Increasing the Readiness and Resiliency of Tourism Destination Stakeholders in Managing Health Crises in APEC Economies

APEC Tourism Working Group

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1.0   EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Tourism is prone to crises, and history has witnessed different crisis typologies impacting the tourism industry globally. Most tourism crises, mainly man-made and natural, were often localized and constrained in some geographical regions. However, health crises have become recurrent, and their widespread extends beyond borders. The recent COVID-19 pandemic has caused both health and economic calamities. Thus, tourism destinations should be prepared with a comprehensive health crisis management strategy to manage and mitigate the adverse impacts of future health crises. Based on this premise, this APEC project aims to pool important insights from tourism stakeholders on the complex and intricate nature of tourism when affected by health crises, its mobilization and assessment of resources, particularly on the preparedness, resiliency and long-term viability of tourism destinations within the APEC economies. The project aim is achieved through the fulfilment of the following objectives: i) enhancing capacity building of tourism destination stakeholders through workshop and case study research in selected APEC economies; ii) assisting tourism stakeholders in preparing, managing, and mitigating the adverse impacts of future health crises that affect the tourism industry; and iii) promoting sustainable tourism development through strategic management of crises and disasters, in particular health crises.

Four key milestone activities as part of the contractors' services have been conducted: i) a virtual roundtable discussion; ii) hybrid case studies in six selected APEC economies (China; Japan; Malaysia; Papua New Guinea; the Philippines; and Viet Nam); iii) a hybrid workshop; and iv) a publication of a handbook as the final project output. The activities outline the core issues of a systematic approach to managing health risks and crises that affect tourism, including the necessary organisational structures, accountabilities, policies, and procedures. They are also used to dichotomise the health crisis phenomena into typical and atypical instances by cross-economy comparisons at micro and macro-organisational levels.

2.0   INTRODUCTION TO HEALTH CRISIS MANAGEMENT IN TOURISM

A health crisis in tourism arises when a contagious disease or illness significantly threatens the well-being and safety of both travelers and local communities in a specific destination. This situation can disrupt the tourism sector as travelers may hesitate to visit affected areas, and governments may impose travel restrictions to contain the spread of the disease. Consequently, the tourism industry is likely to experience a decline as people fear contracting the illness, resulting in adverse consequences for businesses. Additionally, financial setbacks may occur due to the cancellation of flights and hotel reservations, which are crucial for businesses relying on tourism.

The COVID-19 pandemic serves as a recent example of a health crisis profoundly impacting the tourism industry. Governments worldwide implemented travel restrictions and lockdown measures to control the virus, leading to a significant decrease in tourism. Furthermore, the pandemic prompted transformations within the tourism sector, emphasizing the implementation of health and safety protocols such as social distancing, mask-wearing, and proper hand hygiene. Thus, health crises have significantly impacted the tourism industry, prompting stakeholders to adapt and adjust their crisis management strategies. In the past, health crises were often considered isolated incidents that could be contained through standard crisis management protocols. However, the catastrophic effects of the COVID-19 pandemic in recent years have demonstrated that health crises can rapidly spread and have

enduring impacts on the tourism industry and the global economy. Post-crisis, tourism stakeholders are now more focused on long-term preparedness and prevention, with an effective response depending on the adaptive behaviors of citizens, local authorities, rescue workers, and organizations, among others. This underscores the importance of transitioning to resilience-building activities for individuals, organizations, communities, and destinations, forming a collaborative network.

In the pre-crisis stage, stakeholders identify threats and concentrate on reducing risks while preparing for potential crises. The "reduce" element involves risk assessments, prevention measures, surveillance systems, and resource allocation. The "prepare" element encompasses emergency plans, training, communication strategies, and collaboration. During the crisis stage, three elements come into play: "alert," which involves recognizing and communicating the crisis; "notify and escalate," disseminating information and involving relevant stakeholders; and "manage crisis situation," focusing on response plans, coordination, resource mobilization, and decision-making. In the post-crisis stage, stakeholders strive to restore normalcy while learning and upgrading their crisis management. This involves rebuilding infrastructure, restoring tourist confidence, attracting visitors, evaluating responses, sharing knowledge, and implementing improvements for future resilience and sustainability. By addressing these elements, stakeholders can successfully recover the industry, rebuild visitor trust, learn from the crisis, and enhance their readiness for the future.

3.0 SUMMARY AND KEY LEARNINGS FROM THE VIRTUAL ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION

The virtual roundtable discussion was held on 7 November 2022 from 8:00 until 11:00 (Malaysia Time GMT +8.00) through the CISCO Webex Platform hosted by UniSZA Consultancy Sdn. Bhd. Initially, this activity was supposed to be a two-day event. Still, the contractor managed to cover the entire agenda in one session since the discussion was conducted in a focused group discussion (FGD) format. The participants hailed from various APEC economies, ensuring a rich and well-rounded perspective. The geographical distribution of participants reflected a global spectrum, with 5% joining from China, 14% from Indonesia, 18% from Japan, 27% from the Philippines, and a significant 36% from Malaysia. This global representation not only added depth to the discussions but also brought forth a multitude of experiences and insights. In terms of gender representation, the roundtable achieved a commendable balance, with 36% of the participants being female. This inclusivity presents the commitment to diversity, fostering a dynamic and holistic dialogue on the subjects at hand.

The discussion started with an introduction and presentation on the project purpose, planned activities, timelines, deliverables, and final output by the contractor, and subsequently, it was followed by brainstorming on the framework components of health crisis management in tourism. The discussion was lengthy and interactive, and the participants generally agreed with the proposed draft of the integrated framework for health crisis management in tourism with slight modifications. The structured framework will facilitate a nuanced understanding of health crisis typology, delve into the enablers and factors crucial for effective crisis management, and explore pre and post-crisis strategies adaptable to various scenarios. It will also include a pivotal aspect of evaluating the readiness and resiliency of tourism stakeholders, conducting comprehensive assessments to gauge adaptive capabilities.

4.0   SUMMARY AND KEY LEARNINGS FROM HYBRID CASE STUDIES OF SIX APEC ECONOMIES

Three onsite case studies for the Philippines; Viet Nam; and Malaysia were conducted with details as below:

Economy	Period	Activity	Stakeholders
The Philippines	20-24 November 2022	• FGD with academia and researchers. • Meetings with policy makers and industry practitioners. • Onsite observation of tourism infrastructure and facilities.	• The College of Tourism, Hospitality and Transportation Management, Polytechnic University of the Philippines; • College of Tourism and Hospitality Management, National University Manila. • Domestic Promotions Department, Tourism Promotions Board, the Philippines; • Department of Transportation, Toll Regulatory Board; • Tourism Infrastructure and Enterprise Zone Authority; • Policy Formulation and International Cooperation Division, the Philippines Department of Tourism (PDOT); • Statistics, Economic Analysis and Information Management Division (PDOT); • Council of Hotel and Restaurant Educators of the Philippines; • Makati, Central Manila, Intramuros.
Viet Nam	13 -17 December 2022	• In-depth interviews with tourism stakeholders. • Meetings with policymakers and academia.	• Micro, small and medium-sized tourism enterprises consisting of travel agencies, tour operators, restaurant owners, hoteliers, handicraft and merchandise traders, War Museum operator. • Tourism Malaysia Viet Nam; Faculty of Hospitality, Hoa Sen University.

		• Onsite observation of tourism infrastructure and facilities.	• Downtown Ho Chi Minh, Nguyen An Ninh, Ben Thanh Market.
Malaysia	December 2022	• Meetings and in-depth interviews with policymakers, researchers and medical practitioners.	• Ministry of Health Malaysia; National Security Council; Tourism Malaysia; ASEAN Division, Tourism Malaysia

As for the remaining three economies, the case study was conducted through a virtual platform. The information collected is also supported by the thematic analysis performed on the secondary data. Below are the details:

Economy	Period	Activity	Stakeholders
China	December 2022	• In-depth interviews with tourism academia, researchers, policymakers, industry practitioners and local community leaders. • Secondary data comprises of government communiqués and reports from statistical departments, news and global organisations.	• Tourism Malaysia Guangzhou; China International Travel Service, Sichuan; Sichuan Province China Youth Travel Service; Luoyang Normal University; Huizhou University.
Japan			• Japan Tourism Agency; Japan Institute of Tourism Research, Rikkyo University.
Papua New Guinea			• Local Community Organizations, Tourism Polytechnic Makassar*; Institut Teknologi Bandung*.

Interview respondents were selected based on their extensive work and research experience in Papua New Guinea despite their current affiliation in Indonesia.

The in-depth interviews, focus group discussion and onsite observation activities assist the researchers in learning directly from tourism stakeholders' (businesses and destinations) experience in developing and engaging their destination-unique tourism crisis management strategies for COVID-19 prevention, preparedness, response and recovery. The interview session was designed to provide a platform to stimulate open information exchange and learning. Through working with existing disaster management bodies, government agencies and key tourism stakeholders, the researchers learned how destinations address risk management issues and reduce the impact of crises and disasters on the growth and viability of their respective tourism industries.

Based on the in-depth interviews, focus group discussion and onsite observation, below are among the key learning points proposed by the selected APEC economies to reduce the vulnerability of tourism to crisis situations and to strengthen the resilience of the tourism sector:
• To eliminate the negative influence of bureaucracy on business and improve the capacity of public administration to act fast in crisis situations.
• To change attitudes and behaviors regarding the security management of tourist destinations in crisis conditions.

- To enhance the communication efforts on relaying information to the masses.
- To regain the trust of tourists through the safety and security of the tourist destinations.
- To increase the capacity of human resources to realize and better understand the risks of crises.
- To diversify the tourism business' portfolio through innovation and to attract new segments of visitors.
- To digitalize tourism businesses and modernize the way they are managed.
- To provide access to databases with useful information on preventive measures.

5.0   SUMMARY AND KEY LEARNINGS FROM A 4-DAY HYBRID WORKSHOP

The third milestone, a 4-Day Hybrid Workshop on 'Readiness and Resiliency of Tourism Destination Stakeholders in Managing Health Crises in APEC Economies', was conducted from 21-24 February 2023 at Melia Hotel, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. The main aim of this activity is to gather rich insights from economies at different stages of development and vital findings from the hybrid workshop will be incorporated to refine the final framework for the Handbook as one output document. Six speakers with proper qualifications and expertise were identified and invited to deliver their talks in the Hybrid Workshop. Three of them are female and this has satisfactorily addressed the issues of gender composition related to the speakers with the sex-disaggregated data at 50%.

The participants attending the workshop were at the strategic and managerial level from the public and private sectors, particularly in the tourism, hospitality, and health industries. These include the Ministry of Tourism, Arts and Culture, Malaysia Tourism Promotional Board, Malaysia Tourism Centre, Ministry of Health, Malaysia Healthcare Travel Council, National Disaster Management Agency, to name a few. Academia and researchers were also involved in the Hybrid Workshop. Women participants represented 52% of the participants attending the workshop. The table shows the itinerary of the Hybrid Workshop. All the sessions during the Hybrid Workshop were dynamic and interactive, and the participants generally agreed that they gained benefits in terms of receiving direct access to knowledge of health crisis management in tourism and best practices from diverse settings (developed, developing, less developing economies).

Itinerary of the Hybrid Workshop

Date	Session	Agenda
21 February 2023 (Tuesday)	9:00-9:15 9:15-9:30 9:30-10:30 10:30-11:00 11:00-12:45	Opening by Project Overseer Welcoming Remarks by General Manager, UniSZA Holdings Sdn. Bhd. Recapitulation: Virtual Roundtable Refreshment Recapitulation: Case Studies
	14:00-15:30 15:30-15:45 15:45-17:00	**Topic 1: An Evolution of Health Crisis Impacting the Global Tourism Industry** Speaker from Management and Science University, Malaysia Refreshment **Topic 2: COVID-19 and Malaysia: Lessons Learned** Speaker from Ministry of Health Malaysia
22 February 2023 (Wednesday)	9:00-10:30	**Topic 3: Managing the Economic Meltdown in the Midst of Health Crisis** Speaker from Universiti Teknologi MARA, Malaysia Refreshment

	10:30-11:00 11:00-12:45	**Topic 4: Impacts of Healthcare Regulatory and Standards on Tourism Sustainability** Speaker from Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy, Republic of Indonesia
	14:00-15:30	**Best Practice Discussion 1: Readiness and Resiliency of Small and Medium-Sized Tourism Enterprises in Mitigating Health Crisis**
	15:30-15:45	Refreshment
	15:45-17:00	Presentation
23 February 2023 (Thursday)	9:00-10:30	**Topic 5: Effective Leadership and Communication in Pre, During, and Post-Health Crises** Speaker from Ministry of Health Malaysia
	10:30-11:00	Refreshment
	11:00-12:45	**Topic 6: Technology and Health Crisis Management in Tourism** Speaker from Kota University, India
	14:00-15:30	**Best Practice Discussion 2: Applied Health Crisis Management Practices in Tourism Destinations**
	15:30-15:45	Refreshment
	15:45-17:00	Presentation
24 February 2023 (Friday)	9:00-10:30	**Panel Discussion 1: Dynamics of Socio-Culture During Pandemic**
	10:30-11:00	Refreshment
	11:00-12:45	**Panel Discussion 2: Strategy and Way Forward: Leading Successful Change in Health Crisis Management in Tourism**
	14:00-17:00	Workshop Resolution and Recommendation Closing Remarks

Below is the summarization of the key takeaways from each session of the Hybrid Workshop:

Date/Day	Agenda
Day 1 21 February 2023 (Tuesday)	Day 1 began with an **opening speech by the Project Overseer**, followed by a **welcoming remark by the General Manager of UniSZA Holdings Sdn. Bhd**. A representative from the project consultants then presented the insights from the **Virtual Roundtable Discussion** which was held on 7 November 2022. Later, the recapitulation of the **Case Studies** was presented which further discusses the input received from selected six case study economies. In the afternoon, the first speaker from **Management and Science University Malaysia** presented a topic on **An Evolution of Health Crisis Impacting the Global Tourism Industry**. The topic summarizes the impact of the global tourism industry from a series of health crises. These crises have resulted in significant reductions in travel and tourism activity, causing major economic losses for the industry and the broader global economy. In response to these health crises, governments and industry stakeholders have implemented a range of measures to mitigate their impact on tourism, including travel restrictions, quarantine requirements, and enhanced health and safety protocols. However, these measures have also had significant economic and social costs, particularly for tourism-dependent communities and businesses. A speaker from the **Ministry of Health Malaysia** elaborates on the topic of **COVID-19 and Malaysia: Lessons Learned**. The speaker shared measures to contain the virus, including travel restrictions, lockdowns, and social distancing protocols. Despite facing some challenges, Malaysia has learned several valuable lessons from the pandemic, including the importance of strong leadership, effective communication, community engagement, and the need for preparedness and flexibility. The economy's experiences during the pandemic have highlighted the importance of a coordinated response to public health emergencies, as well as the need to invest in healthcare infrastructure and research. Overall, Malaysia's response to COVID-19 has been seen as an important case study for other economies dealing with the pandemic.
Day 2 22 February 2023 (Wednesday)	Day 2 started with the third speaker of the workshop from **Universiti Teknologi MARA Malaysia**. The topic was **Managing the Economic Meltdown in the Midst of a Health Crisis** which described the economic meltdown caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. It is a major challenge for governments and businesses around the world. Therefore, effective management of the economic meltdown requires a coordinated response to support businesses and workers, stimulate demand, and promote financial stability. It is also important to address the underlying structural issues that contributed to the crisis, such as undertourism, inequality and systemic risks in the financial sector. Then, a speaker from the **Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy, Indonesia** presented a topic on the **Impacts of Healthcare Regulatory and Standards on Tourism Sustainability**. There are numerous regulations and standards governing health and safety in the tourism industry. These regulations aim to ensure that tourists receive adequate medical care and are protected from health hazards while travelling. Using Indonesia as a case study, the speaker highlights that compliance with these standards enhances

	tourism sustainability. However, failure to comply with healthcare regulatory and standards may lead to negative impacts on the environment, the health of tourists and local communities, and the tourism industry's reputation.

Later that evening, participants were divided into two groups to discuss on the **Best Practice for Readiness and Resiliency of Small and Medium-Sized Tourism Enterprises in Mitigating Health Crisis.** The discussion focuses on how tourism enterprises prepare themselves, develop strategies and procedures, and maintain their operations in the face of such challenges. There is a call for Business Continuity Management practices among the participants. The aim is to ensure that the tourism industry can continue to operate, and to minimize the negative impact of health crises on businesses and the broader economy. |
| **Day 3**

23 February 2023 (Thursday) | Day 3 kick-started with the fifth speaker of the workshop from **Ministry of Health Malaysia,** who presented a topic on **Effective Leadership and Communication in Pre, During, and Post-Health Crises**. Effective leadership and communication are crucial in pre, during, and post-health crises. Using Malaysia setting as a case study, the speaker shared that in the pre-crisis stage, leaders must establish communication channels and protocols to ensure timely and accurate dissemination of information. During a crisis, effective communication can help manage panic and anxiety among the public and healthcare workers. Leaders must also be able to adapt to changing circumstances and make timely decisions to mitigate the crisis's impact. In the post-crisis stage, effective communication can help restore public confidence in the healthcare system and prevent future crises.

Next, the sixth speaker from **Kota University, India,** shared a topic on **Technology and Health Crisis Management in Tourism.** The integration of technology and health crisis management in the tourism industry is becoming increasingly important. This includes the use of digital tools to monitor and respond to health crises, such as pandemics, as well as the implementation of safety protocols and procedures to ensure the well-being of tourists and employees. Advanced technologies, such as AI and IoT, are also being used to enhance the efficiency and accuracy of health crisis management.

In the evening, participants were divided into two groups to discuss on the **Best Practices for Applied Health Crisis Management Practices in Tourism Destinations.** Applied health crisis management practices in tourism destinations include various strategies and measures that are put in place by tourism authorities, health professionals, and other stakeholders to prevent, detect, and respond to health emergencies in tourist destinations. These practices include risk assessment, emergency planning, communication, surveillance, and response mechanisms to ensure the safety and well-being of tourists and local populations. Adhering to them is crucial in ensuring the sustainability of tourism destinations and protecting the tourism industry from the negative impacts of health crises. |
| **Day 4**

24 February 2023 (Friday) | Day 4 commenced with **Panel Discussion 1 on How the pandemic affected the socio-cultural dynamics of tourism in your region/economy?** The panels chosen for the first discussion were selected based on their expertise and representing different economies. The pandemic has disrupted the normal flow of tourism, and the socio-cultural impact of this phenomenon is vast and far-reaching. Our panelists highlight the challenges faced by various stakeholders in the industry and share their |

| | perspectives on how to navigate the new normal in a post-pandemic world. It was an engaging and informative discussion with our esteemed panelists.

The workshop continued with **Panel Discussion 2** on **Strategy and Way Forward: Leading Successful Change in Health Crisis Management in Tourism**. The second discussion session highlights the need for successful change in health crisis management in tourism and proposes strategies for achieving this. The panelist emphasizes the importance of effective leadership, collaboration between stakeholders, and the use of innovative technologies and data analysis. They also suggest that a proactive approach to crisis management, including preparation and communication with travelers, can help mitigate the impact of health crises on the tourism industry.

Finally, in the afternoon, the workshop ended with **Resolutions and Recommendations** before the **Closing Remarks** by the project consultant. |
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The 4-day Hybrid Workshop was designed to provide a platform to stimulate capacity building that addresses the core issues of a systematic approach to managing health risks and crises that affect tourism. Focusing on the necessary organizational structures, accountabilities, policies, and procedures, the organization of this Hybrid Workshop cultivates knowledge sharing on how destinations across the APEC economies address risk management issues and reduce the impact of crises and disasters on the sustainability of their respective tourism industries.

6.0 SUMMARY AND KEY LEARNINGS FROM THE HANDBOOK ON 'INCREASING THE READINESS AND RESILIENCY OF TOURISM DESTINATION STAKEHOLDERS IN MANAGING HEALTH CRISES IN APEC ECONOMIES'

This handbook offers a systematic approach to managing health risks and crises that affect tourism, covering necessary organizational structures, accountabilities, policies, and procedures. To achieve the aforementioned goals, the handbook provides insights into the typology of health crises and the enablers and factors of health crisis management in tourism, which are discussed in the first two sections. The third section addresses the formulation of pre-, during, and post-crisis management strategies to respond to a health crisis effectively, and the subsequent section presents valuable insights into best practices from selected APEC economies (China; Japan; Malaysia; Papua New Guinea; the Philippines; and Viet Nam) to examine their health crisis management practices. The final component of this handbook highlights suggestions and future plans to improve the preparedness and resilience of tourism stakeholders in handling health crises. The handbook was endorsed by APEC Tourism Working Group on 2 August 2023 and can be accessed at https://www.apec.org/publications/2023/08/handbook-on-increasing-the-readiness-and-resiliency-of-tourism-destination-stakeholders-in-managing-health-crises-in-apec-economies. The following explanation offers a concise overview of each section.

Section 1: An Overview of Health Crisis Typology

The overview of health crisis typology explores the concept of crises as interruptions to regular system functioning, emphasizing their impact on the tourism sector. Various crises, such as natural disasters, health pandemics like COVID-19, terrorism, political unrest, and economic downturns, significantly influence travel decisions and have long-term consequences for the industry. The health crisis in tourism specifically arises from contagious diseases, leading to decreased tourism due to safety concerns and travel restrictions. The discussion further categorizes health crises into outbreaks of contagious ailments, environmental well-being crises, epidemics of chronic conditions, mental well-being crises, and natural disasters.

Additionally, major pandemics and pathogen outbreaks from the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, illustrating their substantial economic impact on the global tourism industry are also explained.

Section 2: Enablers of Health Crisis Management in Tourism

The section underscores the crucial role of enablers in effectively managing health crises within the tourism sector. Enablers, defined as mechanisms and resources, play a pivotal role in cultivating the necessary capabilities for prompt crisis response. Strategic investments in key enablers empower both public and private tourism stakeholders to address health problems swiftly. These enablers include prior risk assessment, emphasizing the importance of comprehensive contingency strategies and training initiatives to identify and mitigate potential health hazards. Efficient communication is highlighted as essential, involving transparent crisis management and inclusive engagement with disabled travelers. Preparedness strategies, such as early detection mechanisms and swift response protocols, are recommended to minimize the impact of health crises on businesses and communities. Collaboration between public and private sectors, the establishment of health crisis management teams, and flexible policies are emphasized as vital components for effective crisis management, ensuring resource-sharing, decision-making frameworks, and business continuity.

Additionally, the section advocates for effective leadership during crises, stressing the importance of clear communication, strategic planning, and collaboration with diverse stakeholders. Collaborative governance is highlighted as crucial for unity and collective effort in addressing health crises, fostering communication, coordination, and cooperation. Leveraging technological advancements, capacity development, and data analytics are identified as tools for enhancing crisis management capabilities. These measures, combined with flexible policies, enable tourism stakeholders to adapt rapidly to dynamic health and safety requirements. Overall, the section underscores the significance of a comprehensive and adaptive approach facilitated by these enablers to effectively navigate and mitigate the impact of health crises on the tourism industry.

Section 3: Pre and Post-Health Crisis Management Strategies

The impact of health crises on the tourism industry has prompted a paradigm shift in crisis management strategies. Traditionally viewed as isolated incidents with contained responses, recent catastrophic events, notably the COVID-19 pandemic, have highlighted the rapid spread and enduring consequences of health crises on the global economy and tourism. Consequently, a focus on long-term preparedness and prevention has emerged among tourism stakeholders, necessitating adaptive behaviors from citizens, local authorities, rescue workers, and organizations. The shift toward resilience-building activities, termed the 'collaborative network,' underscores the importance of collective efforts for effective crisis response. The three stages of crisis management strategies — pre-crisis, during crisis, and post-crisis are delineated. In the pre-crisis stage, stakeholders emphasize threat identification, risk reduction, and preparation through risk assessments, prevention measures, and collaboration efforts. The crisis stage involves alerting, notifying, escalating, and managing the crisis situation with a focus on response plans, coordination, and decision-making. Post-crisis, stakeholders aim to restore normalcy, learn from the crisis, and upgrade their crisis management through infrastructure rebuilding, tourist confidence restoration, knowledge sharing, and implementing improvements for future resilience. A comparison between pre- and post-health crisis management practices further outlines shifts in roles, approaches, a long-term comprehensive outlook, proactive and strategic planning, the use of data analytics and technology, improved coordination and communication, and an expanded scope of

concerns. These adaptations signify a lasting impact on the practices of stakeholders in managing health crises in the future.

Section 4: Best Practices from Case Studies

The section outlines practical recommendations for enhancing the readiness and resilience of tourism destination stakeholders in managing health crises within APEC economies. Focusing on economies like China; Japan; Malaysia; Papua New Guinea; the Philippines; and Viet Nam, the selection aims to showcase diverse health crisis management practices across less developed, developing, and developed contexts. The strategies employed in response to the significant impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the tourism industry encompass stringent border controls, comprehensive quarantine measures, contact tracing efforts, and financial assistance packages for tourism businesses. Collaborative approaches among stakeholders, prioritization of health and safety, digital transformation, and innovation were common practices, emphasizing the importance of adaptability and cooperation in managing health crises.

Additionally, the section highlights the promotion of domestic tourism through campaigns and travel bubbles, demonstrating efforts to stimulate local economies and encourage citizens to explore their own economies safely. Public health campaigns and awareness initiatives played a crucial role, with governments introducing guidelines, such as Japan's "Three Cs" and Malaysia's "Avoid 3C/ Practice 3W," to educate citizens on preventive measures. The implementation of government contact-tracing applications in Japan and Malaysia showcased technological solutions to monitor and trace COVID-19 contacts. Financial support initiatives for economic resilience and investment, including tax incentives and funding mechanisms, were crucial components in the recovery efforts, particularly in the Philippines and Papua New Guinea. In summary, the recommendations emphasize the diverse strategies, collaboration, and innovation needed to effectively manage health crises in the tourism sector across various APEC economies.

Section 5: Recommendations and Future Strategies

Ensuring the readiness and resiliency of tourism stakeholders in APEC economies is pivotal for the industry's sustainability and growth. Key considerations encompass financial stability, operational flexibility, business continuity management, data analytics for informed decision-making, contemporary marketing strategies, memorable customer experiences, stakeholder collaboration, and incentives for SMEs. Financial stability involves maintaining healthy cash flows, manageable debt levels, and diverse revenue sources, while operational flexibility requires adaptability to changing market conditions, introduction of virtual experiences, and emphasis on health and safety measures. Effective business continuity management practices, data analytics utilization, and strategic collaborations among stakeholders contribute to crisis survivability and long-term success. Additionally, promoting sustainable tourism practices and supporting local communities are increasingly recognized as essential elements for the industry's responsible development and resilience. Overall, these strategies aim to fortify the tourism sector's preparedness, adaptability, and sustainability across diverse APEC economies.

7.0 CONCLUSION

The global economy has been severely affected by multiple health crises, causing much trouble for the tourism industry. The travel restrictions, lockdowns, and border closures led to a significant decrease in travel demand, which affected the tourism industry inevitably. Despite these challenges, the health crises prompted stakeholders to reconsider their business practices and adopt sustainable tourism approaches. While it will take a while to recover, the tourism industry has the potential to emerge from this crisis as a more sustainable, responsible, and innovative sector, creating an opportunity for a solid foundation for long-term success.