

Oceania

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and Dallen Timothy (*Arizona State University, USA*)

# **Oceania**

## **A Tourism Handbook**

Edited by  
Chris Cooper and C. Michael Hall

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## Chapter 1

# Introduction

Oceania is defined as Australia, New Zealand and the islands of the Pacific east of Indonesia and the Philippines. As such it is part of the most buoyant tourism region in the world – East Asia and the Pacific – a region that is forecast to receive a quarter of the world’s international tourists by 2020 (WTO, 1998). However, as a tourism destination, Oceania’s tourism volumes will remain modest as they are constrained by the huge distances involved in travelling in the region, indeed distance pervades any discussion of tourism in Oceania – the Pacific Ocean covers almost one-third of the earth’s surface, yet contains a fraction of the earth’s population (Harrison, 2003) (Figure 1.1). This is not only in terms of intra-regional travel across the Pacific, and indeed travel within the region’s largest landmass – Australia, but also the ‘tyranny of distance’ to the world’s tourism markets. Effectively this means that Oceania will never rival the tourism volumes of, say, Europe or the Caribbean – despite the proximity of the generating markets of Asia. Nonetheless, governments across the region have recognised the economic importance of tourism for income, jobs, investment and regional development. They have realised that, increasingly, tourism is becoming more important than the primary industries that were once all-important in the majority of region’s countries. This is clearly demonstrated by the World Travel and Tourism Council’s statistics for the economic significance of tourism in Oceania shown in Table 1.1<sup>1</sup>; indeed tourism is often the only real development option for many of the Pacific islands.

The very nature of Oceania as a tourism destination means that large volumes of tourism are inappropriate. Effective management of tourism is needed to conserve and protect the region’s rich natural and cultural resources – Australia, for example, has a total of 14 World Heritage sites, both Australia and New Zealand have native flora and fauna, whilst the Pacific and its islands have fragile reefs, eco-systems and indigenous cultures. Of course, the stereotyped image of much of the region is of crystal clear waters and swaying palm trees and, whilst this may be true for the Pacific islands and tropical Australia, the region also has many other types of tourism. Both Australia and New Zealand have significant business and conference tourism in the major urban centres, host world-class events such as the Olympic

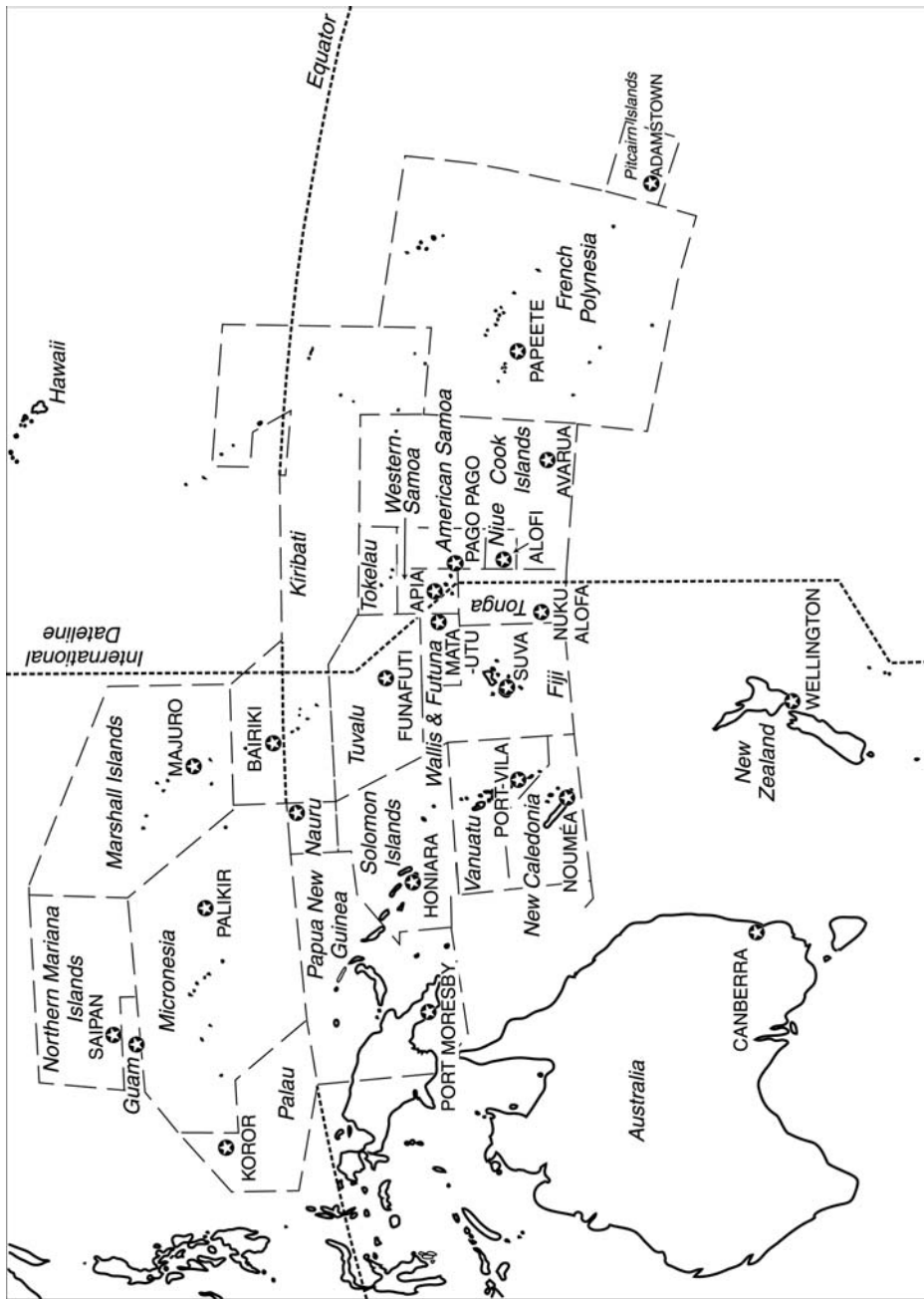


Figure 1.1 Oceania

Games, the America's Cup and Formula One Grand Prix, and act as settings for films such as the Lord of the Rings trilogy.

It is difficult to draw generalisations across the tourism destinations of Oceania. Aside from the tourism products themselves, there is also great variation in tourism supply across Oceania. Accommodation, for example, ranges from the 'profitless-volume' high-rise units of the Gold Coast in Australia and parts of Hawaii, through the local home stays in the Pacific islands to 5 star lodges in New Zealand. Transportation too across the region is changing as both new budget airlines and also Asian carriers challenge the dominance of the national carriers such as Qantas and Air New Zealand. The organisation of tourism in the region showcases some of the best practice available worldwide. Both Australia and New Zealand have excellent national tourism administrations and policies, whilst the newly formed South Pacific Tourism Organisation is one of the few truly international tourism agencies in the world.

Demand for tourism in Oceania has suffered at the hands of the Asian currency crisis in the late 1990s and more recently due to world events, which have not only reduced overall demand for travel but have also acted to cut airline capacity in the region. With the great distances involved, this is a severe constraint on tourism development in Oceania. Inbound volumes of tourism to Oceania are concentrated in Australia, New Zealand and Hawaii, but in both New Zealand and Australia it is the domestic market that has remained strong in the early years of the 21st century. The domestic market has delivered much-needed bed nights to support the tourism sector when the international market has declined.

These paragraphs are a generalisation from a region that is rich in tourism products and examples. This volume draws together a wide range of sources to provide a comprehensive handbook of tourism in Oceania. As tourism grows in importance and significance in the countries of Oceania it is helpful to have a single source of information and reference for tourism. At the same time, this handbook attempts to provide a disciplined analysis of tourism by standardising terminologies and delivering a consistency of approach for all the countries in the region. The handbook is organised into four parts. The first three parts provide an anatomy of tourism in the region by taking a detailed look at each of the three key constituents of Oceania – Australia, New Zealand and the Pacific islands. For each of these regions we have analysed tourism demand, supply and organisation. In addition, for both Australia and New Zealand, we have devoted a chapter for each country to guide the reader through the sources of tourism statistics available. The final part of the handbook takes a thematic approach with invited chapters examining key issues of tourism in the region. Here we identified investment, air transport, risk management, land ownership, climate change and tourism education as critical to the future of the region's tourism development.

This has not been an easy volume to assemble. Partly this is due to the plethora of material on Australia and New Zealand, compared to the much more sparse sources for many of the Pacific islands. However, the handbook has also demonstrated the lack of consistency of tourism sources, statistics and terminology. This is nothing new to tourism researchers, of course, but is a cause for concern as tourism claims its place as one of the leading economic sectors not just in this region, but also worldwide. Stalwarts of putting this handbook together have been Lisa Ruhanen and Peter Treloar, as well as the authors of the themed chapters – Steve Craig-Smith, Anne-Marie d’Hauteserre, David Duval, Larry Dwyer and Jeff Wilks. As ever, Mike Grover and his team at Channel View have been at once patient, encouraging and supportive.

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September 2003

### Note

1. Throughout this volume, Tables have generally been presented at the end of the relevant chapter or section.

**Table 1.1** The economic significance of tourism in Oceania

	<i>Direct impact</i>	<i>Direct impact % of the economy</i>	<i>Direct and indirect impact</i>	<i>Direct and indirect impact % of the economy</i>	<i>Forecast growth to 2013 % annualised real growth</i>
Jobs	739,990	6.0	1,750,930	14.2	2.4
	US\$ billions		US\$ billions		
Gross domestic product	27.9	5.5	66.0	12.9	5.0
Exports			21.6	16.6	7.3
Capital investment			17.2	15.3	3.9
Government expenditure			3.8	4.2	2.7

Source: WTTC (2003)

*Part I*

# ***Australia***

Tourist-host relationships. Increase in crime, gambling and moral behaviour. Social impacts of tourism: Conclusion. Social impacts of tourism reading list. The social impacts of tourism. The Business of Tourism Management – an introduction to key aspects of tourism, and to the practice of managing a tourism business. Managing Sustainable Tourism tackles the tough issues of tourism such as negative environmental impact and cultural degradation, and provides answers that don't sacrifice positive economic growth. There are many positive aspects of tourism. However, development of tourism has caused many problems as well. The big problems are traffic, stressful life for the local people and environmental effects. The positive side is that the tourism is the source of money for the local economy. First of all, tourism impacts the people and the culture of particular places. There are places where tourism causes big traffic. In most popular tourist places it is hard to travel from one side of the town to another. Tourism is a massive industry everywhere in the world, and there are some remarkable advantages to this in each country. Sometimes tourism is the main source of foreign income, boosting the economy for the beautiful countries around the world. It can be very easy to overlook these darker aspects of tourism. Why would you want to look at the negative aspects, when you look at the way tourism has brought vast wealth to many countries that needed it and thrive from it.