



**Asia-Pacific
Economic Cooperation**

Workshop Summary Report

**Voluntourism Best Practices:
Promoting Inclusive Community-Based
Sustainable Tourism Initiatives**

Penang, Malaysia

APEC Tourism Working Group

October 2017

APEC Project: TWG 01 2016

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1. Purpose and objectives of the Workshop

The APEC Tourism Working Group (TWG) 01 2016 Workshop on Voluntourism Best Practices was held on October 9th 2017, prior to the 51st APEC TWG meeting.

The purpose of the Workshop was to enable participants from the public/private sector, non-government organisations and academia to discuss opportunities, challenges and best practices relating to voluntourism, both internationally and across the APEC region. Guest speakers from industry and APEC member economies presented case studies on best practice voluntourism, including industry guidelines.

The Workshop had two main objectives:

- Discuss best practices in voluntourism, and how the niche market can bring benefits to a wide range of stakeholders
- Gather participant feedback on how to approach and initiate best practice voluntourism in the APEC Region

Along with best practice case studies, the Workshop content was informed by a literature review, and preliminary results from surveys and interviews undertaken with those involved in voluntourism (supply, governance and research).

2. Opening remarks

The Project Overseer, Ms Alcinda Trawen opened the Workshop with welcoming remarks and a brief overview of the project history. Thanks were extended to the sponsors of the project: Malaysia, the Philippines and Australia.

Papua New Guinea (PNG) proposed the project in 2015. APEC TWG 01 2016 Workshop Volun-tourism Best Practices Promoting Inclusive Community-Based Sustainable Tourism Initiatives aligns and supports the Tourism Working Group (TWG) Priority Area Two – Sustainable Tourism. The project supports wider APEC TWG goals to promote inclusive growth through tourism development in the APEC region.

3. Session 1: Voluntourism market overview with Q&A

Ms Eilidh Thorburn, project coordinator and Workshop co-facilitator, gave a market overview of voluntourism internationally and in the APEC region. The international volunteer tourism market is large (estimated to be 1.6 million voluntourism trips per year) and growing, and reflects trends of tourists wanting to 'travel with purpose' by connecting and giving back to communities that they visit. Estimates of market value range between USD\$1.7 and \$2.6 billion per annum. Voluntourism demand is driven by millennials and baby boomers, with the largest market segment being mostly young (18-25), female (75%) students (90%) who want to travel whilst 'giving back'.

In response to market demand, there is an ever-growing number of voluntourism organisations, with over 800 now identified worldwide. In the APEC region, over 230 organisations are present, with the majority being NGO or not for profit, and one fifth being commercial organisations. Twenty-one outbound organisations dominate the market for voluntourism in the APEC region, all sending volunteers to 13 or more APEC economies.

Flows generally go from the Global North to the Global South, and the Asia-Pacific region is a large receiving market of voluntourists.

A working definition of voluntourism was provided for the purpose of the Workshop: ““Organised and packaged trips with a duration of few hours up to a year whereby a volunteer provides services free of charge at the point of delivery with the main purpose to aid or alleviate the material poverty of groups in society, the restoration of certain environments, or research into aspects of society or environment.”

Workshop discussions reinforced that the term ‘voluntourism’ means different things to different economies, and the definition needs refining to suit the varying APEC contexts.

4. Session 2: Voluntourism challenges and opportunities

Ms Thorburn provided an overview of the challenges facing the complex and dynamic voluntourism industry. Voluntourism is a niche market, and is very different to other forms of tourism. The development of voluntourism brings with it unique challenges and opportunities. There are currently information gaps across all stakeholder groups: the volunteer (how to choose and identify a best practice operation); for governments (what does best practice look like); and for operators (to share and learn from one another what best practice is). There is also a notable lack of information to evaluate the social, economic and environmental impacts of voluntourism at a local, national and international level.

Preliminary results from the surveys and interviews conducted prior to the Workshop found that voluntourism, *when done well*, brings opportunities to local communities and can enhance people to people connectivity in the APEC region. For example, voluntourism can support local projects, inject money into communities, and provide tangible outputs such as local infrastructure (for example sanitation), and skills (for example English and Mandarin language acquisition).

The preliminary findings from the research also show that voluntourism, *when not done well* brings a series of challenges that can cause offense to local communities or even cause harm. For example, negative impacts can involve; projects that are not aligned to local needs, the diminution of local community dignity, and the hindrance of long-term development efforts. Of particular concern is potential harm to children via volunteering in orphanages, this is something that received considerable media scrutiny in the lead up to the Workshop (September/October 2017). There is also a significant body of research and mounting evidence on this topic.

Voluntourism can add value at a local scale when the power dynamic between the community and the volunteer is balanced, and when the former has a strong voice and leads the project. The volunteer must also be of value to the community, bring skills and have the right attitude towards contributing to local projects. It is part of the responsibility of the sending organisation to carefully manage these expectations and appropriately match volunteers with projects.

5. Session 3: Voluntourism best practice operator case studies

Best practice case study: PEPY Tours

Ms Claire Bennett, General Manager PEPY Tours and Co-Founder of Learning Service, presented the PEPY Tours operator case study. PEPY Tours operate in Cambodia, a popular destination for volunteer tourism activities in the Asia-Pacific region. Ms Bennett explained PEPY Tours organisational journey, from a voluntourism operator to a learning service provider. Through observation and continuous learning, PEPY Tours recognised some of the negative impacts that voluntourism was having, for example building schools without local teachers to provide education. Ms Bennett explained the evolution of the business model from voluntourism to 'service learning' which centres on the main principle "learn before you can help", whereby volunteers first learn about the local culture and way of life, with cultural exchange being thoughtfully facilitated by the organisation.

Best practices include supporting local grassroots initiatives, and ensuring the tourist dollar goes into local projects, for example local produce and handicrafts. PEPY Tours profits support the PEPY NGO which directly supports (financially) education in Cambodia. A further example in initiating best practice is shaping demand. This involves educating and raising awareness among volunteers themselves as to how they can provide positive impacts. Learning Service is an online advocacy platform and information portal on ethical volunteering, which helps to shape demand by sharing a number of online tools.

During the presentation, Ms Bennett also raised the growing concern of voluntourism when working with children, citing several recent media articles, and research evidence.

Best practice case study: GOOD Travel

Ms Shelly Bragg, Co-Founder and Director of Development GOOD Travel presented the GOOD Travel best practice operator case study. Within APEC, GOOD Travel operate in New Zealand, Thailand, Peru, and the People's Republic of China. GOOD Travel is a social enterprise working to inspire and enable travellers to make a positive impact in the places they visit. Ms Bragg's background is in international development and she herself was a volunteer before co-founding GOOD Travel in 2013. Ms Bragg reinforced the value of volunteering and tourism as a power to do good. GOOD Travel actively shape experiences – with a focus on learning, engaging and sharing while working with local partners and supporting them financially through the organisation. They have partnerships with local Non Government Organisations (NGOs) based on long-term, ongoing relationships. For example, GOOD Travel collaborate with NGOs that support microfinance investors and partner with child protection charities.

GOOD Travel are focussed on shifting voluntourism demand from 'helping' to 'learning'. Ms Bragg also acknowledged that tourism can have a negative impact on the environment, so they partner with carbon offset funds and make sustainable choices wherever they can, for example staying at places that have solar power and local linkages. GOOD Travel always source produce locally, eat local food and visit local markets within their itineraries. Another value added to local communities is facilitating travel for community members to other parts of the world. For example in South Africa, they funded local women leaders to attend women leadership summits in Asia. They design and research trips in conjunction with local partners, they also have extensive pre and post trip planning.

The organisation works with universities and through these relationships they aim to measure the long-term impact that they have on local communities.

6. Session 4: Best practice guidelines in voluntourism an overview

Mr Ross Hopkins, Workshop co-facilitator, opened the afternoon session by defining voluntourism best practice and outlining a range of international models. Best Practice is defined as “the intersection where stakeholder (volunteer/communities/sending organisation) expectations overlap and creates a positive impact for all”.

Several models and tools exist to initiate best practice in voluntourism at an international level, which align to global strategic goals in sustainable and ethical tourism (Appendix 3). The UNWTO have an overarching Code of Ethics for Tourism which contains elements that are highly pertinent to voluntourism. The proliferation of codes and best practice guides reflects the desire to ensure negative impacts are mitigated and best practices in the voluntourism industry flourish. Within APEC, there are existing codes for sustainable tourism, for example the APEC/PATA Code for Sustainable Tourism which could be expanded to incorporate voluntourism best practice dimensions.

On a national level, some countries are considering regulation and licencing (Britain), and others such as Nepal have enacted visa restrictions: however, there are currently challenges in the enforcement of visa restrictions.

Other examples of best practice standards and regulation include The Code (2016) which deals with Child Exploitation in voluntourism. The Irish charity Comhlámh developed voluntourism best practices from the international development perspective. There also are operator specific guidelines (e.g. PEPY Tours and Ayana) who have developed tools and polices to ensure best practice, which are freely available for other voluntourism operators to use. The most recent Volunteer Tourism Guidelines were produced by ABTA, a British based tourism industry association.

Checklists and guidelines are also available for voluntourists to help them choose best practice operators. Examples include online review sites and checklists such as PEPY Tour and Volunteer Service Overseas (VSO) guidelines. The exposure that prospective volunteer tourists get to these checklists and guidelines remains a challenge. Greater awareness among travellers of these guidelines is required so that individuals are able to identify and select best practice operators.

Due to the value chain involved in voluntourism there is a need to develop a ‘push and pull’ strategy with guidelines, codes and regulation for operators and better information for potential travellers to influence their decision making and assist them in making the right choice. APEC has an important advisory role to play and can facilitate exchange of information, and awareness of best practice guides and codes of conduct.

7. Session 5: Voluntourism best practice guidelines - case study

Mr Hugh Felton, Senior Sustainable Tourism Executive at ABTA Travel Association, presented a case study of developing volunteer tourism best practice guidelines. Mr Felton coordinated the development of ABTA Volunteer Tourism Guidelines (2016). Mr Felton talked about the motivations behind the development of the guidelines as a response to the concerns around the growing voluntourism industry, in order to guide business in how to provide best practice experiences and products.

Mr Felton communicated the power of this niche market to do good and bring benefits to local communities and destinations. However, he also raised critical issues that must be considered. In particular human rights, and the rights of children, and in this regard, particularly the issue of volunteer work in residential care/orphanages. Animal welfare was also raised as a serious issue which voluntourism must address appropriately. In many cases, the negative impacts caused by voluntourism are unintentional from the perspective of both the volunteer and the organisation.

The ABTA Volunteer Tourism Guidelines were developed with engagement from NGOs, voluntourism organisations, and charities. The guidelines are pragmatic, written in positive language and designed primarily to help operators provide best practice voluntourism. The guidelines are currently voluntary, designed to be a resource for operators to improve their standards and voluntourism programs.

8. Session 6: Achieving best practice APEC economies panel

APEC member economy government perspectives

A panel session was held in the afternoon with a mix of government and industry representatives enabling an exchange of thoughts and ideas of how to initiate best practice in voluntourism. The panel consisted of three APEC Member representatives from Malaysia, Russia and Australia and the three guest speaker industry representatives.

Malaysia - government led voluntourism initiative

Ms Jamie Yeoh Acting Under Secretary, Industry Development Division of Malaysia began the panel with an overview of the government of Malaysia's current initiatives to develop voluntourism. The government program 1Malaysia Voluntourism, has been developed in response to market demand and "the spirit of volunteering fuelling tourism growth". The niche market of voluntourism complements community-based tourism, is able to support rural livelihoods, and links in with existing homestay programs. Malaysia started with domestic volunteers, to ensure that communities rather than foreign companies benefitted from voluntourism. This also allowed for local communities to become more familiar with the concept of volunteering.

The government of Malaysia has implemented a domestic volunteer program primarily with the youth market, preparing their young people to be host to international voluntourists. The program, developed over three years, has placed a focus on community readiness by growing the domestic volunteer market. There has been early success in attracting high yield exclusive (island based/limited number of people) conservation voluntourism activities. Voluntourism packages developed have been segmented into social, conservation and culture. One hundred packages have been sold so far, with wildlife and conservation the most popular activities. Packages range from one week to three months. Key considerations are limiting carrying capacity especially on islands, and having ISO certifications for standard

operations. Malaysia has a cross-sectoral National Voluntourism Council based on three principles: Do not cause harm or create problems, create business opportunities for communities, ISO and standard guidelines for operations. Because this is a government led initiative, it is possible for Malaysia to control the marketing messages as well as the management of the voluntourism program.

Russia's approach to voluntourism

Ms Olga Ismagilova of the APEC Study Center Russia briefly introduced Russia's take on voluntourism. Russia does not have a developed voluntourism market, in fact for Russia voluntourism is domestic volunteers, volunteering at specific events. This is supported by the Russian government. For example at the Sochi Olympic Games, there were 25,000 domestic volunteers – people who had travelled from other places in Russia for the event and stayed there for one or more nights. Other popular voluntourism activities are nature and conservation based programs, for example touristic site maintenance and nature based tourism infrastructure development. Ms Ismagilova highlighted the general lack of research into voluntourism in other countries, and added that for Russia their market share would be a small percentage of the global voluntourism market.

Australia voluntourism: recent policy initiatives

Ms Melanie Crosswell, Director Services & Tourism Exports at the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade Australia, gave an overview of the Australian Government's recent policy initiatives relating to voluntourism.

The Australian Government had invested in sending Australian volunteers overseas for over sixty years. Under the Australian Government program Australian Volunteers for International Development, 1,345 volunteers were sent to 29 countries, with 93% located in the Asia Pacific region in 2015-16. Key areas for voluntary work were health, education, agriculture and government, and 95% of new assignments were aligned with Australia Aid investment plans. The focus was on upskilling local communities and transferring skills – using Australian expertise to develop local capacity.

The current program, delivered by AVI and Scope Global would finish at the end of 2017. The new Australian Volunteers Program would be delivered by AVI in consortium with Cardro and the Whitelum Group from 2018. The AVI Principles for Responsible International Volunteering are:

1. Requires the right person in the right organisation. The organisation is credible, reputable, transparent, accountable and committed to a long term partnership for development. The Individual is a good fit for skills but also importantly, soft skills, such as knowledge and personality.
2. Volunteer opportunities should be locally driven, locally identified priorities and equitable relationships (not imposed).
3. Contribute to developing the capacity of organisations and people – a mutual exchange between volunteers and the local community.
4. Volunteer Placements should be realistic – driven by local need, not by the supply of volunteers.
5. Everyone involved should be safe and participate willingly.

The Australian Government promoted responsible volunteering, especially when dealing with children. They were aware a number of NGOs were campaigning for a ban on Australian's volunteering/supporting orphanages. Recognising it was a complex issue, the Australian Government was looking to support Australians by providing more accessible information on where best to direct their volunteering efforts. The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade

was in discussions with the tourism sector, reputable NGO and the Department of Education and Training on ways to increase awareness on this issue. This would help Australians to do their due diligence to minimise the risk of inadvertently supporting adverse outcomes. It would direct support towards organisations and programs that had strong child protection safeguards in place. Information was included in the Volunteering Overseas Guide on the Australian Government's Smart Traveller website:

<http://smartraveller.gov.au/guide/Pages/volunteering-overseas.aspx>).

Government and industry panel discussion

A panel discussion with industry guest speakers followed the introductions from the three APEC economy representatives. Discussion centered around the differences between managing voluntourism and regular tourism, including the number one priority of putting the community first, and balancing the profit motives of industry with short and long term community interests.

From a government point of view, it is vital to think about national and local priorities and understand what communities wish to achieve from voluntourism, and to then set appropriate standards and frameworks around it. This links into wider tourism debates about 'the social license to operate', and ensuring that local culture and way of life is not eroded by tourism/voluntourism development. More sustainable outcomes from voluntourism can be achieved by clear goals and roadmaps being set by the community and then fitting in volunteers to help achieve those goals. Setting limits on the carrying capacity of certain places is important so that local communities are not overwhelmed.

Tourism can be a way to preserve culture, limiting the carrying capacity can help to ensure indigenous cultures are not harmed by voluntourism, and that the voluntourist experience is more authentic. The management of the tourism dollar is also something to consider when developing best practice voluntourism, including how much flows into the local economy and how that money is distributed within the community.

For governments, the development of voluntourism could add value when linked to broader national strategies, for example conservation, tourism or national economic development. This may include linking voluntourism activities to help to achieve specific objectives in broader strategic plans. Regulation and compliance monitoring takes time and resources. One strategy to overcome this – where possible - is to link the regulation of voluntourism controls to existing codes and regulation frameworks.

Voluntourism is fast changing, dynamic and complex. To achieve best practice, as the voluntourism industry evolves and develops, there is a critical role for information sharing, and learning from different case study settings of lessons learnt and steps taken to initiate best practice. There is an acknowledged role of continuous learning and improvement by all stakeholders – the voluntourists, voluntourism industry, and government.

9. Workshop outcomes and achievements

Relevance of the project and the Workshop

A post Workshop feedback survey (Appendix 4) was distributed to participants after the Workshop. All of the nineteen participants gave feedback (a response rate of 100%).

For the majority of participants, the project and the Workshop agenda items were relevant to their economy. Over two-thirds of participants felt the broader project is very relevant to them and their economy (Figure 1). All survey respondents (79%) strongly agreed/agreed (21%) that the agenda items and topics that covered in the Workshop were relevant to their needs and interests (Figure 2).

Figure 1: How relevant is the TWG 01 2016 Voluntourism Best Practice project to you and your economy?

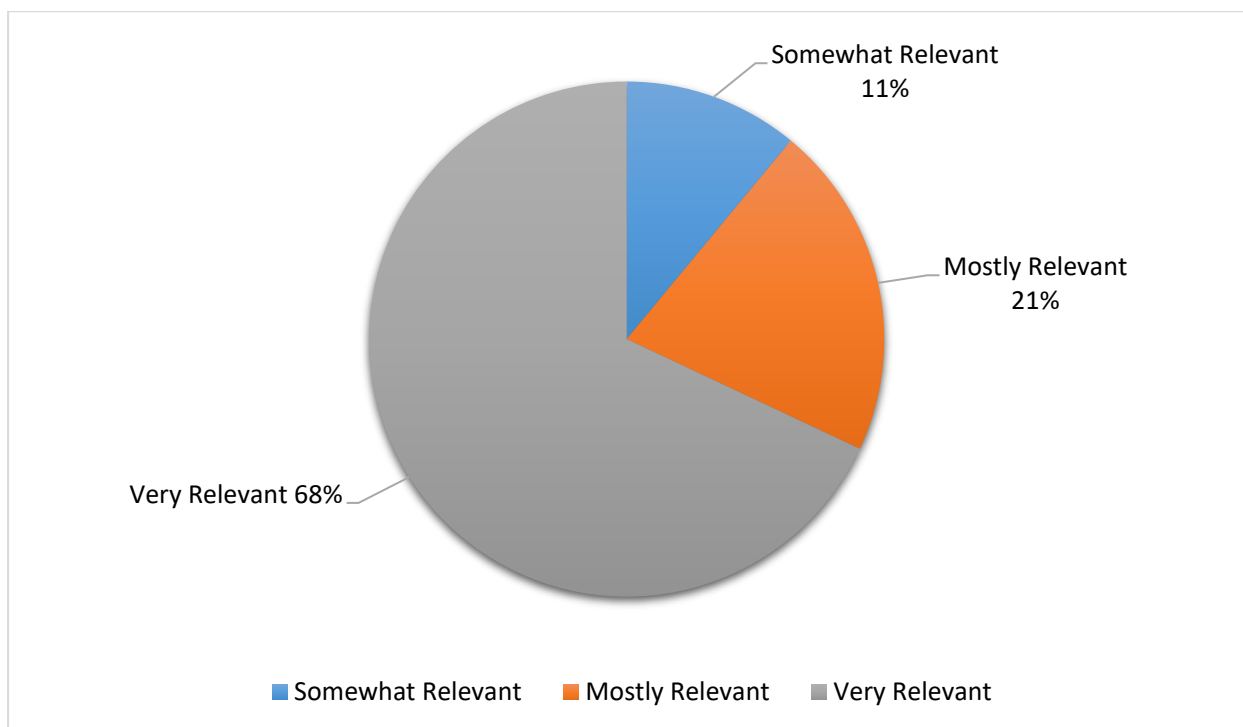
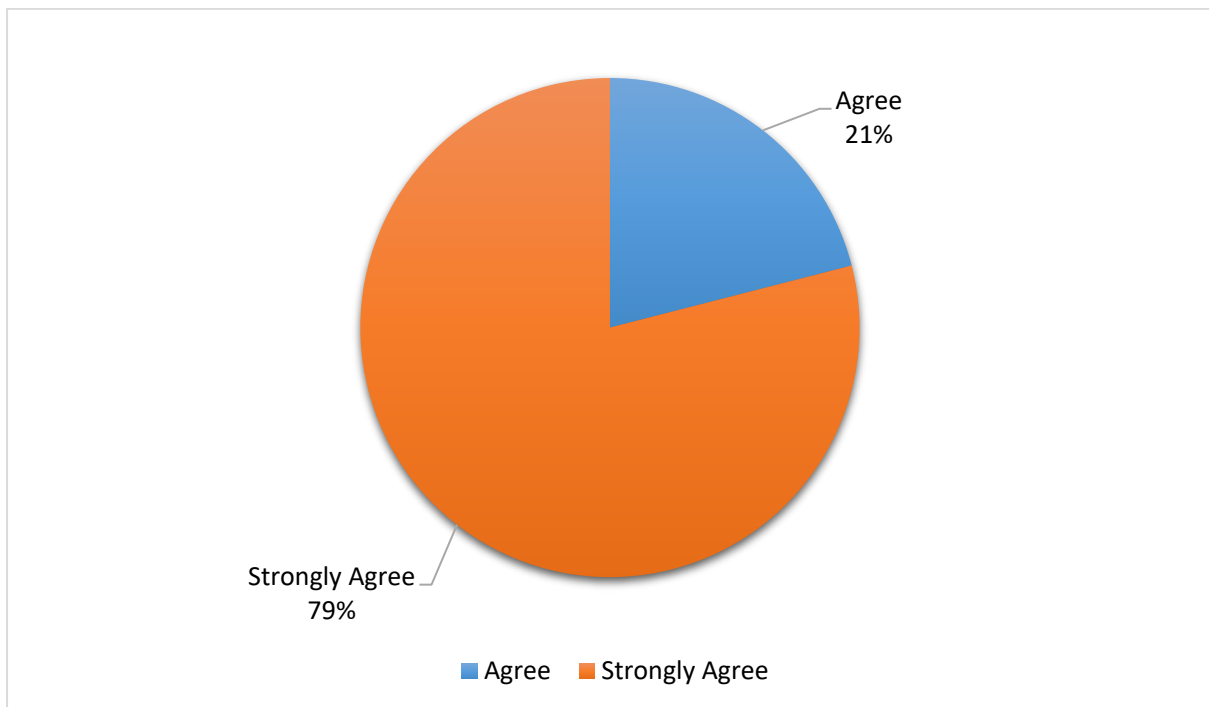


Figure 2: The agenda items and topics covered were relevant

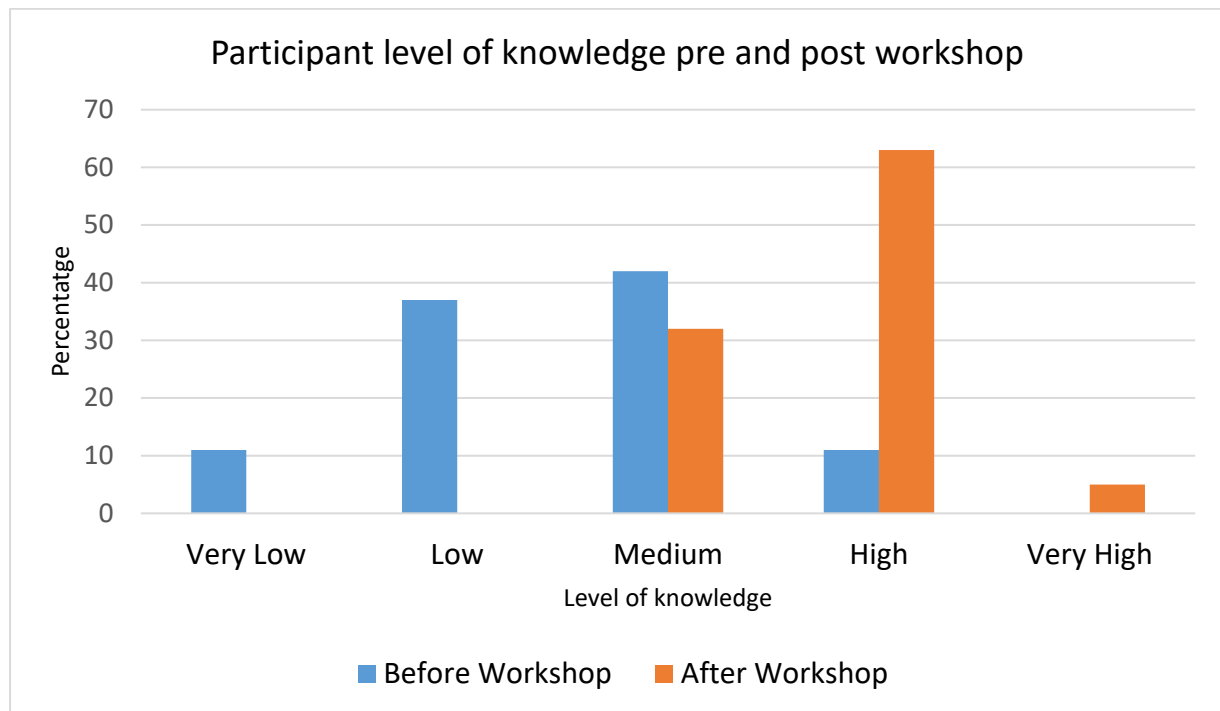


Knowledge gained from the Workshop

Most participants stated they had an average to low knowledge of voluntourism prior to the Workshop. Over one third had a low level of knowledge, and 10% had a very low level. Forty-two percent of respondents stated that they had a medium level of knowledge and the remaining 10% had a high level of knowledge.

Following the Workshop, the overall level of knowledge increased significantly, with over half of participants saying that their level of knowledge of voluntourism was high (63%) or very high (5%). No participants felt they had low levels of knowledge following the Workshop, with around one-third (32%) saying that their level of knowledge was medium. The Workshop opened up broader perspectives for participants, and helped people to realise the complexity of the phenomenon, this can be seen reflected in the overall rise in knowledge, especially those going from high to very high (Figure 3).

Figure 3: Level of knowledge and skills pre and post Workshop attendance



Participants specifically communicated that they had gained the following knowledge from the Workshop:

- An understanding of the meaning of ‘voluntourism’, the concept and the different approaches (n=7).
- The impacts of voluntourism both positive and negative (n=5).
- Best practice approaches for voluntourism with practical examples provided (n=4).
- Awareness of the array of existing guidelines and principles around voluntourism (n=4).

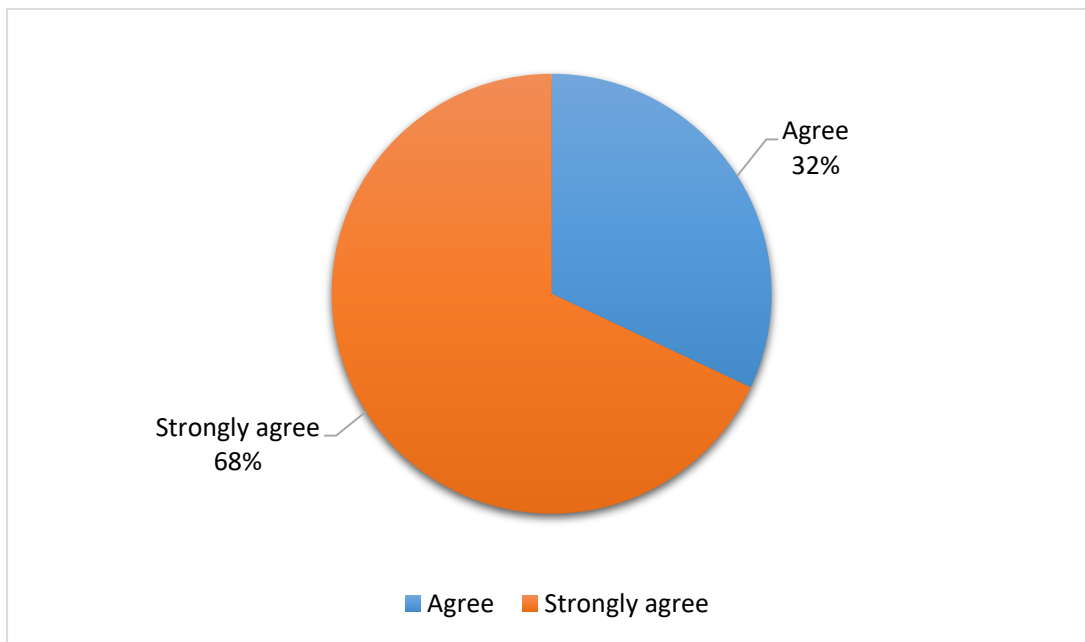
Application of Workshop content and knowledge

Participants were asked how they would apply the knowledge they had gained at the Workshop. While not all took the opportunity to add comments, the most common response was to enhance or create new policy initiatives and this would include sharing best practice (n=8). Others (n=6) noted that they would create new work plans, and engage in discussions around the development of these. Engaging with a number of stakeholders (government, community and business) was another way participants (n=5) would apply the knowledge. Some participants commented that in developing voluntourism, they had learnt that there is a need to focus on community benefit (n=2) and managing visitor expectations (n=2).

Organisation and facilitation of the Workshop

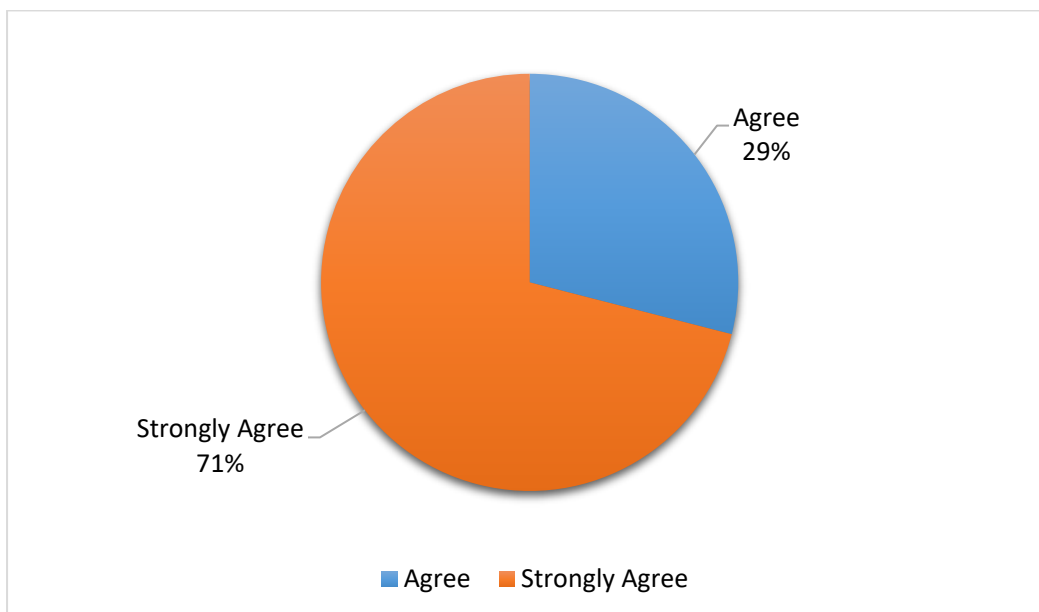
The majority of respondents strongly agreed that the objectives of the Workshop were clearly defined (68%), with the remaining 32% agreeing that the objectives were distinct (Figure 4).

Figure 4: The objectives of the Workshop were clearly defined



All participants strongly agreed (68%) or agreed (32%) that the facilitators and the guest speakers were well prepared and knowledgeable about voluntourism (Figure 5).

Figure 5: The facilitators and speakers were well prepared and knowledgeable about the topic



Participants also agreed that the time allowed for the Workshop was sufficient (53% agreed, and 47% strongly agreed). A majority of respondents agreed (59%)/strongly agreed (18%) that gender issues were sufficiently covered.

Workshop Achievements

The key Workshop achievements were communicated by participants to be:

- Highlighting and sharing best practice in voluntourism, lessons learnt that can be applied to specific economies.
- A greater understanding of the concept of voluntourism.
- Awareness of the challenges and opportunities that voluntourism brings.
- Bringing together policy makers and industry to discuss a topical issue.
- Networking opportunity.

Workshop Improvements

Workshop participants were asked how the Workshop could have been improved. Overall there were relatively few comments made. The only significant feedback received (n=7) focused on the value of encouraging wider participation of other APEC TWG economies. Other suggestions for improvement included more time for discussion (n=3), more research completed prior to the Workshop (n=1) and site visits (n=1).

10. Recommendations for APEC

Workshop participants gave feedback for APEC TWG on how to move forward with the project. There was support for the development and implementation of best practice guidelines. Best practice elements of voluntourism could also be integrated into existing codes and frameworks at an APEC level or member economy level.

The entire supply chain, both the supply and demand sides of voluntourism, need to be thought of when trying to initiate best practice. For example, shaping demand and educating the voluntourist about best practice will place pressure on the industry to raise their standards to align with best practice. Alongside a set of guidelines/policies, it was recommended that checklists be created that both destinations and operators/sending organisations/receiving organisations could utilise to evaluate whether or not voluntourism is a market they wish to develop.

Workshop participants (n=5) communicated that in order to manage voluntourism, multi-stakeholder engagement is required. Moving forward, some participants (n=4) pointed to a need to develop frameworks to evaluate both the positive and negative impacts of voluntourism in the APEC region.

11. Moving forward with the Guidebook

Each APEC member economy is at a different stage in the development of voluntourism as a niche industry. For some, such as the Philippines, there are multiple operators and a large voluntourism sector, for others, such as PNG there is a very small industry. For those just starting with voluntourism there is an opportunity to learn from others and to carefully plan and manage the establishment of the industry to ensure communities can benefit.

The APEC Voluntourism Guidebook will address gaps in the research, especially in the APEC region, of what constitutes best practice in voluntourism, what are the risks, and how these can be managed to enable positive impacts for local and indigenous communities.

Feedback from the Workshop relevant to the Guidebook

In order to inform technical and policy frameworks around voluntourism for the APEC region, Workshop participants were asked to provide three main messages that they would apply to the Guidebook. The top four messages were:

1. Information to educate voluntourists to make informed choices (n=7).
2. Communicate best practice (n=6).
3. Ensure multi-stakeholder (public, private, community) involvement (n=4).
4. The evaluation of voluntourism at a local and national level (n=4).

Other feedback included the need for a clear definition of voluntourism to be developed (n=3) and the importance of community involvement, trust and respect (n=3).

While each economy is at different stages, and operates in different contexts, the guidebook should have a set of standardised codes/checklists that can be applied across contexts and could be used to help inform the evaluation of voluntourism.

Definition of voluntourism for APEC Guidebook

There was debate around the definition of voluntourism, and acknowledgment that this definition be refined and finalised for the purpose of the Guidebook. At individual economy level this definition could be adapted to suit individual contexts.

High risk voluntourism activities

The Workshop speakers highlighted some voluntourism activities that are high risk, in particular these included working with children in residential care and working with animals. These two issues will be addressed in the Guidebook.

Importance of voluntourism value chain

A key topic that the Workshop explored in initiating best practice was the importance of the value chain, including supply and demand factors. On the one hand it is important to educate voluntourists to make ethical choices, and link them to best practice operators. On the other hand, it is also important to help operators and local partners achieve best practice standards.

Appendix

Appendix 1: Workshop Programme



NEW ZEALAND TOURISM
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APEC TWG 01 2016 Voluntourism Best Practices Workshop: Promoting Inclusive Community-Based Sustainable Tourism Initiatives, 9th October 2017,

The Eastern and Oriental Hotel, Penang, Malaysia

Programme

The objective of the workshop is to share and discuss insights and best practices of voluntourism, including how to ensure that the industry brings benefits to all stakeholders

9th October 2017

Time	Topic	Presenter	Description
8:30 – 9.00	Arrival and registration		
9.00 – 9.10	Opening remarks and introductions	Alcinda Trawen PNG Project Overseer	History and status of the project
9.10 – 9.15	Programme Overview	Ross Hopkins TRIP Consultants	Overview of Programme
9.15 – 10.30	Market Overview including Q&A	Eilidh Thorburn NZTRI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Introduction and background to the project - Project update - Market overview and visitor profile
10.30 – 11.00	Morning Tea		
11.00 – 12.30	Voluntourism - Challenges and Opportunities The Operator Perspective	Eilidh Thorburn NZTRI Clair Bennett PEPY Tours Shelley Bragg –Good Travel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Preliminary Research Findings - Key Issues - Operator experiences and 'Best Practice'
12.30 – 13.30	Lunch		
13.30 – 14.15	Best Practice Guidelines - Overview	Ross Hopkins – TRIP Consultants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Overview of Current Codes, Guidelines and Schemes
14.15 – 15.00	Best Practice Guidelines - Example	Hugh Felton – ABTA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ABTA Voluntourism Guidelines
15.00 – 15.30	Afternoon Tea		
15.30 – 16.45	Achieving Best Practice in APEC Economies Panel Discussions	– Shelley Bragg, Clair Bennett, Hugh Felton, Jaime Yeoh (Malaysia), Olga Ismagilova (Russia), Melanie Crosswell (Australia)	Panel discussions on achieving best practice and Q&A session
16.45 – 17.00	Conclusions, next steps and evaluations	Ross Hopkins – TRIP Consultants	

APEC WORKSHOP ON VOLUN–TOURISM BEST PRACTICES

09TH OCTOBER 2017, PENANG, MALAYSIA

PARTICIPANTS REGISTRATION LIST

No	Participant Name	Economy/Organisation
1	Melanie Crosswell	Australia DFAT
2	Tran Thi Phuong Nhung	Viet Nam
3	Claire Bennett	Pepy Tours
4	Olga Ismagilova	Russian APEC Study Center
5	Liugh Felton	ABTA – Travel Association
6	Philemon Senginawa	Papua New Guinea High Commission
7	Milagros Say	Philippines
8	Alex Macatuno	Philippines
9	Manette Reyes	Philippines
10	Filbert Ian Tan	Philippines
11	Stephanie Vu	Macau, China
12	Barbara Masike-Liri	The Nature Conservancy
13	Desmond Vaghelo	West New Britain Provincial Government
14	Kazuo Chujo	Japan Travel Association, Japan
15	Ingrid Kuman	PNG Tourism Promotion Authority
16	Terence Vincent	PNG Tourism Promotion Authority
17	Shelly Bragg	GOOD Travel
18	Faziana Farook	Ministry of Tourism & Culture Malaysia
19	Moad Effizal Piros Ahmad	Ministry of Tourism & Culture Malaysia

Appendix 3: Summary of Codes/Guidelines

Type/Name	Description/Comments
Codes	
International Volunteer Guidelines for Commercial Tour Operators The International Ecotourism Society	<p>The Guidelines</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reality Check <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Voluntourism projects must be developed within the local communities' needs, and not the travellers' or the company's needs, as the first priority - Create opportunities for lasting impact, and not quick change, that are sustainable - Conduct a thorough analysis of various alternatives, and develop voluntourism programmes only if voluntourism is determined as a suitable option 2. Marketing and Messaging <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Use messaging strategies that clearly convey the goals of voluntourism programmes, why they are important and how they make a difference - Avoid all forms of poverty marketing – such as using images or words which belittle or degrade local people 3. Selecting and Working with Volunteers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Proactively assist prospective Volunteers with finding projects that appropriately match their interests, skills, budgets and availability - Provide clear explanations on goals and objectives of volunteer projects, in order to avoid unrealistic expectations or misunderstanding - Utilise pre-trip orientation to ensure appropriate levels of cross-cultural understanding - Provide sufficient information on volunteer opportunities that are available to travellers with special needs - Implement steps to gather feedback from participating volunteers and promptly address any negative feedback - Clearly communicate about the possibility that volunteering is not the right option for some travellers due to a variety of reasons, and offer advice on other options to contribute towards community goals 4. Defining Success and Measuring Impacts <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Conduct community needs assessment in order to ensure that needs are being met and benefits delivered - Collaborate with local partners to clearly define what the success means to the organisations, community and volunteers - Implement a system to conduct third party community needs assessment on a regular basis - Establish a system to monitor progress and measure impact, taking into account local capacity building needs and improvements - Clearly outline and implement a consistent process in which volunteers who behave inappropriately are removed from the project

	<p>5. Transparency and Financial Reporting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Implement a system of reporting to identify how much per trip goes to support community programmes - Employ a consistent method of calculating an reporting on both cash and in kind donations <p>6. Transparency in Non-Financial Reporting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Make public information on short term and long term impacts of voluntourism programmes - Include transparent reporting on the results of regular community needs assessments - Show not just tell the values of community voluntourism programs <p>7. Benefits for Communities and Local Engagement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensure effective approaches to collaboration with communities - Provide sufficient information to community of the effectiveness of volunteer projects and expected long and short term impacts - Seek feedback from the community members regarding their experience of hosting and interaction with volunteers <p>8. Managing Social and Economic Impacts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop and implement a code of conduct regarding working with local and indigenous communities, families and children and respecting their needs, rights and priorities - Maximise the opportunities to provide financial benefits for local people through local employment, capacity building and fair trade practices - Voluntourism providers should comply with responsible business practices, but also support efforts to combat all types of sexual exploitation in destinations and tourism establishments - Require background checks before selecting volunteers (including) criminal history, in order to provide safety to all parties - Implement a strict zero tolerance policy to ensure there is no inappropriate behaviours by volunteers when interacting with children <p>9. Supporting Biodiversity Conservation and Heritage Preservation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop and manage wildlife conservation and heritage preservation related projects with an emphasis on local context - Implement a strict code of conduct for volunteers when they come into conduct with heritage/cultural assets - Implement a strict code of conduct for volunteers when interacting with wildlife
<p>The Code</p>	<p>Orphanage Tourism Code - Covers organisations offering voluntourism products and organisations involved in orphanage activities as tourism attractions – aims to manage and minimise the risk of sexual exploitation of children in travel and tourism</p> <p>Orphanage tourism can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Fuel the growth in orphanages

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Separate children from their families - Disrupt children’s development - Put children at risk of abuse <p>The Code does not accept membership from voluntourism organisations involved in orphanage tourism (from January 2018 onwards)</p> <p>The Code does accept membership from organisations involved in voluntourism activities that include teaching, sports and day care that have established policies to minimise risks and maximise benefits for children</p> <p>Criteria includes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Need to demonstrate child protection policy and procedures - Demonstrate procedures to check travellers – criminal record, undertaking of good conduct, provision of awareness training to traveller, feedback from travellers
<p>International Volunteer Programs Association (IVPA) Non-Profit accredited body</p>	<p>Membership is based on adherence to 35 Principles and Practices based around 4 Areas – Pre-Program – Program – Post Program and Organisational</p> <p>Membership is based on general adherence to principles and practices</p> <p>Pre-Program</p> <p>Materials are clear and accurate – applications open to all but can be rejected – suggested means of fundraising for participants – thorough pre-departure orientation including detailed material on work sites and placement expectation, safety and travel information has medical insurance requirements for volunteers – clearly defines expectations and volunteer responsibilities</p> <p>Program</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In country staff employed and resident in country of volunteer project and in reliable country partner organisations - Wherever possible supports existing projects and existing agencies/NGOs - Has clear policy on donations - Maintains a standard disciplinary procedure - Demonstrates quality customer service through responses - Housing/homestay is clean safe and hygienic <p>Post Program</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Conducts survey/evaluation of volunteers - Promotes sharing of experiences including alumni - Collects feedback from global partners and communities at least annually and assesses impact of volunteers and community concerns <p>Organisational Operations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Conducts annual financial audit - 24 hour emergency contact detailed information on fees spent - Current liability insurance - Accurate clear and non-exploitative information provided - Active Board meeting twice yearly (if not for profit) - Runs programs in accordance with laws domestically and abroad

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Promotes conservation and waste reduction - Responds promptly to complaints and refund policy in place. - Has an operational manual including participant declaration
Ayana Journeys: Responsible Tourism Policy	<p>The Policy aligns with UNWTO Global Sustainable Tourism Criteria</p> <p>Core values are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ethical engaging travel that facilitates genuine connections and learning opportunities - Using responsible travel to promote and support grass roots community projects - Using travel to inspire a generation of global citizens who feel compassionate towards fellow human beings <p>The Policy is focused around</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Effective Sustainability and Planning - Maximising social and economic benefits for the community - Enhancing cultural heritage - Reducing negative impacts to the environment
Comhlámh	<p>Updated in 2016, The Code provides a set of standards for volunteering agencies to ensure volunteering has a positive impact on the three main stakeholders; the volunteer, the sending agency and the local project and community.</p> <p>Approx 42 agencies committed to the Code.</p> <p>11 principles – 18 core indicators – total of 44 indicators</p>
United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) Global Code of Ethics for Tourism	<p>Adopted in 1999 and further revised, The Code's 10 principles amply cover the economic, social, cultural and environmental components of travel and tourism. The Code includes voluntary implementation mechanism for stakeholders. The Code is aimed at a wide range of stakeholders, government, industry, tourists and community.</p>
APEC/PATA Code for Sustainable Tourism	<p>Adopted in 2001 as a commitment to environmentally and culturally sustainable tourism. The Code provides a strategic commitment by APEC members to the further development of specific tools and frameworks such as policies, standards, regulations and accreditation schemes to facilitate sustainable tourism development.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Conserve the natural environment, ecosystems and biodiversity 2. Respect and support local traditions, cultures and communities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensure that community attitudes, local customs and cultural values and the role of women and children are understood in the planning and implementation of tourism projects - Provide opportunities for the wider community to take part in discussion on tourism planning issues - Contribute to the identify and pride of the local communities through providing quality tourism products and services sensitive to those communities 3. Maintain environmental management systems 4. Conserve energy and reduce waste and pollutants

	<p>5. Encourage a tourism commitment to environments and cultures</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Foster in management and staff of all tourism projects and activities, an awareness of environmental and cultural values - Encourage all those who provide services to tourism enterprises to participate through environmentally and socially responsible actions <p>6. Educate and inform others about local environments and cultures</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Enhance the appreciation and understanding by tourists of natural environments and cultural sensitivities through the provision of accurate information and appropriate interpretation <p>7. Cooperate with others to sustain environments and cultures</p>
<p>Voluntary Service Overseas (VSO) Checklist for Voluntourists</p>	<p>VSO has devised this checklist designed to assess the gap year travel providers' commitment to volunteering. VSO advises you to ask these important questions before you choose your gap year travel provider:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Will you be given a defined role and purpose? 2. Will you meet face to face with your provider and attend a selection day to assess your suitability for the volunteering opportunities and gain detailed information about the structure of your placement? 3. How much will it cost and what does this pay for? 4. How will you be supported with training and personal development needs before, during and after your placement? 5. Is the work you do linked to long-term community partnerships that have a lasting impact? And how do volunteers work in partnership with the local community? 6. Does the organisation you are going with have established offices overseas that work in partnership with local people? 7. Can your organisation guarantee you 24 hour a day health, safety and security assistance? 8. Does the organisation have a commitment to diversity amongst its volunteers? 9. How does the organisation encourage long-term awareness of real development issues? 10. How will your work be monitored and evaluated so that others can build on what you have done?
<p>European Voluntary Service (EVS) Accreditation Guidelines</p>	<p>Developed by the European Union (EU), the EVS is linked to the European Union's Erasmus+ Programme which facilitates students across the EU study in different member countries. Accreditation is compulsory for organisations who want to send or receive volunteers from the programme. An online platform – the European Youth Portal, is provided with a link to all accredited programmes. The EVS has a volunteer charter, and organisations must comply with the principles in the charter in order to become accredited. Assessment for accreditation is based on the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Motivation and experience • Training evaluation, partnerships and agreements

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organisational aims, activities and capabilities • Health and safety, risk assessment and planning • Future project planning and inclusion criteria for lower socio-economic volunteers • Planning evaluation • Open and transparent recruitment process <p>The accreditation process includes a paper application and an onsite visit and is managed at a regional (EU wide) government level.</p>
Key Tools and Resources for Voluntourism Providers	
FTTSA – Fair Trade in Tourism South Africa	Certification Programme including certified standards for voluntourism organisations
IVPA (international Volunteer Programmes Association)	IVPA membership organisation which develops and supports Principles and Practices framework to ensure programme quality and guide volunteer choice.
PEPY Tours	Voluntourism 101 – a tool to assist tour operators and volunteer sending agencies check their own practices against best practice and the Learning Service Guidelines to assist travellers and tour operators assess the educational impact of travel
Tourism Concern	The Gap Year and International Volunteering Standards (GIVS) promotes best practice in international voluntourism
Year Out Group	Members Charter – members charter agreement to ensure best practice
The Tourism Child Protection Code	THE Code for the protection of children from sexual exploitation is an industry driven initiative supported by ECPAT (Ending Child Prostitution and Poverty) in partnership with UNICEF and UNWTO
International Ecotourism Society	Through membership services, industry outreach and educational programs, TIES is committed to helping organisations, communities and individuals promote and practice the principles of ecotourism. TIES currently has members in more than 190 countries and territories, representing various professional fields and industry segments including: academics, consultants, conservation professionals and organisations, governments, architects, tour operators, lodge owners and managers, general development experts, and ecotourists. They developed the International Voluntourism Guidelines for Commercial Tour Operators to facilitate best practice.
GSTC (Global Sustainable Tourism Council)	Established around four main themes (effective sustainability planning; maximising social and economic benefits for the local community; enhancing cultural heritage; reducing negative impacts to the environment and providing minimum standards for sustainable tourism.

Appendix 4: Post Workshop Evaluation Survey



APEC Voluntourism Workshop Evaluation Survey:

APEC Project Name/Number: _TWG 01 2016 APEC Workshop on Volun-Tourism Best Practices

The objective of the workshop is to share and discuss insights and best practices in voluntourism, including how to ensure that the industry brings benefits to all stakeholders.

Date: 9 October 2017

Instructions: Please indicate your level of agreement with the statements listed in the table below.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree
The objectives of the workshop were clearly defined			
The agenda items and topics covered were relevant			
The content was well organised and easy to follow			
Gender issues were sufficiently addressed during the workshop			
The facilitators and speakers were well prepared and knowledgeable about the topic			
The time allotted for the workshop was sufficient			

1. How relevant is this project (APEC Voluntourism Best Practice Guidelines) to you and your economy?

5 4 3 2 1
Very mostly somewhat a little not much

2. Rate your level of knowledge of and skills in the topic prior to participating in the workshop:

5 4 3 2 1
Very high high medium low very low

3. Rate your level of knowledge of and skills in the topic after participating in the workshop:

5 4 3 2 1
Very high high medium low very low

4. In your view what were the workshop's results/achievements?

5. What new knowledge did you gain from this event?



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6. Please list your top three messages that you think should be used to inform technical and policy frameworks for voluntourism in your economy or the wider APEC region

i)

ii)

iii)

7. How will you apply the workshop content and knowledge gained at the workshop in your workplace? Please provide examples (e.g. develop new policy initiatives, organise trainings, develop work plans/strategies, draft regulations, develop new procedures/tools etc.).

8. What needs to be done next by APEC TWG?

9. How could the workshop have been improved?

Participant information (identifying information is optional):

Name:

Organisation/Economy:

Email:

Gender: M / F

Thank you. Your evaluation is important in helping us to assess this workshop, improve project quality and plan next steps.