

Nay Pyi Taw Responsible Tourism Statement

Taking Responsibility for Tourism – A
working week on responsible tourism
planning in Myanmar

February 23rd, 2012

This statement is the outcome of the Taking Responsibility for Tourism – A working week on responsible tourism planning in Myanmar.

Prepared by Professor Harold Goodwin, Nicole Haeusler, Achim Munz and the public and private sector of the Myanmar tourism industry.

NAY PYI TAW RESPONSIBLE TOURISM STATEMENT

Introduction

Myanmar is “a place of authenticity where visitors can feel something genuine.... The unsullied cultural and natural resources, people with a sense of genuine hospitality and friendliness, who still take pride in wearing traditional costumes and practicing age old customs, adds up to a rich and authentic trip.”

“Myanmar has the opportunity to develop tourism in a responsible way, picking and choosing from the best examples of more developed countries, but adapting them to the local culture and environment.” ... Through sustainable and responsible tourism, Myanmar believes it can best bring about myriad benefits to all stakeholders in the travel business: travellers, locals and entrepreneurs in a triple-win situation.” Myanmar will emphasise quality rather than quantity.”

Recognising that Responsible Tourism is not a new form of tourism but rather an approach to managing all forms of tourism to ensure that the industry contributes to the development of Myanmar and to the livelihoods of its people – making better places for people to live in, and better places for people to visit.

Representatives of 22 ministries came together for a day to:

- 1. Identify the key sustainability issues which arise from tourism in Myanmar
- 2. Consider the relative importance of the issues and to decide what are the most important issues which need to be addressed
- 3. Determine what each ministry can do to address the issues – to identify what particular ministries can contribute to the development of Responsible Tourism in Myanmar

Myanmar tourism is based on Myanmar’s natural and cultural richness. The group welcomed the formation of the cross ministry committee, the Facilitation Committee for the Entry of International Visitors to Myanmar, with 11 ministries and 14 states and divisions. The intention is to spread the benefits of tourism throughout the country. The Facilitation Committee with the leadership with the Ministry of Tourism ensures a co-ordinated whole of government approach to the development of Responsible Tourism in Myanmar.

There was a consensus that a Myanmar Responsible Tourism Policy is urgently needed. This is essential to provide the foundations for a Myanmar Tourism Development Strategy and Action Plan, or a Master Plan. Too many Master Plans written by international consultants fail to address national priorities and cannot be implemented because the plan is inappropriate and the national capacity to implement the plan has not been developed.

Capacity building to enable effective public and private sector stakeholder engagement in the preparation of Myanmar’s national development plan in tourism was identified as fundamental to ensuring that the plan is shaped to meet national objectives and can be fully implemented by the public and private sector in Myanmar.

Workshop 1 Public Sector

Twenty two ministries took part in the workshop: Ministry of National Planning and Economic Development, Ministry of Environmental Conservation and Forestry , Ministry of Immigration and Population, Ministry of Home Affairs, Ministry of Transport , Ministry of Foreign Affairs , Ministry of Finance and Revenue , Ministry of Labour , Ministry of Health , Ministry of Communications, Posts and Telegraphs , Ministry of Information , Ministry of Co-operatives , Ministry of Sports , Ministry of Culture , Union Attorney General Office , Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement , Ministry of Education , Ministry of Border Affairs , Ministry of Commerce, Union Justice Office , Civil Service Selection and Training Board , Ministry of Science and Technology ,.

The group work demonstrated the willingness of staff in all the ministries represented to work with the Ministry of Tourism to achieve Responsible Tourism. There is a list of some of the initiatives suggested in Appendix 1.

Workshop 2 Private Sector

The group identified a number of potential positive and negative impacts of tourism which are in Appendix 2.

The tourism entrepreneurs concluded that there was an urgent need for

- 1. Stronger laws, building on the 1993 legislation, to ensure the development of Responsible Tourism.
- 2. For education and training, particularly Continuing Professional Development capacity building for the public and private sector to enable them to participate fully in the planning and management for Responsible Tourism development in Myanmar.

“Before this workshop it was very difficult for us to understand how to implement Responsible Tourism in Myanmar. We now know that Responsible Tourism can be implemented by the private sector and public sector in different ways and also we can cooperate and built the better and safer development in Myanmar. The Private Sector can be the middle man between public sector and local persons: private sector can help to implement and train the local people and employees. “

What can the individual businesses do to achieve Responsible Tourism and profit at the same time?

Responsible Tourism is good for business. It is not just a business; it is about presenting our country to the world. Successful implementation will require education, planning, transparency and the support of government through regulation.

- Create Responsible Tourism Codes of Conduct and follow them,
- Show leadership and share knowledge of Responsible Tourism with the community. Co-operate with the key players to achieve sustainable development through tourism
- Environmentally responsible

- Reduce, reuse, recycle – saving resources means more profit
 - Control the use of water and electricity; electric cars, hybrids and solar power
 - Grow more trees rather than cutting them down – encouraging tourists to contribute trees to encourage them to visit again
 - Design environmentally friendly hotels – reduce water and electricity use
 - Use organic fruit and vegetables
- Socio-Cultural Responsibility
 - Create jobs for local people, all kinds of jobs
 - Training and development of tourism skills
 - Encourage local young people and train them to work in the industry
 - Employee satisfaction creates customer satisfaction
 - Hotels can use Responsible Tourism to maintain staff morale and good service
 - Encourage visits to night bazaar festivals, costumes and performances
 - Educate the people around us
 - Conserve cultural heritage
 - Train local people to engage in the industry knowledge – skills – attitudes
 - Promote traditional foods
 - Encourage handicraft and souvenir production
- Economic Responsibility
 - Encourage children to look after the trees planted by the tourists
 - Tour Operators Choosing the right customers for a richer programme/itinerary, more activities
 - Hotels to focus on yield management
 - Source locally and encourage local products – vocational training for crafts
 - Encourage craft producers to demonstrate their crafts and sell to tourists .

How can the Tourism Associations assist the development of Responsible Tourism?

- It is important to grow the numbers and strength of the associations
- Need to educate the business owners, to be required to do an Responsible Tourism course before you can be licensed,
- Need a focal point to keep pushing Responsible Tourism
- Trade Association could encourage members to be more responsible and raise quality
- Please more emphasis on food quality, health and safety – more organics.
- Address issues which affect health care for tourists
- Develop a marketing plan to attract responsible tourists
- Need to build a budget for Responsible Tourism

- Run Responsible Tourism workshops for members and for local community to build capacity. International networking with other associations
- Provide assistance for individual businesses
- Grading should include the Responsible Tourism dimension – economic, social and environmental;
- Sharing ideas and mentoring within the associations and undertake research and development
- Discourage irresponsible pricing
- Support environmental awareness activities – awareness campaigns
- Encourage conservation of cultural heritage
- Encourage cookery contests to develop traditional
- Helping to improve existing tourism destinations
- Helping to upgrade well-being of local communities
- Avoiding waste
- Creating a favourable economic environment for the tourism industry
- The public and private sectors need to work together to achieve Responsible Tourism.

NEXT STEPS

Policy and Planning

Item	Description
Develop a Draft Responsible Tourism Policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Determine national policy objectives in consultation with the public and private sector done through a series of workshops with assistance from international experts closing working with national experts and transferring knowledge..
Immediate plan for the next two years.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">An outline plan to guide the immediate development of tourism in Myanmar and in particular to guide foreign investment and ensure that in short term nothing is done that undermines the Responsible Tourism policy of the public and private sector in Myanmar, developed through a series of workshops engaging the public and private sector in developing a coherent public private partnership for Responsible Tourism development in Myanmar.
ToR for the National Plan or Master Plan Tender Process	<ul style="list-style-type: none">These should be produced based on the Myanmar Responsible Tourism Policy.
Master Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Awarded as a result of a competitive tender process and a careful assessment of the skills of competing teams to fulfil the ToR.

Capacity Building

There is an urgent need to build management capacity to ensure that Myanmar professionals have their knowledge developed and their skills sharpened to enable them to manage the development of the industry as it opens further to the international market.

Training needs will be identified through the Responsible Tourism Policy process and developed in details in the Master Plan. However, there is a more urgent need to develop knowledge of Responsible Tourism Management, which may be possible through intensive blended learning short courses.

APPENDIX 1

Ministry	Discussed Task
Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prevention of Child Sex Tourism • Prevention, protection and rehabilitation of trafficking of persons • To improve awareness on the occurrence of barriers free infrastructure especially for persons with disabilities and elderly
Ministry of Labour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To generate skilled workers in order for them to enjoy better job opportunity in tourism industry according to their skills and qualifications • To set up national skill standard to be able to recognize skilled workers and issue certificates to them
Union Attorney General	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To advice for an acting new laws (especially to avoid social and environmental impacts related to the tourism services) • To advice for various kind of investment contract (in conformity with trade standard and State economic policy (eg. B.O.T, Land lease, Construction)
Ministry of Hotels and Tourism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To lay down the exact guidelines for the responsible tourism policies by discussing related Ministries and Private Sector • To raise the awareness of Responsible Tourism among the Stakeholders • To promote quality tourism • Educate public, private and third sector on Responsible Tourism • Standardizing hotel accommodation (e.g. star rating, ASEAN Green Hotel Award) • Enhancing skills, knowledge and service quality of tourism personnel • Safety and security of tourists • Educate all the stakeholders including tourists about the positive and negative impacts of tourism • Promote & disseminate responsible tourism concepts and best practices • Need to be proactive rather than reactive
Ministry of Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotion of the capacity building and health care facilities for improving health security of Tourist (i.e. both Emergency health care management, Prevention of communicable diseases)
Ministry of Home Affairs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To raise awareness of Tourism related crimes such as child sex tourism
Ministry of Progress of Border Areas and Natural Resources and Development Affairs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To promote local culture and handicraft of local people at boarder area
Ministry of Sports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To promote traditional sports for tourist attractions
Ministry of Culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To promote Awareness and Education Programme • Capacity Building (for all levels)
Ministry of Environmental Conservation and Forestry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To promote sustainable ecotourism

- To create income generation for local community
- Safeguarding natural heritages
- Green Infrastructure
- Capacity Building
- Law Enforcement
- To promote system of EIA

APPENDIX 2

Cultural impacts – misuse by tourists of local communities particularly in entertainment – negative demonstration effects for example declining use of traditional costume. Tourism can attract children to hawk goods for sale and this can lead to begging. The tourism guides have a role in controlling this and there should be a law to stop it. Need to make alternative livelihoods for young people. Human Trafficking. In Myanmar male prostitution is not illegal. Spreading of disease HIV/AIDS.

Environmental impacts: Laws to prevent collecting of flora and fauna souvenir needs to be enforced. Waste management at tourist sites needs to be introduced.

Positive Economic benefits: take tourists to local markets and cook in local houses- homestay not currently allowed. Improve the working conditions (working hours) and wage levels of hospitality workers. Village tours – dancing and toilets - community involvement in tourism. Tree planting together – one tourist one tree programmes, taking photos to send to tourists every 6 months community benefits in water supply and electricity.