existing public participation exercises, limited as they might be, are further compromised by the silos that exist in many government departments. While there may be general awareness of the need for stakeholders to work together, politicians, and most importantly bureaucracies may be unwilling or unable to consider integrated ways of approaching tourism planning and development. Without this willingness to work productively together and the skills that this requires, the potential of subnational tourism to meet national policies is compromised.

Given the difficulty in achieving effective large-scale stakeholder engagement and participation, there needs to be a willingness to consider different models that would in fact bring together stakeholders of like interests and concerns as part of a larger consultation on policy and planning development. The nature of this process is presented in a simple conceptual approach, shown in Figure 5, which illustrates how small groups of stakeholders either geographically or based on interest can be incorporated into a larger process. These smaller groups can deal with particular issues and situations augmented by interaction among the stakeholders involved, within a much larger process of planning, development, preparation and implementation. These alternative models must be assessed and tested if the goals of widespread stakeholder participation and engagement are to be achieved.

Figure 5: Conceptual Stakeholder Approach



## **Incorporating Change Management and Tactical Planning Practices into Decision-Making and Implementation**

It is recognized that in various public sector organizational structures there are processes that require approvals and many stakeholder reviews, which slow down the implementation process. However, given the fact that the tourism environment develops at a much more rapid pace than previously, organizational structures and processes need to be adapted to be more flexible in order to respond to changes in the environment and take advantage of potential opportunities that develop. Increasingly, change management must be seen not only as a function that allows large scale change to occur within an organization but rather as creating an internal environment that thrives on the ability to adapt to global and local conditions.

Regional strategies often do not provide a policy and organizational framework for implementing regional strategies, policies and directions. In order for there to be successful implementation at the sub-national level there needs to be capacity building and organizational cultures for those implementing the strategy to develop tactical activities that support national and regional directions. In many fields, the adoption of tactical planning is seen as one way of dealing with the realities of capacity and decision-making structures. Tactical planning, for the purposes of this discussion, can be seen as short term, small-scale interventions that inspire long-term change (Jamieson & Jamieson, 2016). Some of the characteristics of a tactical approach are a deliberate, phased approach to instigating change, local ideas for local planning, and short-term commitment with realistic expectations. Tactical planning offers a lower risk opportunity for experimentation as short-term planning activities can be more easily changed and usually adapted at a low cost.

### **The Adoption of New Destination Management Models**

Many of the subnational organizations and structures responsible for implementing regional plans are poorly positioned to implement complex and interrelated policies and plans. Many of the organizations and authorities responsible for implementation see their primary responsibility as marketing and promotion, with wider destination management concerns resting with other stakeholders. These other stakeholders often do not have the necessary knowledge, skill or interest to implement regional tourism strategies.

Destination Think!'s Chief Strategist, William Bakker, has suggested that Destination Marketing Organizations (DMOs) have a stark choice to make as they consider how to lead their destinations' success. "We can treat our destinations as commodities and consume what we have as fast as we can at the expense of our citizens and our environment, risking our long-term viability. Or we can offer experiences that transform people by creating memories for life, opening people's minds, or simply strengthening bonds with

loved ones. All while contributing to the quality of life for our citizens instead of taking it away” (Archer, 2016).

In addition, organizations with a primary marketing and promotion mandate have seen their influence and roles changing with the importance of social media in generating interest and travel to destinations. The realization of the need for a wider mandate has resulted in subnational tourism planning and development being best served by organizations that have an integrated perspective. What is proposed is the concept of Destination, Development, Management and Marketing Organizations (DDMMO). These DDMMOs are seen as taking on wider mandates, possibly including the following initiatives: social sustainability, placemaking and branding, livability and localism, partnerships, new funding schemes, sharing economies, smart cities and crisis management and recovery. Developing these types of organizations and structures takes time, but must be seen as essential if Southeast Asian destinations are to remain competitive.

For example, although destinations such as London combine various elements of their communication and marketing functions in order to more effectively position their destinations as great places for tourism, investment, living etc. The city has formed London & Partners, the official promotional company for London, which is a non-profit public/private partnership, funded by the Mayor of London and a network of commercial partners. It supports economic growth and job creation for London by attracting investment, businesses, events, visitors and students, helping businesses to internationalize and building London's reputation (London & Partners).

### **The Development of Innovative and Creative Tourism Experiences**

It is generally accepted that the focus of tourism planning has moved from the development of individual tourism products/attractions to engaged end-to-end visitor experiences. This process has been evolving for some time, based on the early work of several practitioners, particularly Pine and Gilmore's (1999) 'experience economy' which recognizes that the consumer no longer pays for a basic service, but a complete experience.

While in some instances, a visitor experience may naturally present itself, in most cases an experience needs to be curated, packaged and designed for a destination visitor. This has led to an increasing understanding that experience design must be incorporated into the tourism, service and the experience economy sectors. Experience design includes the way experiences are imagined, communicated and constructed by both producers and consumers, and is very much an interdisciplinary activity involving a wide range of stakeholders. However, very often those responsible for tourism development, and in fact marketing and promotion, lack the necessary creative skills and

international orientation to begin to develop experiences that meet the needs of an increasingly sophisticated and demanding customer group who are looking for authentic experiences and memories. Experience designers need to be skilled in research, social media, use of partnerships, design thinking, maximizing visitor journeys and being aware of the potential of virtual reality. As with many other aspects of the implementation process international experts with this skill and knowledge set should be incorporated into the experience development process.

### **Increasing the Capacity of Supply Chains**

One goal of the ATSP 2016-2025 is to encourage tourism development in second and third tier cities. Increasing the capacity of national and local supply chains to meet the needs of ever-growing tourism is an avenue that should be pursued. This can be achieved across many areas of economic and community activity, with food having significant promise as an important development tool. The authors explore the potential of food tourism in a forthcoming article titled *Developing Responsible Food Tourism Experiences in Southeast Asia*.

Supply chains are complex and require sophisticated approaches if tourism is to increase the quality of life and well-being of local people, especially those not directly involved in the delivery of the tourism experience. For example, in food tourism there is a need to move beyond the farm to table concept to one that incorporates the entire production, processing and consumption process. In order for tourism to impact wider sections of the population tourism supply chains should be reengineered to meet development goals “by increasing direct market access for... encouraging tourism enterprises to introduce supplier codes of conduct to ensure fair pricing and trade agreement, building a supportive business environment for local suppliers, celebrating local food as part of the tourism product, and facilitating trading relations between hotels, restaurants and local suppliers” (UNWTO, 2015).

Additionally, the public and private sectors, working with the development community, should support small and medium-sized enterprises in both production and consumption, encouraging the establishment of community-based food and beverage operations. This requires technical assistance, access to credit and support for marketing and promotion.

### **Increasing Private and Public Sector Tourism Planning and Development Capacities**

In Southeast Asia most key stakeholders at the subnational level do not have formal tourism backgrounds and even fewer have planning backgrounds. This capacity gap has to be bridged in order to effect change and meet a wide range of societal goals and objectives (Jamieson & Jamieson 2016).

The regional plans and strategies discussed in this article incorporate strategic

actions, directions and activities necessary to upgrade the capacities of all stakeholders. While these national and regional goals are comprehensive, in many cases the necessary capacity and structure to actually implement capacity building initiatives at the appropriate levels is limited by a lack of financial resources, poor political willingness, few qualified educators and trainers and the lack of time and money of many low-income people to undertake full-time education, even when it is available.

One positive ASEAN capacity building activity was the adoption of the Mutual Recognition Arrangement on Tourism Professionals (MRA-TP) (ASEAN, 2013), which was a significant milestone, as the member economies recognized the need for capacity development on a regional basis to meet a range of tourism objectives. The MRA-TP established competencies and detailed delivery mechanisms for 32 job profiles including positions in hotel services, front office, housekeeping, travel services and, importantly, food and beverage services.

However, many crucial public-sector issues and concerns need to be addressed and strategies agreed to develop and deliver appropriate learning to those involved in the tourism policy and implementation process. The challenge is to first have regional, national and subnational stakeholders agree on a set of competencies and knowledge for those involved in the tourism planning and development process. Table 2 provides a possible list of tourism planning and development competencies and knowledge based on the work of the authors as well as colleagues from the School of Travel Industry Management at the University of Hawaii. Based on an agreement of essential knowledge and competency sets, there is a need for an assessment of the ability and willingness of educational providers to develop the necessary learning packages and delivery systems. At least in the short term, careful consideration of existing planning, tourism, management and organizational programs would allow for the development of an interdisciplinary program requiring two new courses and learning packages. What would be required are introductory and capstone courses to set the academic context for tourism planning and development. This process of development would be best done at the regional level with an exchange of course materials and experience. Without this type of capacity element, it is unlikely that there would be the ability to strategically implement regional and national plans. One possibility for the funding and development of such an initiative could follow the same process as the MRA-TP, in which major development funding from the Australian government together with expertise from within the country were the catalyst for the development of the capacity framework.

Table 2: Possible List of Tourism Planning and Development Competencies and Knowledge

<p><b>Conceptual, Industry and Global Understanding (Concepts, Economics, Global Systems, Industry Development)</b></p> <p><i>Tourism, Travel and Hospitality Industry Conceptual Understanding:</i> Strategic and conceptual understanding of tourism, hospitality, destinations, travel, tour and transportation management, resort, hospitality, hotel, real estate and fractional ownership management, restaurant, food and beverage management.</p> <p><i>Global Understanding, Tourism Economics, Systems Thinking and Perspectives:</i> Understanding globalism and international commitment and management impacts, systems, holistic thinking and economics related to resort and destination management.</p> <p><i>Industry Development and Understanding:</i> Working knowledge and experience of the travel (resort and destination) industry including either previous experience and/or field/working experience applying relevant background within a real world context.</p>
<p><b>Management (Marketing, Finance, Communications, Technology, Human Relations)</b></p> <p><i>Marketing, Product and Services Development:</i> Advertising, public relations and promotions, E-commerce and Internet marketing, consumer motivation and behavior, product/service development and brand development and management, and customer relationship, quality and service management within resort and destination management.</p> <p><i>Financial Management and Control:</i> Application of financial analysis to both the domestic and international travel industry, working capital and asset management, capital budgeting and investment decisions, balance sheet analysis, business planning, managerial finance and mergers and acquisitions as relevant to resort and destination management.</p> <p><i>Communications and Technology Management:</i> Communications and interpersonal behavior, communications and technology management, application of computer technology and Internet-based skills within resort and destination management.</p> <p><i>Human Relations and Resources:</i> Human relations and development, training and motivation and understanding of legal issues, health, risk and safety within resort and destination management organizations.</p>
<p><b>Critical Analysis (Critical Thinking, Research Methods, Applied Research)</b></p> <p><i>Applied Research Methods:</i> Essential research techniques which may be of benefit in analyzing the results used in applied organizational resort and destination management settings. The intention is to understand their use in terms of methodology, accuracy, validity and reliability.</p> <p><i>Critical Thinking, Research and Analysis:</i> Critical thinking, research methods and analysis related to the resort destination management industry. Research methods include identifying sources of information and assimilating information, using quantitative tools to analyze, derive meaning, and solve problems and the ability to adopt a larger perspective, to conceptualize and integrate ideas into systems or theories.</p>
<p><b>Strategic Development (Leadership, Change, Strategy, Policy, Planning, Sustainability, Responsibility, Decision Making)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <i>Strategic Leadership and Organizational Change:</i> Organizational development and behavior, leadership management, visioning and decision-making and management of organizations, crisis and destination change, problem solving, conflict, facilitation, consensus building and negotiation skills and teamwork/team-building within resort and destination management.</li> <li>● <i>Innovation, Technology and Entrepreneurship:</i> Innovation, entrepreneurship, creativity, futures thinking and development, innovation, entrepreneurship, creativity, information and communication technology.</li> <li>● <i>Policy, Planning and Strategic Development:</i> Policy and planning skills, project management skills, resort planning and development, destination planning and development, natural resources and land-use planning, impact assessment and development, cultural impact and resources planning and development, strategic management skills, community development, building partnerships and policy and planning for resort and destination management.</li> <li>● <i>Sustainability and Responsibility:</i> Sustainable development and management, social responsibility, values and ethical management, environmental, social, cultural and economic impacts and analysis, and diversity, cultural and indigenous understanding and sensitivity related to resort and destination management.</li> </ul>

## Final Thoughts

While significant advances have been made at the regional level and to a lesser extent at national levels of tourism planning and development in Southeast Asia, there are still significant gaps in the capacities of subnational governments to implement these plans and ensure responsible development. It will take time before the tourism authorities at the subnational level are in a position to effectively and efficiently implement the strategies of the regional plans. The authors hope that this discussion encourages a debate on the development of the directions put forward in this article.

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## About the Authors

**Prof. Walter Jamieson**, has more than 40 years Walter Jamieson has worked to bridge the academic and consultancy worlds through creativity, innovative and out-of-the-box thinking. His activities include: early work in Canada using tourism and heritage resources as tools for community and economic development, research and consultancy work in China, extensive community-based tourism work in Asia, exploring the power of tourism as a tool for economic and social development, and leadership in creating an innovative service curriculum in Thailand.

He has held executive positions in national and international organizations. Walter Jamieson has been director and a member of a several international consulting groups. He has also been director of several university-based consultancies. Clients include the United Nations World Tourism Organization, UNESCAP, UNESCO, SNV, ADB, World Bank, ASEAN, Ministry of Tourism and Sports, Thailand. He has independently or through institutional activities conducted over a 125 public as well as private sector projects at an international, national, as well as the local level.

**Michelle Jamieson** is a creative, results-driven communication and marketing specialist who has a strong background in tourism, public relations and change management. Having lived and worked in Southeast Asia for more than 15 years, Michelle has an understanding and appreciation for the region, which is richly enhanced with international experience and a global perspective that allows her to provide effective solutions to complex issues. Michelle contributed to the ASEAN Tourism Marketing Strategy 2012 – 2015, in which she developed effective means for communication within the group of ten Southeast Asian countries.

Michelle was the project manager responsible for the preparation of the ASEAN Tourism Marketing Strategy 2017-2020 which was adopted in August 2017.