

## FOREWORD

We hereby proudly present this special edition on Sustainable Tourism presenting a range of interesting articles. At the same time, we are sad to see the tourism industry being hard hit by Covid-19 on a global scale, including many places such as India and various ASEAN countries. According to the latest report of UNWTC, the tourism industry around the world has been badly hit by Covid with an estimated 100-120 million jobs at risk and 60-80% reduction in international tourism for 2020 when compared to 2019. [<https://www.unwto.org/news/covid-19>].

Thailand is no exception, especially as the tourism industry is one of its main economic sectors. While Thailand has been doing noticeably well in coping with Covid-19, the more serious crisis awaiting is an economic crisis. Prior to Covid, Thailand had one of the most developed tourism markets in Asia ([www.rvo.nl](http://www.rvo.nl) > 2017/06 > [factsheet-toerisme-in-thailand](#)), this year the Thai economy experienced its lowest dip in Q2. Whether in Q3 and Q4 of 2020 the Thai economy can recover and revive depends on 2 essential conditions:

- (1) ensuring a 2<sup>nd</sup> round of disease spread does not occur. This is not easy as our extensive natural borders in the north can connect to Myanmar, India, and Bangladesh.
- (2) the ongoing youth protest must be handled with care and respect, for the benefit of the people.

Only with these two conditions met, will we pull through. ([https://www.creativethailand.org/article/thinktank/32496/the#Future-of-Travel:ThinkingRadioMCOT/FM96.5/ECON\\_BIZZ/30Aug2020](https://www.creativethailand.org/article/thinktank/32496/the#Future-of-Travel:ThinkingRadioMCOT/FM96.5/ECON_BIZZ/30Aug2020)). In addition to these two conditions, I sincerely believe that SMEs must be adequately assisted in this difficult time, especially those in tourism and other related businesses. It is probably time to restructure the Thai economy to be less dependent on exports and international tourism.

As such, in this issue, we are proud to present 9 articles, and a book review, featuring diverse views, with different focuses and places of tourism, mostly in Thailand. Of the nine papers, one is from overseas, another addresses hotel and restaurant homepages in eight countries, the rest focus on tourism in Thailand.

Titled *Marine Tourism Economic Development for Sustainable Society Economic Growth in East Java Province, Indonesia*, this is a study on the policy development of a marine tourism community for sustainable growth in East Java Province using qualitative research with descriptive data obtained through in-depth interviews with local stakeholders, observations of phenomena and individual cases, and interactive data analysis techniques. The results show that policy development for sustainable tourism in East Java Province is multi-

faceted, involving economic, socio-cultural, and environmental dimensions with a foundation of justice for both the current generation and future generations. Tourism is thus an interrelated system and policy synergy is needed. This paper offers an alternative community-based tourism model for the coastal communities of East Java Province.

The second article titled *A Comparison of Rhetorical Move Structures of Hotel, Restaurant, And Tourist Destination Homepages* features a study on 24 hotel, 24 restaurant and 24 tourist destination homepages in eight different countries. In the current digital era, websites and social media have become common marketing and decision-making tools in the tourism industry. The content, the moves, the structures, and the language of websites are key determinants of success. The analysis framework found differences in the move structures of the samples, while slight differences in the moves and their structures were found to be caused by different types of products and services; the writing style of each move also varied.

Regarding the remaining 8 articles, let's begin with an article on medical tourism entitled *Relationships Among Medical Activity, Perceived Functional Values, Satisfaction, Trust, And Revisit Intention in Medical Tourism: A Case Study On CLMV Tourists in Thailand*. This is a timely article as Thailand's medical system has suddenly gained recognition during the global spread of Covid19. It is also in line with a decades-old national policy for Thailand as a "medical hub" of ASEAN and Asia, this paper focuses on medical tourism as a profitable economic function for Thailand. Distributing a questionnaire to CLMV tourists coming to Udon Thani for medical activity in 3 private hospitals, the researchers found medical activity, perceived functional value, satisfaction, and trust, as having significant relationships with revisit intentions while satisfaction and trust also acted as significant mediators. They also found that convenience, rather than price, had the most influence on revisit intentions.

The fourth paper titled *Linkages among Tourism Demand, Human Development, and CO<sub>2</sub> Emissions in Thailand* examines the interplay between tourism demand, HDI--Human Development Index (life expectancy, education level, living standard, etc.) and CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, using the Three-Stage Least Squares method with Regression Estimation. Findings indicate that the increase of tourism enhances human development by income and job opportunities, while reduction of tourism will result in lower CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. Policy development towards sustainable tourism is suggested in the study.

The fifth paper titled *The Mechanisms of Tourism Management in Achieving Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): The Case of Phulomlo and Connected Areas, Thailand* is a mixed method study that addresses the key concept of this special issue: sustainable tourism. Guided by the UN's 17 SDGs, this study attempts to achieve the global sustainable development goals through two mechanisms of tourism management, namely a supportive mechanism and an operational mechanism. Through the case study of Phulomo, a popular spot for its stunning scenic views, and noted as the "Cherry Blossom of Thailand"—

an area that spans 3 provinces, Loei, Phetchabun, and Pitsanulok. The Phulomlo and connected areas now is a well-managed tourist destination under collaboration between public and private sectors.

From the northeast and north of Thailand in previously introduced articles, the remaining four articles focus on the south of Thailand—Phuket and nearby provinces. Phuket, one of the world's top tourist destinations prior to Covid with approximately 10 million international tourists each year and 4 million Thai tourists, the area has now seen zero tourists for several months, since February this year. In an attempt to revive Phuket, we are proud to present four articles on different dimensions of Phuket's tourism.

(1) ***Operational Guidelines for Human Capital and Innovative Tourism Entrepreneurs in Sustainable Tourism Perspectives: An Analysis of Tour Operators in Andaman Provinces of Thailand*** is an interesting paper that analyzes the performance and innovations of 360 tourism entrepreneurs through questionnaires and in-depth interviews with 20 entrepreneurs. Findings confirm the positive effects of human capital (consisting of social capital, entrepreneurship orientation, and strategic orientation) and service innovation capability (comprising of service innovation idea, technology integration ability, and business co-creation synergy) on firm performance.

(2) ***Tourism Carrying Capacity Toward Sustainable Tourism Development: a case study of Phuket World Class Destination***: this paper seeks to deeper understand tourism carrying capacity and its impacts on a world class tourist destination. This study also deployed a mixed-method approach, mailing questionnaires to 800 tourists in Phuket, followed by in-depth interviews with local government officials and Phuketians. Findings revealed that exploitation of resources exceeds the carrying capacity and the recreation capacity of facilities has posed a huge threat to tourism, leaving a thought-provoking question on how to keep such world tourist spots sustainable?

(3) The third paper, ***The Development of Sustainable Golf Tourism Management Model in Southern Provinces On Andaman Coast, Thailand*** is also a mixed-method research on golf tourism management using 5 golf courses in 5 provinces in southern Thailand. With questionnaires, in-depth interviews, and focus group discussion, the study reports five attributes, namely attractions, events & tournaments, travel packages, participation of community people, and knowledge, and describes how to make tourism sustainable.

(4) The fourth paper interestingly presents a historical tourist attraction in Phuket—Si Sun Thon community—a 'historical city' and a unique community with growing tourism, care for the environment, preservation and pride for their heritage, and morals for sustainable development. Unlike other tourist packages of Phuket which offer geographical features and nature, this study titled ***The Interpretive Plan for Si Sun Thon Tourist Attraction's Uniqueness Thalang district Phuket, Thailand*** focuses on historical heritage, combining eco-tourism, and natural resources using an interpretive approach for the tourist attractions of Si Sun Thon community.

Last but not least is our book review: **Happiness, Well-being and Sustainability: A Course in Systems Change**, published in 2020 by **Laura Musikanski, Rhonda Phillips, James Bradbury, John de Graaf** and **Clinton L. Bliss**, five authors who are leaders in policy development, community development, and the happiness movement. Sustainable tourism is a way of exploring a destination while respecting its culture, environment and people. This book gives students lessons, exercises and resources to make them happier, motivate them to make career decisions that will help others and the planet, and empower them to be forces for sustainability and social change.

While the COVID crisis has not yet subsided, the global reach of affected economies both on country and world levels, we are facing possibly the most uncertain and difficult time in human history. There is a need to proceed with care and careful thought on how to revive the economy.

As always, I wish to express my deep gratitude to Rev. Brother Dr. Bancha Saenghiran, for his unfailing leadership and support. My heartfelt thanks to the Board of Advisers, the Editorial Board members, and the Editor Team for their continued support, commitment, and hard work in this difficult time, as well as my sincere appreciation to all contributors, reviewers and editors.

Looking forward to seeing you in our final issue for 2020, October-December 2020.

**Absorn Meesing Ed.D.**  
Editor-in-Chief  
ABAC Journal