



DISASTER RISK REDUCTION IN TOURISM DESTINATIONS

Disaster Reduction through Awareness, Preparedness and Prevention Mechanisms in Coastal Settlements in Asia - Demonstration in Tourism Destinations

UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME



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Every year, more than 200 million people are affected by droughts, floods, cyclones, tsunamis, earthquakes, wildfires and other disasters associated with natural hazards. Growing populations, environmental degradation and global warming are making the impacts worse, creating greater disasters and making the need to find better ways to protect people more urgent. These events have shown the high global vulnerability towards these types of disasters, and the potential impacts on human and environmental security.

Tourism is dependent on an intact ecosystem and on institutional structures that can respond to the needs of local people and visitors. Therefore, disaster preparedness and management (for natural and man-made hazards) should be an essential part of any destinations' integrated management plan. Heat waves (such as that experienced in the European summer of 2003), the Southeast Asia tsunami of December 2004, changes in tropical storm intensity (such as Hurricane Katrina), and forest fires (such as those experienced in Portugal in 2005) are all examples of how disasters and environmental emergencies can impact tourist destinations and holiday experiences.

There have always been, and always will be disasters. The patterns of modern life are exposing more communities to danger than ever before. Coastal areas will be more and more exposed to sea rise levels, and meteorological-related disasters due to

climate change. Disaster risk reduction linked with efforts to climate change adaptation and improvement of living conditions are undoubtedly today's major global challenges.

Project Description

Disasters inevitably bring about crises. It is the degree to which people are prepared for disaster that determines how vulnerable or resilient their community will be.

The "Disaster Reduction through Awareness, Preparedness and Prevention Mechanisms in Coastal Settlements in Asia - Demonstration in Tourism Destinations" project aims at increasing the disaster management capacity of the main stakeholders in three tsunami hit tourism destinations (i.e. Kanniyakumari in Tamil Nadu State of India, Patong in Phuket and Pi-Pi Island in Krabi of Thailand). This will be achieved by improving the local authorities' and the private sector's ability to manage natural and man-made disasters and by

APELL, standing for Awareness and Preparedness for Emergencies at the Local Level, is a process designed by UNEP to create public awareness of hazards and to ensure that communities and emergency services are adequately trained and prepared to respond. This process will be applied to the specific needs of tourism destinations, as it has been done for other activities or sectors, like ports and mining industry.



training the residents and tourists on how to properly prepare and react to disasters. This demonstration project is proposed to be implemented by application of United Nations Environment Programme's APELL process.

Objectives

The project aims at:

1. improving disaster preparedness capabilities of the communities (local authorities, local tourism industry and residents) of disaster-prone coastal tourism destinations for effective emergency response;
2. raising awareness of local authorities, local residents and tourists, and of the local tourism industry about the importance of natural and man-made disaster prevention and preparedness;
3. improving local environmental management and coastal planning capabilities of local authorities through the identification of local hazards, assessment of local vulnerabilities suggestion of preventive measures, and production of vulnerability maps with high risk zones;
4. improving risk communication between the local authorities, the private sector (tourism and other private business) and the exposed community (tourists and local population) on local disaster issues to allow better and effective response in crisis situations;
5. increasing the trust of tourists in the tourism destinations.

The project activities include assessment of local hazards, APELL demonstrations, and risk communication. The target groups are (i) local authorities (emergency services); (ii) local tourism sector; and (iii) local residents and tourists. The project will focus on raising the awareness of local authorities and actors in the local tourism sector of the importance of disaster reduction and preparedness and will support the preparation of integrated emergency plans for each municipality. The project implementation comprises of 5 phases:

- Phase A: Assessment
- Phase B: Training and Demonstration
- Phase C: Development of awareness raising and training material
- Phase D: Capacity Building
- Phase E: Public Information and Wider Dissemination

Project Partners

United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) provides the leadership for the protection of the environment by inspiring change, informing stake holders, encouraging partnership and nations and its people to improve their quality of life without compromising that of the future generations. The Division of Technology, Industry, and Economics (DTIE) of UNEP is coordinating this project through its Sustainable Consumption and Production Branch. Web site: www.unep.fr/apell



Destination	Total area (sq km)	Inhabitants	Number of hotels	Number of tourism-related companies	Annual Tourist arrivals	Tourism % of local GDP
Kanniyakumari, India	25.89	19,678	75	166	Domestic: 1,734,411 International: 63,802	n/a
Pi-Pi Island, Thailand	11.12	6,333	51	144	547,000	58.80%
Patong, Thailand	16.4	16,987	104	191	1,872,988	82.39%



International Hotel & Restaurant Association (IH&RA) brings together national associations and international hotel chains & restaurants across the world. Its members include National Hotel & Restaurant Associations from 100 countries and 50 brand chains of Hotels & Restaurants. Web site: www.ih-ra.com

Department of Disaster Prevention and Mitigation of Thailand (DDPM) is part of Thailand's Ministry of Interior and serves as the principal Government agency responsible for disaster management in the country. The department mobilises public participation in the disaster prevention and mitigation process through awareness and preparedness and develops prevention, warning and disaster mitigation systems. Web site: <http://www.disaster.go.th>

The National Safety Council of India (NSCI) is an apex, autonomous body, set up by the Ministry of Labour, Government of India in 1966. Its mission is to build a national movement on Safety, Health and Environment to prevent and mitigate the loss of life, human sufferings and economic losses and providing support services to government, industry and community. NSCI is an APELL partner since 1992 and has established the globally first National APELL Centre (NAC) in 2002. The NAC Sub-centre in Heavy Water Plant, Tuticorin, Tamil Nadu is a local partner of NSCI in this Project. Web site: www.nsci.org.in

Swedish Rescue Services Agency (SRSA), a central supervisory government authority for the rescue services, is through preventive methods working towards reducing the number of incidents, accidents and other emergencies and thus contributing to a safer society. The agency also collates lessons learned from serious emergencies national and international. Internationally the SRSA works with emergency prevention, preparedness and response and maintains a high level of preparedness for humanitarian relief missions. Web site www.srv.se

The three destinations - Kanniyakumari (India), Patong and Pi-Pi island (Thailand) - have been chosen as the APELL demonstration sites for the project and will be trained in specific areas of Disaster Management. These local project partners will take the lead in this demonstration project.

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About the UNEP Division of Technology, Industry and Economics

The UNEP Division of Technology, Industry and Economics (DTIE) helps governments, local authorities and decision-makers in business and industry to develop and implement policies and practices focusing on sustainable development.

The Division works to promote:

- > sustainable consumption and production,
- > the efficient use of renewable energy,
- > adequate management of chemicals,
- > the integration of environmental costs in development policies.

The Office of the Director, located in Paris, coordinates activities through:

- > **The International Environmental Technology Centre** - IETC (Osaka, Shiga), which implements integrated waste, water and disaster management programmes, focusing in particular on Asia.
- > **Production and Consumption** (Paris), which promotes sustainable consumption and production patterns as a contribution to human development through global markets.
- > **Chemicals** (Geneva), which catalyzes global actions to bring about the sound management of chemicals and the improvement of chemical safety worldwide.
- > **Energy** (Paris), which fosters energy and transport policies for sustainable development and encourages investment in renewable energy and energy efficiency.
- > **OzonAction** (Paris), which supports the phase-out of ozone depleting substances in developing countries and countries with economies in transition to ensure implementation of the Montreal Protocol.
- > **Economics and Trade** (Geneva), which helps countries to integrate environmental considerations into economic and trade policies, and works with the finance sector to incorporate sustainable development policies.

UNEP DTIE activities focus on raising awareness, improving the transfer of knowledge and information, fostering technological cooperation and partnerships, and implementing international conventions and agreements.

For more information,
see **www.unep.fr**

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