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# Hotel Resilient

## Strengthening the resilience of the tourism sector

### The Challenge

Tourism is a key driver of socio-economic progress contributing **9% to global GDP** and to **1 out of every 11 jobs** according to the UNWTO Tourism Highlights 2014. International tourist arrivals have reached a record exceeding the 1 billion mark. The demand for international tourism is expected to increase further to about 1.8 billion international arrivals by 2030, while arrivals in emerging destinations are expected to increase at twice the rate of those in advanced economies (UNWTO World Tourism Barometer 2015).

A single disaster event has the potential to cause widespread damage and economic disruption, affecting private and public investments in tourism destinations, and the country's image and reputation, while posing a threat to the lives of tourist, workers and surrounding communities. The United Nations Global Assessment Report 2013 has identified tourism as one of the **fastest growing but also most severely exposed sectors** due to the location of many destinations in hazard prone areas such as on cliff tops, and along rivers and coastlines. In many countries tourism has contributed significantly to the development and plays an essential role in local, national and global economies. Direct and indirect losses from disasters have major impacts on communities relying on tourism as their primary source of income and on the national economy.

Due to the growing importance of tourism worldwide, any disruption to tourism arrivals can seriously **undermine business competitiveness and sustainable development**, thus affecting a country's image and making it less attractive to foreign investors and visitors.

### Our Aim

To **improve climate and disaster risk management** and to **strengthen resilience** in hotels and throughout destinations, the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction Asia and Pacific (UNISDR), is collaborating with the Pacific Asia Travel Association (PATA) and Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH within the framework of the Global Initiative on Disaster Risk Management (GIDRM).

Working with a wide range of public and private stakeholders, the Hotel Resilient Initiative aims to develop standards and tools for hotels and resorts that can be used to demonstrate disaster resilience to customers and clients, whilst creating **standardized approaches and market value**. The standards will assist them in reducing business risk and the risk of tourists to **natural and technological hazards**, while demonstrating the level of preparedness and safety of their premises to potential clients, wholesalers, tour operators, insurers and financiers.



Hotels and resorts along coastlines, rivers or cliff tops in the Asia-Pacific region are highly exposed to natural hazards.

## Our Approach

The United Nations Global Assessment Report 2013 has found that the hotel industry is usually able to manage low impact hazard events well, but that disasters of more extreme severity are often poorly addressed. Many hotels do not have the systems and processes in place to reduce their risk to disasters or be prepared if and when they occur. The implementation of effective disaster risk management through certification programmes and voluntary rating systems were one of the recommendations raised in the Global Assessment Report.

There is a growing recognition of the **importance and value of disaster risk management in the tourism sector** that needs a more systematic approach to ensure long-term competitiveness and sustainable growth. This includes the need for a comprehensive framework to address existing disaster risks, to prevent the creation of future risks and to strengthen the resilience of the sector. Poorly planned and managed tourism development can easily exacerbate at-risk conditions.

Hotel Resilient builds on strong partnerships with government representatives from the respective agencies for tourism and disaster risk management, with the private sector (e.g. hotel associations, hotels, resorts and tour operators) and with civil society in the current focus countries of Indonesia, the Maldives, Myanmar, the Philippines and Thailand. The envisioned output of this multi-stakeholder initiative is a set of **internationally recognised and comprehensive risk management standards** that will strengthen disaster resilience of hotels and destinations.

The Initiative addresses small, medium and larger hotels, while recognizing their different requirements and capacities. The standards can be used by larger hotels as a risk identification and assessment tool when they decide to invest in a full third-party certification process. The certified application of specific standards will recognize hotels that have worked to improve their resilience towards hazards. For Hotels with fewer resources the standard will provide recommended practices to improve their disaster risk management capabilities and build resilience of their businesses.

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## Factors for Success

- Application-oriented linking of actors from the public and private sector, and the civil society in the field of tourism and disaster risk management.
- Detailed risk assessments and response to identified needs in hotels can benefit tourism destination and the surrounding communities.
- Tailored and tangible risk management solutions adapted to larger hotels and SMEs needs, according to their requirements and capacities.

## Contact

If you are working in the context of disaster resilient tourism development and are interested to learn more about the Hotel Resilient Initiative, please contact us.

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