

# HEADLINES

A Quarterly Newsletter of the Tourism Promotions Board Philippines

JANUARY - MARCH 2020

## BAYANIHAN OUR COLLECTIVE JOURNEY TOWARDS TOURISM RESILIENCY AND GROWTH

**PH REMAINS FOCUSED ON  
SUSTAINABLE TOURISM**

**COO ALLONES PUSHES FOR DOMESTIC TOURISM  
AT 2<sup>ND</sup> AIRASIA BUSINESS EXCHANGE**

**TPB: CHAMPIONING THE PHILIPPINES  
IN GLOBAL TOURISM FOR 44 YEARS**





# HEADLINES

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**HEADLINES** is a quarterly newsletter of the Tourism Promotions Board Philippines spearheaded by the Marketing Communications Department.

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# CONTENTS

## CORPORATE NEWS

- 3 New COO takes helm at TPB  
Philippine tourism board achieves ISO 9001:2015 re-accreditation
- 4 Bayanihan, our collective journey towards tourism resiliency and growth
- 5 "More > Real" at the Travel Tour Expo 2020
- 6 TPB: Championing the Philippines in global tourism for 44 years
- 8 PH remains focused on sustainable tourism
- 10 YesPinoy x TPB collaborates for youth disaster resiliency
- 11 New COO pushes for domestic tourism at 2<sup>nd</sup> Air Asia Business Exchange  
"Green Marketing" approach of TPB highlighted at 10th Ecoforum

## PROMOTIONS

- 12 ASEAN keeping pace with the next generation of travel
- 13 Propelling Philippine dive at BOOT Düsseldorf
- 14 New membership program for Philippine tourism industry

## FEATURES

- 15 Discovery Shores Boracay on EcoConserve Program: Saying Yes to Refills and No to Landfills

## DOT UPDATES

- 16 2019 Philippine Tourism Industry Performance – 8.2M target exceeded!
- 17 DOT on COVID-19
- 18 Did You Know? (Stay Curious About the Philippines)



COVER PHOTO:

*When everything is put on pause and innumerable challenges befall a nation, the Bayanihan spirit shines the brightest. The COVID-19 may have brought unprecedented challenges to the world but Filipinos remain resilient in the face of this crisis.*

# NEW COO TAKES HELM AT TPB



**T**he Tourism Promotions Board (TPB) Philippines warmly welcomes its new Chief Operating Officer (COO), Atty. Maria Anthonette C. Velasco-Allones.

A Career Executive Service Officer since 2010, Atty. Velasco-Allones brings her extensive civil service management expertise to TPB. Prior to her appointment, she served as Executive Director of the Career Executive Service Board (CESB) since

2007. Under her leadership, CESB received international recognition from the UN-Asia Pacific Center for ICT in 2009 and 2010 for “bridging the information and communications technology (ICT) capacity gap of government executives in the Philippines to achieve socio-economic and development goals”. She successfully spearheaded CESB’s administrative reforms and program innovations in support of leadership capacity enhancement among the country’s top career senior officials.

She also served as Assistant Secretary for Personnel of the Department of National Defense from 1999-2001 and as Assistant Secretary at the Department of Labor and Employment from 2001-2006.

An Outstanding Alumni of the National Defense College of the Philippines, Atty. Velasco-Allones received the Outstanding Vincentian Alumni Award for Leadership Excellence and Service from the Unibersidad de Santa Isabel in Naga City last 2018.

Atty. Velasco-Allones completed her Bachelor of Arts in Political Science and Bachelor of Laws from

the University of the Philippines. She obtained her Master in Public Management from the joint program of the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy-National University of Singapore and the Kennedy School of Government-Harvard University. She presently serves as a core faculty member of the Ateneo School of Government and is a resident faculty of CESB’s Leadership and Management Proficiency Program.

Her extensive and remarkable achievements in public sector, organizational development and strategic human resource management earned her the prestigious Ten Outstanding Young Men (TOYM) award in the field of Human Resource Development in government service in the Philippines in 2009.

Under her leadership, TPB is looking forward to a purposeful year of promoting the country to become the most preferred tourist destination in the Asia Pacific by 2022.

Atty. Velasco-Allones assumed office as TPB COO on 10 February 2020.

## PHILIPPINE TOURISM BOARD ACHIEVES ISO 9001:2015 RE-ACCREDITATION

**T**PB once again proved its commitment towards the continuous improvement of its management systems by successfully maintaining its ISO 9001:2015 certification.

The audit performed by the Certification International Philippines, Inc. showed that the quality management systems in place at TPB have seen remarkable improvements and discovered no non-conformities in the organization’s existing processes on design, development and provision of Philippine tourism marketing and promotions versus the ISO standards.

An attached agency of the Department of Tourism (DOT), TPB exists to market and promote the Philippines domestically and internationally as a world-class tourism and MICE destination.



# BAYANIHAN

## OUR COLLECTIVE JOURNEY TOWARDS TOURISM RESILIENCE AND GROWTH

The Tourism Promotions Board (TPB), with its mandate to market and promote the Philippines as a key travel destination, has been working hand-in-hand with the Department of Tourism (DOT) to respond to the unprecedented challenges brought about by the Coronavirus disease, also known as COVID-19.

Officially declared by the World Health Organization (WHO) as a pandemic, COVID-19 has bludgeoned the world's socioeconomic landscape with numerous industries on the brink of collapse.

The TPB is now faced with a colossal task to ensure that the most appropriate steps are taken to mitigate the effects of the virus especially on the tourism industry.

### Impacted Events

The pandemic has seriously disrupted the global tourism industry, particularly the airlines, hotels, properties, tour operators and the Meetings, Incentive Travel, Conventions, Exhibitions (MICE) market. As of 20 April 2020, TPB has identified the list of this year's canceled and postponed events:

#### CANCELED EVENTS

EVENT / VENUE / COUNTRY	DATE
<b>TPB-initiated events</b>	
<i>International Philippine Business Mission (PBM)</i>	
Taiwan (Taichung, Tainan and Taipei)	23-26 March
Japan (Osaka, Nagoya and Tokyo)	June
USA (L.A. and San Francisco) and Canada (Vancouver)	01-06 June
Korea (Seoul)	09 June
Southern China (Guangzhou, Fuzhou, Heifei)	05-11 July
North China (Xi'an and Chengdu)	26-28 October
<b>TPB participation in International events</b>	
<i>International</i>	
Korean Underwater Sports Expo (Seoul)	27 February -01 March
Internationale Tourismus Borse (ITB) Berlin	03-09 March
Nagoya Travel Fair (Tabi Matsuri Nagoya)	13-15 March
China Outbound Travel & Tourism Market (COTTM) Beijing	01-03 April
Outdoor Adventure & Travel Show (Montreal, Canada)	03-05 April
World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC) Annual Global Summit (Cancun, Mexico)	21-23 April
Outdoor Adventure & Travel Show (Calgary, Canada)	02-03 May
IMEX Frankfurt (Frankfurt, Germany)	12-14 May
Blue Ocean/Diving Fes Kansai (Osaka, Japan)	16-17 May
Seoul International Tourism Industry Fair	21-24 May
Hanatour International Travel Show (Seoul, Korea)	07-09 June
Tour and Travel Exchange (Tucson, Arizona)	04-07 June
Kansai International Travel Fair (Osaka, Japan)	06-07 June
Diving and Resort Travel (DRT) Expo Shanghai	16-19 July
Incentive Travel and Conventions, Meetings (IT&CM) China (Shanghai)	03-05 August

#### 2020 POSTPONED EVENTS

EVENT & VENUE	ORIGINAL DATE	NEW DATE
<b>TPB-initiated events</b>		
<i>Domestic</i>		
6th Regional Travel Fair (Sta. Rosa City, Laguna)	02-06 April 2020	23-26 July 2020
Tourism Marketing Educational Seminar (Sta Rosa City, Laguna)	29 Mar-01 April 2020	July 2020
Philippine Tourism Destination Inventory (South Bohol)	May 2020	November 2020
Tourism Marketing Educational Seminar (Bohol)	15-19 June 2020	November 2020
Philippine MICE Conference (MICECON) 2020 (Davao City)	14-16 October 2020	2021 (actual dates TBA)
<b>TPB participation in International events</b>		
Annual Investment Meeting 2020 Dubai, United Arab Emirates	23-24 March 2020	TBA
ITB China Shanghai, China	13-15 May 2020	12-14 May 2021
Arabian Travel Market 2020 Dubai, United Arab Emirates	19-22 April 2020	16-19 May 2021
Marine Diving Fair 2020 Tokyo, Japan	03-05 April 2020	10-12 July 2020
IBTM Americas Mexico City, Mexico	27-28 May 2020	26-27 August 2020
Asia Dive Expo (ADEX) Singapore	17-19 April 2020	09-11 October 2020
Malaysia International Diving Expo (MIDE) 2020 (Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia)	12-14 June 2020	04-06 December 2020
Taipei Tourism Expo Taipei, Taiwan	15-18 May 2020	TBA
Kaohsiung International Travel Fair Kaohsiung, Taiwan	10-13 July 2020	TBA
1st Taiwan Online Dive Fair	01 July -15 August 2020	TBA
Taichung International Travel Fair Taichung, Taiwan	03-06 July 2020	TBA

\*as of April 2020

In light of these impacted events, TPB waived participation fees for industry partners joining in selected international trade, MICE and consumer fairs and business missions this year to convey support to the private sectors experiencing the adverse effect of COVID-19 on the tourism industry and the economy.

In addition, the TPB is now working on adjusting the focus of the Philippine MICE Conference (MICECON) 2020 to ensure that the conference program will cover topics that will help our stakeholders recover from losses from the COVID-19 pandemic and to provide sessions that will better prepare the industry for future crises.

### Bayanihan in Action

When everything is put on pause and innumerable challenges befall a nation, Bayanihan spirit and resiliency shine the brightest. This became evident when the public and private sectors collaborated in response to the pleas of the distressed as a result of the ECQ imposed by the national government amid the rise of COVID-19 cases in the country.



Various initiatives were carried out including the staging of recovery flights, arrangement of transportation services and hotel accommodations, food provisioning and distribution of hygienic items called MalasaKits to stranded tourists.

Tourism stakeholders were also assisted financially and provided with webinars and training programs that would enable them to cope with difficulties, rethink initiatives and transition to recovery as society adapts to a new normal.

### On To Recovery Plans

“The DOT has been proactive in handling the current pandemic by constantly meeting with the government agencies directly involved in its management, together with private stakeholders, to come up with mitigation plans related to the tourism industry. TPB, as its attached agency, fully supports the action plans of the department. In particular, shifting the promotions to domestic tourism,” said Mr. Arnold T. Gonzales, TPB’s Acting Deputy Chief Operating Officer for Marketing and Promotions.

TPB believes that a robust domestic tourism is the backbone of any country’s tourism industry thus the agency emphasizes its priority action in intensifying domestic promotions. The agency will also leverage online promotions, continue promoting sustainable tourism, and highlight sustainable community-based tourism.

“Tourism is a resilient industry and has a capacity to bounce back. Definitely, our industry will recover, but it

will take time. When the public starts to perceive that it is safe to travel, only then will we see an improvement. Domestic tourism is likely the first to recover, because you perfectly know the situation/condition in your own country,” stated Ms. Teresita Landan, Acting Head of the Domestic Promotions Department

Further, the agency’s recovery plan covers tactical promotions on the digital platform to strengthen international promotions, leveraging social media and collaboration with influencers to entice Filipinos to travel more within the country, continuous assistance to MICE events, and intensified promotions of the Philippines as a preferred MICE destination in Business-to Business (B2B) platforms through activations and product presentations.

The spread of COVID-19 has highlighted, once more, the barriers that technology can cross. For the Philippine tourism industry, this tool has become a lifeline that keeps current and future business partnerships and transactions afloat. Industry players are still able to continue servicing their clients through digital interaction. In the MICE sector, practitioners are also being forced to upgrade (for those who have yet to) and to think of creative ways to keep clients engaged now and in the future.

The COVID-19 pandemic has underscored the importance of open communication for inclusiveness and openness to collaboration for growth. It has also proven that the tourism industry can band together in times of crisis.

*Image from: <https://elgin.edu/>*



## “MORE > REAL” at the Travel Tour Expo 2020

The 27th Travel and Tour Expo 2020 staged its biggest edition yet on 7 to 9 February 2020, occupying the entire SMX Convention Center in Pasay City. Organized by the Philippine Travel Agencies Association (PTAA), the TTE is the biggest annual travel and tourism event offering exclusive travel deals.

This year’s theme “More > Real,” gathered 400 exhibitors and featured 900 booths showcasing deals with up to 70% discounts.

The Tourism Promotions Board (TPB) Philippines exhibited an indigenous weaving-inspired booth that welcomed visitors with free TPB-exclusive merchandise plus introductions to the TPB Membership Program. Trivia games about the tourist spots in the Philippines were also conducted by the TPB employees.

Amid the COVID-19 outbreak, the event pushed through with precautionary measures strictly implemented for the benefit of the public and tourism sector employees.

# CHAMPIONING THE PHILIPPINES IN GLOBAL TOURISM FOR 44 YEARS

It began as the Philippine Convention Bureau (PCB) in 1976. Eleven years later, it was renamed as the Philippine Convention and Visitors Corporation (PCVC) until its reorganization in 2009 as the Tourism Promotions Board (TPB), the marketing and promotions arm of the Department of Tourism (DOT).

Now in its 44<sup>th</sup> year, TPB remains steadfast in its goal to market the Philippines as a major global tourism and MICE destination while articulating its efforts towards sustainable tourism.

## Mandate

The TPB was created by virtue of Republic Act No. 9593, "An Act Declaring a National Policy for Tourism as an Engine of Investment, Employment, Growth and National Development, and Strengthening the Department of Tourism and its Attached Agencies to Effectively and Efficiently Implement that Policy, and Appropriating Funds Therefor."

It is responsible for:

- Marketing and promoting the Philippines domestically and internationally as a major global tourism destination, highlighting the uniqueness and assisting the development of its tourism products and services, with the end in view of increasing tourist arrivals and tourism investments;
- Marketing the Philippines as a major MICE destination in Asia;
- Attracting, promoting, facilitating and servicing large-scale events, international fairs and conventions, congresses, sports competitions, expositions and the like;
- Ensuring the regular local and international advertisement of the country's major tourism destinations and other tourism products, including Tourism Enterprise Zones (TEZ); and,

- Providing incentives to travel agencies, tour operators, wholesalers and investors abroad capable of drawing a sizable number of tourists and tourism investments to the country.

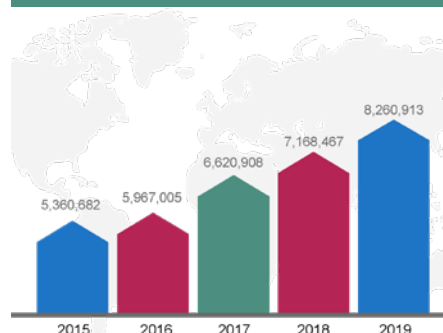
## Core Values



## TPB's annual performance in 2019

Intensified efforts to retain the Philippines as a major destination for global travelers have paid forth in 2019 as the Philippines registered a total of 8.26 million international arrivals, a 15.24% growth over 2018's year-end figure of 7.16 million. For the top markets being handled by TPB, arrivals reached 7,219,098 visitors which is 103.13% of its annual target of above 6.9 million with the Governance Commission for GOCCs (GCG).

## VISITOR ARRIVALS IN THE PHILIPPINES



Source: Philippine Department of Tourism

The agency adopted a marketing approach focusing on psychographics (or motivation for people to travel) more than the demographics that focus on nationality, age, income and propensity to travel. Thus in 2019, marketing and promotions strategies centered on "people's interest."

TPB's various operating units — International Promotions, Domestic Promotions, MICE (Meetings, Incentives, Conventions, Exhibitions/Events) and Marketing Communications, continued their aggressive push to promote top destinations like Boracay, Palawan, Bohol and Siargao through on-ground activities, global media exposure and increased digital presence. New programs, on the other hand, were adopted to develop upcoming destinations in Pampanga, Southern Cebu, Samar, Aklan and BARMM (Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao).

Key international promotional activities included participation in top travel trade events such as the World Travel Market (WTM) in London, International Tourismus Borse (ITB) in Berlin, ASEAN Tourism Forum in Ha Long Bay, and Luxperience in Sydney; dive expos like the Marine Diving Fair, Asia Dive Expo in Singapore and Beijing, Dive Birmingham and Diving Resort Travel (DRT) shows.

Year-round familiarization tours and business missions were organized to strengthen key high-spend markets like Korea, China and Japan. These events served as an opportunity to establish long-term business relationships with the result of generating arrival and sales.



PHITEX 2019 business-to-business session



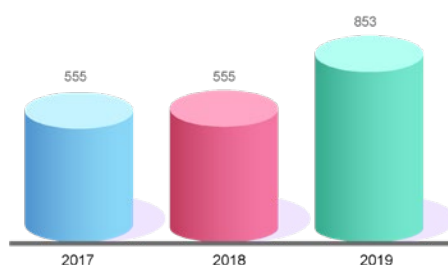


Site Inspection of Manila MICE venues and hotels

The agency also spearheaded two institutional events in 2019 - the Philippine Travel Exchange (PHITEX) held back-to-back with the MICECONnect - which gathered almost 300 international buyers of tourism products and services and 250 Philippine sellers for an insightful discourse and business networking opportunities.

TPB also strengthened the country's presence in the MICE sector, surpassing its targets in generating leads through participation in key global MICE trade shows like the IMEX Frankfurt and IMEX America, Incentive Travel & Conventions Meetings in China and Incentive Travel & Conventions Meetings Asia in Thailand. This resulted in a significant increase in the business leads generated by the agency's participation and business calls to corporate accounts resulting in a 53.7% growth compared to 2018.

#### TPB MICE BUSINESS LEADS GENERATED



Moreover, the agency assisted 155 accounts (local associations and corporations), provided technical assistance to 16 bids and successfully won four of them namely the Asian Federation of Exhibition and Convention Annual General Meeting, International Congress on Sustainable Tourism in Fragile Ecosystems 2020, Ecotourism Travel Mart for 2020 and 2021, and the 16th Asia Pacific (ASPAC) Bonsai and Suiseki Convention 2021.



Photos Above: B2B sessions and 5<sup>th</sup> Regional Travel Fair

Meanwhile, domestic tourism was stimulated by organizing and participating in major travel fairs such as the Travel Tour Expo (TTE), Philippine Travel Mart (PTM), NAITAS Travel and Trade Show, Philippine Harvest Expos and Regional Travel Fairs in Clark, Pampanga and Cagayan de Oro City.

All strategic programs for 2019 were also anchored on the theme of responsible and sustainable tourism — “a balance between business opportunities and our social responsibilities”— spearheaded by DOT. As such, TPB conducted Marketing Educational Seminars with the theme “Marketing Management for Sustainable Tourism Community Development” across the country to provide regional tourism officers, officials from local government units and private sector tourism representatives, the necessary guidance and active mentoring on tourism trends, best practices, new marketing approaches to increase marketability of their respective tourism destinations while promoting

sustainable and responsible tourism at the same time

One of the agency's notable initiatives to tackle the digital sphere is its collaboration with the Center for International Trade Expositions and Missions (CITEM) by staging the Influencer Marketing Program which is designed to tap into the existing community of engaged followers on social media of the chosen international influencers. These influencers are specialists in the niches relevant to these industries: travel, lifestyle design, and fashion.

Further on the marketing side, TPB produced 798 tactical placements in major local broadsheets and lifestyle magazines and publications and listed 376 published releases amounting to Php92.4 million PR values. The agency also contracted IPG Mediabrands as its official media planning and placement agency that helped design, execute and implement TPB's media plan in various forms aligned with its strategic marketing directions for the year.





# PH remains focused on SUSTAINABLE TOURISM

Photo: Boracay

**T**he Philippines, known as the 'Pearl of the Orient Seas,' is home to hundreds of amazing tourist destinations for all kinds of activities. From white sand beaches and glorious mountain trails to iconic food trip destinations and diverse cultural finds, one can honestly say that "It's More Fun in the Philippines."

To guarantee a "More Fun Forever," experience, the country's Department of Tourism (DOT) embarked on a sustainable tourism advocacy. Under this campaign, the Philippine government sent a piercing message to all stakeholders that sustainability practices in tourism is a priority over revenue and numbers.

The results exceeded expectations as foreign tourist arrivals went beyond the 8.2 million target for 2019. Visitor arrivals recorded a double-digit growth every month except for January vis-à-vis the similar periods of the past year. December posted the highest volume at 776,798 entries.

## The birth of the "Save Our Spots" movement

The first identified project was a massive rehabilitation of Boracay to reverse the adverse effects of over-tourism. The island was closed down in the summer of 2018 despite it being a top tourist destination. Armed with strong political will, the national government confronted all its stakeholders and ordered a massive clean-up and demolition of illegal infrastructure as the first step towards the improvement and beautification of the island to make it environmentally sustainable and, at the same time, enticing to tourists around the globe.

The results were breathtaking and Boracay has now transformed itself from a party island into a family destination. This achievement led to the creation of the Save Our Spots (SOS) movement, launched mid-2019 to inspire a mindset towards responsible tourism in the country. The movement went beyond the initial goal to rehabilitate various tourist destinations around the country and encouraged everyone to join the cause and care for and respect the environment, culture, and people through impactful yet straightforward practices.

The government sets Boracay as a benchmark for the next rehabilitation projects such as the Manila Bay, Palawan, Siargao, Bohol, and Baguio City. Similar to Boracay, the

DOT conducted a series of consultations and dialogues with tourism stakeholders in these destinations to map out the next vital steps in the rehabilitation process. El Nido is now building a sewerage treatment plant and reclaiming beachfront easements and Baguio City has started rehabilitating the iconic Burnham Park.

## Tourism Industry Gains

The DOT has gone a long way in preserving and promoting iconic Philippine destinations and has helped the country gain global accolades from several recognition bodies. These include CNN, Conde Nast, Japan Tourism Award, TripAdvisor, and the 2019 World Travel Awards for the country's impressive tourism practices, natural beauty, and cultural heritage preservation. Boracay, Palawan, Cebu, and other Visayan islands were hailed as the world's best island destinations and Vigan as one of the most picturesque towns. The country was also recognized for having the best dive spots in the world and for implementing excellence sustainable efforts in Boracay.



DOT Secretary Bernadette Romulo-Puyat.

"As a whole, this advocacy may seem like an ambitious undertaking, but every small contribution always goes a long way. And this sustainability drive improves our competitiveness and attractiveness as a global tourist destination, especially for future generations," said DOT Secretary Bernadette Romulo-Puyat.

This year, the spotlight is on nine tourist destinations across the country, namely:



## LUZON

### Batangas

Swim at the cove beaches and biodiverse dive spots of Anilao, Calatagan, Nasugbu, San Juan, and Tingloy. Hike the trails of several mountains like Mt. Maculot, Mt. Batulao, and Mt. Talamitam, before finally immersing into the Batangueño culture by visiting old churches and drinking the Batangas Brew or locally known as 'Kapeng Barako.'

### Palawan

Don't miss out on the majestic Puerto Princesa Underground River, which is one of the longest navigable underground rivers in the world. Island hop and snorkel into the blue waters of Coron, El Nido, and the almost untouched island beaches of the Balabac group of islands.



*Puerto Princesa Underground River*

## VISAYAS

### Bohol

Be enchanted with the Chocolate Hills, the man-made forest, and Hinagdanan cave. Peek into the lives of the tiny Tarsiers in their sanctuary, go dolphin watching or scuba diving the next morning, and have a sumptuous lunch on a Loboc or Loay river cruise before soaking into the white-sand beaches of Panglao, Alona or Anda.

### Boracay Island, Aklan

Enjoy kite surfing, paddle boarding, or just relax by the powdery white-sand shore with friends and family. If you're up for a bit more adventure, cross to the nearby islands for cliff diving and snorkeling. You can also go to the mainland for an educational trip at a wind farm and the Motag Living Museum.

### Cebu

Soak in thrilling sea adventures with schools of sardines in Moalboal, go the extra mile canyoneering and trekking in Badian, and enjoy the breath-taking view of Kawasan Falls and Osmeña Peak. You may also want to spend a day visiting the city's heritage sites such as Magellan's Cross and Magellan Shrine. At the end of the day treat yourself

to Cebu's famous lechon and wide range of seafoods. For dessert, try local delicacies like dried mango and otap.



*Sardine Run*

### Iloilo

Visit the UNESCO World Heritage Site Miagao church and other historic sites in the province. Then taste unique local cuisines such as the flavorful La Paz batchoy and pancit molo. The province is also the gateway to the land of the sweetest mangoes, the island province of Guimaras.

## MINDANAO

### Camiguin

Enjoy sweet lanzones at Lanzones festival every October, then snorkel your way around the historic sunken cemetery. Discover the White Island, the hot springs, and even the natural soda pools.

### The Island Garden City of Samal in Davao del Norte

Catch the Vanishing Island during low tide and swim during high tide or see the sights at the Haguimit Falls. Even better, experience a 5-star vacation at the scenic Pearl Farm Beach Resort just off the coast of Davao City. There you can stay in beautiful stilt houses, snorkel around the Marine Sanctuary to see giant clams and corals, or just enjoy the relaxing ambience with your friends and family.



*Pearl Farm, Davao*

### Siargao Island, Surigao del Norte

Ride the big swells and enjoy the balmy winds of Philippines' surfing capital, take a river cruise, or try the rope swing at Maasin river. Cap off the day glamping under the stars.

The DOT encourages all tourists around the globe to visit the Philippines and be part of keeping the fun forever.

*Article by the Department of Tourism*



# YESPINOY X TPB COLLABORATES FOR YOUTH DISASTER RESILIENCY

To cap off TPB's Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) in 2019, the agency partnered with YesPinoy Foundation Inc., an organization focused on youth empowerment, to implement a program on disaster risk management.

TPB and YesPinoy volunteers headed to Cubao Elementary School and Tomas Morato Elementary School last 5 December 2019 and 24 January 2020 respectively to teach lessons on saving lives during calamities and conduct fun activities that highlight the importance of environmental conservation to curb climate change.

The program is part of YesPinoy's "I am Super Campaign," which aims to empower children and community members to be disaster resilient. A total of 200 students from grades four to six from the said schools benefited from the initiative that included the distribution of emergency kits containing a thermal blanket, flashlight, whistle and other vital items needed in times of disaster.

With climate change issues escalating worldwide, the TPB believes that educating the youth about its impact is a crucial step towards its mitigation. But beyond awareness, the agency underscores the importance of disaster preparedness and response given Mother Nature's unpredictability.

"With all the climate change-induced hazards our country is experiencing, it is highly important that all citizens, including the youth, are aware of the standard procedures that they should do before, during, and after a disaster," said Mariel Dimaano, TPB's Planning Officer II and Project Officer of the CSR program.

Since 2017, TPB has been partnering with NGOs with core advocacies similar to the agency's four CSR pillars: (1) environmental conservation, (2) culture and heritage preservation, (3) community assistance and (4) education.

To date, TPB has already planted a total of 2,500 native trees in Southern Luzon, assisted in the building of Isneg houses in Adams, Ilocos Norte to help preserve its culture, distributed educational materials to underprivileged children in Tarlac, Banaue and Ilocos Norte, and educated the youth in partnership with the Haribon Foundation's Biodiversity on Wheels (BOW) Program.







Photo from left to right: TPB Acting Deputy COO for Marketing and Promotions Arnold T. Gonzales, TPB COO Atty. Maria Anthonette Velasco-Allones, AirAsia Philippines CEO Ricardo Isla, AirAsia Philippines CCO Gilbert Simpao, and Tourism Congress of the Philippines President Jojo Clemente

## COO Allones pushes for domestic tourism at 2<sup>nd</sup> AirAsia Business Exchange

Ensuring business continuity, pursuing resource opportunities and addressing tourism issues were the agendas at AirAsia's 2nd Business Exchange Assembly held on 28 February 2020 in Clark, Pampanga.

The half-day event gathered the powerhouses of the tourism industry under one roof including TPB COO Atty. Maria Anthonette Velasco-Allones, AirAsia Philippines CEO Mr. Ricardo Isla and CCO Mr. Gilbert Simpao, TPB Acting DCOO Mr. Arnold Gonzales, DOT 3 Regional Director Ms. Carolina Uy, and Tourism Congress of the Philippines (TCP) President, Mr. Jojo Clemente. Also in attendance were travel agency associations from different parts of Luzon.

In her message as guest speaker, COO Allones announced her support to the Philippine stakeholders and their efforts in promoting the country as a vacation and MICE destination globally by waiving participation fees in international fairs and business missions from February 17 to December 31, 2021.

The recently appointed COO also shared TPB's marketing plans for the year and asserted DOT's thrusts for 2020, which includes expanding the current market base and improving policies on access, connectivity and security.

## “Green Marketing” approach of TPB highlighted at 10th Ecoforum

Marketing the Philippines as an emerging ecotourism destination was the main message delivered by TPB COO Maria Anthonette C. Velasco-Allones at the 10th Ecoforum 2020 held at Royce Hotel, Clark, Pampanga on 28 February 2020.

Speaking to various Local Government Units (LGUs) including tourism officers, the COO discussed the “Green Marketing” approach of the TPB and the agency's support to sustainable community-based tourism (SCBT) destinations that provide a unique local experience and value environmental conservation, cultural heritage, and ecological balance.

COO Allones introduced some of the country's SCBT sites and programs such as the Talaandig Tribe

Sustainable Community in Bukidnon, the Eco-Cultural Tour Program of Sagay Negros Occidental, Buhatan River Cruise in Buhatan Sorsogon and the Community Immersion Program of Kangan Ifugao, among many others, and reiterated the significant role of the government in promoting these sites through traditional media, digital media, and word-of-mouth.

Moreover, the COO highlighted sustainability, stakeholder support, and stewardship as vital factors in protecting our sites for the betterment of future generations. COO Allones also emphasized that aside from advocating for responsible tourism, marketing destinations appropriately should still be at the core of promoting Philippine destinations.







## ASEAN keeping pace with the next generation of travel

The Department of Tourism (DOT) and the Tourism Promotions Board (TPB) Philippines once again led the country's participation in the 39th Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) Tourism Forum (ATF) on 12-16 January 2020 at the Brunei Darussalam International Defense and Exhibition Conference (BRIDEX), Bandar Seri Begawan, Brunei Darussalam.

Joined by the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority (SBMA), and the Philippine International Convention Center (PICC) officials as well as representatives from eight (8) properties/hotels and five (5) travel agencies/tour operators in the country, the Philippine contingent was able to establish 460 new business contacts, 66 sales leads and 21 bookings. Local properties/hotels were also recognized and given awards in various categories.

### **ASEAN Green Hotel Standard Awardees**

Amarela Resort  
Amorita Resort  
Seda Hotel Nuvali  
Bohol Beach Club Resort  
Pearl Farm Beach Resort

### **ASEAN MICE Venue Standard Awardees**

JPARK Island Resort and Waterpark Cebu  
Marriott Hotel Manila  
Bai Hotel  
Conrad Manila  
Princesa Garden Island Resort and Spa

### **ASEAN Clean Tourist City Standard Awardees**

Iloilo City  
Baguio City  
San Carlos City, Negros Occidental

### **ASEAN Sustainable Tourism Awards for Rural and Urban Categories**

Municipality of Tanay  
Palawan Urban Heritage Tour

The ASEAN Tourism Forum is a cooperative regional effort to promote the ASEAN region as one tourist destination. With this year's theme of "ASEAN: Together Towards a Next Generation of Travel", ASEAN member nations aim to recognize the need to keep pace with the dynamics and demands of changing travel patterns, demographics, behaviors, and preferences.





## Propelling Philippine dive at BOOT DÜSSELDORF

The TPB once again asserted the Philippines' stature as a top diving destination at the 51st International Boat Show Düsseldorf (BOOT Düsseldorf) held last 18 – 26 January 2020 in Düsseldorf, Germany.

Together with some of the country's dive associations, luxury resorts, airlines, and travel agencies, the TPB showcased the best of underwater life across the archipelago to more than 250,000 water sports enthusiasts, including quality dive buyers and wholesalers, from 106 countries who took part at the world's leading water sports trade fair and boat show.

Apart from maritime holidays and exotic options, the Philippine contingent highlighted top dive destinations such as the Tubbataha Reefs Natural Park, the crown

jewel of Philippine diving and a UNESCO World Heritage Site known for its rich and diverse marine life. Non-divers, meanwhile, were made to experience "life above water" through the visually captivating Philippine booth featuring the paradisiacal landscape of Philippine islands. The end of the event saw the Philippine team garner a total of 1,737 sales leads including actual bookings negotiated on-site.

The TPB is expected to participate at the next installment slated to be held on 23-31 January 2021 to attract more dive aficionados and provide an optimal experience both on and off the water. The agency is also looking forward to the participation of more diverse dive activity providers that will not only put emphasis on the country's popular dive destinations but also the overall experience of staying in the Philippines.





Davao



## NEW MEMBERSHIP PROGRAM FOR PHILIPPINE TOURISM INDUSTRY

The Tourism Promotions Board (TPB) Philippines, the marketing and promotions arm of the Department of Tourism (DOT), launched the new TPB Membership Program that aims to provide marketing services and benefits to its members for the sustainable development of their businesses and the Philippine tourism industry as a whole.

As part of TPB's thrust to promote the Philippines as a world-class travel destination to local and international markets, the membership program will forge strong collaboration and partnership with the private sector and tourism stakeholders.

Regional sales calls were conducted in the cities of Tuguegarao, Coron, Legazpi, Naga, Dumaguete, Cebu, Zamboanga, Davao and General Santos since November 2019 to present various membership benefits which include

marketing opportunities, brand enhancement, business opportunities, network and capacity-building opportunities, access to information and promotional materials.

Membership is open to DOT-accredited establishments related to accommodations, travel and tour services, MICE (meetings, incentive travel, conventions, exhibitions/events) facilities and organizers, and health and wellness facilities.

To join, interested applicants may go to <https://www.tpb.gov.ph/membership-registration/> and fill out the online application form. Annual membership fees for FY 2020 and 2021 has been waived in response to the coronavirus pandemic in support of all tourism stakeholders.

For more information, applicants may call TPB at 8525-9318 loc. 239 or email [tpbmembership@tpb.gov.ph](mailto:tpbmembership@tpb.gov.ph)



Cebu



Dumaguete



Naga



Legazpi



# Saying **YES** to Refills and **NO** to Landfills



The generation's notion in adopting an environmentally-sensitive approach in consumer products has introduced the advent of eco-friendly alternatives to plastic straws, bags, and utensils. But the fundamental issue here goes deeper than what's fashionable or "in" and it needs to be immediately addressed.

The alarming number of marine animals who die or get injured because of plastic trash have moved Discovery Shores Boracay and Club Paradise Palawan into establishing their own Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiative called the EcoConserve Program. This program covers all environment-friendly practices that have been incorporated into the daily aspects of both resorts' operations to help lessen the properties' ecological impacts. A major component of which is the resorts' goal of minimizing plastic trash. From small practices like replacement of plastic straws with paper or metal ones, the use of refillable pumps for the bath amenities, to bigger and more long-term applications like the installation of a more sustainable source of drinking water, both resorts are committed to

finding ways to better care for the environment.

In 2019, Discovery Shores Boracay and Club Paradise Palawan have invested in EcoPure Water Bottling System that transforms tap water to clean drinking water. The system makes use of Classic Crystal Tropical Purification technology which includes a seven-stage water purification system that destroys microorganism and other harmful substances that may be present in tap water. The resulting EcoPure water is pure and safe for drinking and comes in either still or sparkling. The EcoPure water is elegantly packaged in hygienic glass bottles that are sterilized before and after use.

The new water system eliminates the resorts' need for commercially sold bottled drinking water. The use of glass bottles also completely takes away any health concerns arising from plastic chemicals leaching into the drinking water.

According to several studies published in [www.gogreen.org](http://www.gogreen.org), the production of plastic water bottles requires up to 17

million barrels of oil each year, enough to maintain up to one million cars fueled for an entire year. It also uses energy that can power 190,000 homes, not to mention three times the amount of water needed in the production of one plastic water bottle. That large amount of water used becomes unusable due to its exposure to chemicals during the production process. Once the water in the plastic bottle is consumed, it takes 700 years for one PET plastic bottle to start decomposing.

In 2018, both resorts consumed an average of 12,542 bottles of water per month. The use of EcoPure water system will eliminate the use of plastic bottles which can save both resorts and the environment a total of 150,504 plastic bottles in a year.

To learn more about the resorts' green initiatives, visit [www.discoveryshoresboracay.com](http://www.discoveryshoresboracay.com) or call (632) 7720 8888 or check out [www.clubparadisepalawan.com](http://www.clubparadisepalawan.com) or call (632) 7719 6971.

*Article from the Discovery Shores Boracay and Club Paradise Palawan*



# 2019 PHILIPPINE TOURISM INDUSTRY PERFORMANCE – 8.2M TARGET EXCEEDED!



The year 2019 is deemed celebratory for Philippine tourism as international visitors reached 8.26 million, exceeding the 8.2 million annual target set in the National Tourism Development Plan (NTDP) for 2016-2022.

“This heralds a new milestone in the country’s tourism history, breaching the eight millionth mark. Without doubt, our convergence programs with other government agencies, particularly in improving access as well as product development and marketing initiatives with local government and private sector have greatly paid off. These gains we hope to sustain even as we face global challenges,” enthused Department of Tourism (DOT) Secretary Bernadette Romulo-Puyat.

The DOT year-end visitor arrival report cited a 15.24% growth over 2018’s year-end figure of 7.16 million. Almost all months, except January,

registered double digit growth rates, the largest of which was August at 27.54% while December recorded the highest volume at 776,798.

2019 was the year the DOT launched its refreshed branding campaign; continuing the “It’s More Fun in the Philippines” slogan but repurposing it to advocate for sustainable tourism. The local launch was held in the National Museum of Natural History while the international event was in Berlin during the Internationale Tourismus-Börse (ITB).

To complement the new direction towards sustainable tourism, the DOT launched a movement called “Save Our Spots” to call for each individual to be a responsible tourist and encourage the same behavior towards others to preserve the country’s natural and man-made wonders.

The Philippine tourism industry also received a number of international

awards and recognitions in 2019 such as the World’s Leading Dive Destination at the 2019 World Travel Awards, Asia’s Leading Tourism Board at the 2019 World Travel Awards and Excellent Partner Award (for Sustainable Efforts in Boracay, among others).

“This is a high point for Philippine tourism as it depicts our solidarity and commitment to make tourism work and prove its full potential as a sustainable and inclusive economic activity. The record-breaking numbers solidify the effectiveness of the Tourism Act of 2009, which celebrated its 10-year anniversary in 2019.” Secretary Puyat remarked.

Korea remains as the top source market with a total of 1.98 million arrivals, for a 22.48% increase. The ace spot has been well-guarded since 2010.

China follows closely on second with 1.74 million, boasting of a 38.58% growth.

The United States of America (USA) on third, yielded 1.06 million visitors for a 2.90% increase.

Japan is fourth at 682,788 arrivals, with an 8.07% growth followed by Taiwan reporting an equally impressive double-digit increase of 35.01% for its 327,273 arrivals.

Rounding up the top 12 visitor markets with their volumes and respective growth rates are: Australia with 286,170 (2.2%), Canada with 238,850 (5.48%), the United Kingdom with 209,206 (4.06%), Singapore with 158,595 arrivals (-7.68%), Malaysia with 139,882 (-3.69%), India with 134,963 (11.43%) and Germany with 103,756 (12.66%).

*Article from the Department of Tourism*





# PHILIPPINE TRAVEL ADVISORY

Updates and status report in handling the COVID-19

## PUBLIC SAFETY ANNOUNCEMENT

The Philippine Department of Tourism (DOT) is ensuring that tourism stakeholders implement the safety protocols and series of precautionary measures set by the World Health Organization (WHO) and the Department of Health (DOH) and promoting habits that the public can adapt to contain the spread of the COVID-19.

For more information on COVID-19 situation in the Philippines, you may click [here](#).

Currently, there are temporary travel bans in place and other measures to reduce the risk of imported cases and community transmission.

- There will be a temporary travel ban on foreigners entering the country starting 12:00AM, 22 March 2020. Only OFWs, repatriating Filipinos, their foreign spouses and children (provided that the foreign spouse and children are traveling with the Filipino national), and foreign government or international organization officials accredited by the Philippines will be allowed to enter the country.
- Land, air, and sea travel of uniformed personnel for official business, especially those transporting medical supplies, laboratory specimens related to the COVID-19, and other humanitarian assistance, shall be allowed.
- Sweeper flights for foreign nationals to bring them to airports will be allowed to continue operations.
- Only one (1) person is allowed to bring/fetch a passenger to/at the airport and he/she must depart immediately after picking up/dropping off said person. The driver should carry with him/her a copy of the airline ticket of the passenger as proof of conveyance.

## SELECT HOTELS TO REMAIN OPEN

Hotels and similar establishments **shall remain closed** under the guidelines of the Luzon-wide enhanced community quarantine, **except for the those with:**

- Foreign guests who had existing bookings or reservations under any Accommodation Establishment within the Philippines as of 17 March 2020; and other foreigners who are transiting through, or are otherwise temporarily staying in the Philippines for a short period and will leave the country;
- Long Staying Guests;
- Employees from Neighboring Basic Establishments as defined in this Order;
- Distressed OFWs or OFWs eligible to avail of accommodation assistance from the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration (OWWA) pursuant to relevant OWWA guidelines and issuances.
- Stranded Passengers or passengers whose domestic or foreign flights or rides have been cancelled and are prevented from leaving a city or place where they do not permanently reside, or have difficulty availing of transportation to their home city or province, due to the implementation of a community quarantine.

## WHAT YOU SHOULD DO

We urge the public to follow these steps to prevent further spread of the Corona Virus Disease (COVID-19).



## FLIGHT ADVISORIES

The Philippines was one of the first nations in the world to impose temporary travel bans on countries that were hotspots of the novel Coronavirus outbreak.

Please be informed of the current travel restrictions to certain countries and places below:

China Hong Kong Macau	North Gyeongsang Daegu Cheongdo	Italy Iran
Temporary ban on any person who has been to China and its Special Administrative Regions within fourteen (14) days immediately preceding arrival in the country.  Filipinos are temporarily banned from traveling to China and its Special Administrative Regions.	Temporary ban on any person who has been to the North Gyeongsang province, including Daegu and Cheongdo, South Korea, within fourteen (14) days immediately preceding arrival in the country.	Passengers coming from or has transited through Iran and Italy in the last fourteen (14) days shall be required to present a medical certificate issued by competent medical authorities within the last forty-eight (48) hours prior to arrival in the country certifying that they are COVID-19 free.  They will then be subject to the Bureau of Quarantine (BOQ) for a fourteen (14)-day mandatory quarantine.  Failure to present a medical certificate will be denied entry to the Philippines.

There is a mandatory fourteen (14) day quarantine for Filipinos and Permanent Resident Visa holders coming from any place in China and its Special Administrative Regions, the North Gyeongsang province, including Daegu and Cheongdo in South Korea, Italy and Iran.

## ACCREDITED HOTELS AND RESORTS PROTOCOL

- Temperature checking using a thermal scanner for all guests. Those with fever and flu-like symptoms will not be allowed to enter and will be referred to the nearest hospital.
- Conducting screening test to identify where the guests originated from two weeks prior to arrival
- Provisioning of more sanitizers on the premises

## WHAT THE PHILIPPINE TOURISM INDUSTRY IS DOING

The Philippine government is in close coordination with its tourism stakeholders—including airlines, hotels and resorts, and tour operators—to cascade guidelines to ensure all precautionary measures are enforced to contain the spread of the virus in the country.

## AIRPORT PROTOCOL



## AIRCRAFT DISINFECTION PROTOCOL



## STOP THE SPREAD OF FAKE NEWS

Fake news, disinformation and misinformation can spread faster than COVID-19. We appeal to the public to stop sharing fabricated and unverified news on COVID-19 as it has caused unnecessary panic.

We warn the public that the spread of false reports is a violation of Article 154 of the Revised Penal Code in relation to Section 6 and Section 4 (c) 4 (Online Libel) of the Republic Act 10175 or the Cybercrime Prevention Act of 2012. The Philippine National Police (PNP) has already filed several cases against persons proliferating fake news.

Fake news can be more harmful than the coronavirus outbreak. Know your facts, go to [www.who.int/](http://www.who.int/) and [www.doh.gov.ph](http://www.doh.gov.ph) to get the latest official COVID-19 updates.



# DID YOU KNOW?

## STAY CURIOUS ABOUT THE PHILIPPINES



... that the designs for the native T'nalak textile are inspired from the dreams of the weavers?

Hence, the moniker "Dreamweavers" was bestowed upon the T'boli tribe. The T'boli along with the B'laan, Ubo, Manobo and Bagobo are some of the indigenous tribes living in the surrounding areas of Lake Sebu with rich weaving culture that is still practiced today.

Learn more about Philippine ethnic weaving with emerging sustainable community-based attractions that can be found in Mindanao.



...that you can experience a Sardine Run at Panglao Island in Bohol?

This is the third destination in the world where you can swim through a giant vortex of sardines - at snorkeling depth even! Apart from the Sardine Run in South Africa and Moalboal, Cebu, head on over to the Napaling Dive located at Tangnan in Panglao Island and experience this incredible underwater adventure.



...that the ancient Filipinos used vinegar and acidic fruits to prepare their meats long before the Galleon trade?

Made with fish, meat or vegetables, the Philippine kinilaw is prepared with coconut or cane vinegar and local acidic fruits such as calamansi and seasoned with aromatics like ginger, black pepper, onion and chili pepper. Kinilaw is a derivative of the Bisayan word kilaw meaning raw or to eat raw, and oftentimes called the Philippine counterpart to ceviche.

Explore what other dishes the Philippines has to offer and eat communal style with your friends and family for an authentic Philippine gastronomic experience!



...the Philippines now has an official count of 7,641 islands?

In the latest count of Philippine Islands Measurements Project, more than 500 new islands were identified within the Philippine territories, bringing the official island count from 7,107 to 7,641. And more islands mean more fun! From the towering limestone cliffs of Palawan to the curious geographical wonder of Bohol and the mountain ranges of Cordillera, opportunities for an unforgettable travel experience are boundless.

Come on over and discover why it's truly more fun in the Philippines!



# NAVIGATING THE NEW NORMAL IN PHILIPPINE TOURISM

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PHILIPPINES