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BNU Research and Enterprise Conference 2024

Empowerment Through Research: Bridging Academia and Society

The impact of aviation policies on pro-sustainable tourism: a case analysis of ten priority nations with a high reliance on incoming tourists arriving by air

Introduction
This study is the second phase of a research project that reviews 10 developing countries identified in phase one (Table 1) using an index ranking system to identify those states that relied on visitors arriving by air and how these balance with their sustainable regulations, legislation and plans for sustainable tourism growth.

Table 1: Top 10 countries by tourism and air transport reliance

Country	Development ranking	Indexed development ranking	Annual international tourist arrivals	Indexed annual tourist arrivals	Percentage of annual tourist arrivals by air	Total indexed score
Thailand	3	75%	39,916,000	18%	83.90%	177%
Cuba	3	75%	4,276,000	2%	100%	177%
Philippines	3	75%	8,261,000	4%	98.00%	177%
Maldives	3	75%	1,703,000	1%	100%	176%
Turkey	3	75%	51,747,000	24%	77.00%	176%
Timor-Leste	3	75%	74,800	0%	100%	175%
Sri Lanka	3	75%	2,027,000	1%	94.50%	170%
Qatar	3	75%	2,136,500	1%	90.80%	167%
Lebanon	3	75%	1,936,000	1%	89.80%	166%
Spain	1	25%	126,170,000	58%	82.3%	165%

The research team compared aviation commercial policies, and environmental regulations and legislation for each country in Table 1 with a qualitative score being given for each area towards a final estimate of the extent to which aviation policy is helping or hindering pathways towards pro-sustainable tourism growth.

Initial findings
Not surprisingly the primarily developing countries listed in Table 1 have a great emphasis on economic growth and increasing tourism economic output rather than limiting the excesses of visitor volumes in line with pro sustainable growth. This is especially true of those countries who rely on visitors from aviation only such as Timor Leste and the Maldives

There is some evidence that some countries might be concentrating a bit more on pro sustainable tourism such as Thailand that has whole resorts dedicated to sustainability initiatives but in the main visitors arrive by kerosene-based air transport even if they also offset their footprint.

Balancing the two areas of pro-sustainable tourism policies and economic growth and development has never been more challenging.

Research Team
Gail Rowntree, David Warnock-Smith, Marco Chan, Dalia Kozik, Ahmed Mainatt

Finishing Date and Spin-off training
End of July for a short course in collaboration with ICAO/UNWTO starting in early 2025 that will be the first of its kind, underpinned by this research

2024

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