



Dear colleagues,

The **COVID-19 crisis has brought travel and tourism worldwide to an unprecedented standstill**. As countries introduced curfews and travel restrictions to contain the spread of the virus, airlines and other mobility providers saw dramatic drops in passengers, and hotels, the food and drink industry and tour operators were faced with plummeting customer numbers. Between January and May, the **number of tourists dropped by more than half** compared to last year. This translates into a US\$320 billion revenue loss – more than three times higher than during the Financial Crisis of 2008/2009. The global travel and tourism market is predicted to see a **loss of more than 100 million jobs** worldwide in 2020 (all numbers see [UNWTO](#)).

The sector faces its largest crisis in recorded history, a crisis that places millions of livelihoods at risk, particularly in countries which are highly dependent on tourism, including Small Island Developing States and Least Developed Countries. Moreover, in many parts of the world, the **protection and sustainable management of natural resources and biodiversity rely heavily on** revenues generated by tourism. Lockdown measures and the absence of funding have already led to an increase in [poaching](#) and [deforestation](#).

At the same time, the tourism industry **contributes to climate change and biodiversity loss**. For instance, domestic and international travel to and from a holiday destination significantly adds to a vacation's environmental footprint, as do resource uses (water, energy, food) and pollution in the form of waste, noise and light. Thus, putting global tourism back on its feet offers a unique opportunity to **advance the sustainability and resilience of the sector**.

This requires **collaborative efforts across sectoral silos**, as “green” policy measures for the tourism sector can only succeed if a holistic perspective is taken, considering tourism offers and infrastructure, transport, resource management, education/formation – and taking both urban and rural contexts into account. Standards and labels as well as fiscal and financial incentives for “green” tourism, complemented by efforts to raise awareness, are among the measures that governments should consider when drafting plans to boost their national tourism industries.

The Build Forward Better Briefing #03 looks at the efforts by government, multilateral organisations, academia, civil society and other actors at the national and international level to **responsibly restart tourism and adapt to a new reality during and after the COVID-19 crisis**. It compiles the latest “green” stimulus measures and propositions on what a sustainable, inclusive and resilient recovery from the pandemic could look like.

We hope you find this BFB Briefing insightful and look forward to your **feedback and thematic suggestions for future issues**.

Best regards,
CDCPIII, GET, SDG-RI & SPA

#03 TOURISM - 23 August 2020

The **Build Forward Better Briefing** compiles the latest “green” stimulus measures and propositions by government, multilateral organisations, academia, civil society and other actors at the national and international level. It shares insights on what a **sustainable, inclusive and resilient recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic** could look like. The current briefing focuses on ways out of the crisis for the tourism industry.

This briefing is a **collaborative product by several Berlin-based GIZ IKI projects** (Capacity Development for Climate Policy in Southeast & Eastern Europe, South Caucasus and Central Asia, Phase III; Green Economy Transformation in Cooperation with the Partnership for Action on Green Economy (PAGE); Support Project on SDG Review and Implementation Processes; Support Project for the Implementation of the Paris Agreement). The opinions expressed are those of the authors and do not necessarily coincide with views of the organisation. All **previous issues** of the BFB Briefing can be accessed [here](#).

Many thanks to the GIZ colleagues from the project Cooperation with the Private Sector / Component Sustainable Development through Tourism who contributed to this briefing.

Note: Measures and resources are listed in alphabetical order, with those related to tourism and travel highlighted in yellow.

Government

Africa

- **Angola** has ratified the Paris Agreement and promised to deliver a more ambitious climate plan before the end of the year. Angola is Africa’s number two oil producer behind Nigeria. In 2019, the country’s petroleum industry contributed about 50% of its GDP, making it highly vulnerable to shocks such as the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Despite the COVID-19 crisis, the **Egyptian** government remains committed to implementing an ambitious \$27.6 billion investment plan to carry out nearly 700 “green” projects for the fiscal year 2020/2021. The investments primarily affect the transport and energy sector.
- **Ethiopia** has kicked off a four-year \$3.6 million project on nature-based solutions for water resources infrastructure and community resilience. The programme was launched in early August through extensive tree planting efforts, making reference to a “green” recovery for the country.
- The **Senegalese** Ministry of Oil and Energy has exempt equipment for the production of renewable energies such as solar, wind and biogas from VAT (value added taxes) charges. The government's measure is aimed at accelerating the electrification of rural areas.
- The Terrestrial Restoration Action Society of **Seychelles** (TRASS) is preparing to plant 100,000 trees on the island state’s second-largest island of Praslin. The aim is to restore and conserve ecosystems while creating jobs for people made redundant in Praslin’s tourism sector due to the pandemic.

- In **Togo**, some 15,000 irrigation kits will be made available to farmers. This government initiative in the context of COVID-19 aims to boost yields through climate-resilient agriculture while supporting farmers in their struggle against global warming and the economic shock caused by the pandemic.

Asia & Oceania

- **Bangladesh** considers scrapping 90% of its coal power pipeline, according to the country's energy minister. This would signal a major pivot away from Chinese-funded coal plants in Bangladesh – but is not yet government policy. Similar developments can be observed in other countries. In June, a coal power project in **Pakistan** was cancelled, in large part due to lack of demand. A number of **Vietnam's** coal power projects are also looking increasingly unfeasible in a post-COVID-19 world.
- **Singapore** announced another \$5.8 billion to boost its coronavirus-hit economy, including “tourism credits” for Singaporeans to encourage domestic tourism.
- **Thailand** will introduce more stimulus measures to boost tourism, jobs and consumption, including subsidies to encourage more hiring and domestic travel. On tourism, the government plans to spur domestic travel to recoup some losses from the absence of foreign tourists, who numbered a record 39.8 million last year, with spending accounting for 11.4% of Thailand's GDP.
- The government of **Western Australia** focuses its recovery on creating jobs and aims to generate long-term economic and social benefits. As part of its \$5.5 billion stimulus package, it directs funds towards local manufacturing, sport and community infrastructure, green hydrogen and coastal management projects, and injects \$150 million into the State's tourism industry.

Europe

- The EIB supports **Barcelona** in its green recovery. €95 million will be spent to support 40 transformative projects which are expected to create 1500 new jobs. One quarter of the budget will go to remodelling a 200,000 m² area of the city to better reflect the new environmental vision of town planning and town living. Residential blocks will be merged into “superblocks” that will allow for freer pedestrian mobility, recreational areas and restricted car traffic.
- The **European Commission** has launched a call for expressions of interest for thematic partnerships to pilot interregional innovation projects that support the response and recovery following the COVID-19 pandemic. The aim of the call is to help regions catch the opportunities emerging from the crisis, develop resilience and build on green and digital transformation for the recovery.
- The **European Union** considers quotas to force airlines to use more sustainable fuels as it seeks to clamp down on the climate impact of aviation. While the COVID-19 crisis has slashed emissions from air travel this year, the sector is far off-track for the EU's goal to become climate-neutral by 2050.
- The **Greek** government is preparing the national plan for funds from the “Next Generation EU” investment package. According to local media, the country intends to support the production of components for renewable energy facilities and the infrastructure of offshore wind power plants.
- **Italy's** tourism industry, which accounts for 13% of national GDP, has been devastated by the COVID-19 pandemic. In an attempt to persuade its citizens to holiday at home instead of going abroad, the Italian government subsidises domestic trips; households earning less than €40,000 a year are entitled to a “holiday bonus” of up to €500 which can be used for holidaying within Italy. Meanwhile, the government has announced to inject a further €25 billion into the country's economy, earmarking €3 billion for tourism and culture.
- The **Liverpool** City Region Combined Authority is the first governmental body in the world to join the Wellbeing Economy Alliance (WEAll) which puts wellbeing improvements over traditional economic understandings of growth.

Latin America & Caribbean

- **Caribbean countries** have renewed their calls for a paradigm shift in international financing that would allow them to immediately respond to the effects of the coronavirus pandemic. “More must

be done, both in terms of scope and magnitude, to overcome this systemic crisis and ensure a recovery in line with the Sustainable Development Goals”, the ECLAC executive secretary said.

North America

- **Canada’s** COVID-19 recovery policies appear to be inconsistent with its climate goals, undermined by the reliance of its energy sector on fossil fuel industries in provinces such as Alberta and Saskatchewan. On the brighter side, Canada has widely invested in public transport infrastructure and services, according to [recent analysis](#) by Energy Policy Tracker. Also, there are [reports](#) that with the replacement of Canada’s finance minister, the country will pursue a green(er) recovery.
- [Joe Biden’s pick of Senator Kamala Harris](#) as his running mate for the **US** presidency could reinvigorate stalled world action on climate change if the Democrats win the election on 3 November. The Democrats would rejoin the Paris Agreement, which could spur the deal and help rebuild frayed US ties with other nations. Harris is an original co-sponsor of the Green New Deal as well as co-author of the Climate Equity Act and Environmental Justice for All Act.

International Organisations, Partnerships & Alliances

- Marking the International Day of Indigenous Peoples on 9 August, the **International Climate Initiative** (IKI) published an [overview of projects](#) supporting Indigenous groups in coping with and recovering from COVID-19.
- The **OECD** [paper](#) “Tourism Policy Responses to the Coronavirus (COVID-19)” offers a good overview of the impacts of the COVID-19 crisis for the tourism economy and gives guidance on how to prepare for restart: “Governments need to already consider the longer-term implications of the crisis, while staying ahead of the digital curve, supporting the low carbon transition, and promoting the structural transformation needed to build a stronger, more sustainable and resilient tourism economy. The crisis is an opportunity to rethink tourism for the future.”
- **UNESCO** is working with Indigenous peoples to consider elements necessary for a recovery process. The COVID-19 crisis highlighted inequalities while also shining light on new opportunities and creativity. This is reflected upon in the newly launched [UNESCO Indigenous Peoples Bulletin](#).
- In an [interview](#), Li Yong, Director General of the **United Nations Industrial Development Organization** (UNIDO), discusses how targeted green industrial policies and investments in green industries can lead to the structural changes necessary to recover from COVID-19, with opportunities to boost sustainable economic growth and create jobs in line with the goals of the Paris Agreement and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.
- Under the new “Investment Readiness for Green Finance Mechanisms” [initiative](#), the **World Tourism Organization** (UNWTO) and the **International Finance Corporation** (IFC), the largest global development institution focused exclusively on the private sector in developing countries, conduct training programmes that focus on stimulating tourism’s recovery from the COVID-19 crisis while promoting green financing to enhance sustainability across the whole of the tourism value chain.
- The **UNWTO** has formulated a sector-wide response in its “Global Guidelines to Restart Tourism”, an [action plan](#) focused on the [priorities](#) for tourism recovery after COVID-19. Also, the UNWTO [published](#) a “One Planet Vision for a Responsible Recovery of the Tourism Sector” to mark World Environment Day.
- A powerful [commentary](#) by the **World Resources Institute** elaborates on why “Nature is An Economic Winner for COVID-19 Recovery”. It argues that nature-based solutions generate a triple dividend (economic gains, avoided losses, and social and environmental benefits), which is why they should play an important role in COVID-19 economic recovery packages.
- Brazil could enhance positive long-term growth and social development by investing in a low-carbon recovery, according to a [new study](#) by the **World Resources Institute**.

Academia, Private Sector & Civil Society

- The German **Agency for Business and Economic Development** has published an [article](#) about tourism as an essential factor for sustainable development in developing countries and emerging economies.
- Two articles on **EcoBusiness** and **Project Syndicate** discuss the “green” restructuring of emerging and developing countries’ sovereign debt as one solution to avoid a negative spiral in economic terms for these countries in their battle against the COVID-19 pandemic. The authors propose linking a country’s debt service to its success in protecting or enhancing natural assets such as rainforests, oceans and biodiversity (“Debt-for-Climate Swaps”).
- The **Import Promotion Desk (IPD)** has published [strategies and recommendations](#) for the tourism sector, as well as information on [SME financial support](#) (mostly for Ecuador, Tunisia and Nepal).
- In the [article](#) “Reimagining the \$9 trillion tourism economy – what will it take?”, **McKinsey** suggests four ways for governments to reimagine their role in the tourism sector in the context of COVID-19.
- A new [article](#) in the journal **Nature Climate Change** analyses current and future global climate impacts resulting from COVID-19. It predicts that with an economic recovery tilted towards green stimulus and reductions in fossil fuel investments, it is possible to avoid future warming of 0.3 °C by 2050.
- CANOPY is a biannual newsletter from **WWF Forest and Climate** that provides the latest news and information on WWF’s REDD+ related activities. The [current edition](#) focuses on forest restoration, work with Indigenous peoples in the era of COVID-19, and climate mitigation actions.

Information Hubs

- The blog “**COVIDAM: la Covid-19 dans les Amériques**” provides interesting opinion pieces and analyses on COVID-19-related topics in North, Central and South America (in [French](#) and [English](#)).
- The weekly **Energy Policy Tracker Digest** is a newsletter providing updates on the latest information about COVID-19 government policy responses from a climate and energy perspective. Subscribe [here](#).
- The **Tourism for SDGs platform** publishes news about initiatives and mitigation practices concerning tourism and COVID-19.
- The **UNWTO COVID-19 Dashboard on Country Measures to Support Travel and Tourism** tracks [policy responses](#) by countries and international institutions to mitigate the effects of the COVID-19 crisis in the travel and tourism sector, restart tourism and accelerate recovery.

Events

- On 3 September, the **Centre for Alternative Technology (CAT)** is hosting the [interactive webinar](#) “Tried and tested solutions for a green recovery – working with nature”, exploring rural and urban nature-based solutions.
- The **Center for Protected Area Management at Colorado State University** and **U.S. Forest Service International Programs** host a [webinar series](#) on “Protected Area Tourism Beyond 2020”. The first session explores perspectives on tourism in and around protected areas as we move through crises and reimagine new ways to create more resilient protected area public use programs.
- The **GIZ Exchange Forum on Inclusive Green Economy** took place on 11 August, bringing together GIZ colleagues to share their updates on Green Economy and Green Recovery projects. The presentations and minutes can be accessed on the [IDA community](#) “Green Economy and Green Recovery”.
- “COVID-19, a paradigm shift: rebuilding a better tourism world with health security, diversification and free mobility?”, a virtual event organised by **GIZ** and **Deutscher Reiseverband**, will take place on 24 September (more details tbc).
- **ITB Berlin** and the **Berlin Travel Festival** will be hosting the [festival](#) “We Love Travel!” – a tourism recovery pop-up from 16-18 October with a combination of virtual and analogue formats.
- In a [virtual event](#) on 25 August, the **Pacific Asia Travel Association (PATA)** will give guidance on how to develop an effective and robust communication strategy and plan to quickly reassure and engage

key stakeholders to support recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic and ensure effective crisis communication planning for the next crisis. On 3 September, PATA will host an [event](#) on COVID-19 crisis management strategies and the pandemic's impact on the luxury hospitality industry, and a [workshop](#) on virtual tour guiding, specifically targeting youth.

- Under the theme “Travel’s Next Era”, **Phocuswright** invites leaders of the European travel industry, providing an [online forum](#) for exchange and debate to confront travel’s upcoming challenges (3-10 September).
- The **Stockholm International Water Institute (SIWI)** will host “[World Water Week At Home](#)” from 24-28 August, featuring over 120 sessions on a broad range of topics. Coping with and recovering from the COVID-19 pandemic will be a key topic of the event. In partnership with SIWI, **GIZ** hosts the virtual “[Week on Water for Development](#)”, tackling a multitude of water issues from COVID-19 to climate change. In more than 25 diverse sessions, GIZ collaborates with more than 60 conveners to present and discuss recent findings, publications as well as best practices from the field.
- The **Sustainable Tourism Africa Summit (STAS)** is an event committed to the promotion and support of sustainable tourism in Africa and this year took place virtually. Concepts for building resilience, restart tourism and reshaping alliances and partnerships for a sustainable and optimized tourism on the continent were discussed. A summary and video recordings of keynote speeches and presentations can be found [here](#).
- Past and future **UNWTO events** with recordings and supporting resources can be accessed under [this link](#).
- Under the theme of “Balanced Tourism Recovery for a Better Future”, the **Virtual Destination Mekong Summit** [invites travel professionals](#) from both public and private sectors from all over the world to engage in discussions on how to best prepare for a recovery (25 August).
- The **World Resources Institute (WRI)** hosts an [online event](#) on 26 August called “International Perspectives to Build Back Better Towards a Low-Carbon Resilient Future”, with perspectives from countries, MDBs, international organisations, and those involved with the upcoming COP26 in 2021.
- The “[Future of Travel & Tourism Global Webinar](#)”, hosted by **WTTC** and the **Latin America & Caribbean Air Transport Association (ALTA)**, will take place on 25 August, with a focus on the LAC markets.