

Forum:	U.N. World Tourism Organization (UNWTO)
Issue:	The question of rebuilding tourism industries harmed by the COVID-19 pandemic
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Introduction

Tourism makes up a major part of the world economy as the third-largest export category (behind chemicals and fuel). In some countries, tourism represents over 20% of the gross domestic product (GDP). Tourism also provides livelihoods for millions of people in both developing and developed economies by supporting one in ten jobs.

Since the COVID-19 pandemic first struck the world in late 2019, a variety of industries got affected, including the banking, manufacturing and automotive industries. The outbreak forced several companies to halt their production, or even close-down their companies.

The current COVID-19 pandemic has had significant impacts on tourism around the world. As many as 100 million direct tourism jobs are at risk. Industries connected to tourism are also threatened, which puts 144 million workers worldwide at risk as well. In particular, small businesses are very vulnerable to the impacts of COVID-19 as they support 80% of global tourism

More specifically, the travel industry has been heavily affected. So far in 2020, 43 airlines have closed down, and 77% of accommodations will be forced to lay off more workers. Several factors led up to the current condition, including the dramatic decline in the demand of airlines and the banning of global travel. Most countries also enacted restrictions on travel and locked down cities, which stopped people from going abroad and traveling. The number of international tourists in 2020 declined from 58% to 78%.

The impact of this was a significant drop of visitor spending from \$1.5 trillion in 2019 to between \$310 and \$570. This puts over 100 million people at risk of a job. It also influences the environment. The sudden shutdown of the tourism activities meant months of no income for some conservation areas or national parks, where the protection and

cultivation of biodiversity take place. Without the income, they lack funds, which cause the entire work stop. Similarly, the cultural implication for the virus places emphasis on the crowd that tourism brought to. In the past, the tourists brought extra revenue to the merchants around cultural relics and historical sites. Yet, as the virus spread, the government called off all activities and closed heritage sites. More so, approximately 85,000 museums were temporarily shut-down.

The livelihood impact that the pandemic brought has also threatened the SDGs on tourism as it increases poverty and escalates the unemployment rate. (Goal1: No Poverty, Goal10: Reduce Inequality) Sustainable Tourism is a new trend to the whole world. And tourism is directly connected to three Sustainable Development Goals: Goal 8:decent work and economic growth, Goal 12: responsible consumption and production and Goal 14: life below water.

Historically, the travel and hospitality industry has been able to recover from other catastrophic events such as 9/11 and the Great Recession. However, COVID-19 presents a unique situation that may be difficult to navigate because no economic model exists that could provide a timeframe for how long the virus will be a risk. However, the pandemic also differs from 9/11 and the Great Recession in that people have money to spend in the travelling industry - they are just limited by fear and restriction. Supporting and diversifying traveling industries is an important first step to boost investment in these sectors.

In order to build resilience in these industries, member states must actively take measures to boost competitiveness, advance innovation, foster sustainability, and mitigate the socioeconomic impacts on livelihoods. The current slowdown in travel presents a unique opportunity for the travel industry to improve in the long-term for when demand returns.

The problems eventually lead to the vaccine of the virus. But until the day comes, as global citizens, we should all come up with concepts that aim for a better anabiosis after such a biochemical catastrophe strikes and make the world back on track at the least delay possible. Especially in the hit-hard tourism industry.

Definition of Key Terms

Tourism

Tourism is highly related to human's lives, meaning the act of spending time outside of home. Especially with its feature which is to have the ability to adapt the consumers'

needs at all times. Pursuing relaxation and pleasure, and relieve the high pressure from daily life and work. Moreover, modern tourism is intensively increasing and organized commercially.

Tourism industry

Tourism industry contains many aspects, including accommodation and transportation(airlines, cruise ships, car rental, etc.). This industry considers every activity related to people's short term movement from 1 hour to the maximum 1 year. It can bring a variety of benefits to society since it creates economic trade and millions of job opportunities. It can also connect to other industries such as the financial industry.

Travel Facilitation

Travel Facilitation is all the facilities and services that support tourist travel and gets the individual from their original location to their destination. It is closely related to tourism development, and an increased demand can generate jobs, international understanding, and economic development.

U.N. World Tourism Organization (UNWTO)

The U.N. World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) is an United Nation agency that aims to create a tourism market that is responsible, sustainable and universally accessible, more importantly, a poverty reduction tourism market. Its purpose is to promote economic growth in member states and enhance member states' competitiveness and innovation. It's headquarter is located in Madrid, Spain, and the secretariat is Zurab Pololikashvili. Facing the serious COVID-19 pandemic, this nation also attempts to reduce the loss in the tourism industry in its member states.

COVID-19

Also named the novel CoronaVirus. It's an infectious disease transmitted via droplets and contact. Started in China, Wuhan in December 2019, then spreads worldwide rapidly. In the end of 2020, there's totally 81,485,199 confirmed cases, and 1,798,154 deaths. Throughout investigations and surveys, older people with cardiovascular disease, diabetes, chronic respiratory disease and cancer are more likely to contract the virus.

Small Island Developing States(SIDS)

A group of developing countries with specific social, environmental and economic susceptible issues located in the Caribbean, the Pacific and the Atlantic, Indian Ocean, Mediterranean and South China Sea (AIMS). Their environment and development were

seen as an unique case at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in 1992. There are a total of 52 countries that were recognized as the SIDs. For countries in the SIDs, biodiversity is their common feature. Moreover, half of their GDP constitute tourism and fisheries.

Least Developed Country(LDCs)

Originally certified officially by the UN in 1971. Defined by 3 criterias: Income(GNI), human asset(HAI) and Economic and Environmental Vulnerability (EVI). These low income countries have low human resources, and have high possibility of collapse facing either economic or environmental strike.

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) was its predecessor. The SDGs are 17 sustainable goals adopted by the United Nations in September 2015. It's a set of distinct targets on social, economic and environmental, and all need to be achieved by 2030. Attempt to address the most pressing global issues of our time. The United Nations urges the world to act in a global partnership, to reduce poverty, improve education and health, eliminate inequality, boost the economy, tackle climate change and save our planet.

Marginalized Groups

The vulnerable groups in nowadays society. Some may even be discriminated against or excluded in racial, religious and culture. They are often the victims of violence, social stigma or assault.

Background Information

UNWTO "Tourism and COVID-19"¹

The UNWTO has released an official document declaring their measures undertaken to combat the pandemic. The document can be classified into 4 main parts: Putting People First, Responsible Travel, Promoting Solidarity and Supporting Recovery.

Putting People First

The UNWTO collaborates intimately with the WHO and emits a joint statement about the pandemic and the future of tourism. To ensure the

¹ https://webunwto.s3.eu-west-1.amazonaws.com/s3fs-public/2020-04/COVID19_NewDS_.pdf

implementation of public health measures and minimize its inconvenience to the industry development.

Responsible Travel

Travelers have to take on their responsibility to carry out prevention practices while traveling, which includes washing hands regularly and avoid being in touch with people with acute respiratory infections. Moreover, always be aware of the update and note personal state of health if any symptoms appear.

Promoting Solidarity

Cooperation between countries is compulsory. By holding international dialogue, UNWTO can observe the restrictions on travel and stress the importance of collaboration.

Supporting Recovery

The ones that got particularly impacted are the small and medium size enterprises, also the vulnerables who highly depend on tourism. For years, the tourism industry has been showing its benefits to the world by its social resilience and steady growth of economy. The UNWTO calls upon the world to provide financial support to those small and medium size enterprises and plan for recovery guidelines especially for tourism and included in recovery plans and actions by a larger-scale.

International Incident

The cruise of Diamond Princess is the precedent of cruise ships crisis. It sailed from Yokohama, with a total of 3711 persons on board, including 2666 passengers and 1045 crew members. The Diamond Princess midway stopped at Vietnam, Hongkong, Taiwan and Japan, and docked at Port of Keelung on Jan. 31 followed with an outbreak afterward.

Timeline

- 2/03 : Several passengers got a fever, Japanese government quarantine
- 2/05 : 10 of the passengers got the virus
- 2/11 : 22 Taiwanese in the cruise write a letter to the president seek for help
- 2/17 : Taiwan CDC submit the application

- 2/18 : chartered flight back to Taiwan by the command of the CECC, and follow subsequent screening and isolation regulation
- 2/20 : Nineteen Taiwanese passengers from the Diamond Princess arrived in Taiwan at 9:48 p.m.

Major Countries and Organizations Involved

UNWTO

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WHO

An United Nation organization for human's health and well-being, also for cooperation between nations. Founded in 1948. The WHO tackles crises such as the severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS) epidemic, Ebola Outbreak and the currently COVID-19 pandemic. Its headquarters is located in Geneva, Switzerland. Better health for everyone, everywhere, is their vision

World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC)

First founded in 1900. Formed by a group of industry Chairs and CEO, with over 200 companies members. Aim to maximize the inclusive and sustainable growth of Travel and Tourism, create more job opportunities and reduce poverty by cooperating with countries' governments. It also addresses three essential messages: Governments recognising Travel & Tourism as a top priority, Business balancing economics with people, culture and environment, A shared pursuit of long-term growth and prosperity. The membership includes the entire scope of the Tourism industry, from airlines to hotels, from cruise lines to insurance.

France

Being the most visited countries among the world, France has approximately 89.4 Million Visitors per year, contributing to totally 198.3 billion euros of the revenue. As a result

of the stagnant tourism industry, without the income of international tourists, France predicted a significant drop in their international spending about 82%.

Australia

In 2014, major Australian banks partnered with Qantas Airlines to create a loyalty program which allowed travelers with credit cards from these banks to earn Qantas flyer points through everyday purchases. This program developed into a marketplace and commerce channel that enabled travelers to engage with Qantas even when they weren't flying. This partnership is an example of how diversification could create alternative sources of revenue for airlines affected by the lack of flight demand during the COVID pandemic.

Singapore

Singapore created a Tourism Recovery Action Task Force to aid its tourism industry's recovery. This task force offers absentee payroll and course fee support for businesses affected in order to send employees to various training opportunities. This takes advantage of the current lack of demand to train employees so that they're better prepared for similar events in the future as well as elevate the brand experience when demand picks back up.

U.S.A.

U.S. airlines have rerouted some wide-body planes used for international routes and deployed them to longer domestic routes. This is an example of diversification which allow these airlines to shift business to new revenue streams

Timeline of Events

Tourism industry development and the outbreak of the virus.

Date	Description of event
November 1st, 1974	UNWTO established
November 4th, 2016	The Paris Agreement officially signed
December 31st, 2019	The WHO office in China was informed with unknown illness in Wuhan City, Hubei Province of China

January 22nd, 2020	The meeting of the Emergency Committee convened by the WHO Director-General
January 30th, 2020	The second meeting of the Emergency Committee convened by the WHO Director-General
March 11st, 2020	WHO declared the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak a global pandemic
March 20st, 2020	The first meeting of the UNWTO Global Tourism Crisis Committee
March 26st, 2020	The second meeting of the UNWTO Global Tourism Crisis Committee
April 16th, 2020	The third meeting of the UNWTO Global Tourism Crisis Committee
April 30th, 2020	The third meeting of the Emergency Committee convened by the WHO Director-General
May 28th, 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The fourth meeting of the Emergency Committee convened by the WHO Director-General ● UNWTO launched global guidelines to restart tourism
July 31st, 2020	The fourth meeting of the Emergency Committee convened by the WHO Director-General
October 19th, 2020	The Sixth meeting of the UNWTO Global Tourism Crisis Committee
October 29th, 2020	The fifth meeting of the Emergency Committee convened by the WHO Director-General
November~December, 2020	The vaccine of the pandemic was developed
December 9th, 2020	Global Tourism Economy Forum 2020
December 10th, 2020	The Seventh meeting of the UNWTO Global Tourism Crisis Committee

Relevant UN Resolutions and Treaties

- COVID-19 Related Resolutions
 - U.N General Assembly Resolution (**A/RES/74/270**), 3 April 2020 - Global solidarity to fight the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19)
 - U.N General Assembly Resolution (**A/RES/74/274**), 20 April, 2020 - International cooperation to ensure global access to medicines, vaccines and medical equipment to face COVID-19
 - U.N. Security Council Resolution (**A/74/L.88**), 25 August 2020 - Question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council and other matters related to the Security Council
- UNGA Sustainable Tourism Resolutions²
 - U.N General Assembly Resolution (A/RES/70/193), December 2015 - International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development
 - U.N General Assembly Resolution (A/73/274), July 2018 - Promotion of sustainable tourism, including ecotourism, for poverty eradication and environment protection
 - U.N General Assembly Resolution (A/74/208), July 2019 - Sustainable tourism and sustainable development in Central America

Possible Solutions

Rethink the concept of tourism and achieve sustainability. Reevaluate the structure and form of tourism during this world health crisis when people start taking a more slower pace. Think about how tourism can be beneficial to the world while conducting endless development. Furthermore, establish a new type of tourism industry that keeps abreast to the sustainable developing world. Follow up to the UN SDGs with its 17 SDGs and 169 targets. Attempt to make the tourism ecosystem a better place in a sustainable way, and play an important role in bringing people's prosperity and well-being.

Advance innovation and the digitalization of the tourism industry. By utilizing the far-reaching Internet to make the tourism industry an online platform where people can get any information easily with information transparency of the whole tourism ecosystem. And throughout social media to bring the impact even forward. Notice that promoting the innovation of all aspects of tourism can also be conducive, provide funding to newborn

² <https://www.unwto.org/sustainable-development/unga>

enterprises and give proper financial support to MSMEs. Encourage innovation to a preferable future.

Boost competitiveness and build resilience in order to strengthen the tenancy of the tourism industry and establish an early warning system to retard the force of impact. By facilitating the investment on Small and Medium Enterprise and supporting any other tourism-related departments, establish a diversified market to cater customers' needs and rebuild a new flexible and sound business environment.

Act in Solidarity by making countries with similar nature work together since the issues they encounter resemble, thus it'll make it simple to seek for a consensus and find a solution with a group with many in common. For example, the SIDs are facing problems with the remote and isolated geographical location which set up obstacles to their international trade. As for the LDCs, they all encounter financial problems in development. Similarly, the African nations not only meet with the financial difficulties but also the basic infrastructure lack and insufficiency on information. During lobbying, delegates from similar nature could form the same bloc and propose solutions that help both sides.

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