Promoting ASEAN Tourism

About the Policy Challenge

You are a group of Policy Consultants which has won a service contract from the European Union (EU) to work with the ASEAN Secretariat to recommend concrete policies that could work towards promoting tourism in ASEAN. Armed with the experiences of the development of the tourism industry within the EU, you must at the same time be cognizant of the different operating environment in ASEAN, and consider measures appropriate for the region.

Regional cooperation to develop and promote tourism in ASEAN is a key priority area. Tourism is one of the priority sectors in the ASEAN Economic Community Blueprint. ASEAN as a group is the 5th most visited region in the world. In the “Travel and Tourism – Economic Impact 2015 Southeast Asia” report by the World Travel and Tourism Council, the travel and tourism industry’s contribution to the GDP of Southeast Asia amounts to USD291.8 billion in 2014 (about 12% of GDP), and supports 9.7% of total employment. In 2015, ASEAN as a whole is expected to receive over 96 million international tourists. Intra-ASEAN tourism constitutes about 40% of total tourist arrivals, and intra-ASEAN tourism is also seen as one way to increase people-to-people connectivity as outlined in the Masterplan on ASEAN’s Connectivity. Tourism is thus one of the key industries that can connect the Southeast Asian region through three dimensions – people, institutions and infrastructure.

In January 2015, Malaysia hosted the first ASEAN Tourism Strategic Plan (ATSP) meeting attended by representatives of the National Tourism Organisations of all ASEAN member states and ASEAN Secretariat supported by tourism experts. The vision statement coming out from this meeting recognised that the goal of the ASEAN Economic Community presents immense opportunities for the advancement of ASEAN as a single tourist destination, and calls for the development of responsible, sustainable and quality tourism that could contribute to the socio-economic well-being of the ASEAN people.

How to Participate

The Consultants have been tasked to look into the experiences of the European Union and its member states in promoting sustainable and responsible tourism, and then propose concrete measures / policies that will contribute to tourism in ASEAN. The measures / policies recommended should take into account:
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- The specific context of ASEAN;
- The acceptability of the proposal to all ASEAN countries;
- The impact and cost of the measures;
- The capacity of the various ASEAN Member states to implement the policies;
- The timeline for the implementation of the measures

To participate in this policy challenge, students should work in a team of three to submit a draft proposal outlining the key challenges and some recommendations in promoting tourism. The draft proposal and outline should be presented in not more than eight pages and must be written in English. In these few pages, the team must be able to demonstrate their understanding of the challenge and provide at least one BIG IDEA that can help to transform tourism in ASEAN and make ASEAN one of the most attractive tourist destinations. In the draft proposal, the team could also outline some of the steps that need to be taken to transform the IDEA into reality, and identify some potential obstacles that need to be overcome.

The draft proposal should be submitted to the EU Centre by 14th September (Monday). Please send your entry to eucentresg@ntu.edu.sg with the following details:

- Team name
- Name of all team members
- Nationality of all team members
- Documentary proof of citizenship of all members (as attachments)
- Birth Dates of all team members
- Contact emails of all team members

Judging and Prizes

A Select committee organised by the EU Centre will assess and shortlist the three best proposals based on the following criteria:

- The research into the state of play of tourism in ASEAN
- The “appeal” of the big idea
- Understanding of the key challenges and issues
- Quality of analysis
- Actionable recommendations
- Language and presentation
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The three shortlisted teams will be notified and ask to further develop their draft proposals to a Policy Brief (of 20-25 pages) that could be published, and to make a 20-minute presentation to at a public event to be organised by the EU Centre. The final Policy Brief has to be submitted to the EU Centre by 30th October, and the presentation will take place sometime between end of October and first 2 weeks of November. A judging panel will be there to ask questions, assess the presentations and to award the best presentation.

The best team will win a cash prize of $1,500 SGD. The 1st and 2nd runner-ups will receive cash award of $900 and $600 respectively. Additionally, shortlisted team members will have the opportunity to intern in various ASEAN and EU related institutions, dynamic corporations such as AirAsia and other European/multi-national corporations.

The winning policy proposal will also be widely circulated and could serve as input to the development of the ASEAN Tourism Strategic Plan 2016-2025.

ANNEX A - THE STATE OF ASEAN TOURISM

The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) was founded on 8th August 1967. Comprising now of 10 members (Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam), it has over the years deepened its cooperation, though fundamentally remaining an inter-governmental regional organization.

In responding to the rapidly changing global economic and strategic landscape at the end of the Cold war era, the first small step towards greater economic integration was taken with the proposal of an ASEAN Free Trade Area (AFTA) in 1992.

However, with intensifying economic competition, and in the aftermath of the Asian Financial Crisis, the ASEAN countries took a further step forward to create the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) to be complemented by the ASEAN Political-Security Community (APSC) and the ASEAN Socio-cultural Community (ASCC).

In the blueprint towards the AEC, whose goal is to create a single market and production base by 2015, 12 economic sectors were identified as the key priority sectors.
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for a highly ambitious programme for greater integration. Tourism is one such sector identified.

As of 2012, ASEAN is the 5th most visited region receiving some 85 million international tourists in that year. Tourism generated US$256 billion and represented 11% of ASEAN's GDP. The tourism sector employed more than 26 million people comprising 9% of the whole economy's employment.

The importance of tourism to ASEAN's development and to the socioeconomic and sociocultural development of the various member states cannot be understated. Its importance was reflected when ASEAN leaders adopted in 2011 the ASEAN Tourism Strategic Plan 2011-2015 to stimulate responsible and sustainable tourism development and to further integrate tourism in the AEC. In addition to this strategic plan, in 2012, ASEAN members also produced a marketing strategy to set directions towards 2015. These include plans to draw more international visitors to Southeast Asia and to encourage them to visit more than one country in the region, the leveraging of resources to enhance the positioning of ASEAN as a preferred travel destination, and the incorporating of marketing approach to promote travel within the region under the theme “ASEAN for ASEAN”.

The ASEAN Tourism Strategic Vision 2016-2020 is now being developed and the emphasis will be on Quality Tourism, Sustainable Growth and Development, Connectivity and Travel Facilitation, and Manpower and Skills Competence Development.

Tourism besides being a priority area in ASEAN Economic Community, has also been identified as an important vehicle for realizing people-to-people connectivity in the Masterplan on ASEAN's Connectivity.

Several ASEAN initiatives in the tourism sector have been undertaken over the years under the Roadmap for Integration of Tourism Sector 2004-2010 to further promote ASEAN as a tourist destination through the liberalisation of tourism and travel related services, upgrading of tourism infrastructure, enhancement of the skills of tourism related personnel and encouraging greater participation from the private sector in the development of the tourism sector.

The successful undertaking of the Roadmap resulted in greater inflow of tourists from both ASEAN and third countries into the region. This has also led to growing demand for local products and services, jobs creation, foreign exchange and greater interactions between local peoples and the tourists.
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Nothwithstanding all these achievement, many key challenges and obstacles remain in trying to integrate tourism in ASEAN and to promote and market Southeast Asian region and ASEAN as an integrated tourist destination. First and foremost, there is a big development gap between its richer members (Singapore and Brunei) and its poorest (Laos and Cambodia), and infrastructure deficiencies have resulted from this development gap. Secondly, ASEAN currently lacks a single visa for non-ASEAN nationals and this may deter these visitors from, say, visiting Vietnam after taking a holiday in Thailand. All these challenges such as the harmonization of visa requirements, development of third party liability insurance, standardization of tourism-related services and the upgrading of tourism-related infrastructure need to be addressed if ASEAN is to succeed in its efforts to integrate the tourism sector in the region.

The work of the consulting team is to identify these challenges and consider measures that can address these challenges.

The consultants should also look at the experience of other regions, in particular the European Union (EU), to see how some of these problems and challenges could be tackled. The EU has been able to lay the foundations for a coherent framework for a European tourism policy, stressing those factors which determine its competitiveness while taking account of the need for sustainable development. With the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty, the importance of tourism is recognized and the EU now has powers in this field to support, coordinate and complement action by the Member States.

The European Commission (EC), in cooperation with the Member States and associations representing the sector, has invested considerable effort over a number of years in implementing a series of actions intended to stimulate competitiveness in the European tourism sector whilst consolidating and promoting sustainable, responsible and high-quality tourism in Europe. To date, the EC has successfully increased tourism demand from within the EU and beyond, improved the quality and range of tourism, enhanced the socio-economic knowledge base of the tourism sector by developing innovation and improving professional skills, promoted Europe as a unique destination abroad and mainstreamed tourism in other EU tourism policies.

More importantly, the team should also recommend feasible policies that can help to promote ASEAN tourism, and grow the tourism sector in a sustainable way.
ANNEX B - Key Guiding Questions for the Consulting Team

What should be the framework for promoting ASEAN tourism? Consider international arrivals and intra-regional tourists (that is tourists coming from within ASEAN) and if there are different approaches in attracting the different tourists? Intra-ASEAN tourism constitutes more than 40% of all tourist arrivals, and the second largest group of tourists to ASEAN comes from Europe. The number of EU visitors to ASEAN region exceeded 7 million in 2012, and is still growing. Hence the interest from the EU to promote greater aviation links to ASEAN, and support from the EU to help develop the institutional framework and capacity within ASEAN to achieve a safe, secure and sustainable Single Aviation Market.

What is the key selling point for promoting “ASEAN” as a destination, and not just individual ASEAN member countries?

What are the major obstacles? Is it a question of physical connectivity and lack of infrastructure? Or are there other socioeconomic and political obstacles?

How to engage private investors, tourism operators and other stakeholders in the aviation industry, hospitality and food & beverage industries, and work with the different stakeholders to develop feasible strategies for promoting ASEAN tourism?

What are some of the negative impacts of tourism that have to be mitigated to achieve the triple goals of responsible, sustainable and quality tourism?

ANNEX C: List of resources, information and data on tourism in ASEAN/EU

ASEAN
Tourism Statistics

ASEAN Tourism Agreement
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ASEAN Develops Tourism Strategic Vision 2016 – 2025

ASEAN Tourism Strategic Plan 2011 - 2015

World Economic Forum: The ASEAN Travel & Tourism Competitiveness Report 2012

Tourism and Regional Integration in Southeast Asia
http://www.ide.go.jp/English/Publish/Download/Vrf/pdf/481.pdf

AirAsia to promote Asean as tourism destination through ‘Asean Pass’

Travel and Tourism: Economic Impact 2015 for Southeast Asia

European Union (EU)

Overview of EU Tourism Policy

Travel and Tourism in the EU

Sustainable Tourism

European Tourism 2015: Trends and Prospects (Q2 2015)
http://etc-corporate.org/?page=report&report_id=78&subject=trends_watch&theme=reports

Destination Europe 2020
http://www.etc-corporate.org/?page=destination-europe-2020

Guide to EU funding for the tourism sector (2014-2020)
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Simplifying visa rules

The European Union And Tourism: Challenges And Policy Responses

International Tourism Trends in EU-28 member states

Other articles of note:

The Impact of ASEAN on Tourism

How can we encourage travel and tourism in ASEAN? By Tony Fernandes
https://agenda.weforum.org/2015/05/how-can-we-encourage-travel-and-tourism-in-asean/

Fostering ASEAN Tourism through Regional Cooperation: Challenges and Opportunities

Regional Tourism Development in Southeast Asia
http://www.tnc-online.net/pic/20150207115011975.pdf


The changing demographics of tourism in Southeast Asia

Feasibility Study for the Establishment of a Regional Secretariat for ASEAN Tourism Professionals

Najib calls for ASEAN to be promoted as single tourism channel
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Using of Social Marketing to Enhance Capacity of ASEAN Community-based Tourism

A model of ASEAN Collaboration in Tourism
http://epubs.surrey.ac.uk/534331/3/Wong_A%20model%20of.pdf

Guest Opinion: Why Southeast Asia Needs Better Tourism Dispersal

Visa-on-arrival is the new currency in global travel

The tourism industry is ‘make or break’ for the EU economy – The Parliament Magazine EU
https://www.theparliamentmagazine.eu/articles/opinion/tourism-industry-make-or-break-eu-economy

Estimating Tourism: Can the role of regional integration be ignored?
http://www.etsg.org/ETSG2012/Programme/Papers/379.pdf

The Cost of Non Europe in Transport and Tourism

World Economic Forum's Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Report 2015

The European and Southeast Asian Single Aviation Markets
http://www.eucentre.sg/?p=10543

Tourism as a driver of economic growth and development in the EU-27 and ASEAN regions

Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Report – by WEF