



THE NATIONAL TOURISM DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2023-2028

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A STRATEGY FOR PHILIPPINE TOURISM

The Philippine National Tourism Development Plan of 2023-2028 (the “Plan”) was developed with inputs from stakeholders from across the country – including the Department of Tourism (the “Department”), its offices and attached agencies, other national government offices, various local governments including those from mature and developing tourism destinations, private sector representatives from various industry groups, the academe, and non-governmental organizations – and it provides a framework to guide the development and implementation of various programs, projects, and activities for the growth, development, and transformation of Philippine tourism.

While it is framed primarily from the perspective of the Philippine government, implementing this Plan requires the involvement of private, academic, and non-governmental stakeholders, toward common goals and objectives for Philippine tourism. As a strategic plan, it does not purport to address every single situation or propose solutions for every problem. Instead, it provides guidance in identifying approaches or priorities for decisionmakers in resolving such situations or problems. While the Plan provides recommendations as to what these programs, projects, and activities may be, it is understood that these may be adjusted to meet circumstances on the ground and may change as circumstances change. It is, however, important that such adjustments and changes remain aligned with the vision, goals, and objectives articulated in this Plan.

KEY FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Considering the diverse views of the many stakeholders from across the country, the urgency of the industry’s recovery from the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, and the massive contribution that the industry can have on the national economy’s resurgence and growth even amidst global uncertainty, it must be emphasized that:

Philippine tourism is a massive engine of national growth and development. From the Philippine Statistics Authority’s (PSA) 2019 data, tourism generated 12.7% of GDP (measuring direct and indirect effects) and 13.6% of national employment. Domestic tourism accounted for 84% of the economic value of tourism in our country. Domestic tourism is thus an underappreciated but crucial part of our national economy. Domestic travel must thus be more systematically monitored and studied, and comprehensively supported and encouraged, not only to revive the tourism industry and many local economies but also for long-term resilience and growth.

The role, however, of international tourism must not be devalued. Inbound travelers in 2019 were our third largest source of export revenue. As one of the country’s leading sources of foreign exchange, it will play a critical role in stabilizing the economy, providing needed inflows to support the growth of tourism and other industries, while building mutually beneficial relationships with the world. As such, it will be critical not only to properly seize the reopening of international travel but also to diversify and grow our international markets to enhance the role of international tourism.

Furthermore, based on the World Travel and Tourism Council’s (WTTC) 2019 data, our tourism industry reaches deeply into our economy, positioning the Philippines among the leading tourism economies of Southeast Asia in

terms of its economic impact. Going one step further than the PSA, the WTTC measured tourism's induced effects on the economy, generating a total impact equivalent to 22% of the national GDP, thus supporting more jobs and communities for our country.

The tourism industry thus plays a massive role in our national economy. Its significance as an economic driver must be embraced and prioritized, and a national effort is necessary to support the industry's revival, growth, and long-term sustainability.

Our government must commit to supporting tourism development by undertaking critical institutional reforms, pursuing a whole-of-government approach, and investing in long-term sustainable growth. Many of the key bottlenecks for properly supporting and growing the tourism industry lie outside the mandate of the Department of Tourism and its attached agencies. The World Economic Forum identifies 17 Pillars in its 2021 Tourism Development Index that, to be properly addressed, require various agencies to work together in prioritizing and implementing programs that support tourism growth – improving the business environment, safety and security, health and hygiene, digital and transportation infrastructure, cultural and other tourism resources, among others – and only through effective convergences across agencies can the industry fully realize its potential.

Institutional reforms will be needed to strengthen promotions, enhance the sustainable development of tourism sites and zones, and integrate the local government units, as well as private, academic, and civil society sectors more fully as partners in nation-building. Investments must be made in technology and infrastructure, and in the stewardship of natural, cultural, and human capital, to ensure that the industry's long-term growth is sustainable, competitive, and resilient.

With increased devolution, institutions, and capacity building will be crucial to empower regional and local stakeholders to take responsibility for their destinations. More destinations should be developed to spread the benefits of tourism within the context of responsible tourism and sustainable development.

It will only be through the convergence of priorities and programs, and a commitment for tourism at both national and local levels, that the Philippines will be able to leverage strategic opportunities for medium and long-term sustainable growth.

We must build deeper experiences of our country. The Philippines, in the short-run recovery, must focus on its strengths - our mountains and forests, our beaches and islands, and our waters and reefs – while integrating mechanisms to manage human impact in these environments. We must also invest in developing health and wellness, meetings and conventions, leisure and entertainment, domestic and international cruising, Muslim-friendly travel, and for long-staying visitors. However, the country's long-term growth as a global destination requires that we invest in and build deeper cultural experiences and communicate the stories of our people and communities. Through our heritage sites and cultural centers, our food, farms, and festivals, our arts and crafts, and our traditions and faiths, we can properly anchor the tourism experience as being distinctly Filipino.

The national strategy must be anchored on the Filipino identity, sustainability, resilience, and competitiveness. Even as the Philippine tourism industry has grown significantly in the last two decades, the country must now focus on and emphasize shifting towards a path that invests in innovation, protects the natural, cultural, and human capital on which tourism depends, and ensures that tourism embodies the Filipino identity, and is resilient not only for itself or its host communities but also for the country as a whole.



STRATEGIC VISION

As enunciated by the Tourism Act of 2009 “tourism is an indispensable element of the national economy, and an industry of national interest and importance”, and consistent with the priorities of the Administration of President Ferdinand Marcos, Jr., this National Tourism Development Plan for 2023-2028 shall:

Establish a Philippine tourism industry anchored on Filipino culture, heritage, and identity, which aims to be sustainable, resilient, and competitive, in order to transform the Philippines into a tourism powerhouse in Asia.

STRATEGIC VALUES AND APPROACHES

This Vision is framed by **the Strategic Values of Filipino Identity, Sustainability, Resilience, and Competitiveness**. Programs, projects, and activities should be directed toward and implemented with these values in mind:

Filipino Identity. Philippine tourism must be anchored on authentic experiences of the richness and diversity of Filipino cultures and the country’s 7,641 islands and must contribute to the holistic development of people, communities, and the nation.

Sustainability. Tourism can and must be an effective vehicle for sustainable development. Sustainability must be understood not only in terms of balancing environmental impacts and economic development but also as an approach that strives for social and cultural development through equitable and inclusive growth.

Resilience. Tourism can and must be a mechanism by which communities and the nation can become more resilient to crises and disasters. Considering the massive size and impact of the industry, its stakeholders must have the knowledge and resources to bounce forward from challenges to continue being one of the engines of economic growth for our country.

Global Competitiveness. Tourism can and must be a key strategy for our country and our people to achieve genuine progress, requiring change and innovation by leveraging technology, enhancing policies and institutions, building stronger partnerships with different stakeholders in the public, private, and civil society sectors, and investing further in the country’s human, natural, and social capital for tourism.

Attaining a more sustainable, resilient, and competitive tourism industry anchored in Philippine identity will require implementing this Plan with a view towards enhancing the **Strategic Approaches of Connectivity, Convenience, E(quality):**

Connectivity. It is crucial that our destinations and their sites are properly connected in tourism circuits to enhance the tourism experience and spread tourism to more communities. This can only be achieved through the transformation of end-to-end transportation services by land, sea, and air, as well as the provision of power and telecommunications services to drive the digital transformation of the industry and its communities. This involves route development, the resumption and addition of international and domestic flights from key, strategic, and opportunity markets, as well as improving gateways in terms of

systems management, and improving touch points of tourists to lessen barriers to travel and pursuing design enhancements to reflect the Filipino branding and identity.

Convenience. The convenience of the traveler must be a central focus of our efforts and programs must be designed and implemented from the viewpoint of the visitor. At the primary level, this involves the provision of basic services such as clean restrooms, tourist rest areas, and call center lines for tourist assistance. Convenience further involves reducing the barriers and simplifying processes in entering and moving within the Philippines – especially through the uniformity of health and safety protocols – providing necessary information about destinations and sites, products and promotions, transportation and facilities, as well as the improvement of healthcare facilities to ensure the availability of high-quality emergency care.

E(quality). More of the Philippines must be opened to tourism, and more communities, municipalities, cities, and provinces across the Philippines must receive the support needed to develop tourism destinations, create and enhance tourism products, improve opportunities for livelihood and employment for tourism frontliners and Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs), create better visitor experiences and to benefit from the opportunities and growth generated by tourism. The upgrading of tourism standards and accreditation to be at par with global standards, the pursuit of collaboration across the public and private sectors, and between national and local governments, the introduction and incentivization of sustainability, and the emphasis on the Filipino brand identity, will be key.

STRATEGIC GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The following Goals and Objectives, anchored in the Plan’s Strategic Values and implemented through the Strategic Approaches, will be necessary in framing the programs, projects, and activities of the Department of Tourism, its attached agencies, the Philippine National Government, and the country’s local government units, together with the stakeholders from the private, academic, and civil society sectors:

GOAL 1. IMPROVEMENT OF TOURISM INFRASTRUCTURE AND ACCESSIBILITY.

OBJECTIVE 1.1. Barrier-free and frictionless travel, including the adoption of more liberal visa policies, electronic visas, and policies that promote seamless travel and digital tourism transformation.

OBJECTIVE 1.2. Pursue funding and implementation of infrastructure programs on roads, bridges, drainage systems and flood mitigation, water, waste, and sewage management, among others.

OBJECTIVE 1.3. Restore old routes, enhance existing, and develop new routes for air and sea travel across key, strategic, and opportunity markets.

OBJECTIVE 1.4. Collaborate with relevant government agencies to improve operations and interiors of gateway airports and seaports.

OBJECTIVE 1.5 Pursue contingency funding to build resilience and provide assistance in times of any type of disaster and/or climate-related events that affect tourism destinations and frontliners.

GOAL 2. COHESIVE AND COMPREHENSIVE DIGITALIZATION AND CONNECTIVITY.

OBJECTIVE 2.1. Mainstreaming of technological advances, including the development of a tourist lifecycle app and the use of financial technologies.



OBJECTIVE 2.2. Improve internet connectivity across destinations, enhance skills, systems, and infrastructure for the digitalization, gathering, and use of tourism data and the monitoring of tourism programs.

OBJECTIVE 2.3. Bridge remote tourism communities and sites through regional and cross-province tourism circuits.

OBJECTIVE 2.4. Responding to the needs of tourists, including the establishment of a tourism assistance call center.

OBJECTIVE 2.5. Connecting people for authentic experiences.

GOAL 3. ENHANCEMENT OF OVERALL TOURIST EXPERIENCE.

OBJECTIVE 3.1. Expansion and strengthening of the accreditation system to be at par with global standards, including incentivizing sustainability practices and the introduction of Filipino components into interiors, operations, and services, especially for the accommodations sector, and the provision of support for tourism MSMEs.

OBJECTIVE 3.2. Enhance the human capital of the Philippine tourism industry through expansive training and education, institutionalizing the Filipino Brand of Service Excellence.

OBJECTIVE 3.3. Strengthen collaborations with relevant government agencies for safety and security, health and social services, and the development and implementation of standards for food, products, and other services for tourists and tourism communities.

OBJECTIVE 3.4. Improve the experience of transportation modes, hubs, terminals, and rest areas.

OBJECTIVE 3.5. Provision of relevant tourism information to domestic and international markets through aggressive and innovative campaigns, promotions, events, and the provision of tourist information centers and tourist rest areas.

GOAL 4. EQUALIZATION OF TOURISM PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT AND PROMOTION.

OBJECTIVE 4.1. Provide new opportunities for the tourism development of Provinces, Cities, and Municipalities with emerging and potential destinations while continuing to support the improvement of key destinations.

OBJECTIVE 4.2. Link emerging and potential destinations with key destinations and metropolitan areas through joint promotions, connectivity, cross-regional and cross-provincial collaboration, product, transportation, and inclusive tourism circuit development.

OBJECTIVE 4.3. Undertake heritage, culture, arts, and product mapping across all Regions and Provinces.

OBJECTIVE 4.4. Include Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) in tourism product development, campaigns, and promotions, and in the establishment of all Tourist Rest Areas to strengthen the tourism value chain.

OBJECTIVE 4.5. Developing an effective system of monitoring, support, and assistance for responsible and sustainable tourism.

GOAL 5. DIVERSIFICATION OF PORTFOLIO THROUGH MULTIDIMENSIONAL TOURISM.

OBJECTIVE 5.1. Develop and improve products that deepen the cultural experience of the Philippines and its cultural aggrupations, such as by integrating food and festivals, arts and crafts, traditions, and practices, with farms and heritage sites, developing halal/Muslim-friendly tourism, pilgrimage tourism, and heritage villages for our cultural communities.

OBJECTIVE 5.2. Improve products that make the country a leading destination for sustainable ridge-to-reef experiences in the Asia-Pacific region through sun/sand/sea tourism, marine and diving tourism, forests and protected areas tourism, and nature-based adventure tourism.

OBJECTIVE 5.3. Increase investments in and the development of high-value tourism experiences such as MICE and special events tourism, health wellness and medical tourism, lifestyle shopping and entertainment tourism, and domestic and international cruise tourism.

OBJECTIVE 5.4. Develop and promote experiences for long-staying visitors, that generate higher-value, and that result in deeper connections, including for retirement, education, digital nomads, voluntourists, and gap year travelers.

OBJECTIVE 5.5. Sharing our culture through film tourism, as well as through other forms of popular arts and culture, and seeking and obtaining international recognition for the best of the Philippines.

OBJECTIVE 5.6. Expand the number of Tourism Enterprise Zones across the Regions, and establish tourism villages focused on community tourism, ecological preservation, sustainability, and cultural identity.

GOAL 6. MAXIMIZATION OF DOMESTIC AND INTERNATIONAL TOURISM.

OBJECTIVE 6.1. Increase programs and promotions for new and existing domestic tourism opportunities within regions and between connected regions.

OBJECTIVE 6.2. Growth of existing international markets through the development of niche markets.

OBJECTIVE 6.3. Development of new international markets for long-term diversification and resilience.

OBJECTIVE 6.4. Maximize the role of regional offices and foreign offices in research, promotions, and market development.

OBJECTIVE 6.5. Increase connectivity by air through the pursuit of route development for international and domestic destinations, push for the decongestion of primary gateway airports, the expansion to secondary gateway airports, and coordination with relevant government agencies for liberalization of entry and immigration policies.

OBJECTIVE 6.6. Increase connectivity by sea through the pursuit and development of a marine tourism highway, focused on improving and adding seaports, developing international and domestic cruises, and coordination with relevant government agencies for liberalization of entry and immigration policies.

GOAL 7. STRENGTHENING TOURISM GOVERNANCE THROUGH CLOSE COLLABORATION WITH NATIONAL AND LOCAL STAKEHOLDERS

OBJECTIVE 7.1. Advocating for the prioritization of tourism in the national agenda and rallying the support of national agencies to improve industry competitiveness.

OBJECTIVE 7.2. Sustaining cross-sectoral projects by institutionalizing and operationalizing mechanisms for convergence.

OBJECTIVE 7.3. Increase in investments brought about by optimized tools for tourism investment through planning, PPPs, and incentives.

OBJECTIVE 7.4. Increase engagements and pursue partnerships with regional and global tourism development partners such as member-nations of the ASEAN, APEC, BIMP, and other global tourism institutions to increase Philippine tourism competitiveness and collaboration.

OBJECTIVE 7.5. Empower local government units and institutions for tourism development through close collaboration with the National Government and regional offices and by building within communities a culture that values the role of tourism in development.



OBJECTIVE 7.6. A stronger and inclusive Tourism Congress through expanding the accreditation system and industry stakeholdership.

OBJECTIVE 7.7. Provide continuous and substantial resources for mainstreaming national and local identity, sustainability, resilience, and competitiveness.

OBJECTIVE 7.8. Protect and support tourism stakeholders during crises.

OBJECTIVE 7.9. The review and amendment of the Tourism Act of 2009 (RA 9593), particularly to enhance resources to implement Strategic Values, expand coverage of funding for infrastructure and contingencies, and provide new incentives for tourism investment.

The Goals and Objectives of this Plan have been framed to meet these challenges. Given the scale and complexity of these challenges faced by the country and the tourism industry, it is of vital importance that the industry remains focused on the vision, values, approach, goals, and objectives of this Plan, even as programs, projects, and activities are developed, implemented, and adapted to local and changing conditions. Programs, and their projects and activities, must endeavor to address as many of these goals and objectives as possible and must point to specific indicators of sustainability, resilience, competitiveness, and identity to ensure that national efforts result in tangible positive outcomes.

THE NATIONAL TOURISM DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2023 - 2028

PART I: SITUATION AND STRATEGY



THE NATIONAL TOURISM DEVELOPMENT PLAN FOR 2023-2028

The Philippine National Tourism Development Plan (NTDP) for 2023-2028 (“the Plan”) is a strategic plan that provides a framework to guide the development and implementation of various programs, projects, and activities of the Philippine government. This framework includes both national and local levels, as well as private, academic, and non-governmental stakeholders, toward common goals and objectives for Philippine tourism. As a strategic plan, it does not purport to address every single situation or propose solutions for every problem. Instead, it provides guidance in identifying approaches or priorities for decision-makers in resolving such situations or problems. Furthermore, while the Plan provides recommendations as to what these programs, projects, and activities may be, it is understood that these may be adjusted and changed to meet local and changing circumstances. It is, however, important that such adjustments and changes remain aligned with the Vision, Values, Approach, Goals, and Objectives articulated in this Plan.

Planning and the Philippine tourism industry. This Plan was commissioned by the Department of Tourism (the “Department” or “DOT”) following its mandate under Republic Act No. 9593 (“the Tourism Act of 2009”). It is the third such plan, and its predecessors (NTDP1 [2010-2016] and NTDP2 [2016-2022]) largely succeeded in growing the Philippine tourism industry – from 3.52 million tourist arrivals in 2010 to 8.26 million in 2019, from a 6.2% Tourism Direct Gross Value Added (TDGVA) share to the country’s Gross Domestic Product (GDP) equivalent to PHP 558 billion in 2010, doubling to 12.7% of the economy in 2019, equivalent to a contribution valued at PHP 2.48 trillion.

These numbers underscore that indeed, as stated by the Tourism Act, tourism is “an engine of investment, employment, growth, and national development” and

that it “is an indispensable element of the national economy and an industry of national interest and importance”.

The Predecessor NTDP, the Philippine Development Plan of 2016-2022, and the Pandemic. NTDP2 envisioned a globally competitive, environmentally sustainable, and socially responsible tourism industry. It was drafted in line with the key pillars of *Ambisyon Natin 2040*, an articulation of the vision behind the Philippine Development Plan (PDP) 2016-2022 and the current PDP 2023-2028. It communicates an idea of development where the average Filipino is truly middle class – free from want, free from fear, and free to pursue knowledge – and anchors the overall national development strategy. In that vision, tourism plays significant roles, providing opportunities for employment and entrepreneurship, spreading development to the regions, providing a strategy to strengthen communities and cities, and defining the aspirations of the Filipinos. Tourism is thus a crucial element in developing a high-trust society, not only by fulfilling our needs and aspirations, but also by generating greater awareness of the natural beauty of our country, the diversity of our cultures and our heritage, and crafting a stronger sense of nationhood.

The steady progress toward the visions for NTDP2 and *Ambisyon Natin 2040* – and that decade-long trajectory of tourism growth – came to a crashing halt in 2020 with the COVID-19 pandemic. The UN World Tourism Organization reported that international tourism lost an estimated USD 935 billion in revenues in 2020 alone, amounting to approximately a 70% decline in tourism. The Asia-Pacific region in particular saw a decline in tourist arrivals by 82%.

In the Philippines, international tourist arrivals declined by 82%, from 8.26 million in 2019 to 1.48 million in 2020. Tourism’s share of GDP declined from

12.7% to 5.4%, and employment in the sector fell from 5.72 million jobs to 4.68 million. Domestic trips declined from 109.75 million to just 24.25 million over the same period.

Responding to the challenge of the pandemic and the massive dislocations in the industry, the DOT prepared the Tourism Response and Recovery Plan (TRRP), and a Reformulated National Tourism Development Plan (2016-2022) [NTDP2R] to guide its programs, prioritizing the protection of tourism jobs and safety of workers, visitors, and communities through vaccination efforts and financial assistance.

As the country entered 2022, the government has shifted to restoring market confidence for the resumption of travel and supporting tourism enterprises as destinations begin to reopen. However, certain key international markets have recently reopened, fueling expectations for the resurgence of international tourism. On the other hand, the global community has been convulsed by a new war, generating tremendous human suffering, destabilizing the global economy, and threatening to reshape the global order.

This Plan was initiated and drafted during the transition between administrations and has been revised and completed to reflect the priorities of the Marcos Administration. The NTDP 2023-2028 strives to rebuild the industry and anchor its role as a critical driver of the economy even in the wake of the pandemic and its economic consequences, amid global conflicts, and worldwide economic instability. This Plan must also deal with the degradation of the environment, the imperatives of culture and identity, demographic shifts, evolving markets, and the urgency of sustainability. This Plan further seeks to transform the tourism industry and anchor it on national identity, sustainability, resilience, and competitiveness. It is consistent with, and advances, the vision and goals outlined in the Philippine Development Plan for 2023-2028 for economic and social transformation.

A Filipino identity, Sustainability, Resilience, and Competitiveness. This pandemic has brought into focus the urgency of rebuilding the Philippine tourism industry on a stronger foundation. The Philippines sees many of its destinations and communities battered by natural disasters regularly – from the impact of typhoons and storm surges, earthquakes and volcanic eruptions, flooding, and landslides – and the pandemic has driven home the need to develop an industry that not only copes with disasters but is an effective vehicle for the recovery of communities and economies. The closure of Boracay in 2018 marked a turning point for the industry towards sustainability, but the pandemic has underscored the need to speed up this transition, as sustainable destinations are inherently more resilient, and vice-versa. Finally, as travel resumes, many of our neighbors in the region will also be using tourism to rebuild their economies. Competition in the region will be amplified, and we must be able, not only to hold our own but to lead. This requires, not only crucial institutional changes and the development of human capital and critical infrastructure but also reexamination and redefinition of our tourism experiences in a way that truly communicates the sense of being Filipino.

Connectivity, Convenience, and E(quality). The plan must be anchored by a genuine concern for the well-being of tourism stakeholders. Travelers, businesses, and communities can only thrive when they are connected by roads, airports, seaports, power, and telecommunications services to support a digital transformation. The provision of services by both the private and public sectors must be driven by a desire to make travel easier for the visitor. The distribution of resources and opportunities for tourism development must be shared across the country in a way that nurtures and supports multi-dimensional experiences. Moving towards a more competitive, sustainable, resilient, and distinctly Filipino tourism industry requires a mindset that places tourists and tourism stakeholders first.



The process. Developing the Plan utilized a combination of desk and online research, focus group discussions, stakeholder surveys, and expert opinions in gathering data. Thirty stakeholder consultations were held, both to gather inputs from stakeholders and to validate the findings and recommendations of the report. It had participants from national government agencies, local governments, various tourism enterprises, and civil society organizations, among others. Specialists in tourism, economic development, environmental management, public health, transportation infrastructure, resilience, sustainability, cultural heritage, and social development, among others, brought their expertise and experience in developing the findings and recommendations for this Plan. TwoEco, Inc., is honored by the privilege to have worked with the

Department of Tourism on the National Tourism Development Plan for 2023 to 2028, amid the challenge of shaping the industry's recovery and moving it towards sustainability, resilience, and competitiveness.

A note on data, figures, and terms. There are minor variations in the data, numerical figures, and terms used in this report. These variations can be attributed to different sources of data, differences in methodologies, different base years, currency conversions, and/or the rounding of numbers. We have endeavored, as much as possible, to use the figures and terms as they were used in the source material and have indicated the sources for reference. Unless otherwise indicated, this report reflects the best available data in early to mid-2022.



PHILIPPINE TOURISM AS AN ENGINE OF ECONOMIC GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

While the Philippine Statistics Authority reported tourism's already massive contribution of 12.7% of the national GDP and 13.5% of employment in 2019, the World Travel and Tourism Council's report examined how deeply the industry reaches into and drives our economy. The WTTC estimates that by counting induced effects, the industry generated as much as 22% of GDP – a number that places the Philippines among the leading tourism economies in the region in terms of economic impact. Domestic tourism will be crucial to the recovery and in the long-term will play an important role in building industry resilience against shifts and shocks to international travel. However, it will be crucial to seize the reopening of international travel, diversify and grow our international markets, and leverage international tourism revenue to strengthen our economy.

Domestic Tourism Drives Philippine Tourism

The Philippines, as an archipelagic country in Southeast Asia, holds great natural beauty in its landscapes and its biodiversity. It has also nurtured a diversity of cultures, enriched further in the course of history by interactions with other nations and powers. In recent years, tourism has grown to be a very important part of the national economy, generating 12.7% of GDP and 13.5% of employment in 2019. That tourism growth has been driven by its recognition as one of the leading beach holiday destinations in the world, and increasingly, by its other natural and cultural attractions, its facility for English, its value proposition as a low-cost destination, and the natural hospitality of the Filipino people. Table 1 details the tremendous growth of tourism from 2010 to 2019, with the industry's contribution to the economy ("TDGVA" or "Tourism Direct Gross Value Added") increasing four-fold in ten years.

In that regard, NTDP2 was massively successful in meeting, if not exceeding, its targets for 2019, before the pandemic. Table 2 demonstrates that the industry exceeded most of its key economic targets, falling short only in total employment generated, but only by a small fraction of the total.

Crucially, however, Table 2 underscores a fundamental yet underappreciated reality of the Philippine tourism industry – that the industry is driven by domestic travel, which in 2019 generated 84% of total tourism revenue, valued at PHP 3.142 trillion of PHP 3.742 trillion.

Philippine Tourism in the ASEAN Region

The tourism industry's competitive performance is often measured – improperly – by comparing the number of international arrivals among ASEAN member states, often referencing Thailand's 39.9 million, or Malaysia's 26.1 million, in 2019. Table 3 provides a comparison of these arrivals. This approach of comparing international arrivals however ignores the massive contribution of domestic travel to the tourism equation, the fundamental geographic differences of the countries involved, and the economic impact that travel entails in such contexts. Our neighbors on the Southeast Asian mainland for instance have land borders with their neighbors that allow for quick and easy trips between countries. The Philippines, however, as an archipelago, requires travelers who deliberately choose to travel to the country, stay longer, and spend more. The World Travel and Tourism Council's (WTTC) study, summarized in Table 4, shows the true impact of tourism on the country.

Year	Tourism Direct Gross Value Added	Growth Rate (%)	Gross Domestic Product	Growth Rate (%)	Share of TDGVA to GDP (%)	Share of Tourism Employment to Total Employment (%)
2010	586,900	19.2	9,399,451	12.0	6.2	11.4
2011	694,484	18.3	10,144,661	7.9	6.8	11.7
2012	851,869	22.7	11,060,589	9.0	7.7	12.1
2013	974,302	14.4	12,050,592	9.0	8.1	12.4
2014	1,169,216	20.0	13,206,828	9.6	8.9	12.7
2015	1,380,042	18.0	13,944,157	5.6	9.9	12.8
2016	1,575,417	14.2	15,132,381	8.5	10.4	12.8
2017	1,944,193	23.4	16,556,651	9.4	11.7	13.1
2018	2,238,961	15.2	18,265,190	10.3	12.3	13.0
2019	2,480,415	10.8	19,516,418	6.9	12.7	13.5

Source: Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) Report on Philippine Tourism Satellite Account, 2019

Indicators	2016			2017			2018			2019		
	Target	Actual	Difference									
Revenue (PHP Billions)												
Total	2,156	2,191	35	2,361	2,806	445	2,603	3,292	689	2,888	3,742	854
Inbound	353	315	-38	407	453	46	473	446	-27	564	600	36
Domestic	1,803	1,876	73	1,954	2,353	399	2,130	2,846	716	2,324	3,142	818
Economic Impact												
Tourism Gross Value Added (PHP Billion)												
Total	1,186	1,575	389	1,298	1,944	646	1,432	2,239	807	1,588	2,507	919
% of GDP	8.3	10.4	2.1	8.3	11.7	3.4	8.4	12.3	3.9	8.6	12.7	4.1
Employment (Millions)												
Total	5.2	5.224	0.024	5.3	5.268	-0.032	5.6	5.365	-0.235	5.8	5.719	-0.081
% of Total Employment	13.0	12.8	-0.2	13.2	13.1	-0.1	13.4	13.0	-0.4	13.6	13.6	0
Visitors (Millions)												
Inbound	5.9	5.967	0.067	6.5	6.621	0.121	7.4	7.168	-0.232	8.2	8.261	0.061
Domestic	70.5	75.7	5.2	73.3	86	12.7	76.3	98.6	22.3	79.3	109.8	30.5

Sources: NTDP 2016-2022; PTSA 2020

Member State	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	Growth in 2019 (vs 2018)	CAGR (2015-2019)	Share (%) of Arrivals By Air in (2019)
Brunei	0.22	0.22	0.26	0.28	0.33	19.8%	11.2%	7.5
Cambodia	4.78	5.01	5.60	6.20	6.61	6.6%	8.5%	66.6
Indonesia	10.41	11.52	14.04	15.81	16.11	1.9%	11.5%	61.1
Lao PDR	4.68	4.24	3.87	4.19	4.79	14.4%	0.6%	39.8
Malaysia	25.72	26.76	25.95	25.83	26.10	1.0%	0.4%	36.8
Myanmar	4.68	2.91	3.44	3.55	4.36	23.0%	-1.7%	41.1
Philippines	5.36	5.97	6.62	7.13	8.26	15.9%	11.4%	98.0
Singapore	15.23	16.40	17.42	18.51	19.12	3.3%	5.8%	77.8
Thailand	29.88	32.53	35.59	38.18	39.92	4.6%	7.5%	83.9
Vietnam	7.94	10.01	12.92	15.50	18.01	16.2%	22.7%	79.8
ASEAN Total	108.90	115.57	125.72	135.17	143.61	6.2%	7.2%	68.7
Intra- ASEAN (% Share)	42.2	40.3	38.6	36.7	36.0	-1.9	-3.9	
Extra-ASEAN (% Share)	57.8	59.7	61.4	63.3	64.0	1.1	2.6	

Note: Nominal values; CAGR = Compounded Annual Growth Rate Source: UNWTO, ASEAN NTO Reports



Table 4 shows that the Philippines:

- Ranks second to Thailand in tourism’s GDP contribution to the national economy, with Thailand at USD 106.5 billion, and the Philippines at USD 90 billion.
- Ranks second to Cambodia in tourism’s share of GDP, with the Philippines at 22.5% versus Cambodia’s 25.9%, considering further how much larger the Philippine economy is against Cambodia.
- Ranks second to Indonesia in terms of the number of jobs generated by tourism, with Indonesia at 13.18 million jobs, and the Philippines at 9.57 million jobs, considering also that Indonesia has a much larger population than the Philippines.
- Ranks first in domestic tourism impact at USD 64.4 billion followed by Thailand at USD 27.3 billion.
- Ranks second in leisure spending at USD 50.6 billion after Thailand’s USD 80.9 billion.
- Ranks first in business spending at USD 26 billion followed by Singapore at USD 16.9 billion.

The WTTC report differs in its numbers from that of the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) by going one step further in measuring the impact of tourism.

While the PSA measures direct (the spending of tourists) and indirect (the spending of tourism enterprises on wages and suppliers) effects, the WTTC

goes further by quantifying induced effects – the impact of spending by direct and indirect tourism employees on the economy. In this, the Philippines demonstrates that its tourism industry goes deeper and farther than most of our neighbors in powering the economy. The WTTC approach is thus crucial in appreciating the reach and depth of the industry.

Domestic Tourism is Already Powering the Industry’s Recovery

The pandemic spared no one in the region and the world from its effects on travel and tourism. Based on WTTC research¹, the unprecedented closure of borders and travel restrictions due to the COVID-19 pandemic, declared by the World Health Organization (WHO) in March 2020,² resulted in the following impacts on the world:

- Loss of USD 4.5 trillion (total effects) in 2020; decline in GDP contributions by 49.1% compared to 2019.
- Decrease in share to GDP from 10.4% to 5.5%.
- Loss of 62 million jobs from 334 million in 2019.
- Decrease of 45% and 69.4% in domestic and international visitor spending, respectively.

Table 4. Economic Impacts of Tourism in ASEAN: 2019

Member State	GDP Contribution		Employment		Visitor Impact			Spending by Purpose		
	Value (USD B)	Share to GDP (%)	Persons (M)	Share (%) to Employment	International (USD B) ^a	Share to Exports (%)	International (USD B) ^b	Domestic (USD B)	Leisure (USD B)	Business (USD B)
Brunei	0.7	5.6	0.01	7.3	0.23	3.1	0.22	0.28	0.457	0.052
Cambodia	6.97	25.9	2.23	24.7	5.4	32.1	5.3	1.58	4.273	2.677
Indonesia	64.7	5.9	13.18	10.1	17.9	8.9	18.4	21.6	30.1	9.4
Lao PDR	1.9	10.0	0.35	10.2	0.98	13.6	0.97	0.51	1.223	0.264
Malaysia	41.8	11.7	2.28	15.1	21.4	9.2	22.2	21.8	37.5	5.7
Myanmar	5.50	5.9	1.41	6.3	2.8	16.9	2.5	1.50	2.450	1.892
Philippines^c	90.0	22.5	9.57	22.8	12.1	10.8	11.5	64.4	50.6	26.0
Singapore	39.2	11.1	0.54	14.3	26.0	4.2	27.7	10.4	19.4	16.9
Thailand	106.5	20.1	8.05	21.4	63.2	20	65.1	27.3	80.9	9.6
Vietnam	23.2	7.0	4.91	9.0	11.1	4.0	11.8	10.40	19.536	2.012
ASEAN	380.7	11.8	42.60	13.4	161.1	8.9	165.7	159.8	246.4	74.5

Note: Nominal values; CAGR = Compounded Annual Growth Rate Source: World Travel and Tourism Council Report

¹ <https://wtcc.org/Research/Economic-Impact>

² In March 2020, the World Health Organization classified the COVID-19 health outbreak as a global pandemic.

In the region, in Table 5, we see the pandemic's massive effect on arrivals, GDP contribution, employment, and visitor impact, across the board.

However, Figure 1, also from the WTTC, highlights how the Philippine tourism economy has begun its recovery. While international visitor spending in 2021

is but a fraction of 2019's level at just 6.8% (PHP 41.5 billion against PHP 611.9 billion), 2021's domestic travel has already surged to 49.5% of 2019 levels (PHP 1,617.9 billion against PHP 3,267.4 billion). The industry's contribution to GDP has also recovered to

Member State	International Visitor Arrivals (M)			GDP Contribution (\$B) ^a			Employment (M)			Visitor Impact (Value in \$B) ^b					
	2019	2020	Change (%)	2019	2020	Change (%)	2019	2020	Change (%)	International			Domestic		
	2019	2020	Change (%)	2019	2020	Change (%)	2019	2020	Change (%)	2019	2020	Change (%)	2019	2020	Change (%)
Brunei	0.33	0.06	-81.3%	0.7	0.5	-26.8	0.01	0.13	-10.4	0.23	0.13	-44.9	0.28	0.19	-29.3
Cambodia	6.61	1.31	-80.2%	6.97	2.4	-66.1	2.23	1.66	-27.9	5.4	1.20	-77.8	1.58	1.00	-36.1
Indonesia	16.11	4.05	-74.8%	64.7	34.5	-46.6	13.18	11.8	-10.4	17.9	3.9	-78.4	21.6	14.0	-35.2
Lao PDR	4.79	0.89	-81.5%	1.9	0.91	-51.8	0.35	0.29	-18.0	0.98	0.28	-71.9	0.51	0.34	-32.7
Malaysia	26.10	4.33	-83.4%	41.8	17.6	-57.9	2.28	2.02	-1.2	21.4	3.4	-84.0	21.8	14.7	-32.7
Myanmar	4.36	0.90	-79.3%	5.5	2.07	62.3	1.41	1.09	-23.2	2.8	0.5	-83.8	1.50	0.97	-35.0
Philippines^c	8.26	1.48	-82.1%	90.0	52.8	-41.4	9.57	7.55	-21.1	12.1	2.6	-78.8	64.4	41.5	-35.5
Singapore	19.12	2.74	-85.7%	39.2	15.7	-60.0	0.54	0.50	-6.5	26.0	6.7	-74.4	10.4	6.6	-36.1
Thailand	39.92	6.70	-83.2%	106.5	41.7	-60.8	8.05	6.8	-15.1	63.2	14.9	-76.5	27.3	19.6	-28.0
Vietnam	18.01	3.69	-79.5%	23.2	11.9	-48.5	4.91	3.7	-24.7	11.1	3.5	-68.5	10.40	7.5	-28.2
ASEAN	143.61	26.16	-81.8%	380.7	180.1	-52.7	42.60	35.45	-16.8	161.1	36.9	-77.1	159.8	106.5	-33.4

^a Includes induced impacts in the calculation of GDP and employment. For visitor impact (international tourism receipts excluding passenger transport), the WTTC used the PTSA.

^b WTTC estimates using data in local currency units converted into USD in 2019

^c Includes induced impacts in the calculation of GDP and employment. For visitor impact (international tourism receipts excluding passenger transport), the WTTC used the PTSA.

Note: Values have been rounded off for presentation purposes only.

Sources: WTTC, UNWTO, AMS NTO Reports

Figure 1. WTTC's Key Data for Philippine Tourism

Source: World Travel and Tourism Council 2022 Report

Philippines Key Data		
2019	2020	2021
Total contribution of Travel & Tourism to GDP:		
 22.5% of Total Economy PHP 4,561.2BN (USD 92.6BN)	 4.8% of Total Economy PHP 878.8BN (USD 17.8BN) Change: -80.7% Economy change: -9.6%	 10.4% of Total Economy PHP 2,017.2BN (USD 41.0BN) Change: +129.5% Economy change: +5.6%
Total contribution of Travel & Tourism to Employment:		
 9.50MN 22.7% of total jobs	 6.49MN 16.5% of total jobs Change: -31.7%	 7.82MN 17.8% of total jobs Change: +20.5%
Visitor Spend:		
International:		
 PHP 611.9 BN 10.6% of total exports (USD 12.4BN)	 PHP 134.4 BN 2.9% of total exports (USD 2.7BN) Change: -78.0%	 PHP 41.5 BN 0.8% of total exports (USD 0.8BN) Change: -69.1%
Domestic:		
 PHP 3,267.4 BN (USD 66.3BN)	 PHP 570.1 BN (USD 11.6BN) Change: -82.6%	 PHP 1,617.9 BN (USD 32.8BN) Change: +183.8%



close to half of 2019 levels, with 2021 at 10.4% of the total economy, against 2019's 22.5%.

The Roles of Domestic and International Tourism

The combined revenue for 2019 from domestic and international tourism was valued at USD 76.5 billion (USD 64.4 billion and USD 12.1 billion respectively), compared to the BPO sector's USD 26.3 billion and 1.3 million jobs,³ or the mining industry's USD 3.5 billion and 33,941 jobs.⁴ This should put in perspective the strategic importance of the industry and the prioritization it should have in the scheme of national priorities.

The importance of domestic tourism needs to be emphasized because it is often overlooked in measuring and understanding the impact of tourism on the Philippine economy – especially in terms of generating livelihoods for people and communities and contributing to national growth and resilience. Looking solely at international arrivals and expenditures – as has been the practice – does not provide the whole picture.

This is not to say that international tourism has no role to play. International tourism from PSA data in 2019, was the third largest source of export revenue, which at PHP 548.76 billion, was 9.9% of total exports. International visitors thus bring much-needed revenue that stabilizes the economy and supports it effectively for world trade, while enhancing our ties and promoting our identity within the community of nations. Crucially, while the growth of domestic tourism is limited by the growth of the domestic economy, international tourism can potentially expand massively over a short period.

We alluded earlier that the Philippines behaves differently from many of our regional neighbors by attracting relatively fewer tourists but who are nevertheless willing to spend more. In Table 3, we

described the number of international visitors and the proportion arriving by plane. In Table 6 below, we demonstrate the average expenditure generated by international visitors, with the Philippines placing second in 2019.

Table 6. Inbound Tourism Expenditure per Tourist (USD)

	2013	2019
Brunei	426.67	-
Cambodia	687.65	803.51
Lao PDR	1170.42	1142.61
Malaysia	905.42	850.50
Myanmar	471.62	573.10
Philippines	1196.11	1389.78
Singapore	1235.29	-
Thailand	1573.25	1630.47
Timor-Leste	367.09	-
Vietnam	957.47	656.89

Source: World Bank, World Development Indicators: Travel and Tourism

While the data demonstrates that our country thus receives considerable economic benefits from international tourism, the pandemic has also emphasized how dependent we are on too few countries. In Table 7, we identified our source markets for 2018 and 2019.

In 2019, South Korea and China together (at 1.99 million and 1.74 million visitors respectively) accounted for 45.2% of our international tourists. Adding Japan's 682,788 (8.3%) and Taiwan's 327,273 (4%) means these four East Asian markets together already constitute 57.5% of our total arrivals. Adding the United States' 1.06 million travelers (12.9%) to the Philippines means that the top 5 source markets for the Philippines constitute 70.4% of its entire international tourism market. The closure of any of these markets – as the pandemic has demonstrated – has a significant impact on the industry.

³ Recalibration of the Philippine IT-BPM Industry Growth Forecasts for 2020-2022 at <https://www.ibpap.org/knowledge-hub>

⁴ <https://psa.gov.ph/content/2019-annual-survey-philippine-business-and-industry-aspmi-mining-and-quarrying-sector> PHP 176.7 billion at exchange rate of PHP51:USD1.

	2018			2019			Change (in %) 2019 vs 2018	
	Market	Volume	Share (%)	Market	Volume	Share (%)		
1	Korea	1,624,251	22.7	Korea	1,989,322	24.1	22.5	
2	China	1,257,962	17.6	China	1,743,309	21.1	38.6	
3	USA	1,034,471	14.4	USA	1,064,440	12.9	2.9	
4	Japan	631,821	8.8	Japan	682,788	8.3	8.1	
5	Australia	279,828	3.9	Taiwan	327,273	4.0	35.0	
6	Taiwan	242,411	3.4	Australia	286,170	3.5	2.3	
7	Canada	226,446	3.2	Canada	238,850	2.9	5.5	
8	UK	201,044	2.8	UK	209,206	2.5	4.1	
9	Singapore	171,796	2.4	Singapore	158,595	1.9	-7.7	
10	Malaysia	145,246	2	Malaysia	139,882	1.7	-3.7	
11	India	121,124	1.7	India	134,963	1.6	11.4	
12	Hong Kong	117,992	1.7	Germany	103,756	1.3	12.7	
Sub-Total		6,054,392	84.0			7,078,554	85.7	16.9
Grand Total		7,168,467				8,260,913		15.2

Source of basic data: OTDPRIM, DOT

Finally, the top 5 source markets have populations whose growth rates have significantly slowed or have even begun to shrink. While their relatively increasing wealth and prosperity may yet continue fueling increasing arrivals and spending, prudent planning for the long term should entail diversification.

Our national strategy should, therefore, utilize domestic tourism in the recovery, strengthening it as the foundation of the national tourism strategy, while investing to enhance our ability to diversify, prosper, and benefit from international tourism once international travel resumes and stabilizes.



BUILDING DEEPER EXPERIENCES OF THE PHILIPPINES

The Philippines leads as a destination for ridge-to-reef experiences. The short-run recovery must focus on our strengths as a nature-oriented destination - our mountains and forests, our beaches and islands, and our waters and reefs – while integrating mechanisms to manage human impact in these environments. However, for medium to long-term development, we must begin today to develop, foster, and build deeper cultural experiences by communicating the stories of our peoples and communities through properly mapping, packaging, and promoting our heritage sites and cultural centers, our food, farms, and festivals, our arts and crafts, our traditions and faiths, to properly anchor our tourism products in a distinctly Philippine identity. We must also invest in developing the frameworks and infrastructure for coordinating and supporting strategic tourism products, including health and wellness, meetings and conventions, domestic and international cruising, leisure and entertainment, film tourism, Muslim-friendly travel, and long-staying visitors.

Domestic Tourism

Building on the massive importance of domestic tourism for the Philippines, it is crucial to understand domestic traveler preferences to develop tourism products to properly match those preferences.

Post-pandemic preferences. Some of the results of our study⁵ are summarized in Table 8. It demonstrates the massive interest of domestic travelers in the variety of experiences that the Philippines offers, with almost all of these products scoring in the 80 to 100% range in terms of aggregate interest (“definitely interested” plus “somewhat interested”), with only “casino/gaming” falling outside of that range.

Looking at aggregate interest and given how crowded the field is, focusing more closely on the leading edge of “definitely interested” will be more instructive. The top experiences for domestic travelers are [1] sun/beaches/islands, [2] food explorations/cooking classes, [3] adventurous activities, [4] nature/national parks/forests, and [5] city trips.

Expectedly, “sun/beaches/islands” was ahead of the pack, while “food explorations/cooking class” placed second, reflecting how food and meals are central to Filipino culture. However, beyond the dominance of sun/beaches/ islands, and with the narrow margins between the different products, domestic tourists do not have strong preferences between predominantly cultural, natural, or facilities-oriented products. Those at the bottom of the chart – from concerts/festivals to casino/gaming – while still having a considerable amount of interest, may indicate a more targeted market and/or the real/perceived commitment of time, money, and/or fitness as barriers to enjoying these experiences.

These findings should guide stakeholders in developing tourism circuits on a strong anchor, with a supporting mix of different sites and activities. These findings should also be a jumping-off point for more targeted and nuanced research for each of these products.

⁵ TwoEco conducted a consumer survey during the period of April to May 2022 to understand domestic tourist preferences. It had 740 respondents who represent

consumers that had traveled at least once in the last five years, reflecting a margin of error of +/-4%.

Table 8. Domestic Tourist Preferences

	Pre-pandemic			Post-pandemic		
	Definitely interested	Somewhat interested	Total	Definitely interested*	Somewhat interested	Total
Sun/beaches/islands	83.61	13.76	97.37	87.80	9.83	97.63
Food explorations/cooking class	67.88	25.02	92.9	77.50	15.68	93.18
Adventurous activities	69.48	25.09	94.57	76.58	19.49	96.07
Nature/national parks/forests	75.25	21.38	96.63	75.78	20.45	96.23
City trips	69.54	25.61	95.15	73.97	22.52	96.49
Theme parks	66.27	29.71	95.98	71.51	24.46	95.97
Historical landmarks	65.09	27.72	92.81	71.18	23.37	94.55
Health/medical	67.98	23.28	91.26	68.15	24.14	92.29
Religious places of worship	60.87	27.54	88.41	67.41	24.11	91.52
Romantic getaways	60.09	29.72	89.81	66.87	27.31	94.18
Shopping	59.83	28.34	88.17	65.19	26.01	91.2
Mountains/hiking/trekking	56.91	30.56	87.47	62.63	26.23	88.86
Farm/plantation	52.34	37.80	90.14	62.21	33.15	95.36
Concerts and Festivals	58.54	32.63	91.17	61.53	29.58	91.11
Cultural/art museums or activities	58.6	32.75	91.35	61.12	30.89	92.01
Diving/water sports	49.38	35.26	84.64	60.85	25.96	86.81
Sports	52.53	34.89	87.42	59.61	31.26	90.87
Spa/wellness	53	34.68	87.68	58.88	30.89	89.77
Retreats and pilgrimages	52.64	36.61	89.25	56.24	34.46	90.7
Destination weddings	41.82	38.34	80.16	48.10	35.08	83.18
Casino/gaming	20.44	16.26	36.7	25.63	18.37	44

Ranking of preferences are based on the “post-pandemic” “definitely interested” responses.

Source: TwoEco internal research

Impact of the pandemic on preferences. The top five products that registered the largest changes in “definitely interested” between the pre- and post-pandemic scenarios are [1] diving/water sports, [2] farm/ plantation, [3] food explorations/cooking class, [4] adventurous activities, and [5] sports.

Notably, all products showed heightened “definitely interested” responses. Almost all products showed increased aggregate interest, with a few showing very marginal reductions.

Revenge travel. Shifts were also observed for domestic tourists on their planned frequency and level of spending as the country shifts out of the public health emergency.

Even as 35.7% do not see changes in how frequently they travel, with even 18.3% registering a reduction in travel, a significant 46% see themselves increasing their frequency of travel, with 85.4% of this segment claiming to increase the frequency of travel by 50-100%.

Similarly, while 50% do not see changes in how much they spend, with another 15.9% saying they will reduce their level of spending, a sizeable 34.1% claim they will increase their spending, with 69.8% of that segment planning to increase their spending by 50-100%.

Crucially, revenge travel may signal a fundamental and permanent shift in tourist preferences. Significant shares of respondents indicated that traveling more (21%) and spending more (18%) will become permanent.

Business travel. A majority (51.6%) see a shift to more online meetings and conferences, while very significant shares see a decline in travel for face-to-face meetings with staff, suppliers, and clients (40.3%), a decline in travel for conventions and conferences (40.1%), and budgets for business travel to decline (48.8%). For these latter three responses, while declines reflect the dominant sentiment, there are nevertheless significant counterweights. Significant segments of respondents have adopted a neutral position (22.8%, 26%, and 21.9% respectively), while



the remainder disagrees with the dominant sentiment (36.8%, 33.8%, and 29.3% respectively).

For these changes, a significant share (40.8%) feel that these changes will only be for the immediate to short-term period, while 24.3% see these changes as being long-term or permanent.

Priority Interventions. Rounding off our research on domestic tourist preferences, we found a broad consensus on critical interventions needed to improve tourism experiences. Table 9 summarizes these findings.

Table 9. Domestic Tourist Preferences on Priority Interventions			
	Definitely important	Somewhat important	Total
Provide and improve public toilets	92.07	6.49	98.56
Handling of waste	90.90	8.32	99.22
Protection of the environment	90.40	9.13	99.53
Improve quality of service in tourism establishments	90.02	8.79	98.81
Improve PWD facilities	88.81	10.26	99.07
Health monitoring and mask wearing for tourists	88.78	8.05	96.83
Provide more security in tourist areas	88.51	8.27	96.78
Improve internet connectivity in tourist areas	87.63	10.48	98.11
Promote use of local products	86.52	11.53	98.05
Emphasize local culture of a place	85.53	12.88	98.41
Restore historical/heritage sites	84.68	13.20	97.88
Provide and improve visitor centers	84.22	13.79	98.01
Interactions with communities/IPs	83.55	13.39	96.94
Information and storytelling of sites and destinations	83.34	15.16	98.5
Registration of tourists	82.79	13.09	95.88
Regulate number of visitors in sites and destinations	82.56	12.99	95.55
Public transportation connections	82.50	14.11	96.61
Single online platform	80.37	16.69	97.06

Ranking of preferences are based on the “definitely important” responses.
Source: TwoEco internal research

First, we note that all the identified interventions scored over 95% in aggregate importance (“definitely

important” and “somewhat important”) and are all within the statistical margin of error.

Focusing on “definitely important” as the basis for this ranking, some key priorities can be identified. First, issues that deal generally with the environment attained the highest rankings, followed by tourism facilities and services, then by cultural components of tourism, and finally, the regulation of tourists. Note, however, that even with this ranking, the margins between the different priorities are nevertheless very narrow.

International Tourism

For the international market, the DOT contracted in 2021 the services of the market research firm, Frost & Sullivan, to carry out a consumer insights survey of various international travel source markets for the Philippines. This study, summarized in Table 10, revealed that the Philippines leads in the region (ranking within the top three ASEAN destinations) for (1) sun, beaches, and islands, (2) nature, national parks, and forests, (3) mountains, hiking, trekking, and (4) diving and water sports.

On the other hand, it ranks poorly in cultural experiences, including (1) historical landmarks, (2) cultural/art activities or museums, (3) religious/ places of worship, (4) city trips, and (5) food explorations/cooking classes.

Finally, while it does well in other products, such as (1) romantic getaways, (2) nightlife and entertainment, (3) spa/wellness/health/medical, (4) farm/plantation/vineyard, and (5) casino/gaming, these indicated a low level of awareness or interest. These findings are summarized in Table 7 below.

This study demonstrates the need to focus the national strategy on developing our nature-oriented tourism products while emphasizing the need to properly build and enrich our cultural experiences to properly anchor tourism experiences within a Philippine identity and sense of place, thus more

effectively standing out from our neighbors in the region.

Building from our Strengths while Investing for Long-term Growth

Both domestic and international markets emphasize the centrality of the Philippines as a destination for sun/beach/island experiences, while the international perception of our country is more strongly linked to it being a nature-oriented destination. While nature-oriented products do score well locally, the domestic traveler seems to be willing to explore anything and everything – with as little commitment to time and money as possible. These circumstances may allow us to effectively build both the domestic and international profile of the Philippines simultaneously, first, by anchoring our recovery on our strongest product of sun, beaches, and islands, and building on our international recognition to prioritize nature-based tourism, especially within framework of sustainability, and second, to use the window of

opportunity created by the pandemic to properly develop other products through proper policy, planning, and implementation, for the benefit of both international and domestic travelers.

At the domestic level, while many regions in the country seek to develop their tourism products, the Philippines and its regions must emphasize their local identities and work on the quality of the experience provided. This will ensure that the tourism experience that the country offers both domestically and internationally becomes distinct in the mind of the traveler, highlighting the uniqueness of the Philippines, to effectively stand out and lead in Southeast Asia.

At the international level, fully aware that the ASEAN member states at first glance appear to offer broadly similar tourism products (see Table 11), it will be crucial to invest for the long-term in defining our cultural experiences to stand out in ASEAN’s highly competitive tourism environment more effectively.

Table 10. Philippines Destination Image versus Leisure Travelers Motivations		
PRODUCT		COMPARATIVE PERFORMANCE
Sun/Beaches/Islands	76%	Thailand is No1 while Philippines and Indonesia followed closely behind
Nature/National parks/Forests	50%	Stiff rivalry between Philippines, Malaysia and Indonesia
Mountains/Hiking/Trekking	38%	Philippines scores highest for adventurous activities
Diving/Water sports	34%	Philippines is up there with the rest of the world in diving
Historical landmarks	51%	Philippines ranked lowest
Cultural/Art museums or activities	29%	Philippines ranked very poorly
Religious/places of worship	11%	Philippines ranked poorly
City trips	34%	Philippines ranked average; Singapore is tops
Shopping	27%	Philippines ranked below average
Food explorations/Cooking class	27%	Philippines ranked poorly
Romantic getaway	21%	Philippines scored the highest
Visiting friends/relatives	18%	Philippines scored very high among the top 3
Nightlife/Entertainment	15%	Philippines ranked high slightly below Thailand and Singapore
Spa/Wellness/Health/Medical	4%	Philippines ranked high
Farm/Plantation/Vineyard visits		Philippines ranked high
Casino/Gaming		Philippines ranked high; below Singapore

Source: Frost & Sullivan 2022 Study on The Consumer Insight Survey of Travel Markets



Table 11. Dominant Tourism Products in ASEAN Member States

TOURISM PRODUCTS		DESCRIPTION
Brunei	Culture and Religious, Nature, Culinary, Business	Ulu Temborong National Park (500 sq. km. protected virgin forest), Kampong Ayer the Floating Village, Jame' Asr Hassanil Bolkiah and Sultan Omar Ali Saifuddin Mosques are some of its natural and cultural assets; Brunei is billed as a super safe, clean, and tranquil destination.
Cambodia	Culture And History, Religious, Nature/Adventure, Beach Holidays	Angkor Wat is rated as one of the world's must-see ancient sites consisting of colossal temples; the museums in Pnom Penh including the Tuol Slen War Museum; floating villages in Tonle Sap Lake and the numerous beach resorts including the tourist town of Seam Reap have transformed the country into a fast emerging tourism destination.
Indonesia	MICE, Culture-Halal Tourism, Marine and Cruise Tourism, Sun and Beach	Bali is the premiere beach resort and marine sports destination destination; together with the town of Ubud; the ancient temples of Borobudur; meeting orangutans in Borneo and the "dragons" of Komodo National Park;
Laos	Culture, Religious/Pilgrimage, Nature, Ecotourism	Charming city of Luang Prabang is the most popular tourist attraction with golden-roofed temples, wooden houses and French provincial buildings; Vientiane with the great Buddhist temple Pha That Luang; trips along the Mekong River.
Malaysia	Sun and Beach, Ecotourism, Adventure, Marine Sports, Shopping, Biking, Culture	Kuala Lumpur, the capital featuring the Petronas Twin Towers, and Georgetown, the colonial multicultural capital of Penang; climbing Kota Kinabalu, diving in Sipadan Island, and numerous beach destinations displaying its own unique setting.
Myanmar	History, Ecotourism, Community-Based Tourism	The Inndawgyi Wildlife Sanctuary was Myanmar's first eco-tourism site featuring kayaking, biking and village-life interaction, Boat trips along the Ayeyarwady River offers community living with daily glimpses of the famous Irrawady dolphins; wildlife sanctuaries in Sagaing Region and Kachin State;
Philippines	Sun & Beach, Nature-Adventure, Culture, Marine Sports, Farm	Pristine beaches exemplified by Boracay and El Nido as well as numerous dive spots throughout the archipelago banners its natural assets. Rice terraces in Ifugao and mountain ranges offer trekking and hiking experiences while its rich Spanish colonial past give range to cathedrals of heritage fame highlighted by the walled city of Intramuros in the heart of the capital, Manila.
Singapore	Island Integrated Resorts, Arts, Culture, MICE	City attractions cover the Marina Bay Sands complex right beside Gardens by the Bay complemented by the City Zoo, Botanical Gardens and Orchid Gardens; theme parks in Sentosa Island; high end shopping in Orchard Road and the ubiquitous street food Singapore is famous for found in all corners. Meetings and conferences are year-round activities in convention centers and hotels.
Thailand	Sun & Beach, Culture, Nature, Adventure, Marine Sports, MICE	Bangkok, the entry point of most of European travelers, is a hive of commerce, meetings/conferences, floating markets and recreational activities especially at night; Chiang Mai and its walking streets, elephants and more tropical wildlife in Khao Yai National Park, the historic city of Ayutthaya and beach resorts galore in its coasts and islands.
Vietnam	Culture, Marine Sports, And Island Tourism (Beach Resorts), Eco and Natural Tourism, City Tourism	Billed as the most under-rated destination in Southeast Asia, it offers the seascapes of Halong Bay, the capital Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh city for their museums and street-life; the historic town of Hue and the jungle-covered temple town of My Son; numerous beach resorts dot the coastline.

Note: Listing of major tourism products came from ASEAN Country websites, Wikipedia and the Frost & Sullivan Consumer Insight Survey 2017 and 2022 comparing the Philippines product offering with selected ASEAN Member countries.

INSTITUTIONAL REFORMS AND ACHIEVING LONG-TERM GOALS

Barriers to effective convergence between government agencies lessen the capability of our country to achieve competitiveness, sustainability, resilience, and a distinctly Filipino experience. Institutional reforms will be needed to strengthen promotions, enhance the sustainable development of tourism sites and zones, build convergence between different national agencies and local governments, and integrate the private, academic, and civil society sectors more fully as partners in nation-building. With increased devolution, institution, and capacity building will be crucial to empower regional and local stakeholders to take responsibility for their destinations within the framework of sustainable tourism development. Investments must be made in technology and infrastructure, and in the stewardship of natural, cultural, and human capital, to ensure that the industry's long-term growth is sustainable, competitive, and resilient.

Strengthening Promotions and the Sustainable Development of Tourism Sites and Zones

Our research also examined the institutional arrangements among the ASEAN Member States in how each governs their respective tourism industries. Based on their governance structures for tourism, they can be divided into three groups, namely, the maturing economies (Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Thailand), the city-states (Singapore and Brunei), and the transitional economies (Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, Vietnam). Their institutional arrangements appear to reflect their particular political-economic contexts, as regards the degree of specialization in their agencies, and the extent of local government autonomy. The maturing economies generally have greater agency specialization and development, and provide for greater autonomy at the local level. The city-states maintain small bureaucracies, with a tourism board exercising most tourism governance functions. The transitional economies are highly centralized, with a ministry exercising most tourism governance functions, and some autonomy at the local level.

The Philippines, as a maturing economy and polity, should reflect that maturity through the development of its governance institutions through

increased specialization of functions. This would entail properly delineating and assigning the function of promotions to the TPB, allowing the DOT to focus on the core governance functions of policy-making, planning, and regulation more effectively. On the other hand, the Philippines should seize on its strategic advantage of having a specialized agency for the planning and development of tourism enterprise zones and the provision of infrastructure.

Table 12 outlines the governance structures of ASEAN member states.

Stronger Collaborations for Competitiveness and Sustainability

It bears emphasis that, in the long trajectory of growth of the tourism industry in the post-World War II era, only pandemics (SARS), natural disasters (Indian Ocean tsunami), recessions (2008-2009), and conflict (9/11) have interrupted that growth, whether at national, regional, or global scales. Recognizing this, preparing the industry for competitiveness, sustainability, and resilience will be crucial. Reference to the WEF Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Index (TTCI) and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) Index will be essential in understanding the improvements needed to meet



Table 12. Overview of National Tourism Agency Mandates in ASEAN

Governmental Functions and Relevant Agencies				
	Policy, Planning and Regulation	Promotions and Marketing	Investment and Development	Local Government Powers
Philippines	Department of Tourism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Department of Tourism Tourism Promotions Board 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tourism Infrastructure and Enterprise Zone Authority Other Investment Agencies 	Defined powers for local planning and development
Thailand	Ministry of Tourism and Sports	Tourism Authority of Thailand	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Board of Investment Designated Areas for Sustainable Tourism Administration Tourism Authority of Thailand 	Defined powers for local planning and development
Malaysia	Ministry of Tourism, Arts and Culture	Tourism Malaysia	Malaysian Investment Development Authority	Defined powers for local planning and development
Indonesia	Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy	Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy	Indonesian Ministry of Investment	Defined powers for local planning and development
Singapore	Ministry of Trade and Industry (Singapore Tourism Board)	Ministry of Trade and Industry (Singapore Tourism Board)	Ministry of Trade and Industry (Singapore Tourism Board)	City-state
Brunei	Ministry of Primary Resources and Tourism (Brunei Tourism Board)	Ministry of Primary Resources and Tourism (Brunei Tourism Board)	Ministry of Finance and Economy (Brunei Economic Development Board)	City-state
Vietnam	Ministry of Culture, Sports, and Tourism	Ministry of Culture, Sports, and Tourism	Ministry of Planning and Investment	Localizing and implementing national plans and programs
Cambodia	Ministry of Tourism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ministry of Tourism Cambodian Tourism Marketing and Promotions Board 	Council of Development Cambodia	Localizing and implementing national plans and programs
Myanmar	Ministry of Hotels and Tourism	Ministry of Hotels and Tourism	Directorate of Investments and Company Administration	Localizing and implementing national plans and programs
Laos	Ministry of Information, Culture, and Tourism	Ministry of Information, Culture, and Tourism	Ministry of Planning and Investment	Localizing and implementing national plans and programs

these goals. While the Philippines has the fifth largest economy in Southeast Asia and should have considerable resources to bring it closer to its goals under the TCI and the SDGs, it underperforms in competitive metrics against its neighbors in the region. In this regard, the Philippines needs to properly understand this competitive environment to strengthen its position and to navigate a path toward growth, resilience, and sustainability.

The WEF Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Index⁶.

The TCI provides unique insight into the strengths and development areas of each country or economy to understand and anticipate emerging trends and risks for informed policy and investment decisions. The WEF TCI in Table 13 shows that, while the Philippines remains roughly in the same range for

global ranking since 2015 (74th in 2015, 79th in 2017, and 75th in 2019) it has slid from 5th to 7th when compared with other Southeast Asian economies, being overtaken by Vietnam and Brunei, with the gap between leading countries increasing against the Philippines.

This demonstrates the highly competitive nature of tourism in the Southeast Asian sub-region, and the need for the Philippines to perform at a higher level, appropriate for its level of economic and political development. Table 14 captures the 2019 ASEAN performance under each sub-index.

Crucially, the Philippines does well in the Policy and Enabling Conditions, reflecting a degree of prioritization of tourism at the national level. It also does well in Natural and Cultural Resources, reflecting the number of its UNESCO World Heritage

⁶ Calderwood, L., & Soshkin, M. (2019). The Travel & Tourism Competitiveness Report 2019. Geneva: World Economic Forum.

sites and the presence of large-scale venues for events. Both these sub-indices may be said to reflect the competitive potential of the country more closely. On the other hand, it underperforms in Enabling Environment, reflecting challenges in ease of doing business and safety and security, and in Infrastructure, particularly in air, ground, and port infrastructure. The 14 pillars that comprise the

TTCI, and the Philippines' ranking in the region, are summarized in Table 15.

Pillars in boldfaced font are those in which the country performs in the bottom third of the region (ranked 7 to 9 out of 9 countries covered by the index).

Table 13. Southeast Asian Performance in World Economic Forum: Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Index

Regional Rank	2015	2017	2019
1	Singapore (11)	Singapore (13)	Singapore (17)
2	Malaysia (25)	Malaysia (26)	Malaysia (29)
3	Thailand (35)	Thailand (34)	Thailand (31)
4	Indonesia (50)	Indonesia (42)	Indonesia (40)
5	Philippines (74)	Vietnam (67)	Vietnam (63)
6	Vietnam (75)	Philippines (79)	Brunei (72)
7	Lao (96)	Lao (94)	Philippines (75)
8	Cambodia (105)	Cambodia (101)	Lao (97)
9	Myanmar (134)		Cambodia (98)

Numbers in parentheses are the global ranks of each economy.

Brunei in 2015, Brunei and Myanmar in 2017, and Myanmar in 2019 were excluded from the ranking due to insufficient data

Source: World Economic Forum Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Reports for 2015, 2017, 2019

Table 14. ASEAN Rankings Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Index 2019

Enabling Environment	Policy and Enabling Conditions	Infrastructure	Natural Cultural Resources	Overall
Singapore (7)	Singapore (2)	Singapore (3)	Indonesia (18)	Singapore (17)
Malaysia (34)	Indonesia (4)	Thailand (32)	Thailand (21)	Malaysia (29)
Brunei (48)	Malaysia (11)	Malaysia (35)	Vietnam (26)	Thailand (31)
Thailand (63)	Thailand (42)	Brunei (61)	Malaysia (31)	Indonesia (40)
Indonesia (72)	Philippines (53)	Indonesia (71)	Philippines (46)	Vietnam (63)
Vietnam (73)	Brunei (71)	Philippines (80)	Singapore (66)	Brunei (72)
Lao PDR (Laos) (92)	Cambodia (78)	Vietnam (87)	Cambodia (72)	Philippines (75)
Philippines (93)	Vietnam (79)	Lao PDR (Laos) (95)	Lao PDR (Laos) (88)	Lao PDR (Laos) (97)
Cambodia (106)	Lao PDR (Laos) (83)	Cambodia (101)	Brunei (123)	Cambodia (98)

Numbers in parentheses are the global ranks of each economy.

Source: World Economic Forum Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Report 2019

Table 15. WEF TTCI Philippine Ranking in ASEAN for Competitiveness Pillars

Pillar	Ranking	Pillar	Ranking
Business Environment	8/9	Price Competitiveness	4-6/9
Safety and Security	9/9	Environmental Sustainability	3/9
Health and Hygiene	6/9	Air Transport Infrastructure	7/9
Human Resources	4/9	Ground/Port Infrastructure	7/9
ICT Readiness	6/9	Tourist Service Infrastructure	5/9
Tourism Prioritization	5/9	Natural Resources	3-5/9
International Openness	7-8/9	Cultural and Business Resources	6/9

Source: World Economic Forum Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Report 2019



The WEF Travel and Tourism Development Index (TTDI).⁷

As this Plan was being drafted, the WEF adopted a new framework that reflected the broader challenges facing the tourism industry. The 2021 TTDI specifically noted that it cannot and should not be compared with the TTCI – learning from the pandemic and other threats and risks to the industry, new indicators and new pillars were adopted to capture the sustainability and resilience of tourism destinations more accurately.

The 2021 TTDI consists of five subindices and 17 pillars, with 112 individual indicators distributed among the different pillars. Of the eight countries in the Southeast Asian region included in the Index, the Philippines ranks sixth, behind Vietnam and ahead of Cambodia and Laos. It is last on the pillars of Business Environment and Safety and Security

and tied last with Vietnam and Cambodia for Travel and Tourism Demand Pressure and Impact. The only pillar in which the Philippines is ranked above the median is Natural Resources. Table 16 summarizes the results for the Southeast Asian region.

The Sustainable Development Goals Index⁸.

Under the Sustainable Development Goals Index, the Philippines in 2021 ranked 9th out of the 10 ASEAN Member States. This is captured in Table 17 below. The Philippines must do much more to hit its targets for sustainable development. While the SDGs by themselves do not directly relate to tourism performance, they offer opportunities in which tourism programs can properly converge with those of other government agencies, identify key priorities, and aid significantly in attaining sustainability goals.

TABLE 16. WEF Travel and Tourism Development Index 2021

	Overall	Business Environment	Safety And Security	Health And Hygiene	Human Resources And Labor Market	Ict Readiness	Prioritization Of Travel And Tourism	International Openness	Price Competitiveness	Air Transport Infrastructure	Ground And Port Infrastructure	Tourist Service Infrastructure	Natural Resources	Cultural Resources	Non-Leisure Resources	Environmental Sustainability	Socio-Economic Resilience And Conditions	T&T Demand Pressure And Impact
1	SIN	SIN	SIN	SIN	SIN	SIN	SIN	SIN	MAL	SIN	SIN	THA	IND	IND	SIN	SIN	SIN	LA
2	IND	IND	VIET	MAL	IND	MAL	IND	CAM	IND	THA	MAL	SIN	THA	VIE	THA	CAM	THA	IND
3	THA	MAL	VIET	MAL	THA	CAM	MAL	IND	VIET	IND	IND	MAL	PHI	THA	MAL	IND	VIE	SIN
4	MAL	VIET	IND	THA	THA	VIET	LAO	IND	THA	MAL	THA	VIET	PHI	MAL	VIE	LAO	PHI	THA
5	VIE	THA	IND	IND	VIET	IND	PHI	THA	CAM	VIET	VIE	PHI	VIE	SIN	IND	PHI	MAL	MAL
6	PHI	LAO	LAO	LAO	PHI	CAM	MAL	PHI	PHI	PHI	PHI	CAM	CAM	PHI	PHI	MAL	VIE	IND
7	CAM	CAM	THA	PHI	CAM	PHI	THA	PHI	VIET	THA	CAM	CAM	IND	LAO	CAM	CAM	PHI	VIE
8	LAO	PHI	PHI	CAM	LAO	LAO	LAO	LAO	SIN	LAO	LAO	IND	LAO	SIN	LAO	LAO	THA	LAO

Source: World Economic Forum Travel and Tourism Development Index 2021

⁷ Travel & Tourism Development Index 2021: Rebuilding for a Sustainable and Resilient Future. World Economic Forum (2022)

⁸ Cambridge University Press. (2021). Sustainable Development Report 2021.

In deriving the overall SDG index, the 17 goals are given equal weights. The score denotes “a country’s position between the worst possible outcome (0) and the best or target outcome (100)”. The Philippines’ overall score is 64.5, which means that, on average, it is 64.5% towards achieving the best possible outcome on the 17 Sustainable Development Goals. When comparing this regionally in ASEAN, the country ranks 9th in the region, where the top performer, Thailand, has a 9.7% lead in the SDG index.

Table 17. Southeast Asian Performance in the Sustainable Development Goals Index 2021

ASEAN Ranking		SDG Index (%)
1	Thailand (43)	74.2
2	Vietnam (51)	72.8
3	Malaysia (65)	70.9
4	Singapore (76)	69.9
5	Brunei Darussalam (84)	68.3
6	Indonesia (97)	66.3
7	Myanmar (101)	64.9
8	Cambodia (102)	64.5
9	Philippines (103)	64.5
10	Lao PDR (110)	63.0

Numbers in parentheses are the global ranks of each country
Source: Sustainable Development Report 2021

Table 18 underscores the need – and the opportunity – for tourism to address the SDGs in which we are falling behind. By working closely with investors and local governments, tourism can go far in addressing poverty, providing decent work generating economic growth, and reducing inequalities. By working closely with other national government agencies, tourism can also help in spurring investment for good health and well-being, and for sustainable cities and communities.

Table 18. UN SDG Philippine Ranking in ASEAN

Goal	Ranking	Goal	Ranking
No Poverty	8/9	Reduced Inequalities	8/8
Zero Hunger	5/10	Sustainable Cities and Communities	10/10
Good Health and Well-being	8/10	Responsible Consumption and Production	5/10
Quality Education	7/10	Climate Action	3/10
Gender Equality	5/10	Life Below Water	1/9
Clean Water and Sanitation	5/10	Life on Land	3/10
Affordable and Clean Energy	7/10	Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions	7/10
Decent Work and Economic Growth	8/10	Partnerships for Goals	5/10
Industry Innovation and Infrastructure	7/10		

Source: UN Sustainable Development Goals Report 2021

Intersections for Infrastructure and Technology, and Investing in Natural, Cultural, and Human Capital

The WEF TTCI/TTDI and the UN SDGs provide concrete and measurable targets for focusing our national strategy. Many of these require programs that lie outside the mandate of the Department. These indices thus emphasize the crucial need to strengthen convergences between different agencies, and to use limited government resources in an efficient and focused manner, to attain these goals.

The opportunities revealed by the TTCI and SDG Report have also been affirmed by stakeholders. Our consultations have emphasized that, while the country’s tourism industry has grown significantly over the last two decades, the country has yet to fully realize the tourism value of its innate potential. The needed growth, innovation, and entrepreneurship, however, need to be properly supported for the Philippines to truly compete in a region filled with countries seeking to grow their tourism industries. In this regard, a dedicated effort to invest in the improvement and growth of natural, cultural, and human capital for tourism will be crucial.

While there has been significant improvement in the transportation infrastructure of the country in the last two decades, with airports being built or upgraded, train networks being expanded, seaports being developed for RO-RO use, highway networks being expanded, and roads to tourism sites being built, but challenges remain. Linkages between



different modes of transport, different tourism sites, facilities, and urban areas, and even between localities need to be improved. The public transport system needs to become more comfortable and useful for both tourists and residents alike. Thinking of the human experience in terms of ease of travel must be the center of transportation policy, whether for tourists or residents.

Technology offers new and important ways to facilitate tourism services and enrich tourism experiences. The pandemic has speeded up the adoption of many new technologies and platforms; however, even willing stakeholders can be constrained by limitations in the telecommunications and internet infrastructure of the country.

The Role of Communities and Stakeholders

Our consultations revealed that the industry has benefitted significantly from increased government interest and support for tourism, a consistent tourism brand, interest in and planning for tourism among local governments, and support given to and broader collaboration between stakeholders. For the next phase of tourism development, a balance between continuity and change will be necessary.

For local governments, the *Mandanas* ruling increases the resources available to local governments, and their capacities for tourism should be developed in relation to planning, regulation, and development, especially toward sustainability. In this regard, it will be crucial to institutionalize local tourism offices and provide permanence to office staff. This will ensure that the considerable investment in training local tourism officers and their staff by the Department can have the opportunity to bear fruit, but this also necessarily requires that the Department also strengthen and systematize its training programs to allow for the progression in the capacities and skills of local governments, taking due regard for the

goals of sustainability, resilience, and competitiveness, and the varying backgrounds of local tourism officers.

A crucial gap encountered at both the national and local level – heightened during the pandemic – is the need for a comprehensive and integrated system for improving standards, accreditation, and regulation of operations. Enterprises not currently covered by the accreditation system are often MSMEs that would benefit greatly from training and resources and the Department must endeavor to bring them within the system while working for greater accountability. The Department must work closely with the Local Government Units, in their regulatory functions, to ensure that the entire industry moves forward toward greater sustainability, resilience, and competitiveness. The Department, in turn, must have the power to exact compliance and accountability from both tourism enterprises and local governments that fail to meet standards, particularly those oriented toward the Plan's strategic values.

Finally, one potential area for dynamic growth is properly engaging the private sector and other industry stakeholders. The Tourism Act provides the mandate of the Tourism Congress as the private sector partner of the Department in the formulation and implementation of policies, plans, and programs. Properly empowering the Tourism Congress requires mandating all tourism enterprises to join as a condition for accreditation, and that would ensure that the organization has the resources to effectively assist the Department in its endeavors. Further, its mandate may be reviewed, and its membership expanded to include both non-governmental organizations and academic institutions involved in tourism. Crucially, however, it must stay as a one enterprise-one vote system (rather than as a federation of industry associations) to ensure greater democratic participation and involvement.

STRATEGIC VALUES AND APPROACHES

Even as the Philippine tourism industry has grown significantly in the last two decades, the country must now focus on and emphasize moving towards a path that invests in innovation, protects the natural, cultural, and human capital on which tourism depends, and ensures that tourism is resilient not only for itself or its host communities but also for the country as a whole. Building a sustainable, resilient, and competitive industry hinges on our ability to create genuinely Filipino tourism experiences, pursued through programs that emphasize Connectivity, Convenience, and Equality for tourists, destinations, and stakeholders.

Megatrends driving Tourism

Tourism has grown, both domestically and internationally, almost continuously over the last half-century. This growth has been fueled by a long-term trajectory of rising incomes, increasingly accessible information about destinations through the Internet and social media, cheaper transportation and other tourist services through business and technological innovations, the stabilization and opening of previously closed markets, the progressive reduction of barriers to travel and, more fundamentally, the basic drive of individuals to assert personal agency and autonomy, and the desire for new experiences.

This growth has only been interrupted, whether on global, regional, national, or local levels, by shocks to the system. These include (1) economic crises, such as the 2008-2009 Recession, (2) public health emergencies, including the 2019 COVID pandemic, (3) natural disasters, such as the Indian Ocean tsunami or the eruption of Eyjafjallajökull, or (4) conflict and terrorism, including 9/11.

An industry that looks toward the future must understand these trends and prepare accordingly. This underscores the imperatives behind this Plan's Strategic Values and Approaches.

Strategic Values: Filipino Identity, Competitiveness, Resilience, and Sustainability

The urgency of a shift towards tourism anchored on Filipino identity, competitiveness, resilience, and sustainability arises from the fact the world is still in the middle of a public health emergency, an ongoing international armed conflict, and the political, social, and economic repercussions of both. These are complicating industrial and national recovery. Furthermore, the Philippines deals with natural disasters regularly – hardly a year goes by when a major tourism destination is not hit by a natural disaster.

Moreover, many tourism areas and communities are at risk from the effects of climate change and struggle with the loss of biodiversity and the severity of pollution. Tourism can only support long-term growth and development if it takes into consideration and integrates the stewardship of people, communities, cultures, and the natural environment.

It is also crucial that tourism, because of its massive impact on income, jobs, and livelihoods, is effectively and efficiently used to revive national and local economies. This in turn emphasizes the need to pursue tourism development competitively, requiring investment in human capital and infrastructure, and innovations in governance and business.



Finally, to ensure the holistic development of people, communities, and the nation, Philippine tourism must be anchored on authentic experiences of the richness and diversity of Filipino cultures and the country's 7641 islands, ultimately reflecting an authentic Filipino identity.

Strategic Approaches: Connectivity, Convenience, Equality

Implementing these Strategic Values requires Approaches that value the experiences of the tourist, the destination, and their stakeholders.

Focusing on the convenience of the traveler will be essential. Industry stakeholders must work toward a vision that prioritizes the well-being of our visitors, examining how experiences can be improved, from the visas and immigration, the rationalization of health and safety protocols, to booking accommodations and accessing travel by land, sea, and air, to having various amenities and services within reach. By leveraging technology and deploying mobile applications, the traveler experience can be enhanced, providing information and tools for every step of the journey.

The Department commits to a strategy of connectivity that links destinations through transportation, power, and digital infrastructure, as well as other public services, to enhance both the traveler journey but also the development potential of tourism communities. Through the establishment of regional tourism circuits and value chains between urban areas, large provinces, and well-known destinations, to smaller islands and emerging destinations, these connections promote the spread of tourism-driven economic growth, investment, livelihoods, and opportunities.

Enhancing equality in the industry entails spreading the economic opportunities brought by the tourism industry to potential and emerging destinations. The Department shall focus on the equalization of overall tourism product development and promotion across the country's regions, and develop encompassing tourism standards, accreditation, and inclusive

development, to enhance the quality of the overall Philippine experience.

These Strategic Values and Approaches require a whole-of-government approach, necessitating the convergence in the priorities, policies, plans, and programs across key government agencies.

The Recovery

Revenge travel will be a key driver in the recovery and may balance or even offset the drag generated by the aforementioned system shocks. It may thus lull us into a sense of complacency when much work yet needs to be done.

The closure of Boracay, difficult as it was, nevertheless marked a turning point in how tourism destinations should be managed. This highlighted the need for new institutions and strategies to truly bring tourism onto a more sustainable trajectory. Carrying capacity, especially with an anticipated resurgence of mass tourism, will become a central concern in the management of tourism destinations.

Furthermore, government initiatives during the pandemic to support the industry and its stakeholders – financial assistance, prioritization in vaccination, and online training programs, among many others – can be refined and developed further to serve as a template for recovery in future disaster situations. Tourism development must henceforth work toward sustainability and resiliency, especially in remote rural communities for which tourism is the main, if not the sole, driver of the local economy, and provider of local livelihoods.

New tools will need to be developed and deployed to properly support the industry, to build its resilience, and to fuel its recovery out of crises. A long-term commitment to investing in the natural, cultural, and human capital of the country will be essential to building a tourism industry that reflects the Filipino identity in a way that is competitive, resilient, and sustainable.



SCENARIOS AND PROJECTIONS

While there are projections for a recovery of domestic tourism by late 2023 and international tourism by early 2025, there remains much uncertainty in the global environment. With new strains, the pandemic may yet suddenly turn for the worse, while current geopolitical and humanitarian crises will likely continue rippling out to affect the world, even possibly leading to fundamental shifts in the global political and economic system. The pandemic has accelerated many changes, whether political, economic, social, or technological in nature, that will have significant ramifications for the tourism industry. It falls upon the Philippines' industry stakeholders – from the national to local governments, from the private sector to local communities – to be aware of these circumstances and plan accordingly.

PAST PERFORMANCE

The period of 2019 to 2021 marked both the highest and lowest points in the growth of Philippine tourism – from the momentum of long-term progress supported by consistent policies and programs to the collapse caused by the pandemic, with its curtailment of travel, and its impact on income and livelihoods. The idea of sustainability, while part of the policy framework of the Tourism Act of 2009, was emphasized with the closure, redevelopment, and reopening of Boracay, and gradually institutionalized in various plans for key destinations throughout the country. The pandemic, however, drove home the need for a more systematic and integrated approach to sustainability and resilience.

NEAR, MEDIUM, AND LONG-TERM CHARACTERISTICS

The near term, spanning the period from 2022 to 2025, will be characterized by a recovery from the impact of the pandemic, counterbalanced against the inflationary and recessionary pressures generated by the conflict in Ukraine. During this period, seizing the surge of revenge travel and an emphasis on domestic tourism will be crucial in reviving the industry while preparing it for a broader reopening and stabilization of international travel. The near term will require an

emphasis on our core tourism products while providing a window of opportunity to develop frameworks for strategic tourism products, effective inter-agency convergence, the empowerment of local governments, and necessary regulatory and legislative reforms. The mechanisms to integrate competitiveness, sustainability, and resilience metrics in programs must be established. These programs in turn should be properly monitored and managed through an integrated data and decision-making infrastructure that effectively ties together the local with the national. Continuity in promotions will be crucial in this period to both encourage domestic travel and to make the Philippines a top-of-mind international destination.

The medium-term, spanning the period from 2025 to 2028, will in turn be defined by the ability to maintain momentum generated by domestic tourism and expand/diversify the base of international tourism. Deeper socio-cultural shifts that had been accelerated during the pandemic may stabilize as new realities in this period – changes to the ways of doing business or the kinds of experiences sought by travelers, for instance. As such, maintaining the momentum during the period of recovery will hinge on how successfully the frameworks for new and strategic products and institutional reforms are implemented, especially in how these are oriented, through the Strategic Values and Approaches. Implementing these successfully in a

timely manner would allow the tourism industry to contribute significantly to meeting targets for sustainable development.

In the long term, the diversification and multidimensionality of markets and products and the focus on competitiveness, resilience, and sustainability, should move the Philippines toward a phase of renewed yet sustainable growth. However, what may ultimately be decisive will be how significantly the international system changes as a result of great power competition or cooperation. Tourism growth in previous decades was anchored on a system of international cooperation and free trade, and a system that moves away from those values may fundamentally alter the character of the industry.

BASELINE, MEDIUM, AND UPSIDE SCENARIOS

Below are the tables summarizing projections for different scenarios for the industry's recovery. It is emphasized that these are projections, not targets.

The Baseline Scenario reflects the projections from the Reformulated National Tourism Development Plan of 2016-2022, taking into consideration the impact of the pandemic (see Table 19).

The Medium and Upside Scenarios below were developed in February 2023 to reflect available data and assumptions as of year-end 2022. They reflect assessments of how successfully the world can exit the pandemic, manage the impact of the Ukraine conflict on global markets and shifting supply chains, and the degree of reopening of China and other major markets. It is also shaped to some extent by how major economies can manage recessionary pressures and, crucially, how the Philippines itself can gain and maintain momentum for its economic growth while managing inflation (see Tables 20 and 21).

It is recognized, however, that there are fundamental uncertainties in charting the course for the future. These scenarios and projections will need to be revisited periodically as new circumstances develop.



Table 19. Tourism Industry Projections BASELINE Scenario

Indicators	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028
Revenue (PHP Billion)	3,744	697	810	1,614	2,247	2,714	3,054	3,473	3,952	4,500
Inbound	600	133	28	114	316	505	527	579	637	701
Domestic	3,144	564	783	1,399	1,931	2,209	2,527	2,893	3,315	3,799
Tourism Gross Value-Added (PHP Billion)	2,509	917	1,001	1,310	1,947	2,420	2,759	3,196	3,664	4,249
Share to Gross Domestic Product (GDP) (%)	12.9	5.1	5.2	6.27	8.79	10.26	10.99	11.95	12.87	14.01
Employment										
Tourism Employment (Million)	5.7	4.7	4.9	5.0	5.3	5.4	5.7	5.9	6.1	6.3
Share to Total Employment (%)	13.6	11.9	11.1	11.2	11.8	11.9	12.0	12.2	12.5	12.9
Visitors										
Inbound Tourism (Millions)	8.3	1.5	0.2	1.7	4.8	7.7	8.4	9.3	10.2	11.5
Domestic Trips (Millions)	122.1	27.0	37.3	64.1	85.1	93.5	102.9	113.3	124.8	137.5
Average length of stay (Inbound)	9.49	10.58	10.58	9.5	9.5	9.5	10	10.5	10.5	11
Average length of stay (Domestic)	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.5	5.5	6.0	6.0	6.0
Average Daily Expenditure (Foreign) in PHP	6,648	6,759	6,981	6,977	9,349	9,536	9,726	9,921	10,119	10,322
Average expenditure per trip (PHP)	25,745	20,911	20,990	21,935	22,483	22,933	23,392	23,859	24,337	24,823

Baseline projections for 2022 are based on the previous administration's estimates, prior to the formulation of the NTDP 2023-2028.

Notes:

- 1. Data for 2019 - 2021:** Actual data from the Philippine Tourism Satellite Accounts (PTSA), Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) and the Department of Tourism (DOT).
- Projections for 2022 reflect the RNTDP 2021 - 2022, and adjusted in consideration with the actual data from 2021 and the behaviors of the current sector and government policies by mid-2022 during the preparation of this plan.
- The performance exceeded the initial 2022 baseline projections. (a) inbound tourism arrivals of 2.65 exceeded 1.7 M; (b) average length of stay of 12.91 exceeded 9.5; (c) inbound tourism revenues of PHP 369 Billion) exceeded PHP 114 Billion; (d) tourism employment of 5.4 million exceeded the 5 million projection; (e) Domestic trips of 103 million exceeded 64.1 million.
- Data for 2022 macro-indicators represent baseline projections. Assumptions for average daily expenditure in PHP for inbound and domestic for 2023-2028 are adjusted using the Development Budget Coordination Committee (DBCC) inflation projections for inflation for 2023-2028 (estimates as of December 5, 2022).

Table 20. Tourism Industry Projections MEDIUM Scenario (as of February 2023)

Indicators	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028
Revenue (PHP Billion)	3,744	697	810	1,873	2,877	3,899	4,355	4,905	5,512	6,157
Inbound	600	133	28	369	718	1,044	1,185	1,362	1,563	1,794
Domestic	3,144	564	783	1,505	2,160	2,855	3,169	3,542	3,949	4,363
Tourism Gross Value-Added (PHP Billion)	2,509	917	1,001	1,376	2,192	3,001	3,379	3,870	4,381	4,975
Share to Gross Domestic Product (GDP) (%)	12.9	5.1	5.2	6.2	9.9	12.6	13.3	14.2	15.0	15.9
Employment										
Tourism Employment (Million)	5.7	4.7	4.9	5.4	5.5	5.8	6.1	6.3	6.6	6.9
Share to Total Employment (%)	13.6	11.9	11.1	11.4	11.3	12.1	12.8	13.1	13.6	14.1
Visitors										
Inbound Tourism (Millions)	8.3	1.5	0.2	2.6	5.8	8.3	9.1	10.2	11.3	12.6
Domestic Trips (Millions)	122.1	27.0	37.3	103	95.1	122.1	131.6	142.8	154.5	165.8
Average length of stay (Inbound)	9.49	10.58	10.58	12.91	13.00	13.00	13.00	13.00	13.00	13.00
Average length of stay (Domestic)	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.5	5.5	6.0	6.0	6.0
Average Daily Expenditure (Foreign) in PHP	6,648	6,759	6,981	9,121	9,440	9,723	10,015	10,315	10,625	10,943
Average expenditure per trip (Php)	25,745	20,911	20,990	21,935	22,703	23,384	24,085	24,808	25,552	26,319

Notes:

1. Data for 2019 - 2022: Actual data from the Philippine Tourism Satellite Accounts (PTSA), Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) and the Department of Tourism (DOT). Data as of 29 August 2023. However, projections for 2023 -2028 were prepared as of February 2023 during the NTDP drafting.
2. Average length of stay for inbound tourism is adjusted upward in 2023-2028. The actual 2022 average length of stay already reached 12.91. The proposed indicative target is to at least maintain the 13 until the end of plan period.
3. Employment estimate in 2022 adjusted upward based on the actual results of inbound tourism in 2022.
4. Growth rates of GDP used in estimation is based on the Development Budget Coordination Committee (DBCC) inflation projections as of December 5, 2022.
5. Domestic Average Length of Stay and Expenditure per Trip for 2022 are estimates as no data is made available by PSA as of 29 August 2023

Table 21. Tourism Industry Projections UPSIDE Scenario (as of February 2023)

Indicators	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028
Revenue (PHP Billion)	3,744	697	810	1,873	3,235	4,175	4,648	5,477	6,393	7,572
Inbound	600	133	28	369	803	1,086	1,288	1,527	1,750	2,114
Domestic	3,144	564	783	1,505	2,431	3,089	3,360	3,950	4,643	5,458
Tourism Gross Value-Added (PHP Billion)	2,509	917	1,001	1,376	2,532	3,101	3,663	4,299	5,094	6,136
Share to Gross Domestic Product (GDP) (%)	12.9	5.1	5.2	6.2	11.3	12.8	14.1	15.3	16.8	18.7
Employment										
Tourism Employment (Million)	5.7	4.7	4.9	5.4	5.6	6.0	6.3	6.5	6.8	7.2
Share to Total Employment (%)	13.6	11.9	11.1	11.4	11.7	12.5	13.1	13.5	13.9	14.7
Visitors										
Inbound Tourism (Millions)	8.3	1.5	0.2	2.6	6.5	8.4	9.6	11.0	11.6	13.5
Domestic Trips (Millions)	122.1	27.0	37.3	103	106.1	129.6	135.5	153.2	173.1	195.7
Average length of stay (Inbound)	9.49	10.58	10.58	12.91	13.00	13.00	13.00	13.00	13.50	13.50
Average length of stay (Domestic)	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.5	5.5	6.0	6.5	7.0
Average Daily Expenditure (Foreign) in PHP	6,648	6,759	6,981	9,121	9,531	9,912	10,309	10,721	11,150	11,596
Average expenditure per trip (Php)	25,745	20,911	20,990	21,935	22,922	23,839	24,792	25,784	26,816	27,888

Notes:

1. Data for 2019 - 2022: Actual data from the Philippine Tourism Satellite Accounts (PTSA), Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) and the Department of Tourism (DOT). Data as of 29 August 2023. However, projections for 2023 -2028 were prepared as of February 2023 during the NTDP drafting.
2. Data for 2023-2028 indicators represent estimates only. The 2023-2028 indicators represent updated projections prepared as part of the NTDP 2023-2028 (as of February 2023). Assumptions for average expenditure in PHP for inbound and domestic tourism for 2023-2028 have been updated using the Development Budget Coordination Committee (DBCC) inflation projections for 2023-2028 (estimates as of December 5, 2022). Projections to be updated quarterly.
3. Average length of stay for inbound tourism is adjusted upward in 2023-2028. Actual 2022 average length of stay already reached 12.91. The proposed indicative target is to reach 13.5~14 by end of plan period. Similarly, for domestic tourism the proposed indicative target is to raise the average length of stay to 7.0 by end of plan period. This will be supported by the multi-dimensional program and enhanced connectivity across the destinations.
4. Domestic Average Length of Stay and Expenditure per Trip for 2022 are estimates as no data is made available by PSA as of 29 August 2023
5. Growth rates of GDP used in estimation:Based on the DBCC projections as of December 5, 2022.



STRATEGIC VISION

Strategic Context. This National Tourism Development Plan has been drafted in a time of great change and uncertainty. While there is optimism that the pandemic is finally under control and travel is returning, the reality nevertheless is that new strains and other public health emergencies may yet force tourism to come to a halt once again. War and conflict undermine the global stability on which trade and travel depend and may force significant changes to global institutions. Within the Philippines, even with its vibrant and diverse peoples and culture, magnificent landscapes and stunning biodiversity, and the massive contribution of tourism to growth and development in the last two decades, consistency in policies for and the prioritization of the industry has waxed and waned with administrations. Across the world, tourists themselves are also changing – they yearn for experiences that are deeper and more authentic, travel that is more responsible and sustainable, yet embedded with and enhanced by technology. It is the vision of this Plan to ensure that the industry survives and thrives amid this change and uncertainty.

The Vision. As enunciated by the Tourism Act of 2009, “tourism is an indispensable element of the national economy, and an industry of national interest and importance”, and consistent with the priorities of the Administration of President Ferdinand Marcos, Jr., this National Tourism Development Plan for 2023-2028 shall:

Establish a Philippine tourism industry anchored on Filipino culture, heritage, and identity, which aims to be sustainable, resilient, and competitive, in order to transform the Philippines into a tourism powerhouse in Asia.

STRATEGIC VALUES AND APPROACHES

This Vision is framed by **the Strategic Values of Filipino Identity, Sustainability, Resilience, and Competitiveness**. Programs, projects, and activities should be directed toward and implemented with these values in mind:

Filipino Identity. Philippine tourism must be anchored on authentic experiences of the richness and diversity of Filipino cultures and the country’s 7,641 islands and must contribute to the holistic development of people, communities, and the nation.

Sustainability. Tourism can and must be an effective vehicle for sustainable development. Sustainability must be understood not only in terms of balancing environmental impacts and economic development but also as an approach that strives for social and cultural development through equitable and inclusive growth.

Resilience. Tourism can and must be a mechanism by which communities and the nation can become more resilient to crises and disasters. Considering the massive size and impact of the industry, its stakeholders must have the knowledge and resources to bounce forward from challenges to continue being one of the engines of economic growth for our country.

Global Competitiveness. Tourism can and must be a key strategy for our country and our people to achieve genuine progress, requiring change and innovation by leveraging technology, enhancing policies and institutions, building stronger partnerships with different stakeholders in the public, private, and civil society sectors, and investing further in the country’s human, natural, and social capital for tourism.

Attaining a more sustainable, resilient, and competitive tourism industry anchored in Philippine identity will require implementing this Plan with a view towards enhancing the **Strategic Approaches of Connectivity, Convenience, E(quality):**

Connectivity. It is crucial that our destinations and their sites are properly connected in tourism circuits to enhance the tourism experience and spread tourism to more communities. This can only be achieved through the transformation of end-to-end transportation services by land, sea, and air, as well as the provision of power and telecommunications services to drive the digital transformation of the industry and its communities. This involves route development, the resumption and addition of international and domestic flights from key, strategic, and opportunity markets, as well as improving gateways in terms of systems management, and improving touch points of tourists to lessen barriers to travel and pursuing design enhancements to reflect the Filipino branding and identity.

Convenience. The convenience of the traveler must be a central focus of our efforts and programs must be designed and implemented from the viewpoint of the visitor. At the primary level, this involves the provision of basic services such as clean restrooms, tourist rest areas, and call center lines for tourist assistance. Convenience further involves reducing the barriers and simplifying processes in entering and moving within the Philippines – especially through the uniformity of health and safety protocols – providing necessary information about destinations and sites, products and promotions, transportation and facilities, as well as the improvement of healthcare facilities to ensure the availability of high-quality emergency care.

E(quality). More of the Philippines must be opened to tourism, and more communities, municipalities, cities, and provinces across the Philippines must receive the support needed to develop tourism destinations, create and enhance tourism products, improve opportunities for livelihood and employment for tourism frontliners and Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs), create better visitor experiences and to benefit from the opportunities and growth generated by tourism. The upgrading of tourism standards and accreditation to be at par with global standards, the pursuit of collaboration across the public and private sectors, and between national and local governments, the introduction and incentivization of sustainability, and the emphasis on the Filipino brand identity, will be key.

STRATEGIC GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The following Goals and Objectives, anchored in the Plan’s Strategic Values and implemented through the Strategic Approaches, will be necessary in framing the programs, projects, and activities of the Department of Tourism, its attached agencies, the Philippine National Government, and the country’s local government units, together with the stakeholders from the private, academic, and civil society sectors:



GOAL 1. IMPROVEMENT OF TOURISM INFRASTRUCTURE AND ACCESSIBILITY. Infrastructure, both from the engineering and human perspectives, is crucial for attaining tourism development aligned with our Strategic Values and Approaches. Even as transportation and utilities infrastructure have improved significantly over the last decade, crucial gaps remain. Key gateways are poorly integrated into local transportation networks and can do more to reflect local identity. Remote communities, destinations, and sites are yet poorly served by infrastructure services that they are unable to seize the opportunities offered by tourism.

OBJECTIVE 1.1. Barrier-free and frictionless travel, including the adoption of more liberal visa policies, electronic visas, and policies that promote seamless travel and digital tourism transformation. Accessibility should see the provision of transportation infrastructure together with the promotion of seamless travel - the simplification of entry and movement protocols, more efficient processing at customs, immigration, and quarantine at ports of entry, the adoption of tourism-oriented visa policies, and the use of digital applications for safe and seamless mobility. The specific circumstances of women and children, the elderly, minorities, religious and ethnic groups, and people with disabilities, among others, should be considered in the design and implementation of policies and programs.

OBJECTIVE 1.2. Pursue funding and implementation of infrastructure programs on roads, bridges, drainage systems and flood mitigation, and water, waste, and sewage management, among others. Current convergence programs on transportation must be continued, and they must also begin to focus on the human experience of travel – providing the necessary information to make informed choices, making travel safer, seamless, and easier, especially when changing modes of transportation, and to support human-scale alternative modes of transport, to allow tourists to better experience tourism sites and destinations in a sustainable way. Programs in particular for roads, bridges, and drainage systems to tourism destinations and sites must be enhanced and expanded to reach and transform more communities through tourism. Programs for connectivity for other forms of infrastructure, such as power, telecommunications, waste, water, sewage, and others are essential components both for the benefit of tourists and for the development of their host communities. Tourism facilities should meet international standards while reflecting and respecting local environmental and cultural contexts.

OBJECTIVE 1.3. Restore old routes, enhance existing, and develop new routes for air and sea travel across key, strategic, and opportunity markets. Growing both domestic and international tourism in an archipelago requires the development of routes for both air and sea travel. The connection of key urban areas in the country will boost domestic tourism, and the direct connection of international markets with our gateways and destinations will boost international tourism. Sea travel for tourism is underappreciated and is an untapped resource in a country of 7,641 islands.

OBJECTIVE 1.4. Collaborate with relevant government agencies to improve operations and interiors of gateway airports and seaports. The arrival of a traveler at our airports and seaports is the first major experience they have of our country. Not only should facilities be improved and the operational design and procedures be oriented to consider the experience of tourists, but it should also communicate a sense of place, the culture of the country, and the local community.

OBJECTIVE 1.5. Pursue contingency funding to build resilience and provide assistance in times of any type of disaster and/or climate-related events that affect tourism destinations and frontliners.

Both natural and human crises and disasters, magnified by climate change, pose a significant risk to many tourist destinations and local communities, even as they struggle with the loss of biodiversity, increased pollution, and other environmental challenges, ultimately affecting the tourism industry on which many communities rely for their livelihood. The pandemic in particular has driven home the need for greater resilience in the tourism industry and the wider Philippine economy. Financial assistance and capacity-building programs, especially for tourism frontliners, will be crucial first steps.

GOAL 2. COHESIVE AND COMPREHENSIVE DIGITALIZATION AND CONNECTIVITY. The travel experience in the 21st century is digital. Even as local governments take on a greater role in tourism development, the Department must provide the knowledge and support to connect travelers, destinations, and communities with resources necessary for digitalization and a digital experience. This will be vital for the real-time management of sites and destinations, enhancing tourist experiences, and for continuous learning and innovation in our tourism programs.

OBJECTIVE 2.1. Mainstreaming of technological advances, including the development of a tourist lifecycle app and the use of financial technologies. Technology offers new and important ways to facilitate tourism services and enrich tourism experiences. Stakeholders must embrace both online and social media platforms (and now, the metaverse) not only as tools to facilitate transactions, or to promote their products, but also to provide greater information and transparency, and to begin shaping the visitor experience. The development of a mobile application for tourists will provide much more information and choices at every stage of the visitor journey and provide a platform for feedback and innovation. The use of payment platforms has also expanded during the pandemic, and more tourism enterprises should adopt these more consistently.

OBJECTIVE 2.2. Improve internet connectivity across destinations, enhance skills, systems, and infrastructure for the digitalization, gathering, and use of tourism data and the monitoring of tourism programs. The telecommunications infrastructure of the country remains significantly lacking, especially in remote areas that would otherwise be ready for tourism. The ability to harness new technologies – and the immediate and long-term competitiveness of tourism enterprises – depends on the extent and reliability of telecommunications services. Further, the pandemic has introduced to the public the use of QR codes as a tool for sharing and obtaining information. Tourist sites and destinations can use these systems in a manner compliant with privacy laws to gather data on tourists for purposes of public safety and the management of sites, as well as to provide more information or enhance the visitor experience by providing QR codes that are linked to websites, videos, apps, among others.

OBJECTIVE 2.3. Bridge remote tourism communities and sites through regional and cross-province tourism circuits. Digitalization and connectivity also involve the connection of remote tourism communities in tourism circuits not only in terms of the physical infrastructure of roads and bridges but also as circuits of experiences that are shaped and enhanced by the digital environment.

OBJECTIVE 2.4. Responding to the needs of tourists, including the establishment of a tourism assistance call center. It is essential that, in orienting the industry to better respond to the needs of tourists, the necessary tools are developed and deployed to access public services and provide assistance. This will require equipment, training, and the gathering of information and feedback.



Included among these tools should be a call center available 24/7 for tourists, to address needs and manage problems at any stage of the tourist journey. Tourist concerns may be raised via hotline, through a web or mobile application for their convenience. Necessary information will be gathered, and training will be required, to make the call center effective in fulfilling its mandate.

OBJECTIVE 2.5. Connecting people for authentic experiences. Crucially, amid all the strategies oriented toward infrastructure, technology, and digitalization, it is important to emphasize that programs should be developed to enhance authentic experiences, connect visitors with people and places, and anchor the identity of the Philippines.

GOAL 3. ENHANCEMENT OF OVERALL TOURIST EXPERIENCE. The industry has benefitted significantly from increased government interest and support for tourism, a consistent tourism brand, interest in and planning for tourism among local governments, and support given to and broader collaboration between stakeholders. Such governance initiatives, however, need to grow further for the industry to be competitive, and must increasingly focus on creating world-class yet distinctly Filipino experiences for our visitors.

OBJECTIVE 3.1. Expansion and strengthening of the accreditation system to be at par with global standards, including incentivizing sustainability practices, and the introduction of Filipino components into interiors, operations, and services, especially for the accommodations sector, and the provision of support for tourism MSMEs. The Department, through the accreditation system, exercises a level of supervision over only a fraction of the entire tourism industry. By providing paths toward the inclusion of other tourism enterprises, especially for MSMEs, and coordinating closely with local governments, the Department can more effectively move the whole industry toward our Strategic Values and Approaches. Programs oriented towards Filipinization, sustainability, resilience, and competitiveness can now more effectively be deployed with much wider participation and involvement.

OBJECTIVE 3.2. Enhance the human capital of the Philippine tourism industry through expansive training and education, institutionalizing the Filipino Brand of Service Excellence. The Department, on its own or working with various agencies for education and training, must begin to systematize and organize educational and training programs toward supporting long-term industry competitiveness and mainstreaming knowledge and programs on the Strategic Values and Approaches. The implementation of the Philippine Tourism Human Capital Development Plan will be indispensable in attaining this objective.

OBJECTIVE 3.3. Strengthen collaborations with relevant government agencies for safety and security, health and social services, and the development and implementation of standards for food, products, and other services for tourists and tourism communities. Working closely with other national agencies and the local government, specific programs for security, safety, health, and social services should be designed and implemented in relation to the specific needs of tourists and the community. Standards should be developed and implemented that uplift the quality while respecting and enhancing the diversity, of food, products, and other services for tourists while strengthening local value chains.

OBJECTIVE 3.4. Improve the functionality and design experience of transportation modes, hubs, terminals, and rest areas. With airports being built or upgraded, train networks being expanded, seaports being developed for RO-RO use, highway networks being expanded, and roads to tourism sites

being built, challenges remain. Linkages between different modes of transport, different tourism sites, facilities, and urban areas, and even between localities need to be improved. The public transport system needs to become more comfortable and useful for both tourists and residents alike. Tourists need better traveler-oriented facilities, the development of clean and safe rest areas and information centers, and the provision of proper signages and paths.

OBJECTIVE 3.5. Provision of relevant tourism information to domestic and international markets through aggressive and innovative campaigns, promotions, events, and the provision of tourist information centers and tourist rest areas. This entails creating and communicating a stronger sense of identity and place through hard infrastructure – such as well-designed tourist information centers embedded within tourist rest areas – and promotions that are both consistent in quality and that reflect our diverse cultures. Providing relevant tourism information through various forms of media platforms, and enhancing the tourist experience on the ground through tourist information centers and tourist rest areas are critical to enriching the traveler’s pre-trip and trip stages of the customer journey.

GOAL 4. EQUALIZATION OF TOURISM PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT AND PROMOTION. The growth of mass tourism, while it contributes to general tourism indicators (such as arrivals and spending), also presents challenges in terms of managing the impact on sites and communities. Concentrating tourism development in a few areas creates social, environmental, and cultural problems in destinations and neglects the growth of other communities. The country must expand its capacity and work toward sustainability and resiliency by developing new products and new destinations, and these should be properly supported through promotions and connections with urban areas and well-established destinations.

OBJECTIVE 4.1. Provide new opportunities for the tourism development of Provinces, Cities, and Municipalities with emerging and potential destinations while continuing to support the improvement of key destinations. Identifying new destinations should involve, not only an assessment of their existing and potential attractions, but also their readiness in terms of planning and technical competence, existing and planned investment in infrastructure, facilities, and amenities, as well as the coherence of strategies for circuit development, marketing and promotions, management, and the authenticity of experiences. The Department shall work closely with local governments in planning for tourism, investing their resources in needed infrastructure, and training the local government and stakeholders for responsible and sustainable tourism.

OBJECTIVE 4.2. Link emerging and potential destinations with key destinations and metropolitan areas through joint promotions, connectivity, cross-regional and cross-provincial collaboration, product, transportation, and inclusive tourism circuit development. There are many emerging and potential destinations and tourism sites across the country, providing many different experiences. Efforts must be made, however, to connect them more effectively, not only in terms of roads and transportation but more importantly, in a proper narrative of a place. Collaboration between different local government units to develop coherent tourism plans and products across tourism development areas and tourism clusters will be essential. Appropriate visitor and interpretation centers, information platforms, and trained guides, docents, and tourism officers, are needed.

OBJECTIVE 4.3. Undertake heritage, culture, arts, and product mapping across all Provinces and Regions. In anchoring our future on the strength and diversity of Philippine culture, it is crucial to undertake the comprehensive mapping and inventory of our tangible and intangible cultural heritage.



This effort will then provide the foundation for developing tourism plans, programs, and products that truly reflect both the national and local identities, anchoring our tourism experiences properly within the Philippine experience.

OBJECTIVE 4.4. Include Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) in tourism product development, campaigns, and promotions, and in the establishment of all Tourist Rest Areas to strengthen the tourism value chain. Localities should make strategic assessments and commitments for the development of their communities. In many cases, the benefits of tourism can be secured for their residents by focusing on the necessary facilities, products, services, and resources that support neighboring destinations. These strategies can, among others, involve MSMEs in crops and food production, cottage industries for arts and crafts, providing employment, commercial and public services, and developing more integrated local economies across various communities. Tourist Rest Areas can then provide ways to link these communities and their enterprises to the tourism value chain.

OBJECTIVE 4.5. Developing an effective system of monitoring, support, and assistance for responsible and sustainable tourism. The Department, working closely with local governments, shall develop programs to ensure that tourism destinations and sites are properly monitored, and the necessary measures undertaken and implemented, to conserve and develop the natural, cultural, and human capital of the country for responsible and sustainable tourism development.

GOAL 5. DIVERSIFICATION OF PORTFOLIO THROUGH MULTIDIMENSIONAL TOURISM. In rebuilding Philippine tourism, it is crucial to focus not just on reviving the industry but on improving what and how tourists experience the Philippines. We are fully aware of the beauty of our islands and seas, the richness of our biodiversity and our culture, and the skill and talent of our people. All these, however, must be translated and communicated into outstanding experiences for our guests, and into inclusive development for enterprises, communities, and other stakeholders of the industry. This requires all stakeholders to work together to build these experiences, and to do so in a manner that is aligned with our Strategic Values and Approaches, to ensure that our country's natural, cultural, and human capital is conserved for future generations. Providing outstanding experiences for tourists will be crucial to competing and succeeding in our region and becoming a tourism powerhouse for the world.

OBJECTIVE 5.1. Develop products that deepen the cultural experience of the Philippines and its cultural aggrupations, such as by integrating food and festivals, arts and crafts, traditions, and practices, with farms and heritage sites, developing halal/Muslim-friendly tourism, pilgrimage tourism, and heritage villages for our cultural communities. The country needs to build a stronger cultural experience. While our country is culturally diverse, and our history is rich and complex, we need to provide stronger, more integrated narratives and experiences for cultural tourism. The cultural identity of both the nation and of cultural aggrupations in a particular locality or region should be expressed. Our heritage sites should not be static displays but venues of vibrant interaction and a discovery of a sense of place and identity. Stories of places should blend festivals and food, clothing and crafts, arts and traditions, beliefs and faiths. Farm tourism experiences should capture and communicate the stories of communities and their connection to the land through their crops. Programs need to be developed to make the Philippines more culturally sensitive – by adopting halal standards to meet the needs of Muslim travelers, developing tourism with local and indigenous communities on their terms, and developing religious pilgrimages in a manner that respects traditions of faith and culture.

OBJECTIVE 5.2. Improve products that make the country a leading destination for sustainable ridge-to-reef experiences in the Asia-Pacific region such as sun/sand/sea tourism, marine and diving tourism, forests and protected areas tourism, and nature-based adventure tourism. The Philippines has achieved global recognition for its islands and beaches, for diving and marine sports, and is increasingly recognized as a destination for nature tourism. We must leverage our strengths in these experiences, building on our 7,641 islands, and our position in the Coral Triangle as a global “center of the center” of marine biodiversity, and a Biodiversity Hotspot. This requires a deliberate effort to integrate tourism in a sustainable way into sensitive environments, providing the proper framework for conservation and development, and appropriate facilities to improve experiences for more tourists while managing their impact while generating the resources to conserve the natural environment.

OBJECTIVE 5.3. Increase investments in and the development of high-value tourism experiences such as MICE and special events tourism, health, wellness, and medical tourism, lifestyle, shopping, and entertainment tourism, domestic and international cruise tourism. Even as the Philippines strives to build its natural and cultural tourism products, the country must make a dedicated effort to invest in high-value tourism products. This requires proper planning and coordination with other agencies and stakeholders, the investment in facilities and infrastructure, overcoming institutional bottlenecks, and building the interagency teams to pursue these strategies, in view of the pandemic recovery, national strengths and capacities, and shifts in tourist preferences. Health and Wellness, Medical and Retirement, MICE and Special Events, Cruise Tourism, Golf Tourism, Lifestyle, and Entertainment will be key products, and these should not be pursued in isolation – rather, they must be experienced in a way that properly integrates them into circuits that support host communities and other tourism products.

OBJECTIVE 5.4. Develop and promote experiences that are long-staying, generate higher value, and result in deeper connections, including retirement, education, digital nomads, voluntourists, and gap year travelers. For long-staying tourists, including those for Retirement, Education, Gap Year, Voluntourists, and Digital Nomads, it is essential not only to promote the Philippines as a destination, but also to develop comprehensive programs that truly address their needs, and continuously assist them in experiencing the country. This requires continuing administrative support, and specialized promotions and programs that connect them to other tourism destinations and experiences.

OBJECTIVE 5.5. Sharing our culture through film tourism, as well as through other forms of popular arts and culture, and seeking and obtaining international recognition for the best of the Philippines. Strengthening how our identity is recognized, shared, and experienced locally and globally will be crucial in properly defining the Philippines as a global destination. This will also require a comprehensive and long-term program to promote awareness of the country and Filipino culture throughout the world through various forms of media and communications, especially through the use of film. This will also require a conscious and dedicated effort to secure the recognition of our tourism sites and communities, our natural, cultural, and intangible heritage.

OBJECTIVE 5.6. Expand the number of Tourism Enterprise Zones across the Regions, and establish tourism villages focused on community tourism, ecological preservation, sustainability, and cultural identity. The country must expand its capacity and work toward sustainability and resiliency by developing new products and new destinations, through the development of Tourism Enterprise Zones, to attract tourism investments and improve the business environment in the country to achieve



the vision of a globally competitive, sustainable, and resilient tourism industry that reflects the Filipino identity.

GOAL 6. MAXIMIZATION OF DOMESTIC AND INTERNATIONAL TOURISM. With the massive size of domestic tourism and short-term uncertainties facing international travel, the domestic market must be prioritized to reenergize the industry for recovery. However, international tourism for the medium to the long term continues to offer significant potential for growth while generating much-needed export revenue. As a matter of policy, a crucial balance will be required: domestic tourism must be recognized as the bedrock of the industry and must be supported and developed accordingly, while international tourism must be nurtured and diversified for long-term growth and resilience. Programs must be adopted that support both.

OBJECTIVE 6.1. Increase promotions for new and existing domestic tourism opportunities within regions and between connected regions. The Cluster Approach should be pursued to encourage the implementation of specific projects and activities that include the development of tourism circuits and the improvement of existing ones - preferably through inter-provincial and municipal collaboration. Major transport networks, particularly roads and public transport routes and terminals, as well as entry and exit points, strong narratives, and a mix of major and minor attractions, are characteristics of a well-defined circuit that encourages intra- and inter-regional travel. Well-designed clusters and circuits should be prioritized for promotions.

OBJECTIVE 6.2. Growth of existing international markets through the development of niche markets. As the populations of our existing markets age and contract, our programs should diversify towards niche markets, catering to smaller groups, yet providing high-value, more tailored experiences.

OBJECTIVE 6.3. Development of new international markets for long-term diversification and resilience. The pandemic has revealed our over-reliance on a handful of international markets. Diversification toward other countries – necessitating or implementing appropriate air travel and visa policies, as well as investments in new offices, promotions, and marketing – will be necessary for greater resilience and future growth.

OBJECTIVE 6.4. Maximize the role of regional and foreign offices in research, promotions, and market development. Foreign offices will play an important role in growing and diversifying our international markets. More offices will need to be established, and they will all need to have more resources to conduct the research, promotions, and market development activities needed. Regional offices, on the other hand, will play an equally important role in promoting domestic tourism, carrying out the necessary research, and implementing the necessary programs to understand and nurture the industry and its stakeholders and support its long-term growth in a responsible and sustainable manner.

OBJECTIVE 6.5. Increase connectivity by air through the pursuit of route development for international and domestic destinations, push for decongestion of primary gateway airports and expansion to secondary gateway airports, and coordination with relevant government agencies for liberalization of entry and immigration policies. Direct connections between source markets and destinations, and reducing and eliminating requirements for entering and traveling within the country, are crucial in lowering the barriers that hinder potential travelers from experiencing the country. Lobbying for and establishing more international and domestic routes will be essential in catalyzing the

tourism industry, especially in emerging and potential destinations. Facilitating these connections for tourists to get to their destinations more easily will be crucial in building convenience and equality and for positive tourism experiences throughout the country.

OBJECTIVE 6.6. Increase connectivity by sea through the pursuit of a marine tourism highway, focused on improving and adding seaports, developing international and domestic cruises, and coordination with relevant government agencies for liberalization of entry and immigration policies. While the Philippines is an archipelagic nation, with the tremendous cultural and natural diversity of its 7,641 islands, sea travel has been neglected as a way of experiencing the country. By upgrading our seaports and ensuring seamless port entry procedures, international and domestic cruise tourism will flourish and can reach and support communities that were deemed too difficult to connect by air. Improving maritime connections will inevitably lead to wider, more integrated circuits, linking different regions of the country, and allowing travelers to experience more of the country with ease.

GOAL 7. STRENGTHENING TOURISM GOVERNANCE THROUGH CLOSE COLLABORATIONS WITH NATIONAL AND LOCAL STAKEHOLDERS. With an industry that spreads widely across and deeply into national and local economies, harnessing tourism for national development demands the convergence of priorities, policies, and programs across different agencies of the national government and into every local government unit. This will also require enhancing the ability of the Department to properly regulate and support the industry even amid greater devolution to local governments. This requires changes not only in institutional structures, powers, functions, and resources, but also in the crucial gathering and use of data for the proper management of tourism at national, cluster, and local levels of governance. All these will be necessary if the industry is to move toward and implement the Strategic Values and Approaches.

OBJECTIVE 7.1. Advocating for the prioritization of tourism on the national agenda and the support of national agencies for industry competitiveness. The massive economic impact of the tourism industry is driven by the fact that it involves a broad swath of economic activities. Tourism goes beyond bookings for airlines and hotels, or of tours and tourist sites. It involves restaurants and food producers, public and private transportation providers, souvenir stalls and handicraft makers, cultural workers and professionals, vendors on the street and those in malls, telecommunications, and other utility service providers, to name just a few. The money spent by a tourist supports all these other business activities, and yet, the power and resources available to the Department to properly drive the growth of the industry is limited. The national government must build the consensus that the tourism industry is critical to our growth and recovery and provide the Department with the resources and mechanisms to attain these goals. In building that consensus, and orienting it toward the Strategic Values and Approaches, stronger systems for gathering, sharing, and analyzing data, and for working across agencies are needed for more effective implementation and monitoring of programs.

OBJECTIVE 7.2. Sustaining cross-sectoral projects by institutionalizing and operationalizing mechanisms for convergence. Considering the significant co-benefits of convergent programs, the Tourism Coordinating Council will need to institutionalize working groups and programs between different agencies, to ensure their effective and efficient coordination and implementation. Functions between tourism agencies need to be streamlined, rationalized, and refined, their powers enhanced, and resources generated, especially if the Department is to play a stronger role in policymaking and regulation. To that end, strengthening the tools, systems, and infrastructure for data-driven decision-



making toward national goals of sustainability, resilience, and competitiveness will be of critical importance.

OBJECTIVE 7.3. Increase in investments brought about by optimized tools for tourism investment through planning, PPPs, and incentives. Improving tourism infrastructure to elevate the tourism experience requires increased investment. PPPs have the potential to increase financing opportunities for the tourism and local business sectors, especially in adapting environment-friendly technology in construction and operations as well as improving the delivery of service. TIEZA's role in the development of TEZs and tourism infrastructure will need to be redefined under CREATE, and incentives for sustainability projects for tourism areas will need to be provided.

OBJECTIVE 7.4. Increase engagements and pursue partnerships with regional and global tourism development partners such as member-nations of the ASEAN, APEC, BIMF, and other global tourism institutions to increase Philippine tourism competitiveness and collaboration. Pursuing partnerships with our global NTO counterparts provides opportunities for the country in terms of cross-marketing and knowledge sharing. As the ASEAN region leads globally in terms of tourism industry growth, best practices in enhancing tourism products and services, marketing and promotions, and enacting sustainable tourism practices can be adopted.

OBJECTIVE 7.5 Empower local government units and institutions for tourism development through close collaboration with the National Government and regional offices and by building within communities a culture that values the role of tourism in development. Tourism, at its most fundamental, is about experiencing a place. Local governments thus play a very essential role in creating a positive experience for visitors. Even while they have increased resources to implement their programs pursuant to the *Mandanas* ruling,⁹ there nevertheless are gaps in institutional capacities, skills, and knowledge to implement and orient programs toward Strategic Values and Approaches. Local tourism offices need to become permanent and professional positions. Both the Department and local governments, through their local tourism offices, will need to work together more effectively and the Department must be empowered to properly compel compliance with national laws, policies, and plans, to ensure movement toward and attainment of those goals. More fundamentally, tourism communities should develop a mindset that values, prioritizes, and nurtures the tourism industry, respects the traveler and the industry's stakeholders, and protects the community's environmental and cultural assets.

OBJECTIVE 7.6. A stronger and inclusive Tourism Congress through expanding the accreditation system and industry stakeholdership. The Tourism Congress of the Philippines (TCP) was conceived to gather together accredited private sector stakeholders in a way that allowed them to see and address the industry's needs and concerns more concretely and broadly, beyond the perspectives of their particular enterprise sectors. Different administrations have vacillated in approaching and working with TCP. However, the TCP alone has a mandate provided by law to represent the private sector and work together with the government in the formulation and implementation of tourism policies, plans, and programs. DOT and TCP should work together in expanding TCP's membership, and in developing new modes for collaboration amid greater decentralization.

⁹ *Mandanas v. Executive Secretary* (GR No. 199802m July 3, 2018). See also Executive Order No. 138 (2021).

OBJECTIVE 7.7. Provide continuous and substantial resources for mainstreaming national and local identity, sustainability, resilience, and competitiveness. Many tourism areas and communities are at risk from the effects of climate change and struggle with the loss of biodiversity and the severity of pollution. The succession of natural and human-made disasters, and the pandemic, have driven home the need for greater resiliency in the tourism industry, and in the Philippine economy as a whole. Government initiatives during the pandemic to support the industry and its stakeholders – financial assistance, prioritization in vaccination, and online training programs, among many others – can be refined and developed further to serve as a template for recovery in future disaster situations. Tourism development must henceforth work toward sustainability and resiliency, especially in remote rural communities for which tourism is the main, if not the sole, driver of the local economy, and provider of local livelihoods. Many tourism stakeholders lack the basic knowledge, skills, and resources to nurture their ventures and localities, much less to do so in a sustainable, resilient, and competitive manner that reflects local identity and traditions. It is imperative that investments be made in these dimensions, and the Department must work closely with other agencies toward these goals.

OBJECTIVE 7.8. Protect and support tourism stakeholders during crises. The Department must have the mandate to effectively protect and support tourism stakeholders in various emergencies and crises. This should include necessary services for tourism enterprises and frontliners, tourism communities, and tourists themselves.

OBJECTIVE 7.9. The review and amendment of the Tourism Act of 2009 (RA 9593), particularly to enhance resources to implement Strategic Values, expand coverage for funding for infrastructure and contingencies, and provide new incentives for tourism investment. The existing system can be improved both through executive action and by amending the Tourism Act. The existing framework for national and local tourism planning will need to be strengthened, particularly in the context of fleshing out the clusters and tourism development areas at the local level and requiring greater inter-LGU coordination, as set forth at the national level. In effectively connecting the country new programs for infrastructure development will be needed, and to move the industry towards greater sustainability, resilience, and competitiveness, reforms to travel taxes and for generating new sources of funding will be crucial. The mandates and functions of the DOT and its attached agencies will need to be redefined to better orient and provide resources for policies and programs to implement this Plan.



THE NATIONAL TOURISM DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2023-2028

PART II: IMPLEMENTATION FRAMEWORK AND PROGRAMS



IMPLEMENTATION FRAMEWORK

This strategic vision for the tourism industry can only be implemented by correlating, innovating, and operationalizing it within the institutional and spatial arrangements of and between government and other stakeholders, at both the national and local levels. This implementation framework involves two key elements: convergence and clusters. Convergence emanates from the reality that the breadth and depth of the tourism industry require strong inter-agency and inter-stakeholder approaches. Clustering, on the other hand, proceeds from the need to rationally organize and develop tourism sites and facilities as networks within their specific local contexts. Developing effective clusters requires utilizing a framework that examines the assets of attractions, activities, accommodations, accessibility, and amenities within a human context of area, authenticity, awareness, administration, and advantages for the community.

OVERVIEW

A vision of a tourism industry anchored on sustainability, resilience, and competitiveness will require the country to develop destinations and experiences in a way that emphasizes our identity as a people and a country. This will require adjusting institutional arrangements, leveraging new technologies, and connecting physical infrastructure to the mobility needs and circumstances of visitors and residents alike. All these must be achieved amidst the realities of the pandemic, climate change, environmental degradation, and the frequency of disasters, the increasingly competitive environment for tourism in the Southeast Asian region, the need of our people for genuine sustainable, equitable, and inclusive development.

The Tourism Development Framework adopted by this Plan is anchored in the Philippine Development Plan's drive for a stable, comfortable, and secure life for all. Tourism's role in economic development, environmental and cultural conservation, and building pride of place will be crucial in attaining those goals, particularly in a manner that is sustainable, resilient, and competitive. Tourism development must be anchored in an intimate understanding of the various destinations throughout the country.

CONVERGENCE

Convergence emanates from the reality that the breadth and depth of the tourism industry require strong inter-agency and inter-stakeholder approaches. It is anchored on creating strong and stable partnerships among and between public and private stakeholders to successfully implement both strategic and tactical programs essential to achieving a competitive, resilient, and sustainable tourism industry. Shared responsibilities, particularly between national agencies and local government units, will be necessary for product development and tourism planning, marketing and promotions, accreditation and regulation, training and standards, and enhancing much-needed infrastructure and public services.

As mandated in the Tourism Act of 2009, the convergence approach was formalized with the creation of a Tourism Coordinating Council (TCC), a 25-member body of government and private sector agencies that was tasked to oversee the coordinative effort and the allocation of resources in implementing the National Tourism Development Plan's key programs. Moving forward, however, the TCC will require permanent and effective working groups to jointly develop and implement programs across different agencies and stakeholders.

Some of the recommended convergent working groups, including relevant LGUs, private, academic, and civil society sector stakeholders, would be:

- With the **DENR and TIEZA** for environment-oriented programs, including the development of nature-based tourism products, the planning, and development of infrastructure and facilities for protected areas, the effective monitoring and enforcement of carrying capacity and other environmental management programs, coordination for the UNESCO World Heritage sites, among others.
- With **IA, NPDC, NPF, NCCA, NM, NHCP, as well as the NCIP, FDCP, NCMF, and other cultural agencies** for the enrichment of current culture-oriented tourism products, combining the significance of heritage sites with food, festivals, and other local traditions, and for deeper coordination and collaboration for the frameworks for and implementation of strategic tourism products, including Halal, IP communities, UNESCO world heritage sites, highlighting both national identity and that of cultural aggragation within the country.
- With the **TIEZA, DPWH and DOTr and their attached agencies** for transportation infrastructure programs, including reformulated TRIPs and LIPAD programs, as well as inputs on the design of standardized, context-specific tourism public facilities, and on tourism products designed around modes of transportation, such as cruise tourism.
- With **DILG and the Leagues of Local Governments** for local development programs, particularly in developing enforcement mechanisms for LGU and tourism enterprises, institutionalizing the role of the local tourism office, outlining tourism development priorities for LGUs, and developing a culture of tourism for local communities.
- With **DA, DAR, DTI, and NCCA** for developing standards to uplift the quality of food, products, and services offered to tourists, especially farm/agro-tourism programs, especially in developing linkages between local products, local production and resilience, and with community culture and identity.
- With **DOH** for health-oriented programs, not only for the parallel development of medical tourism and wellness tourism but also to ensure local public health services more effectively support the needs of tourism host communities and their visitors, including quarantine and vaccination facilities.
- With the **PNP and DND** for effective safety and security programs in tourism areas and at key infrastructure and facilities.
- With **DFA, BI, DOTr, BOC, and BOQ** for travel facilitation programs, ease of entry, and seamless entry as well as digitalization of entry requirements.
- With **DICT** for improvement of connectivity and implementation of digitalization programs.

TOURISM DEVELOPMENT CLUSTERS

This Plan continues the implementation of the “Tourism Cluster” approach as a destination development strategy. Tourism clusters link infrastructure projects, tourism entertainment and service centers, accommodation facilities, recreational and leisure areas as well as nature parks and heritage sites through a logical grouping of transportation networks that is centered on at least a primary gateway. (Figure 2)

The Cluster Approach has been adopted to define a logical and spatial framework for the development of tourism based on air, sea, and road gateways with major consideration for international airports considering that travel markets in the current and the



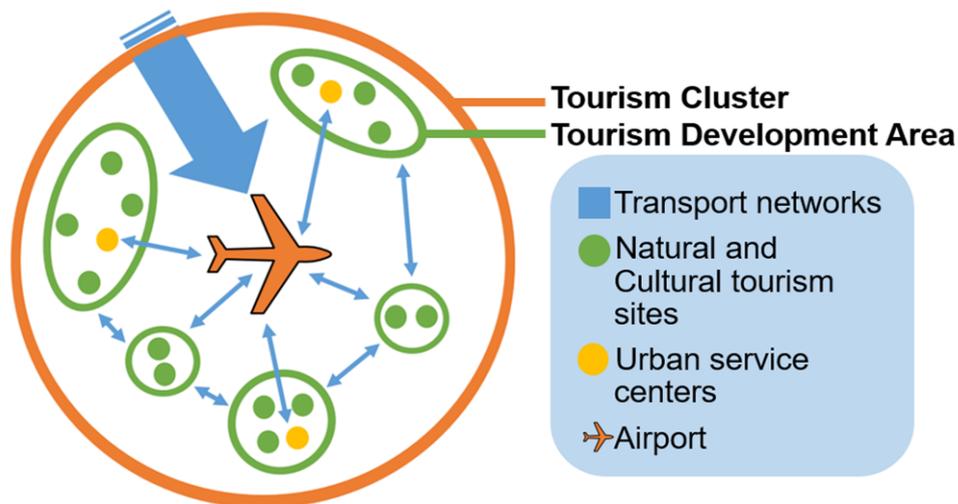


Figure 2. The Tourism Cluster Concept

Source: DOT/ National Tourism Development Plan (NTDP 2016-2022)

foreseeable future will demand direct access to their end destinations, particularly in foreign country markets. This translates to longer holiday periods with less travel time spent for both domestic and foreign visitors.

The archipelago has been divided into 20 clusters (Figure 3) bearing in mind the current international gateways that exist and the access it provides to travelers to an area:

- 7 in Luzon or Northern Philippines (NP);
- 6 in the Visayas or Central Philippines (CP); and,
- 7 in Mindanao or Southern Philippines (SP).

Clusters have been conceived with the critical role of gateways in mind not only in terms of improving access and connectivity to travelers but also in the overall context of developing tourism areas. As such, the 20 clusters have been categorized into 2 types:

- International gateway cluster destinations (GCDs) which are served by an international airport/s utilized by air carriers who offer international routes; and,

- Domestic cluster destinations (DCDs) are serviced by domestic airports utilized by air carriers who offer domestic routes.

THE TOURISM DEVELOPMENT AREAS

The 20 tourism clusters have further been subdivided into 49 Tourism Development Areas (TDAs) to provide clearer geographical focus within and between clusters as well as the spatial relationships amongst tourist destinations, facilities, and service centers as linked through transport networks and gateways to serve visiting travelers. As such, within a cluster, several TDAs exist encompassing provinces, and urban settlements to include protected parks, sanctuaries, landscapes, and seascapes that could traverse political boundaries and serve as a physical frame of reference in the formulation of tourism circuits.

TDAs have the following key attributes:

- Good air, sea, and road interconnected systems resulting in ease of traveling to and within areas of interest and easy access to service centers;
- Presence of key infrastructure to support power, water, sewage/ solid waste disposal, and

telecommunication requirements of the community and expected visitors;

- Sufficient supply of a range of accommodation facilities;
- Restaurants, shopping, recreational and entertainment facilities;
- Interesting tour/sightseeing programs and activities to natural and cultural sites; and
- Existence of medical and security support services.

The logical grouping of these elements brings forth the need to synchronize the implementation of tourism development programs at the national, regional, and local levels to maximize the returns in improving transport systems, basic infrastructure, and other support facilities that can benefit larger areas and more communities. It also encourages cooperation

among provinces in showcasing a common identity that is experienced through a diversity of natural and cultural attractions.

Tourism Development Areas as defined should also incorporate market data describing tourist volume, visitor demographic profile, inventories of accommodation facilities, leisure and entertainment facilities as well as institutions and organizations involved in the area's local tourism programs and activities.

Within the 20 tourism clusters shown in Figure 3 below, there are 49 tourism development areas; 15 TDAs in the Northern Philippines, 15 in the Central Philippines, and 19 in the Southern Philippines, as presented in Table 22.



National Tourism Development Plan 2023 - 2028
Tourism Development Cluster

LEGEND:

-  Airports
-  SeaPorts

Tourism Development Clusters

-  NP1 - Batanes
-  NP2 - Ilocos Region
-  NP3 - Cagayan
-  NP4 - CAR
-  NP5 - Central Luzon
-  NP6 - Metro Manila and Environs
-  NP7 - Laguna, Batangas, and Quezon
-  CP1 - Bicol
-  CP2 - MIMARO
-  CP3 - Palawan
-  CP4 - Panay and Guimaras Islands
-  CP5 - Central Visayas and Negros Island
-  CP6 - Eastern Visayas
-  SP1 - Surigao and Dinagat Islands
-  SP2 - Agusan River Basin
-  SP3 - Cagayan de Oro Coast and Hinterland
-  SP4 - Zamboanga Peninsula
-  SP5 - Davao Gulf and Coast
-  SP6 - Cotabato and Sarangani
-  SP7 - BARM

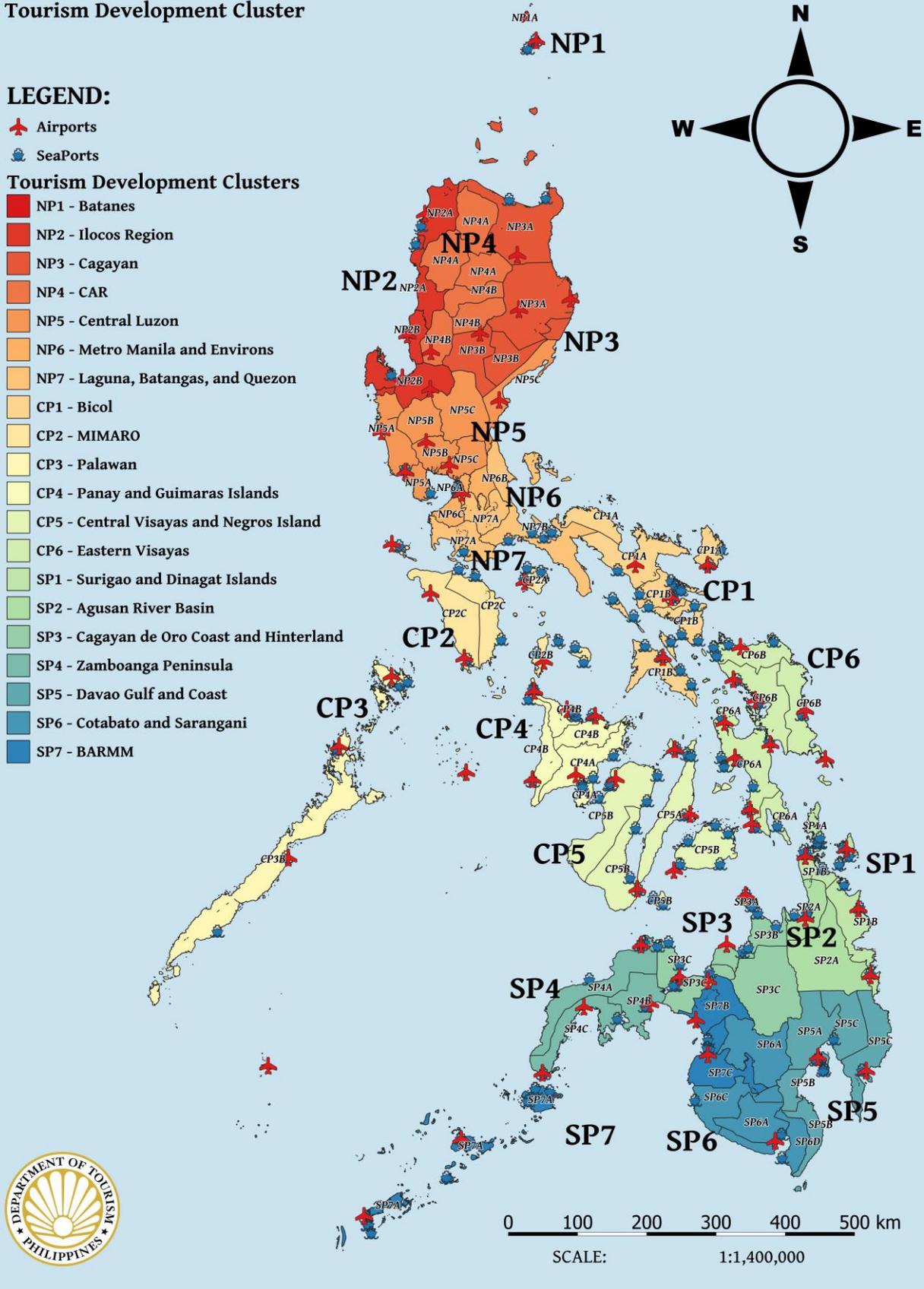
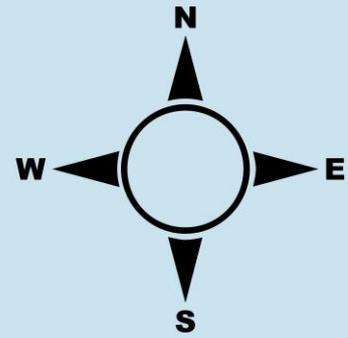


Figure 3. The Tourism Clusters of the Philippines

Table 22. Tourism Development Clusters and Areas, and Local Government Units

Cluster Number*	Cluster Name	TDA Number	LGUs of TDA**	Cluster Number	Cluster Name	TDA Number	LGUs of TDA
NP1	Batanes	NP1A	Batanes			CP5A	Cebu Metro Cebu
NP2	Ilocos Region	NP2A	Ilocos Norte Ilocos Sur	CP5	Central Visayas and Negros Island	CP5B	Negros Oriental Siquijor Negros Occidental Bacolod City
		NP2B	La Union Pangasinan			CP5C	Bohol
NP3	Cagayan	NP3A	Cagayan Isabela	CP6	Eastern Visayas	CP6A	Leyte Tacloban City Southern Leyte Biliran
		NP3B	Quirino Nueva Vizcaya			CP6B	Samar Northern Samar Eastern Samar
NP4	CAR	NP4A	Apayao Kalinga Abra	SP1	Surigao and Dinagat Islands	SP1A	Dinagat Islands Siargao Island
		NP4B	Benguet Baguio City Ifugao Mountain Province			SP1B	Surigao Del Norte Surigao Del Sur
NP5	Central Luzon	NP5A	Zambales Olongapo City Bataan	SP2	Agusan River Basin	SP2A	Agusan del Norte Butuan City Agusan del Sur
		NP5B	Clark Subic Tarlac Pampanga Angeles City			SP3A	Camiguin
NP6	Metro Manila and Environs	NP6A	Metro Manila	SP3	Cagayan de Oro Coast and Hinterland	SP3B	Cagayan de Oro City Misamis Oriental
		NP6B	Rizal			SP3C	Misamis Occidental Iligan City Lanao del Norte
NP7	Laguna, Batangas and Quezon	NP6C	Cavite	SP4	Zamboanga Peninsula	SP3D	Bukidnon
		NP7A	Laguna Batangas			SP4A	Zamboanga Del Norte
CP1	Bicol	NP7B	Quezon Lucena City	SP5	Davao Gulf and Coast	SP4B	Zamboanga Del Sur
		CP1A	Camarines Norte Camarines Sur Catanduanes			SP4C	Zamboanga Sibugay Zamboanga City Isabela de Basilan
CP2	MIMARO	CP1B	Albay Masbate Sorsogon	SP6	Cotabato, Sultan Kudarat, and Sarangani	SP5A	Davao Del Norte Davao City Samal Island
		CP2A	Marinduque			SP5B	Davao Del Sur Davao Occidental
CP3	Palawan	CP2B	Romblon	SP7	BARMM	SP5C	Davao de Oro Davao Oriental
		CP2C	Oriental Mindoro Occidental Mindoro			SP6A	Cotabato
CP4	Panay and Guimaras Islands	CP3A	Calamianes Group of Islands	SP6	Cotabato, Sultan Kudarat, and Sarangani	SP6B	South Cotabato General Santos City
		CP3B	North Mainland			SP6C	Sultan Kudarat
CP4	Panay and Guimaras Islands	CP3C	Puerto Princesa City South Mainland	SP7	BARMM	SP6D	Sarangani
		CP4A	Iloilo Iloilo City Guimaras			SP7A	Basilan Tawi-Tawi Sulu
		CP4B	Antique Aklan Capiz			SP7B	Lanao Del Sur
						SP7C	Cotabato City Maguindanao del Norte Maguindanao del Sur

* NP – Northern Philippines, CP – Central Philippines, and SP – Southern Philippines

** Listed are Provinces, Highly Urbanized Cities (HUC), Metropolis, or Island/LGU Groups. Also Includes the two (2) freeport and special economic zones – Clark and Subic.



TOURISM CIRCUITS

A tourism circuit is defined as a route on which there are at least three major tourism attractions, such that none of these are in the same town or city, and these sites are not separated by long distances. Travelers get to be motivated to visit some of the attractions featured on the route. The circuit should feature at least a tourist service center where accommodations, amenities, and other activities can be availed of, and a transportation network (usually roads) exists to access the various tourist sites, facilities, and services.

The dominant physical aspect in implementing a tourism cluster strategy is the establishment of a tourism circuit involving visits to sites that should not be separated by long distances. Travelers are mostly likely to visit places if they have a spatial reference covering a certain area or destination (such as a region, province, or city), its attractions related to a significant event, subject matter, or theme, and comparative travel distances between these places as well as a specific set of leisure activities that can be enjoyed.

Aside from attractions, sites, and recreational areas, circuits also identify major tourism service centers, defined as built-up areas near or within a major attraction exhibiting a concentration of tourism establishments that cater to the needs of travelers amongst which are accommodation facilities, transport hubs, and other activity areas such as dining and recreational businesses, and amenities which may include even institutional facilities such as medical and security services. Major transport networks, particularly roads and public transport routes and terminals, as well as entry and exit points, are included in well-defined circuits.

The identification and development of a circuit shall progress through the integration of common themed sites and attractions that cater to specific markets or holiday groups that are usually designed by tour operators as packaged tours given a set time and a price while individual travelers can also use the circuit to design their Do It Yourself (DIY) holiday travel

dependent on their desires and preferences and a budget.

THE 10A FRAMEWORK

To enhance the Tourism Cluster Concept, TwoEco's 10A Framework provides a structure for evaluating the completeness of tourism clusters and circuits, and the readiness of a destination. This ensures that different dimensions are included in the analysis while allowing planning recommendations to then be oriented to the identified planning goals.

The 10A Approach expands from the 5A's of Tourism (Dickman, 1996), which are Attractions, Accommodations, Accessibility, Activities, and Amenities. The success of Dickman's 5As lies in the ease with which these different components can be understood and communicated by focusing on the alliterative A's:

1. **“Attractions”** refers to tourism assets that attract tourists from a wide geographical area, often at national or international scales. Tourist attractions are often places of culture, heritage, nature, or particular experiences that draw people to visit a destination.
2. **“Accessibility”** refers to the transportation infrastructure and services available to support tourists traveling to and within a destination. Factors that affect accessibility include the location and condition of key gateways, the condition and connectivity of transportation networks, and the ease of travel to and from a destination.
3. **“Accommodations”** refers to places where a tourist can stay for one or more nights while visiting the destination. It is a crucial component of tourism in light of the UNWTO definition of a tourist as a person who stays at least one night outside their normal environment.
4. **“Activities”** refers to the entertainment facilities and services that complement the Attractions. In a beach attraction, activities might consist of

hanging out at the beach, swimming, and engaging in water sports. That same beach attraction might also be supported by areas for shopping, restaurants, and cafes for eating, among others.

5. **“Amenities”** refers to the variety of facilities and services available in the destination to help improve the overall visitor experience such as visitor centers and public comfort rooms, or even the locality’s facilities and services on which tourists may also rely, including telecommunications and internet services, health centers, police and security services, for example.

The first 5A’s largely focus on the business side of tourism, particularly its physical assets, focusing on sites and facilities. It overlooks, however, the human and contextual dimensions of tourism, which are of critical importance in orienting a destination or the industry toward broader developmental goals, such as those for sustainable development. The additional A’s that we have developed and will employ in our analytical framework are Area, Authenticity, Administration, Advantages, and Affinity:

6. **“Area”** refers to the spatial context in which the first 5A’s are located. Tourism assets can be clustered in terms of spatial and thematic connection, particularly in the formulation and development of tourism circuits or networks.
7. **“Authenticity”** refers to an understanding of the place that builds on the locality’s identity, and its

sense of place, especially to its natural and cultural assets. It respects and conserves natural and cultural sites and practices, and, while it recognizes the need to accept change and modernity, it does so in a manner of balance and respect, managing impacts when possible.

8. **“Affinity”** involves the promotion and marketing of a destination, connecting markets with the destination and its products, and building on the authentic representation of the place and its people, to ensure increasing knowledge and understanding of the site or destination for possible tourist markets. It also involves communicating to tourists the meaning of the place, which may involve signs, apps, and tourist guide training, among others.
9. **“Administration”** involves all the measures adopted by stakeholders to manage the destination effectively. It includes plans and policies, programs and regulations, zoning, and having an administrative framework and stakeholder consultations, among others.
10. Lastly, **“Advantages”** refers to the benefits that tourism should bring to the community, such as investment and jobs, improved infrastructure and better management of environmental impacts, a revitalized local culture, and a sense of identity.

By utilizing the 10A Framework, tourism clusters and tourism development areas can develop stronger and more distinct experiences, while creating more concrete opportunities to ensure their sustainability.



Five Programs have been developed to implement the Strategy, namely: (1) Institutional Development, (2) Product Development; (3) Market Development and Promotions, (4) Capacity Building, and (5) Infrastructure and Seamless Travel. The detailed design, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of these Programs should be oriented, whenever possible, to implementing the Strategic Values and Approaches and to specific, quantifiable indicators under the Philippine Development Plan 2023-2028, WEF Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Index, WEF Travel and Tourism Development Index, and the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

OVERVIEW

The National Strategy operationalized through the Implementational Framework, would be embodied in five programs, summarized in Tables 22 to 28 below:

1. Institutional Development
2. Product Development
3. Market Development and Promotions
4. Capacity Building
5. Infrastructure and Seamless Travel

These five programs are without prejudice to existing programs currently being implemented by the Department and its attached agencies. The latter may be continued on their own or merged with the former.

Objectives and Outcomes. Each of the five programs, as well as their respective projects and activities (PPAs), are designed to implement one or more Strategic Goals and Objectives. The PPAs are also oriented toward specific indicators under the UN Sustainable Development Goals and/or the WEF Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Index. In the detailed design, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of their PPAs, teams should:

1. Orient their PPAs and performance targets toward the Strategic Objectives stated in their descriptions in the Tables below.

2. Examine and consider whether their PPAs may advance most, if not all, of the other Strategic Objectives. While PPAs may generally correspond to a specific Strategic Goal or Strategic Objective, teams should see opportunities to implement holistically and develop cross-office and cross-agency teams, if needed.
3. Understand the role of the UN SDGs and WEF TPCI in the PPA, to properly integrate the Core Values especially whether the PPA can specifically advance an indicator under the UN SDGs and/or WEF TPCI. Whenever possible, PPAs should indicate that/those indicator/s and define quantifiable yet realistic goals for their PPAs based on these metrics. (For example, the WEF TPCI includes the number of UNESCO World Heritage Sites as an indicator for “Natural and Cultural Resources”. A quantifiable outcome at the program level might be to “increase the number of UNESCO World Heritage Sites by two (2) by 2028.

INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The Institutional Development Program focuses on several key adjustments and reforms in tourism governance, including the rationalization and streamlining of the Department’s and its attached agencies’ functions, mechanisms for inter-agency convergence, providing a framework for local tourism administration, and building and deepening relationships with tourism stakeholders. For instance, institutionalizing the Strategic Values and Approaches can best be achieved through their integration with tourism development plans at local and site levels.

Adjustments and reforms on tourism governance may, to some degree, be addressed through executive action (such as Implementing Rules or Administrative Orders) by the Department individually or with relevant partner agencies jointly. There are also existing frameworks that require implementation and expansion (TouRIST framework), further elaboration, development, and implementation (Ecotourism Framework), as well as

institutionalization, integration, and implementation (Cultural Heritage Mapping).

Executive actions are intended to implement the policies of the Tourism Act of 2009 more fully given past experience and current circumstances or reconcile and/or clarify seemingly conflicting or vague provisions of the Tourism Act itself, or with more recent legislation. For instance, in the context of fleshing out the clusters and tourism development areas at the local level, it requires greater inter-LGU coordination, as set forth at the national level.

Others that go more deeply into the Tourism Act may require amending or new legislation, particularly those that deal with taxation or the legislated mandates and functions of agencies. All these, however, must also take place within a framework of coordination between the national and local, especially to ensure the proper use of tools and monitoring toward Strategic Goals and Objectives. A stronger system of data-gathering, monitoring, and evaluation will be crucial to the implementation of these plans.

PROGRAMS AND PROJECTS	OBJECTIVES	TTCI PILLARS / SDGs	DOT ¹⁰	IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS	SUCCESS INDICATORS	TIMING
PROGRAM 1. INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT		SDG 9, 11, 12, 13, 14, 17				22 24 27 23 26 28
Project 1.1 Institutionalizing mechanisms for convergence	Objectives 7.1, 7.2	Pillar 6 <i>Pillar 1</i>	OSEC-LLU Planning Services	TCP, Tourism Associations	RA 9593 Amended Unit in DOT Established, Funded, and Operational Inter-agency development of appropriate standards, processes, regulations	
1.1.1. Reform the membership and processes of the Tourism Coordinating Council for effective interagency collaboration						
1.1.2. Align the tourism-related programs and budgets of national agencies with the priorities of the NTDP (institutionalize the annual preparation and calendar of the TDP for submission to the DBM)						
1.1.3. Create a coordination unit in DOT to handle the convergence programs and secretariat of the TCC						

¹⁰ Responsible DOT Office & Attached Agencies

PROGRAMS AND PROJECTS	OBJECTIVES	TTCI PILLARS / SDGs	DOT ¹⁰	IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS	SUCCESS INDICATORS	TIMING
<p>Project 1.2 Establishing the mechanisms to advocate for the prioritization of tourism in the national agenda and to facilitate the operationalization of working groups in the Tourism Coordination Council.</p> <p>1.2.1: Strengthen ties and stakeholder with key government agencies, houses of Congress, local leagues, international organizations, key business groups, and non-governmental organizations.</p> <p>1.2.2: Establish and operationalize working groups for convergence programs.</p>	Objectives 7.1, 7.2, 7.5	Pillar 6 <i>Pillar 1</i>	OSEC-LLU, TDP, OSC	TCP, Tourism Associations	Tourism Funding Increased	
<p>Project 1.3. Improving and Institutionalizing Systems for Data Gathering, Reporting, Monitoring, and Evaluation to more effectively support data-driven decision-making for policy and management, particularly in the accomplishment of NTDP goals, including the development of the necessary integrated data infrastructure.</p> <p>1.3.1 Strengthen and systematize infrastructure for gathering and sharing information including sex-disaggregated data across stakeholders</p>	Objectives 2.1, 2.2 7.1, 7.4	Pillar 6 <i>Pillar 5</i>	OSEC-LLU, TDP, TIEZA	LGUs, TCP, Tourism Associations	Tourism Funding Increased	
<p>Project 1.4. Rationalizing and Streamlining Functions. Clarifying the mandates and functions of the DOT and attached agencies to eliminate redundancies, improve efficiencies, and provide the necessary resources to carry them out.</p> <p>1.4.1 Define the mandate and provide the resources for the TPB</p> <p>1.4.2 Redefine the TEZ framework, infrastructure mandates, and investment promotion functions of the TIEZA in light of the devolution transition plan and the implementation of the CREATE Law, then prepare a strategic action plan with investment program for TIEZA based on the results of the review and redefinition of TIEZA's roles</p> <p>1.4.3 Merge Tourism Park Agencies</p>	Objectives 7.8, 7.3	Pillar 6 <i>Pillar 1</i>	TPB, NPDC, NPF, OSEC-LLU, TIEZA	TCP, TOURISM ASSOCIATIONS, DENR, FIRB	RA 9593 Amended Legislation on Park Agencies sponsored and passed into law Rationalized Functions of TIEZA, TPB, and Park Agencies	
<p>Project 1.5. Integrating Regulation and Stakeholdership. By expanding the scope of the accreditation system, more tourism enterprises can both be monitored and supported to meet accreditation standards such as a) Environmental/health/safety management standards; b) Training and compliance with social development goals; c) Reporting on visitor data and compliance with various programs; d) Certification programs on sustainability and resilience</p> <p>1.5.1. Conduct study and action plan for the inclusion of "unclassified" services to embrace the entire industry</p> <p>1.5.2. Pursue the inclusion of the sharing economy platforms and online booking platforms</p> <p>1.5.3. Implement automatic and mandatory membership and dues for the Tourism Congress</p> <p>1.5.4. Update the online accreditation system to reflect the proposed metrics</p>	Objectives 3.1, 2.2, 4.1, 7.5	Pillar 1 <i>Pillar 6</i>	TRCRG	TCP, Tourism Associations, PSA	Accreditation and regulation process revised, adopted, and implemented Sharing Economy Regulatory Framework Completed, Adopted, and Implemented and Included in Measurement of Tourism Performance The online accreditation system upgraded	



PROGRAMS AND PROJECTS	OBJECTIVES	TTCI PILLARS / SDGs	DOT ¹⁰	IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS	SUCCESS INDICATORS	TIMING
<p>Project 1.6. Local Tourism Offices. Institutionalizing the tourism offices of local government units to ensure continuity in capacities, programs, and development.</p> <p>1.6.1 Strengthen the role of local tourism councils as a mechanism for consultation, coordination, and implementation – Develop local convergences for transportation and infrastructure, health and social services, environmental and cultural conservation, public safety and security for the promotion of barrier-free tourism among others</p> <p>1.6.2 Inclusion of local HEIs in the management of tourism destinations</p> <p>1.6.3. Building a culture of tourism in local communities.</p>	Objectives 7.2, 7.4	Pillar 6 <i>Pillar 4</i> <i>Pillar 1</i>	TDP, TRCRG	DILG, CHED, LGUs	Local Convergence Programs Established, Funded, and Operational Increased Participation in HEIs Programs Funded by LGUs	
<p>Project 1.7. Mainstreaming Resources for Sustainability and Resilience. Providing new and aligning existing funding sources to develop and support sustainability and resilience programs for tourism destinations.</p> <p>1.7.1. Communicate the state of the industry, its impact on development, and its role in sustainability, resilience, and competitiveness for people and communities.</p> <p>1.7.2 Implementation/roll-out of technical assistance to LGUs/Destinations</p> <p>1.7.3 Providing incentives for renewable energy and resources, and for upgrading equipment by tourism enterprises (Review the CREATE Law provision on incentives and identify those that will support (1) investments in alternative and sustainable energy and its support infrastructure (especially in tourism enclaves/resorts/islands) and transport like e-vehicle, e-trike, among others serving these sites, and (2) upgrading by tourism enterprises)</p>	Objectives 7.6, 7.4, 7.7	Pillar 9 <i>Pillar 6</i> <i>Pillar 13</i> <i>Pillar 14</i>	TDP, Branding and Communications, TRCRG OSEC-LAS, TRCRG, TIEZA	TCP, Associations TCP, DILG, LGUs, Development Partners FIRB Member Agencies	Tourism Funding Increased Innovative financing schemes introduced and adopted Strategy Paper/ Business Case completed and adopted by FIRB	
<p>Project 1.8. Optimize public and private partnerships as strategies for sustainable management and operation of tourism in tourism enterprise zones, protected areas, and heritage sites.</p> <p>1.8.1 Conduct capacity development on project identification, prioritization, evaluation for potential PPP, and modalities for PPP applicable for operations and management of tourism projects especially local attractions and sites</p> <p>1.8.2 Leverage TIEZA's rules and procedures for Joint Ventures and management contracts for the disposition/privatization of its assets, and future projects under an investment promotions program</p>	Objectives 7.3	Pillar 1 <i>Pillar 6</i>	TDP, TIEZA	NEDA, PPP CENTER	Priority PPP Projects identified, packaged, promoted, and implemented	
<p>Project 1.9 Adopt inclusion of other non-governmental organizations, and academe in consultative processes</p> <p>1.9.1 Identify and update the registry of stakeholders (including other NGOs and academe) and disseminate it on the DOT website</p> <p>1.9.2 Create a platform on the DOT website for a consultative process (e.g. submission of comments on issues)</p>	Objective 7.5	Pillar 6 <i>Pillar 13</i> <i>Pillar 14</i> <i>Pillar 1</i>	TRCRG, TDP	TCP, LGUs, LPP, LCP, LMP	Registry Completed and Disseminated Operational Platform and Highly Utilized for Consultative Process	
<p>Project 1.10 Reform the travel tax and provide national and local funding sources for promotions, resilience, sustainability, and development</p> <p>1.10.1. Conduct a review of the travel tax in aid of legislation and alternative funding source – the Tourism Development Fund, a legislative proposal</p> <p>1.10.2. Pursue advocacy for the reform and implementation of EIC among tourism stakeholders</p> <p>1.10.3. Provide technical support to the DOT, Congress, and other stakeholder groups during public hearings</p>	Objectives 7.8, 7.7, 7.6, 7.1	Pillar 6 <i>Pillar 13</i> <i>Pillar 14</i> <i>Pillar 1</i>	TIEZA, OSEC-LLU	CONGRESS, TCP	RA 9593 Amended	
<p>Project 1.11 Enhance the role of foreign offices and travel attaches toward market research and developing new markets within an integrated and coordinated framework with the central office</p> <p>1.11.1 Create a unit in the DOT central office that coordinates work program preparation and implementation of foreign offices with DOT offices and TPB</p>	Objectives 6.4, 6.3, 7.8	Pillar 7 <i>Pillar 6</i>	TDP, OSEC, TIEZA		Unit in DOT Created, Funded, and Operational Increased access to New Markets	

PROGRAMS AND PROJECTS	OBJECTIVES	TTCI PILLARS / SDGs	DOT ¹⁰	IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS	SUCCESS INDICATORS	TIMING
1.11.2 Review the market research and market development functions of the foreign offices in light of innovations as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic						
Project 1.12 Strengthen evidence-based decision-making, internal governance, and public accountability	Objectives 7.7, 7.4, 7.6, 2.1, 2.2, 2.4	Pillar 6 <i>Pillar 1</i>	TDP		Unit in DOT Created, Funded, and Operational	
1.12.1 Create a monitoring and evaluation unit in the DOT for the NTDP to institutionalize the implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of the goals of the NTDP					Institutionalized System Operational and Utilized by Stakeholders	
1.12.2 Update and institutionalize data (including sex-disaggregated) gathering, monitoring, and reporting of key indicators of tourism impact through the Centralized Tourism Data Center						
1.12.3 Institutionalize the monitoring reporting and evaluation of policies, plans, and projects						
1.12.4 Incorporate the values of sustainability, resilience, and competitiveness into all policies, plans, and programs by mainstreaming the components of the TouRIST program: livelihood, disaster risk management, infrastructure, and standards						
1.12.5 Identify and prioritize the digitalization of documentation, processes, and services of DOT and attached agencies						
Project 1.13. Continuing and Implementing the TouRIST Destination Framework.	Objectives 4.1, 4.2, 7.3, 4.1	Pillar 9 <i>Pillar 13</i> <i>Pillar 14</i> <i>Pillar 1</i> <i>Pillar 6</i>	TDP, OSC, TIEZA	NEDA, PPP CENTER, MULTILATERAL BANKS, GOVERNMENT FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS	Projects Approved by NEDA ICC for Implementation	
1.13.1 Work to secure approval with NEDA-ICC of TouRIST Destination Plans for Coron, El Nido, Bohol, Siargao, Siquijor, and Baguio.					At Least 1 Area Per Tourism Cluster Covered Under the TouRIST Program	
1.13.2 Expand the Coverage of the TouRIST Framework to New Destinations. Establish a process to identify destinations that should be brought under the TouRIST Framework.						
Project 1.14. Enhancing the Ecotourism Framework. Explore and develop tools for development and conservation, providing a framework for enhancing the tourism value of protected areas between DOT, DENR, and TIEZA.	Objectives 5.2, 7.6, 4.3, 2.3	Pillar 9 Pillar 13 <i>Pillar 6</i>	TDP, TRCRG, NPDC, TIEZA	DENR, DOST, DTI, DILG, LGUs	Frameworks completed and implemented	
1.14.1 Enhance the policy framework for and the coverage of more protected areas for nature tourism						
1.14.2 Invest in the provision of appropriate facilities and programs in priority protected areas						
1.14.3 Mainstream sustainability and regeneration in nature tourism experience						
1.14.4 Transformation of Network of National Parks.						
Project 1.15. Developing a Cultural Heritage Tourism Framework. Providing and implementing a framework to properly coordinate the conservation and use of tourism's tangible and intangible heritage, enhancing and communicating significance, between DOT, NCCA, and other cultural agencies.	Objectives 5.1, 7.4	Pillar 14 <i>Pillar 6</i>	TDP, NPF, TRCRG, NPDC	NCIP, NCA, NHCP, NM LGU cultural offices, TCP and tourism associations, DEPED, CHED, TESDA	Frameworks completed and implemented	
1.15.1 Invest in updating and creating new narratives based on the mapping and product assessments					New and improved narratives created and communicated	
1.15.2 Conduct training for tourism stakeholders as regards the use of the narratives in tour scripts, promotional materials, and product development and packaging					Training programs completed with high participation of target stakeholder groups	
1.15.3 Prepare an action plan at a local level to mainstream the initiatives in the educational system, curriculum, and projects to sustain pride of place initiatives in the long term					Local action plans completed and implemented	



PROGRAMS AND PROJECTS	OBJECTIVES	TTCI PILLARS / SDGs	DOT ¹⁰	IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS	SUCCESS INDICATORS	TIMING
<p>Project 1.16. An Enhanced, Harmonized, and Standardized Process for Tourism Planning that identifies components implementing the Strategic Values and Approaches, also with the 10A Framework, as well as mechanisms to enhance collaboration across clustered LGUs.</p> <p>1.16.1. Provide an enhanced framework for national, cluster, and local level coordination of tourism plans. Emphasize the role of the local government in the planning and management of tourism sites.</p> <p>1.16.2 Harnessing the role of PPP in sustainable operations and maintenance of tourism destinations/attractions/sites</p> <p>1.16.3 Provide mechanisms for the Department to monitor, regulate, and compel the compliance of tourism destinations with standards, plans, and programs more effectively.</p> <p>1.16.4 Strengthen the role of the regional offices in supervising and supporting local governments in tourism development within an integrated and coordinated framework with the central office</p>	<p>Objectives 7.4, 7.6, 7.1, 7.2, 4.1, 4.2, 4.3</p>	<p>Pillar 6 <i>Pillar 9</i> <i>Pillar 13</i> <i>Pillar 14</i></p>	<p>TDP, OSC, TIEZA TDP, OSC, TIEZA, IA OSEC-LLU, OSEC-LAS TDP, LGUS</p>	<p>NEDA, MULTILATERAL BANKS, GOVERNMENT FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS NEDA-PPP CENTER TCP, CONGRESS DILG, LGUS</p>	<p>At least 1 PPP model per cluster RA 9593 Amended Rules and Regulations for Compliance Reviewed and Implemented Tourism Plans Across Levels per Region/TDA Completed and Implemented</p>	
<p>Project 1.17 Promote science/evidence/ stakeholder-based decision-making for the management and conservation of natural and cultural assets</p> <p>1.17.1 Strengthen local tourism data collection and management by institutionalizing DOT's Local Tourism Statistics System in the LGU tourism information infrastructure</p> <p>1.17.2 Expend cultural mapping (inventory, validation, continuous research) activities</p> <p>1.17.3 Review and update the local cultural and tourism development plans and programs and institutionalize heritage conservation and management</p> <p>1.17.4 Development and promotion of ecotourism and cultural sites within ecological limits, and sanitary and safety standards</p> <p>1.17.5 Conduct a needs assessment in the areas of resilience of tourism communities and training programs</p> <p>1.17.6 Identify priority projects to build the resilience of tourism communities and secure funding support</p>	<p>Objectives 7.1, 7.2, 7.3, 7.4, 7.5, 7.6, 2.2, 2.4, 4.1, 4.2</p>	<p>Pillar 14 <i>Pillar 13</i> <i>Pillar 6</i> <i>Pillar 9</i></p>	<p>TDP, TRCRG, IA</p>	<p>TCP, DILG, LGUs NCCA, NHCP, NM, and Local Cultural Agencies, NDRRMC, DILG, LGUs, DOST, DICT</p>	<p>Institutionalized system aided by technology implemented and operational Increase in the number of areas with cultural maps; Increased funding and utilization for research in cultural and heritage tourism Resilience and Conservation principles integrated into the plans Priority projects on resilience funded and completed</p>	

PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT

This Product Development Program focuses on three categories of tourism products – our primary tourism products, strategic tourism products, and long-term product strategies – which may be grouped into the following baskets:

- 1) **Primary Tourism Products** – cultural experiences and ridge-to-reef experiences that strongly contribute to the identity of the Philippines as a destination.
 - a. **Cultural Experiences** – focusing on building deeper narratives and understanding of stories of place, people, and community:
 - i. The significance of heritage sites
 - ii. Integrating sites with living culture, including food and festivals, traditional arts and crafts, and others
 - iii. Farm tourism, and its role in sustainability and resilience
 - b. **Ridge to Reef Experiences** – focusing on enhancing experiences through more thoughtful circuit planning and implementing strategies for carrying capacity and environmental management
 - i. Sun, Beaches, Islands (or Sun, Sand, and Sea)
 - ii. Mountains, Forests, and Terrestrial Protected Areas
 - iii. Diving, Water Sports, and Marine Protected Areas
 - iv. Protected Landscapes and Seascapes
- 2) **Strategic Tourism Products** – Products requiring market research and the formulation of product development plans, involving considerable stakeholder consultation, coordination, involvement, and investment, and implementing those plans (with the research, planning, and institutional coordination being carried out within the first three years of this plan, and transitioning to implementation thereafter):
 - a. **Culture-oriented products** – involving consultation and coordination with key government agencies, community or religious leaders
 - a. Halal/Muslim-friendly tourism
- 3) **Long-Term Product Strategies** – requiring institutional and financial investment in strategies that more fully define the Philippines as a tourism destination, more effectively anchoring the idea of the Philippines in the global consciousness through specific, world-class experiences. These brand-building strategies are grouped into three:
 - a. **Macro-Spatial Strategies:** These macro-strategies respond to the project’s TOR for specific spatial recommendations, and are designed to build off of the frameworks, implementation, success, and
 - b. Residents, Indigenous Peoples, and Cultural Communities
 - c. Pilgrimage Tourism
 - d. Art Tourism
 - e. Film Tourism
 - b. **Facilities-oriented products** – involving consultation and coordination with key government agencies and private sector investors
 - a. MICE and Special Events
 - b. Lifestyle and Entertainment
 - c. Domestic and International Cruise Tourism
 - d. Health and Wellness Tourism
 - e. Golf Tourism
 - c. **Long-staying Tourists** – focusing on interventions that promote greater accessibility (such as online information platforms and visas) and promoting more wholistically other tourism products of the Philippines
 - a. Retirement
 - b. Education
 - c. Voluntourism
 - d. Gap Year Travel
 - e. Digital Nomads



refinement of primary and strategic tourism products, looking toward implementation at the tail-end of this Plan and overlapping into the next. At present, most of the prominent tourism destinations of the country are located along the western and lowland coastal areas. The growth and development of these areas as a result of previous NTDPs and this Plan should transition to supporting the growth of other communities, especially in highland areas and along the eastern coastal areas. These macro-spatial strategies should not diminish the importance of current and future plans and development, but rather properly integrate with them. Also, the focus on a specific product in one area does not preclude the development of similar products in other parts of the country. They should be understood as a way to more effectively spread the positive impact of tourism to more communities while reducing the burden of negative environmental and social impacts for the Northern, Central, and Southern Philippines.

- b. **Town Plazas:** As a strategy for more properly defining the identities of towns, generating pride of place, and anchoring the narratives of communities, a strategy of investment in the rehabilitation of town plazas for their historical, environmental, and community values should be undertaken. This includes the investment in the

conservation of heritage sites (including old houses, municipal buildings, church complexes, markets, and others), the redevelopment of public amenities around the plaza (such as cultural centers, libraries, and museums), and the development of sports facilities in a separate area. Revitalized town plazas can be a venue for supporting MSMEs with traditional products, arts, and crafts through weekend markets, attracting visitors with new economic activity, and as an anchor for narrative building for the community.

- c. **International Identity:** The two initiatives include dedicated, sustained, interagency efforts on the following strategies:
 - i. UNESCO Heritage – to systematically prioritize and drive the applications for UNESCO World Heritage Sites, Intangible Heritage, and other key internationally recognized designations
 - ii. Communicating Culture – to systematically promote Philippine culture, sites, and identity abroad, by integrating them into pop culture including film, music, and performances, highlighting our sites, products, food, traditions, and practices, among others.

PROGRAMS AND PROJECTS	PRIMARY, SECONDARY OBJECTIVES	TTCI PILLARS / SDGs	DOT ¹¹	IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS	SUCCESS INDICATORS	TIMING
PROGRAM 2. PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT: ENRICHING EXPERIENCES, AND INVESTING IN STRATEGIC AND LONG-TERM PRODUCTS		SDG 11, 12, 14, 15				
Project 2.1. Enriching Experiences for Core Tourism Products: Ridge to Reef: Sun/Sand/Sea; Marine and Diving; Forests and Protected Areas	Objectives 5.2, 2.3, 4.3, 6.2, 6.4	Pillar 9 <i>Pillar 13</i> <i>Pillar 6</i>	TDP, TRCRG	DENR, DOST, DTI, LGUs	Masterplan completed and implemented	
Project 2.2. Refining and Defining the Philippine Cultural Experience. 2.2.1. Integrating Experiences for Built, Tangible, and Intangible Heritage. 2.2.2. Highlighting the Identity of Cultural Aggregations. 2.2.3. Framing Farm/Agri Tourism as Cultural Experiences for education and resilience.	Objectives 5.1, 2.3, 4.3, 6.2, 6.4	Pillar 14 <i>Pillar 6</i>	TDP, TRCRG, TPB, IA	NCCA, NM, DENR, NHCP, IA, DA, DENR	Frameworks and Master plans Completed and Implemented	
Project 2.3. Developing and Implementing Frameworks for culturally sensitive interactions and cultural exchanges with residents, especially indigenous peoples and cultural communities 2.3.1. Halal/Muslim-friendly Tourism 2.3.2. Residents, Indigenous Peoples, Cultural Communities 2.3.3. Pilgrimage Tourism	Objectives 5.1, 3.2, 4.3, 7.4	Pillar 14 <i>Pillar 6</i>	TRCRG, TDP, TBP, IA	DENR, NCIP, DSWD, LGUs, DTI, NCCA, NHCP, DOST, NM	Guidelines Adopted and Implemented	
Project 2.4. Integrating and Coordinating the Development of High-Value Tourism Infrastructure with Product Development 2.4.1. MICE and Special Events 2.4.2. Lifestyle and Entertainment 2.4.3. Domestic and International Cruise Tourism 2.4.4. Golf Tourism	Objectives 5.3, 1.2, 3.4, 4.2, 7.1, 7.2, 7.3, 6.2, 6.3	Pillar 14 <i>Pillar 5</i> <i>Pillar 4</i> <i>Pillar 7</i> <i>Pillar 8</i> <i>Pillar 10-12</i>	TDP, TPB, TRCRG	DICT, DTI, TCP, MARINA, PPA	Frameworks and Master plans Completed and Implemented	
Project 2.5. Enhancing Well-being. 2.5.1. Health and Medical Tourism 2.5.2. Wellness Tourism	Objectives 5.3, 5.4, 6.2, 6.3	Pillar 7 Pillar 2 Pillar 3 Pillar 5 Pillar 8	PRA, TPB, TIEZA	DICT, TCP, DTI, DOH, CHED, DEPED	Frameworks and Master plans Completed and Implemented	
Project 2.6. More time, more experiences. 2.6.1. Retirement Tourism 2.6.2. Education Tourism 2.6.3. Digital Nomads 2.6.4. Voluntourism 2.6.5. Gap Year Travel	Objectives 5.4, 6.2, 6.3, 2.1	Pillar 7 Pillar 2 Pillar 3 Pillar 5 Pillar 8	PRA, TPB, TDP, TRCRG	DICT, TCP, DTI, DOH, CHED, DEPED	Frameworks and Master plans Completed and Implemented	
Project 2.7. Strengthen destinations and stakeholdership 2.7.1 Improve the planning of tourism circuits and networks anchored on tourism products. 2.7.2 Increase the involvement and importance of the local government units	Objectives 4.3, 4.2, 7.4	Pillar 6	TDP, TRCRG	DILG, LGUs, TCP, Tourism Associations	At least 1 new improved tourism circuit implemented per cluster	
Project 2.8 Philippine Highlands. Establishing a world-class walking trail that connects landscapes, communities, and nature lovers with the national parks and protected areas of highland areas across the country.	Objectives 4.2, 5.2, 6.2, 6.3	Pillar 13 <i>Pillar 6</i> <i>Pillar 9</i> <i>Pillar 11</i>	TDP, TRCRG, TPB	LGUs, DENR, DTI, DOST	Frameworks and master plans completed and implemented	

¹¹ Responsible DOT Office & Attached Agencies



PROGRAMS AND PROJECTS	PRIMARY, SECONDARY OBJECTIVES	TTCI PILLARS / SDGs	DOT ¹	IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS	SUCCESS INDICATORS	TIMING
		<i>Pillar 12</i>				
Project 2.9. Philippine Islands. Envisioning the Philippines as a center for island holidays and marine sports in Asia where opportunities for diving, sailing, yachting, game fishing, and island hopping abound amidst a wide range of beach resorts, linking existing destinations with new ones throughout the archipelagic core of the country.	Objectives 4.2, 5.2, 6.2, 6.3	Pillar 13 <i>Pillar 6</i> <i>Pillar 9</i> <i>Pillar 10</i> <i>Pillar 11</i> <i>Pillar 12</i>	TDP, TRCRG, TPB	LGUs, DENR, DTI, DOST	Frameworks and master plans completed and implemented	
Project 2.10. Heritage Villages. Identifying and developing selected areas/sites that showcase cultural practices, architecture, customs, and way of life of indigenous cultural communities.	Objectives 5.1, 7.4, 6.2, 6.3	Pillar 14 <i>Pillar 2*</i> <i>Pillar 6</i> <i>Pillar 9</i> <i>Pillar 11</i> <i>Pillar 12</i>	TDP, TRCRG, TPB, IA	NCCA, NHCP, NM, IA, DA, DENR	Frameworks and master plans completed and implemented	
Project 2.11. Town Plazas and Building Pride of Place. Formalize a country-wide program that will motivate local governments and their respective communities to embark on the restoration and enhancement of their municipal, city, and provincial plazas and surrounding areas (if applicable) in a harmonious manner that its cultural value is enhanced while economic and recreational needs are met.	Objectives 5.1, 7.4, 6.2, 6.3	Pillar 14 <i>Pillar 1</i> <i>Pillar 2</i> <i>Pillar 3</i> <i>Pillar 4</i> <i>Pillar 5</i>	TDP, TRCRG, TPB, IA	NCCA, NHCP, NM, IA, DA, DENR	Frameworks and master plans completed and implemented	
Project 2.12. The UNESCO Initiative. Establishing a team within DOT to leverage convergences for a national effort to secure the designation of more UNESCO World Heritage Sites, and other UNESCO designations.	Objectives 5.5, 5.1, 7.1	Pillar 14 <i>Pillar 6</i>	OSC	DFA, Cultural Agencies, LGUs	Unit Established in DOT At least 2 new heritage sites declared by UNESCO and/or ASEAN by 2028	
Project 2.13. Communicating Culture. Through an integrated program that brings together NCCA, FDCP, cultural workers, and associations, developing a multi-platform strategy that communicates the Philippine identity globally. 2.13.1. Tapping the Potential of Film Tourism	Objectives 5.5, 5.1, 7.1	Pillar 14 <i>Pillar 6</i>	TDP, NPF, IA TDP, TPB, Branding	NCCA, NHCP, FDCP FDCP	Operational Multiplatform Strategy At Least 3 Foreign Films	

PROGRAMS AND PROJECTS	PRIMARY, SECONDARY OBJECTIVES	TTCI PILLARS / SDGs	DOT ¹²	IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS	SUCCESS INDICATORS	TIMING
					prioritized in the stimuli packages	
Project 3.3. Market Research and Development - carry out specific activities to grow existing, and explore and diversify into, potential international markets	Objectives 6.1, 6.2, 6.3	Pillar 6 <i>Pillar 7</i>	OTDPRIM	TPB, DFA	Completed market studies Entry of new international source markets into the top 5	
Project 3.4. Developing existing and new channels for promotions working closely with key stakeholders 3.4.1. Deepen relationships with traditional channels for tourism promotions, through traditional media, industry trade fairs, conventions 3.4.2. Develop and implement a comprehensive digital promotions strategy 3.4.3. Leverage existing and develop new intergovernmental arrangements to maximize tourism exchanges between countries 3.4.3. Tap existing or develop new networks in the Filipino diaspora for tourism	Objectives 6.1., 6.2, 6.3, 6.4,	Pillar 6 Pillar 7	OPMD	DFA, DMW	Increased arrivals from existing and new markets	

CAPACITY BUILDING

Shifting the industry onto a more competitive, resilient, and sustainable path on firmer footing with an authentically Filipino identity requires systematic investment and development of human capital. On the government side, local tourism officers (as well as other local officials) should have training programs that standardize the knowledge and skills available to them, and to empower them to manage their communities more effectively as tourism destinations.

On the private sector side, in addition to existing and future training programs, deliberate efforts must be undertaken to increase inclusiveness and equity, addressing issues of gender, minorities, and disadvantaged groups. Further, strategic development of tourism and tourism-related programs in educational and training institutions should address current and projected gaps in the knowledge and skills of tourism workers.

PROGRAMS AND PROJECTS	PRIMARY, SECONDARY OBJECTIVES	TTCI PILLARS / SDGs	DOT ¹⁷	IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS	SUCCESS INDICATORS	TIMING
PROGRAM 4. CAPACITY BUILDING		SDG 8, 10				
<p>Project 4.1. Institutionalize and empower local tourism offices as destination management organizations - Building the Local Tourism Officer Corps. Developing with HEIs a curriculum of modules for tourism officers to standardize the knowledge and skills of tourism officers and their staff.</p> <p>4.1.1 Institutionalize the position of local tourism officer and local tourism offices for major and upcoming destinations</p> <p>4.1.2 Professionalize the corps of local tourism officers through programmatic and interdisciplinary capacity building, training, and evaluation</p> <p>Integrate the system of data gathering, monitoring, enforcement, and reporting with the national government</p>	Objectives 7.4, 7.5, 3.2, 2.2	Pillar 4 <i>Pillar 6</i>	TDP, TRCRG	LGUS, LPP, LCP, LMP, DILG	Increase in the number of institutionalized tourism offices	
<p>Project 4.2. Enhancing Current Training Programs for Stakeholders. Developing programs that meet the current and future needs of tourism stakeholders in view of the strategic direction for tourism.</p> <p>4.2.1 Under the Tourism Development Program, coordinate and collaborate with the partner agencies in identifying priority projects for women and marginalized groups and in increasing their access to information and opportunities for training programs</p> <p>4.2.2. Collaborate with the DOLE's Public Employment Services Office Network to enhance the registry of skills of marginalized groups and facilitate matching opportunities.</p>	Objectives 3.1, 3.2, 7.5, 2.1	Pillar 4 <i>Pillar 6</i>	TRCRG	TCP, CHED, TESDA, TIBFI, ACADEME DSWD, PCW, DILG, LGUS, DTI, DOLE, NCIP	Training Programs Enhanced Tourism programs for women and marginalized groups Registry of skills of women and marginalized groups operational in LGUs based on target pilot areas	
<p>Project 4.3. Implementing the Philippine Tourism Human Capital Development Plan. Implementing the PTHCD to meet integrated education, and training needs for the industry's development.</p> <p>4.3.1 Review and Update to PTHCD 2026-2030</p>	Objectives 3.2, 3.1, 7.5	Pillar 4 <i>Pillar 6</i>	TRCRG	TCP, CHED, TESDA, TIBFI, ACADEME	PTHCD 2021-2025 completed and reviewed for updating to PTHCD 2026-2030	

¹⁷ Responsible DOT Office & Attached Agencies



INFRASTRUCTURE AND SEAMLESS TRAVEL

Infrastructure is a crucial competitiveness gap that falls outside the immediate ambit of the Department’s mandate and functions. In this regard, the improvement of transportation, utilities, and social services infrastructure will require close coordination with the relevant agencies, and given the massive impact of the tourism industry, should be prioritized by those agencies. The

interventions include, not only addressing hard infrastructure gaps (such as roads and trains, airports and seaports, communications and power, water and sewage) but particularly the human dimension of using infrastructure (making travel more convenient, providing more information, deploying off-grid solutions, among many others).

PROGRAMS AND PROJECTS	PRIMARY, SECONDARY OBJECTIVES	TTCI PILLARS / SDGs	DOT ¹⁸	IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS	SUCCESS INDICATORS	TIMING
PROGRAM 5. INFRASTRUCTURE AND SEAMLESS TRAVEL		SDG 6, 7, 9				
Project 5.1. Improve travel facilitation processes and reduce other barriers and costs to travel 5.1.1. Advocate for visa upon arrival, e-visa, and visa-free policies for target markets 5.1.2. Prepare the roadmap for integrating information infrastructure of tourism, and border control agencies 5.1.3. Support the implementation of the Advance Passenger Information System and Passenger Name Record 5.1.4 Expand charter flight program for secondary airport development programs 5.1.5 Update the air service agreements to increase access for future growth 5.1.6. Provide a system of value-added tax refunds for tourists	Objectives 1.1,1.3, 2.1, 2.4	Pillar 7 Pillar 6 Pillar 12	TDP, TRCRG	DFA, BI, BOC CAB, CAAP CAB, CAAP, DTI, DOLE	Enabling visa policies adopted Roadmap completed and implemented with funding DOT integrated with the working group Increased utilization of secondary airports through charter flights Amended air service agreements with priority markets for growth	
Project 5.2. Tourism Infrastructure Standards. Standards for context-based development of key tourism infrastructure (paths and walkways, view decks, visitor centers, tourism transport terminals, public toilets, campsites) requirements. 5.2.1 Conduct a comprehensive assessment of existing and proposed tourism support infrastructure projects vis-à-vis national and local rules and regulations and guided by minimum performance standards and specifications (MPSS) 5.2.2 Develop a sustainable standard for the design and management of tourism-support infrastructure projects	Objectives 1.2, 2.1, 3.4, 7.4	Pillar 12 Pillar 10 Pillar 11 Pillar 2 Pillar 3 Pillar 5	TDP, TRCRG	DOTr and attached agencies, DPWH, LGUs	Assessment completed MPSS adopted in projects Standards developed and adopted by agencies and the private sector	

¹⁸ Responsible DOT Office & Attached Agencies

PROGRAMS AND PROJECTS	PRIMARY, SECONDARY OBJECTIVES	TTCI PILLARS / SDGs	DOT ¹⁸	IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS	SUCCESS INDICATORS	TIMING
<p>Project 5.3. Further, enhance and expand airports and seaports for tourism</p> <p>5.3.1 Update the DOT-DOTr-CAAP Convergence Program update the MOA for 2022-2028 and activate the Technical Working Group on convergence</p> <p>5.3.2. Prepare the annual and medium-term tourism airport program that reflects the priority airport projects</p> <p>5.3.3 Cruise Tourism Gateway Enhancement. Improving port infrastructure for cruise tourism - Prepare the annual and medium-term tourism cruise port program that reflects the priority cruise port projects to be identified in the updated cruise tourism strategies</p> <p>5.3.4 Secure funding for the priority projects</p> <p>5.3.5 Implement the route development program for airports and cruise ports</p> <p>5.3.6 Monitor the project implementation</p>	Objectives 1.2, 2.1, 2.3, 3.4, 5.4	Pillar 10 Pillar 11	TDP, Planning Services, TIEZA	DOTr, CAAP, CAB, PPA, MARINA, AIRPORT AUTHORITIES, PORT AUTHORITIES, LTFRB, DPWH	MOA Renewed and Implemented, TWG Activated Infra programs completed on time New routes developed or increased access to underserved and unserved markets At least 1 cruise home port developed and operational	
<p>Project 5.4 Last-Mile Travel Reforms. Providing reliable, safe, convenient last-mile travel for tourists.</p> <p>5.4.1. Conduct an assessment and inventory of last-mile access from airports, seaports, and major transport terminals</p> <p>5.4.2. Secure funding for the priority actions</p>	Objectives 1.2, 1.3, 2.3, 3.4, 4.1	Pillar 11	TIEZA, TDP, TRCRG	DOTR, CAAP, CAB, PPA, MARINA, AIRPORT AUTHORITIES, PORT AUTHORITIES, LTFRB, DPWH	Last Mile Access Provided	
<p>Project 5.5 Sustainable Tourism Transportation. Facilitating seamless mobility through the use of sustainable transport modes like e-vehicles, e-trikes, and e-bikes in tourism enclaves and islands.</p> <p>5.5.1. Review the CREATE Law provisions on incentives and identify those that will support (1) investments in alternative and sustainable energy and its support infrastructure (especially in tourism enclaves/resorts/islands) and transport like e-vehicle, e-trike, among others serving these sites, and (2) facilitate compliance with standard requirements.</p> <p>5.5.2. Based on the review, prepare a strategy paper for the inclusion of tourism-related facilities and services not yet covered in the strategic investment priority program (SIPP) that is subject to review every 3 years under the law</p> <p>5.5.3. Develop a package of incentives and disincentives that will facilitate compliance with standard requirements</p> <p>5.5.4. Improve the design of tourism, and air. And sea terminals based on international standards and practices that promote barrier-free tourism among others</p>	Objectives 1.3, 2.2, 7.3, 7.6	Pillar 10 Pillar 11 Pillar 12	TRCRG, TIEZA	DOTR AND ATTACHED AGENCIES, AIRPORT, SEAPORT, AND LAND AUTHORITIES	Guidelines adopted in scope of work	
<p>Project 5.6. Upgrading Tourist Travel Assistance. Facilitating convenience through the provision of reliable and user-friendly online tourism travel information and platforms.</p> <p>5.6.1. Prepare a business case for the development of an integrated online platform and application</p> <p>5.6.2. Upgrade transport infrastructure for smart and contactless travel, and sustainability and resilience</p> <p>5.6.3. Establish a 24/7 tourist assistance call center</p>	Objectives 1.1, 2.1, 2.2, 2.4	Pillar 5 <i>Pillar 6</i>	TDP	DICT, DOST	Business Case Completed Online Information Set Up and Operational Convergence with DICT Operational	



PROGRAMS AND PROJECTS	PRIMARY, SECONDARY OBJECTIVES	TTCI PILLARS / SDGs	DOT ¹⁸	IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS	SUCCESS INDICATORS	TIMING
<p>Project 5.7. Enhancing the connectivity of transportation infrastructure with tourism destinations, facilities, and sites</p> <p>5.7.1 Expand the scope of work for the enhancement of transportation infrastructure – including roads, bridges, drainage systems, road signages (including those leading to attractions) - and barrier-free amenities based on international standards, including tourism rest areas</p> <p>5.7.2 Develop the strategic roadmap to assess the bottlenecks and constraints</p> <p>5.7.3 Integrating PUV Modernization and Tourism. Advocating LGUs to adopt route plans that integrate servicing tourism sites and facilities.</p> <p>5.7.4 Secure funding for the priority actions</p>	Objectives 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 2.3, 3.4, 4.3, 7.1, 7.2	Pillar 11	TIEZA, TDP, TRCRG	DOTR, CAAP, CAB, PPA, MARINA, AIRPORT AUTHORITIES, PORT AUTHORITIES, LTFRB, DPWH	Complete Soft Scape Infrastructure Funded Issuance of relevant department orders Roadmap Completed and Implemented	
<p>Project 5.8. The Provision of Social Support for Tourism Communities. Enhancing the provision of basic services to support tourists and tourism communities, enhancing local development and resilience.</p> <p>5.8.1 Conduct inventory of existing infrastructure for health and social development in tourism communities</p> <p>5.8.2 Prepare the list of priorities for funding by national agencies under the Tourism Development Program</p> <p>5.8.3 Collaborate with the DOH and DSWD in working with the LGUs for the priority local health and social projects in the tourism communities</p> <p>5.8.4. Establish funding programs to provide support for tourism communities in times of emergencies and crises</p>	Objective 7.6, 7.7, 3.3	Pillar 3	TDP, TRCRG	DOH, DILG, DSWD, LGUs	Advocacy program implemented Priority list funded by National Agencies and LGUs	
<p>Project 5.9. Providing Key Infrastructure for Remote Tourism Communities and Sites. Deploying off-grid, renewable, modular solutions in remote areas to provide ICT, water, energy, and waste management services.</p> <p>5.9.1 Prepare business case for grant of subsidy program for ICT access and improvement in remote tourism communities</p> <p>5.9.2. Leverage Executive Order No. 127 and the Digital Philippines program of the DICT for improving internet connectivity in prioritized remote tourism communities</p>	Objective 2.3, 4.3, 7.3, 7.6	Pillar 2 Pillar 5	TDP, TRCRG	DICT, DOST	Infrastructure present in remote tourism communities Business Case completed and adopted	

