DESTINATION MANAGEMENT **GUIDELINES**

2020

MINISTRY OF BUSINESS, INNOVATION & EMPLOYMENT
HĪKINA WHAKATUTUKI

New Zealand Government

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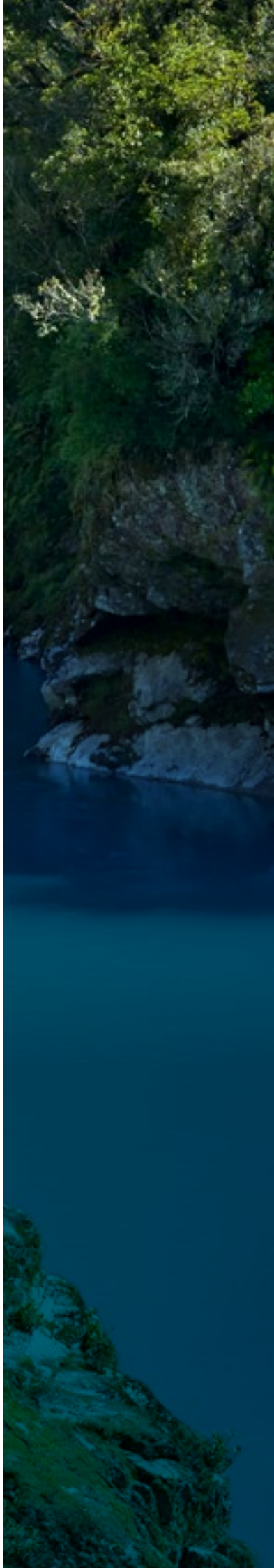
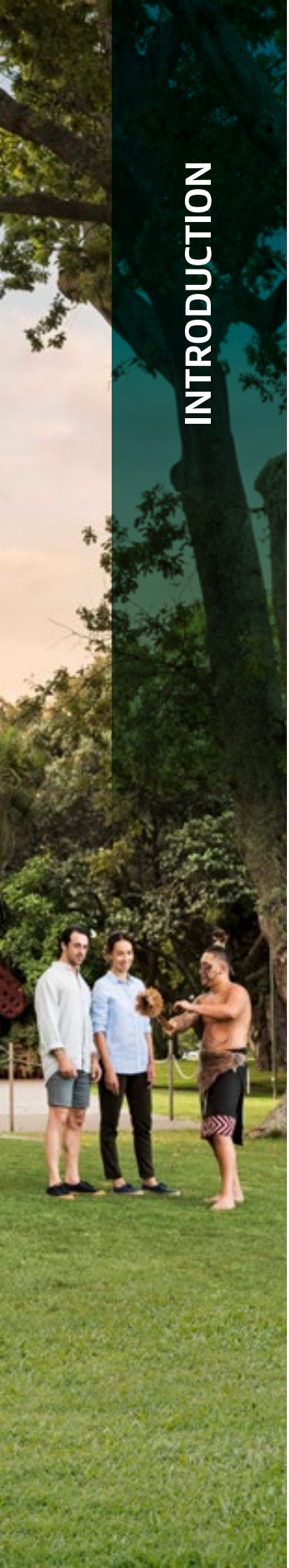


Photo credit: Tourism New Zealand, Roy's Peak Track Wanaka

INTRODUCTION



INTRODUCTION

This document describes what Destination Management (DM) is and how to go about creating a DM plan. It provides suggestions on components that could be included in a plan and questions to stimulate discussion and identify gaps, opportunities and areas for further investigation.

This set of guidelines are based on research, international best practice, case studies and industry consultation. It is a practical tool that aims to assist people and organisations who have a role in supporting, growing and developing the tourism economy within their region, district or community. This may include Regional Tourism Organisations (RTOs), Economic Development Agencies (EDAs), central Government agencies, regional/local government, Māori/iwi/hapū organisations, tourism enterprises and key infrastructure owners. They can also assist broader community groups such as Chambers of Commerce and Business Associations that are part of the ecosystem of a destination.

Background

Growth in global travel means that some destinations around the world are under pressure from tourism, resulting in overcrowding and negative effects on the quality of the visitor experience, the environment and communities.

In addition, security concerns, climate change and changing technology are influencing visitors' decision making; their needs and expectations are evolving, with more travellers concerned about making responsible travel choices.

Visitors are also seeking greater connection and meaning from their travel experiences, wanting to immerse themselves more in communities and to connect with local people and cultures.

New Zealand has shared in this growth and many of these challenges and opportunities are having an influence on our situation.

Tourism is New Zealand's largest export industry and a significant part of the economy. International visitor growth has been steady over much of the last decade, primarily driven by the decreasing cost of travel and favourable global economic conditions. This has been complemented by a buoyant New Zealand economy and growth in domestic spending on tourism. While the number of international arrivals has been slowing since 2017, visitor numbers are expected to grow over the longer term.

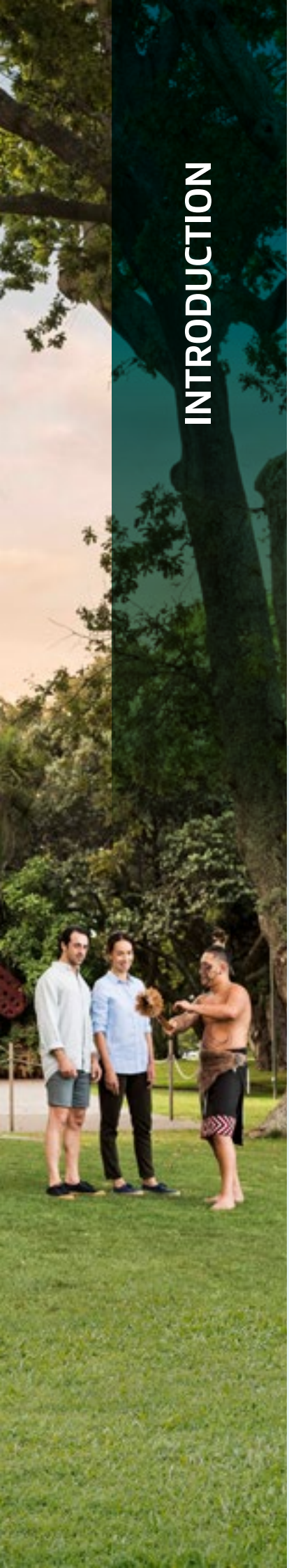
The New Zealand-Aotearoa Government Tourism Strategy was launched in May 2019 and aims to enrich New Zealand through sustainable tourism growth, underpinned by productive, sustainable and inclusive tourism.

The Government's goal is to enrich New Zealand Aotearoa through sustainable tourism growth. This requires better co-ordination across the range of individuals and agencies, both public and private, that make up the tourism sector. We need to make sure that tourism evolves in a way that is consistent with, and supported by, local communities and Māori/iwi.

Destination Management and planning is the mechanism by which New Zealanders can ensure that tourism in their region reflects their wishes and they have an agreed way to maximise the benefits that tourism brings whilst managing any negative impacts. It helps give greater certainty to the private sector that enables long term investment as well as confidence to the public sector about the facilities and services they need to provide.

Destination Management and planning plays a critical role in the tourism eco-system and I would like to thank all of those individuals who have contributed to the development of these best practice guidelines.

Iain Cossar, GM Tourism,
Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment



INTRODUCTION

DM is a key focus of the strategy and will contribute to the following strategy goals:

- Tourism supports thriving and sustainable regions
- Tourism sector productivity improves
- New Zealand-Aotearoa delivers exceptional visitor experiences
- Tourism protects, restores and champions New Zealand-Aotearoa's natural environment, culture and historic heritage
- New Zealanders' lives are improved by tourism

DM and planning is also a priority area of the Tourism Industry Aotearoa's (TIA's) strategy, *'Tourism 2025 & Beyond – A Sustainable Growth Framework,'* https://tia.org.nz/tourism-2025/

STATISTICS

41% growth in visitor arrivals in the last 5 years

72% growth in spend in the last 5 years

3.9 million annual international visitors

58% tourism spending is by domestic visitors

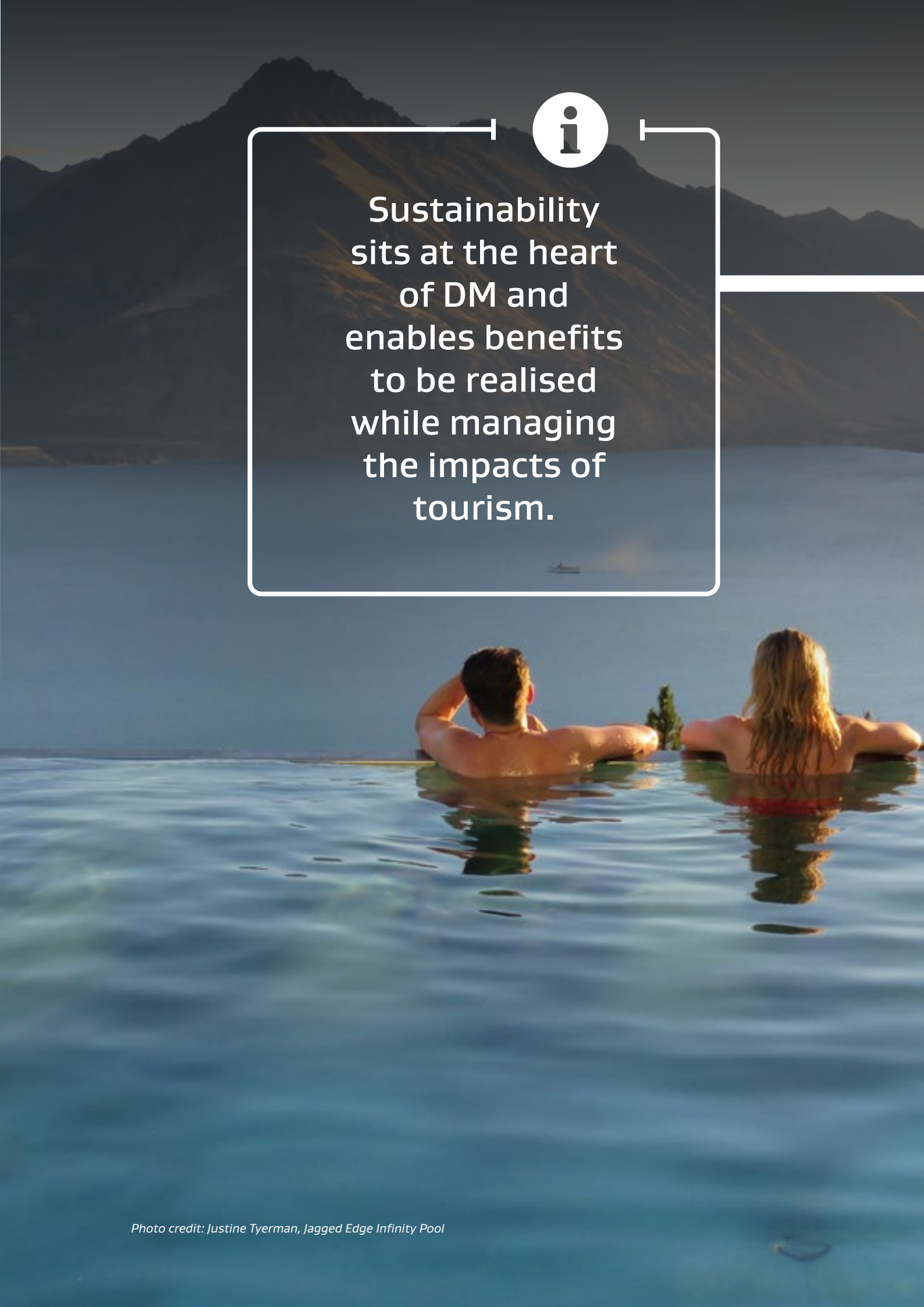
5.1 million annual visitors by 2025

$17.2 billion or **20%** of exports

$16.2 billion direct, **$11.2** billion indirect contribution to GDP

230,000 people employed, approx. **8%** of total workforce

NZ population **4.9 million** - half a million increase in the last six years



Sustainability sits at the heart of DM and enables benefits to be realised while managing the impacts of tourism.

Photo credit: Justine Tyerman, Jagged Edge Infinity Pool

Photo credit: Camilla Rutherford, Te Puia, Rotorua

DESTINATION MANAGEMENT **AND WHY IT IS IMPORTANT**

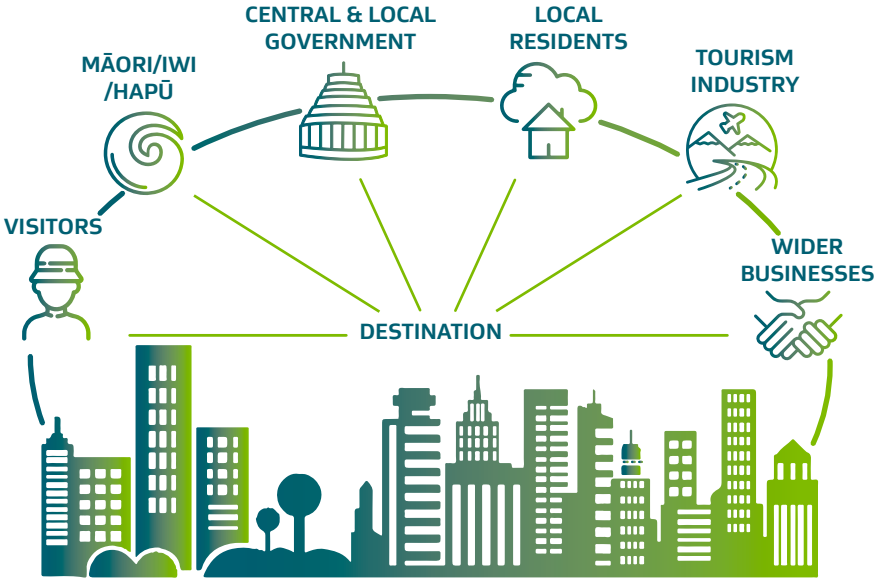
CHAPTER 1

DESTINATION MANAGEMENT AND WHY IT IS IMPORTANT

1 DESTINATION MANAGEMENT AND WHY IT IS IMPORTANT

DM involves the management of all aspects of a destination that contribute to a visitor's experience, including the perspectives, needs and expectations of:

- visitors
- Māori/iwi/hapū
- tourism industry
- wider businesses
- local residents
- central & local government.



DM brings together different stakeholders to achieve the common goal of developing a well-managed, sustainable visitor destination. It is an ongoing process that requires destinations to plan for the future and considers the social, economic, cultural and environmental risks and opportunities.

Adopting a DM approach enables communities and destinations to respond to changing conditions and determine the type of tourism they would like to have and the benefits they would like to receive, taking an active role in managing these.

Every region is different, with unique attributes, assets, challenges and opportunities. There is no 'one-size-fits-all' approach to DM; solutions should be customised for the destination. However, we can learn from international experiences and enable productive, resilient, inclusive and sustainable destinations across New Zealand-Aotearoa, creating better value for visitors and residents alike.

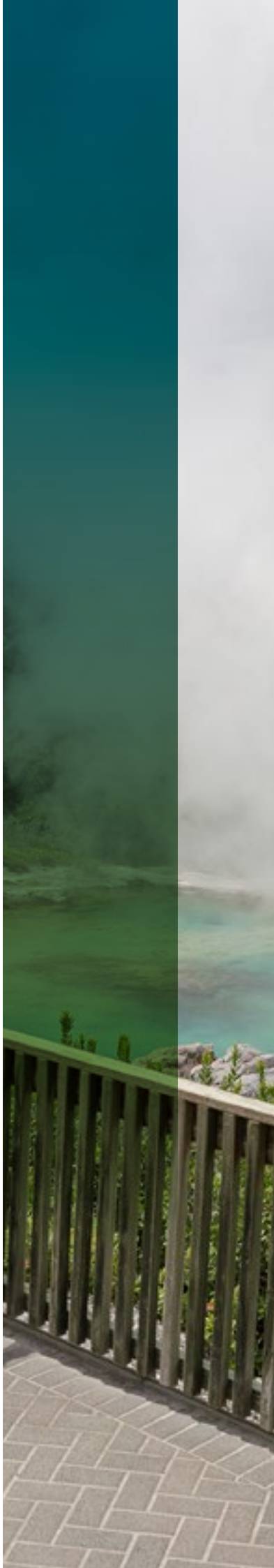
Making the most of the benefits of tourism

Tourism helps to support local jobs and adds diversity, vibrancy and prosperity to communities. Whilst New Zealand has seen steady growth, visitor numbers and spending have not been distributed evenly across regions and the percentage share of international visitors travelling to the non-gateway regions has remained unchanged over the past several years. In addition, growth in off-peak travel has not been sufficient to address the ongoing seasonality challenge for many regions, affecting the productivity and viability of many tourism enterprises and the destination's ability to attract investment.

Māori/iwi/hapū increasingly want to be involved in the sector and visitors are seeking authentic cultural/indigenous experiences. DM and DM planning require inclusive engagement with Māori and where appropriate, respectfully incorporate an understanding of the destination's unique Māori culture and protocols (tikanga). It can provide opportunities for product development that will enhance the visitor experience and the destination's identity and brand expression.

Tourism is integral to economic development and is a key driver and tool to achieve wider economic development goals. DM and visitor attraction strategies can play a role in building the reputation of a region/place and attracting new residents, businesses and students.

DM involves collaboration across the multiple stakeholders that make up the ecosystem of a destination.



Managing environmental and social issues

In some parts of New Zealand, destinations are under pressure from visitors. This can often be the case during holiday periods when both international and domestic visitors are travelling. There is concern in some places that tourism and recreational activities are negatively affecting the natural environment; this is reducing the sector's social licence in these communities.

TIA and Tourism New Zealand's (TNZ) 'Mood of the Nation' survey in March 2019 showed that general community support for tourism is declining, with more New Zealanders now feeling worried about the pressures arising from visitor growth. This particularly applies to the effects of international visitors, with more New Zealanders thinking that international tourism puts too much pressure on New Zealand. https://tia.org.nz/resources-and-tools/insight/mood-of-the-nation/

The community is a core part of a destination's brand. As visitors seek deeper engagement with locals, it is important that communities' welcome visitors and support tourism. Where local communities and tourism operators are engaged, well informed and involved, visitor experiences are more likely to be high quality, locally derived (unique) and innovative, and the community is more likely to be positive about the development of tourism.

> Welcoming, supportive communities are a vital part of what New Zealand has to offer our visitors. To ensure New Zealanders continue to offer manaakitanga to our visitors, it is essential that our destinations are well managed to meet the needs of both residents and visitors.
>
> *Chris Roberts, CE,*
> *Tourism Industry Aotearoa*

Photo credit: Alistair Guthrie, Matapouri, Northland

Photo credit: Kirsten Simcox Photography, Art Deco Ahuriri Marina

AN INTEGRATED DESTINATION **MANAGEMENT APPROACH**

CHAPTER 2

2 AN INTEGRATED DESTINATION MANAGEMENT APPROACH

DM requires a holistic and integrated approach with three interdependent components:

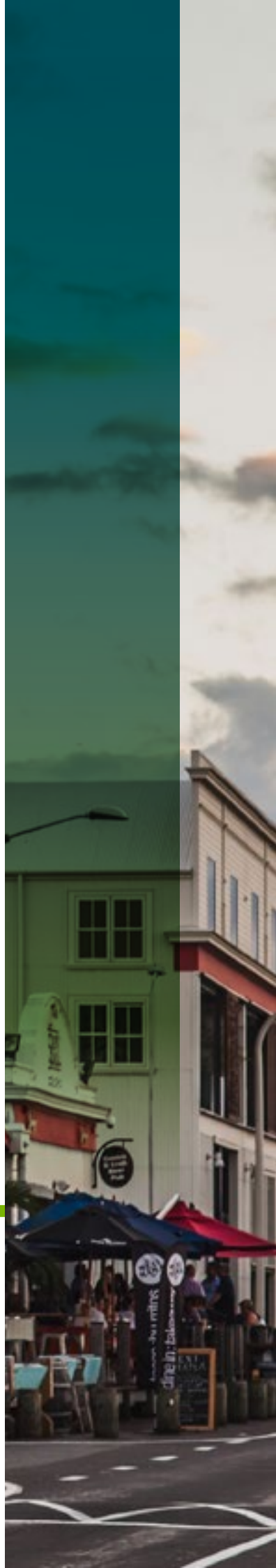
1. **Visitor Experience:** the destination's experience offering, including activities, attractions, supporting infrastructure, services and amenities.
2. **Marketing and Promotion:** the destination's marketing and promotional activity, creating demand and enabling the destination to be competitive, productive and sustainable.
3. **Resource Management:** the destination's strategy, policy and regulatory frameworks, Te Tiriti o Waitangi, organisational structures and the investments that support the destination.

Compelling visitor experiences

Visitors engage with people, places and products, but they take away experiences and lifelong memories. Great destinations exceed visitors' expectations and provide high levels of satisfaction. This is how value is created in tourism. DM requires a strong 'visitor-centric' view that has the visitor experience at the heart of decision making. It makes sure the experience meets the needs of the visitors, both current and future.

A destination's 'hero' experiences act as key drivers of visitation, creating awareness of the destination and providing compelling reasons to visit. This helps to create demand from which other tourism enterprises in the area can leverage off. Today's global travellers are spoilt for choice and have high expectations, creating strong competition for the visitor dollar, both within international markets and domestically across New Zealand's regions.

> Hero experiences are those world-class or iconic experiences that provide a destination with a real competitive advantage over other destinations. They focus on what is truly unique, memorable or engaging about the destination.
>
> *Tourism & Events Queensland*



International research shows that successful destinations fulfil each aspect of the visitor journey and experience. They have a strong brand and a diverse offering. This includes a good supply of natural, historic and cultural attractions, varied accommodation types and a range of hospitality offerings. They also have quality infrastructure, services and amenities, which collectively help the destination to be attractive, competitive and sustainable.

Destinations can be at different stages of maturity and scale and therefore, may not be able to fulfil all of the above requirements. Stakeholders need to understand how visitors' experience their place and be realistic about what they can offer and what resources are available, setting their expectations and priorities accordingly.

Effective Marketing and Promotion

A destination's marketing and promotional activity is a core part of managing a destination effectively, targeting the right type of visitors, encouraging regional dispersal and addressing seasonality – that is, the right product(s) to the right market(s) at the right time(s).

Destinations focus on attracting both domestic and international visitors, including general holiday visitors, and visitors who may visit family and friends, or be attracted for an event, conference or study opportunity. They target different markets and segments through a range of promotional activities to realise the value for their destination from tourism, given their goals/aspirations and the types of experiences that appeal to their selected markets.

Marketing activities often involve partnerships between the RTOs/EDAs and the tourism industry, as well as TNZ in the international market. RTOs play a lead role in coordinating their destination's domestic marketing activities.

Marketing can also be a vital communication tool for connecting with the local community. It is important to bring locals along on the DM journey. Every resident is an 'ambassador' (or detractor) for the area; therefore, it is important to engage and empower communities, keeping them informed in a way that encourages them to be great advocates for the sector and welcoming visitor hosts. It also helps local residents to feel proud of their place.

Effective marketing can be used to manage the effects of visitors in the area by advocating for responsible visitor behaviour e.g. the Tiaki Promise https://tiakinewzealand.com/, as well as directing visitors during crisis events or natural disasters.

tiaki
CARE FOR NEW ZEALAND

Photo credit: Tourism Holdings, Waitomo, Waikato

CASE STUDY

HAMILTON & WAIKATO TOURISM AMBASSADORS

The Ambassador training programme has been developed by Queenstown Resort College and is designed to upskill frontline staff from Hamilton tourism businesses, hospitality and accommodation providers, transport operators, retailers and volunteers to help expand their local knowledge by providing simple tools to create positive and memorable experiences for leisure and business travellers to the city. These include the history and unique stories of the Mighty Waikato region and Kirikiriroa / Hamilton, including local Māori history and legends, the experience of early settlers and how the local economy has evolved to present day. They also receive tips on how to better connect with visitors from key international markets, ensuring they are left with a positive and lasting impression of Hamilton and the Waikato.

The Ambassador programme is now in six locations around New Zealand, including Auckland, Queenstown, Wanaka and Northland.

Jason Dawson, CE, Hamilton & Waikato Tourism

Resource management

Central and local government strategies and policies, as well as regulatory and planning frameworks, determine the environment within which the tourism sector operates. This includes the location, type and scale of tourism activity permitted within an area. (See the Strategic Fit section of the Guide in Chapter 4).

Local government are also significant investors in the core infrastructure, amenities and attractions that communities and visitors enjoy, such as (but not limited to) museums, galleries, convention centres, parks and reserves. They are responsible for place making/shaping, which is an integral part of the destination offering. They also determine New Zealand's regional areas and fund the structures that coordinate, develop and promote the region/destination e.g RTOs, EDAs.

Successful destinations have strong leaders and champions, fit for purpose organisational structures, and collaborative partnerships and coordinated delivery across all aspects of the destination. In the New Zealand context, this is particularly important in partnerships between the Crown and iwi.

> **Place making lies at the very heart of economic development. Places that have invested in the infrastructure and amenities that make good experiences have become the places that people want to visit, live, study and work. When destinations invest in place making in a determined fashion the flow on investment and benefits go far beyond tourism as businesses need to locate in the places talent wants to live.**
>
> *David Perks, GM Regional Development Destination and Attraction, WellingtonNZ*

Successful destinations are characterised by a high degree of alignment between national, regional and local planning frameworks including visions and goals.

Photo credit: Graeme Murray, Alpine Crossing, Ruapehu

Photo credit: Miles Holden, Moeraki, Otago

DEVELOPING A DESTINATION **MANAGEMENT PLAN**

CHAPTER 3

DEVELOPING A DESTINATION MANAGEMENT PLAN

3 DEVELOPING A DESTINATION MANAGEMENT PLAN

DM planning can apply to a macro-area (e.g. South Island), region (e.g. Taupō Region), district (e.g. Clutha District) or specific location (e.g. Milford Sound). All of these layers are relevant in the context of the destination and stakeholder needs.

Stakeholders will determine what constitutes a 'destination', depending on who is leading/facilitating the development of a DM plan, the way visitors experience the place, clusters of activity and communities of interest. Also relevant is the resources and structures supporting the destination, such as RTOs, EDAs and local government authorities.

Collaborative and ongoing process

DM is an ongoing collaborative process. It requires inclusive and coordinated leadership that enables various stakeholders to come together to form a common goal and an agreed vision of success to which they are all committed. It needs to engage residents, tourism enterprises, businesses, Māori/iwi/hapū, RTOs, EDAs, TNZ and local/regional and central government as appropriate.

Commitment and resources

Embarking on a new DM planning process can be a lengthy exercise requiring a reasonable degree of commitment and resourcing. Stakeholders need to be clear about what they want to achieve and be mindful of the resources, capability and capacity available to develop and implement the plan. Small steps can be taken and built on over time as capacity and resources become available.

Many aspects of DM could already be captured in existing plans. Some destinations may want to take a light touch approach, coordinating components of existing plans and identifying gaps and new areas to focus on. Other destinations may choose to embark on a full DM planning process.

Whether you choose a light touch or detailed approach, be clear about why you are developing a plan, who needs to be involved with clearly defined roles and responsibilities and how the plan will be implemented (and funded).

A detailed approach requires an appropriate governance/ leadership structure to lead and coordinate the DM planning process. This could be one lead agency or a consortium as agreed by relevant stakeholders and sponsors. Identifying the right people with the right skills is important as well as ensuring they have the appropriate support and mandate. Destinations can be at different stages of maturity and stakeholders can have different views on the size and scale of tourism that is appropriate. Effective DM is a long term commitment, stakeholders should determine the scope and approach that best serve the destination's interests and aspirations.

DM plans should focus on activation and critically determine key areas that are realistic and achievable.

Additional resources may be required to support the development and implementation of the plan; therefore, the process needs to be cognisant of central and local government planning and funding cycles. DM should aim to provide continuity of activity across both political and planning cycles, to provide confidence for stakeholder commitment and investment.

Fit for purpose

To remain fit for purpose, successful destinations regularly revise, review and re-engineer their plans, activities and structures to respond to changing visitor or community needs and the macro- and microeconomic influences.

Regardless of the approach, ambitious visions and comprehensive programmes of activity are commendable; however, DM plans should be realistic and focus on achievable outcomes, with short, medium and long-term priorities and actions.

CASE STUDY

SOUTHLAND MURIHIKU DESTINATION STRATEGY 2019- 2029

"The 10-year Strategy highlights the importance of destination management and presents a positive vision for the future where Southland.

The Strategy has a strong commitment to embrace a holistic approach to sustainably growing the visitor economy, looking at all the elements that contribute to the overall visitor experience and having these at the centre of positioning Southland as a sought-after travel destination.

The process to develop the Strategy has been extremely valuable, with significant consultation and stakeholder engagement ensuring the strategy vision had broad representation and was inclusive and reflective of the regional tourism sector.

Through this process we have been able to align private and public sectors that equally recognises the host community, local businesses, the environment and of course our visitors. Many of the recommendations made will not only influence the visitor economy but help to make Southland a better place to live helping to ensure the benefits of tourism are shared across the whole region."

Bobbi Brown, GM Tourism & Events, Great South

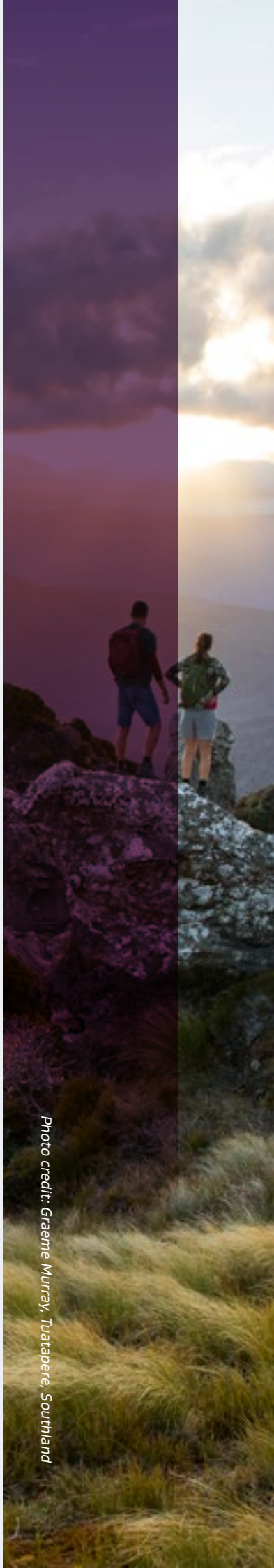
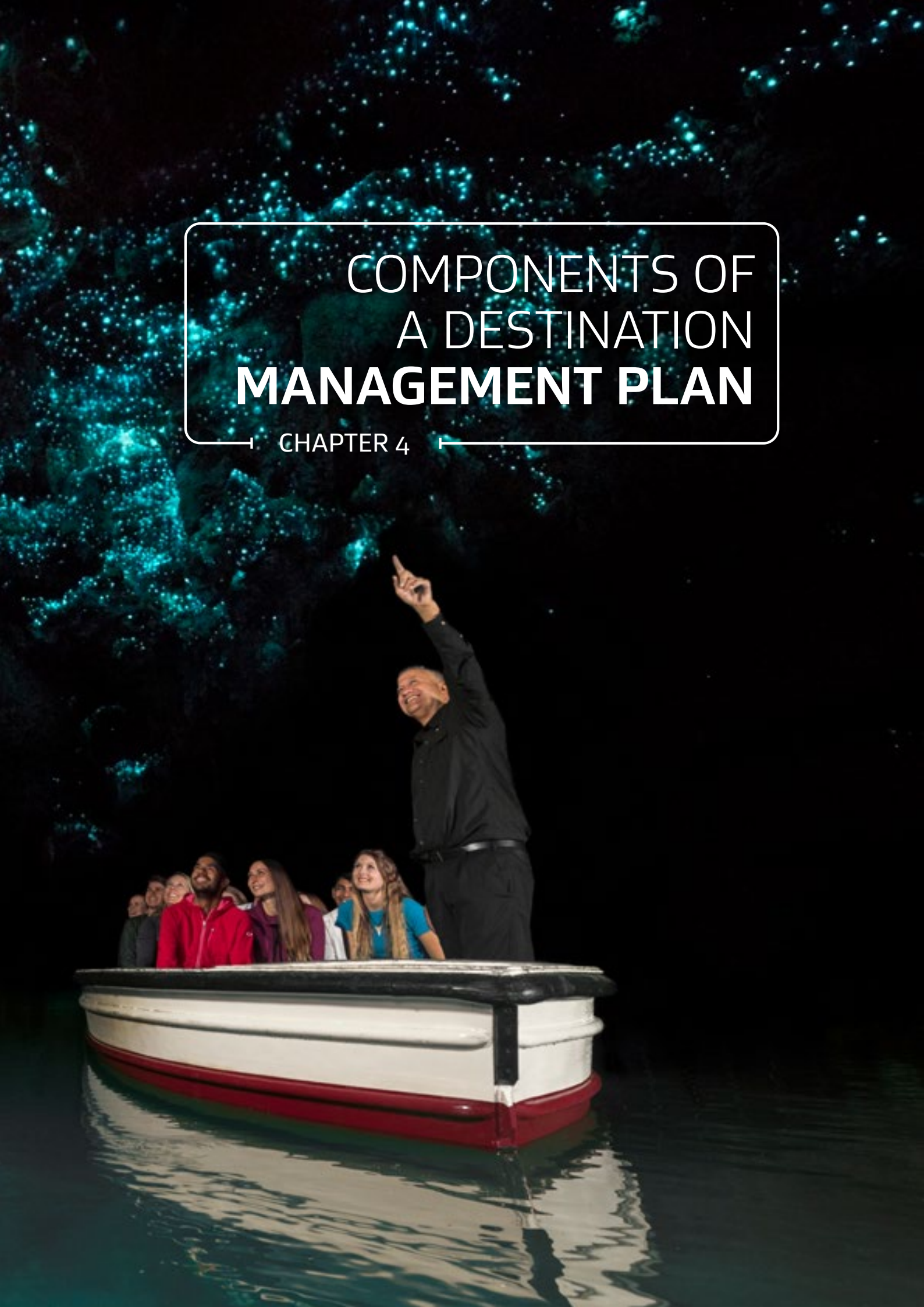


Photo credit: Graeme Murray, Tuatapere, Southland

Photo credit: Corin Walker Bain, Waitomo Caves, Waikato



COMPONENTS OF A DESTINATION **MANAGEMENT PLAN**

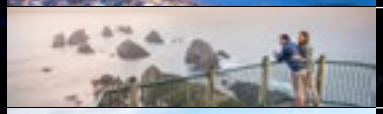
CHAPTER 4

4 COMPONENTS OF A DESTINATION MANAGEMENT PLAN

Outlined to the right are the 16 main components of a DM plan. These have been developed using international research, government frameworks and industry consultation. Use the descriptions and questions in each component to focus thinking, stimulate discussion and identify gaps, opportunities and areas for further investigation.

THE 16 MAIN COMPONENTS OF A DESTINATION MANAGEMENT PLAN

DEFINE THE DESTINATION



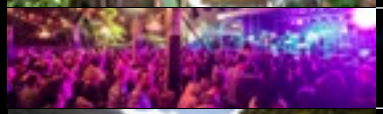
DEFINE THE VISION

DATA, RESEARCH & ANALYSIS

STRATEGIC FIT

BRAND POSITIONING

TARGET MARKETS



EXPERIENCE & PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT (Attractions)

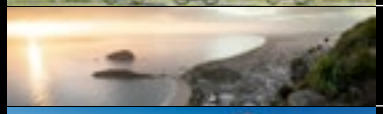
ACCESS

ATTITUDES

MARKETING & PROMOTION (Awareness)

AMENITIES, SERVICES & INFRASTRUCTURE

ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP



CAPABILITY & DEVELOPMENT

LEADERSHIP & STRUCTURES

RISK & CRISIS MANAGEMENT

MEASURING SUCCESS

DEFINE THE DESTINATION

Defining the destination is important when multiple stakeholders with various perspectives are involved. In addition, it fosters a pragmatic approach that can ensure progress and success.

Destinations vary in geographical size and scale of activity. The DM plan can focus on a specific geographical/spatial area, such as a locality, town, district or region, or a cluster of experiences that has visitor appeal and demand.

DM planning can apply to a macro-area, region, district or specific location. All of these layers are relevant in the context of the destination and stakeholder needs.

While various perspectives are valuable, the approach needs to be 'visitor-centric', to inform discussions and decision making. Visitors do not necessarily understand geographical, locational or political boundaries. Therefore, it is important to consider the current visitor movements and behaviour in and around the destination, as well as the destination's relationship and links to neighbouring destinations.

A DM plan is most successful when the tourism stakeholders have a natural affinity, when there is a community of interest and it is practical for them to work together.

ASK

- Are the DM plan boundaries relevant to the needs of the visitors and their movements and behaviour?
- Is this a destination in its own right, and/or is it part of a broader destination or journey to reach another destination?
- Are there linkages to neighbouring destinations and recognition of visitor flows?
- Does the DM planning area recognise;
  - iwi rohe (boundaries) that affect the focus and responsibility/accountability of the destination?
  - communities and their needs and aspirations?
  - organisational, political and funding considerations that affect the focus and responsibility/accountability of the destination (e.g. the RTOs/Territorial Local Authorities)?

Photo credit: Queenstown, Winter Wonderland lights

DEFINE THE VISION

A clearly defined long-term vision, to which the community and stakeholders are committed, with an agreed understanding of what success looks like, is critical to ensure all parties are heading in the same direction.

Agree on outcomes that you would like to achieve, as well as values/principles to guide the development of the plan. Focus on outcomes that consider economic, social, environmental and cultural measures, as well as the best way to monitor performance. (See the Measuring Success section.)

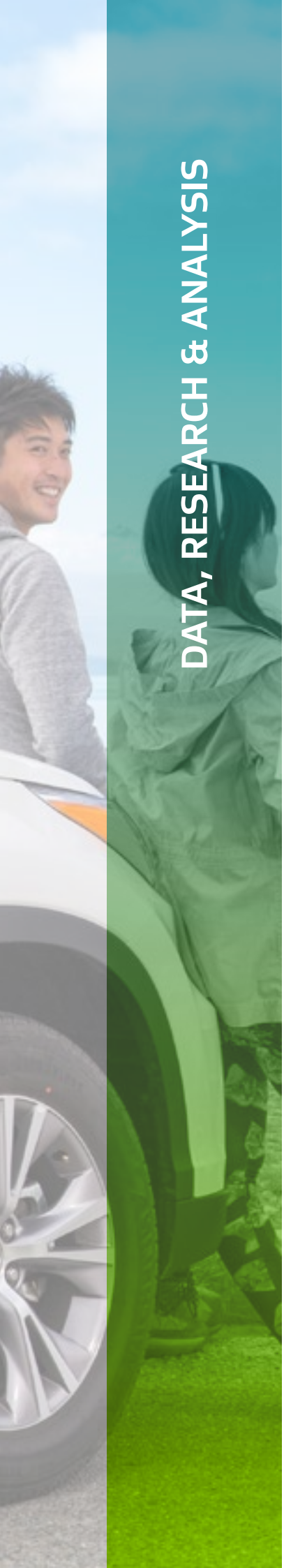
Consider how well the vision aligns with national strategies and plans, as well as the regional economic development strategy and other relevant plans. (See the Strategic Fit section.)

ASK

- Is there an agreed vision that includes the perspectives of visitors, tourism operators, wider businesses, community, Māori/iwi/hapū and local government stakeholders?
- Is the vision aspirational, inspirational and engaging?
- Have we identified values/principles to guide the stakeholders and the development of the DM plan?
- Does the vision support other national and regional plans, as well as a sustainable approach?
- Do we have clearly defined outcomes and an agreed understanding of what success looks like? Do these consider the four well-beings of environmental, cultural, social, economic?
- How will we know when we have achieved our vision?

> **Destination Management should promote the importance of the customary context and protocols (kawa and tikanga) which forms the foundation for manāki whenua (nurture, protect, enhance) and manāki tangata (protecting the relationship with tangata whenua).**
>
> *George Asher, Ngāti Tūwharetoa*

Photo credit: Miles Holden, Catlins Otago



DATA, RESEARCH & ANALYSIS

DM requires data, research and insights to inform decision making and measure success. This includes understanding your visitors well, how your destination delivers on visitor needs and expectations, as well as measuring how your community feels about visitors and the tourism sector.

The tourism industry is affected by the global environment, which is in a constant state of change. It is important to understand the micro- and macro-economic environments and stay abreast of developments that could affect your destination.

There is no single solution or recipe for success – destinations need to take account for their unique conditions, opportunities and challenges and plan accordingly.

Understand your visitors

Gather data and insights about who your visitors are, why they visit your destination and the value they add to your economy and community. Consider current and future trends, and set a baseline for measuring progress and performance. Use both quantitative and qualitative research.

Use sources such as (refer to appendix for links):

- Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE), Tourism New Zealand (TNZ), New Zealand Transport Agency (NZTA), Department of Conservation (DOC), New Zealand Trade and Enterprise (NZTE) and Statistics New Zealand for regional summaries and international visitor statistics
- Tourism Industry Aotearoa (TIA) for domestic visitors (DGiT)
- NZTE New Zealand Visitor Activity Forecast
- TIA & TNZ for the 'Mood of the Nation' survey and other quantitative research on community attitudes to tourism
- Regional Tourism Organisations (RTOs), Economic Development Agencies (EDAs) and i-SITEs

Bespoke research could be required if there are information gaps. Working with partners is a cost-effective way of procuring research where there are common needs.

ASK

- Do we have a good understanding of our visitors and their contribution to our economy?
- Do we know who is coming, why they are visiting, where they are coming from, what they do and how satisfied they are?
- Do we know how our visitors perceive us?
- Are our data and insights reliable and robust, or only indicative?
- What are the future visitor trends and forecasts?
- Where are our information gaps? How do we address these?
- Are there specific sites that need deeper analysis to understand demand, use, carrying capacities, impacts and benefits?
- Is there a clear understanding of the supply-and-demand potential for Māori-related visitor experiences?
- How are we monitoring community satisfaction/sentiment about visitors and the tourism sector?

Understand the potential of your destination

Successful destinations differentiate themselves and offer compelling reasons to visit, fulfilling visitor needs and expectations (while also being vibrant places to live and work). A destination's product offering should support the brand and be aligned to target markets and community aspirations.

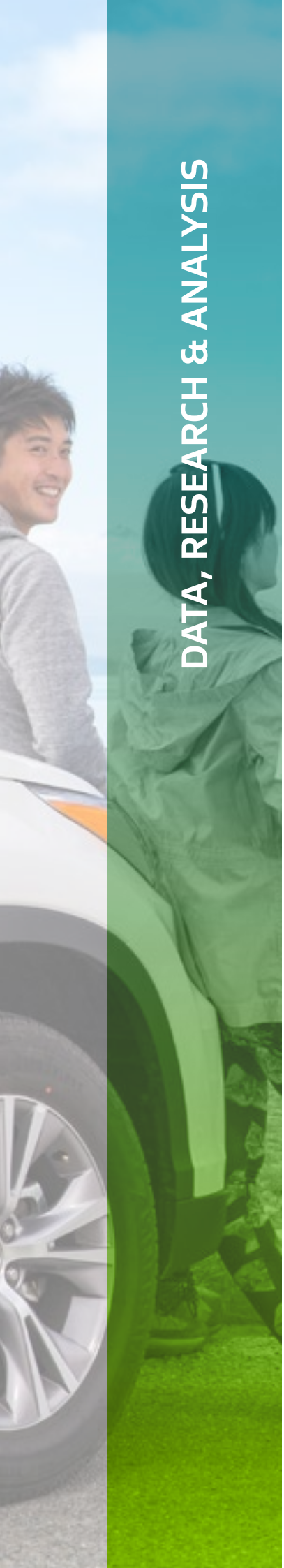
Some places are destinations in their own right, others are part of the visitor journey between places, and some are part of a hub-and-spoke configuration connected to an urban centre. Identifying the type of destination that you are, and what you want to become will help you to focus on pragmatic strategies and realistic outcomes.

Useful analysis tools:

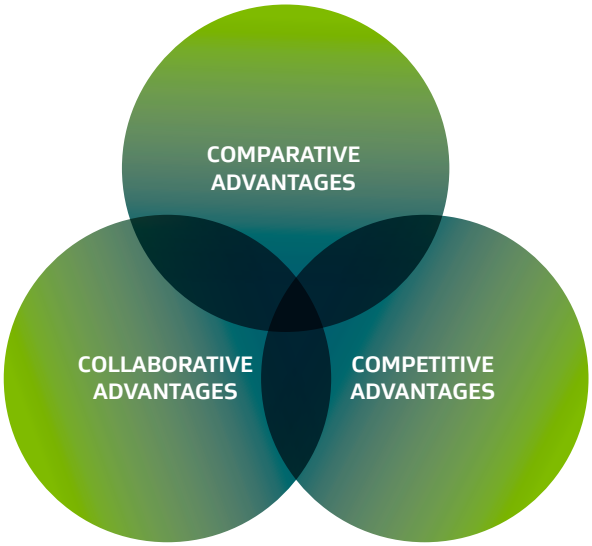
- **SWOT** – identifies the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats
- **PESTEL** – identifies the political, economic, social, technological, environmental and legal factors
- **COMPETITOR ANALYSIS** – identifies competitor destinations' brands, product offerings and visitor markets/profiles, share of visitors, visitor nights and visitor expenditure.

Identify your destination's comparative and competitive advantages. Comparative advantages are the resources within the destination, such as the people, environment, knowledge, economy, infrastructure and historic and cultural/indigenous aspects. A competitive advantage is the ability to use a destination's resources efficiently and effectively over the long term (Crouch and Ritchie 1999). The goal is to turn your comparative advantages into competitive advantages.

Photo credit: Vaughan Brookfield, Lake Pukaki, Canterbury



In addition, identify whether your destination can work collaboratively with others, leveraging your comparative and competitive advantages to further maximise opportunities. This could include collaborations within and across products, sectors and regions/destinations.



Assess your destination's product offering

Carry out a 'product audit' to find out what your destination has to offer (built, natural, heritage and cultural assets) including accommodation, attractions/activities and services such as cafes and restaurants. Also consider what events, meetings and conferences also attract visitors to the destination. Identify hero experiences that create demand for your destination, as well as supporting themes and experiences.

Assess whether these experiences are meeting visitor needs and expectations in your target markets, as well as whether they are increasing visitor spend, regional dispersal and off-peak visits.

Try to identify the scale and capacity of the experiences offered and any existing limitations and pressure points, particularly with regard to supporting infrastructure. GIS mapping can help with identifying and analysing types of geographic features and spatial data to inform planning and development.

ASK

- What are the key assets of the destination?
- What are our hero destinations and experiences?
- What are the supporting themes and experiences?
- How compelling and competitive is our destination's offering?
- Does our destination have a unique selling proposition/point of difference from other destinations?
- Are the offered experiences meeting the needs and expectations of the target markets? Are there differences between domestic and international visitors in terms of needs and expectations?
- Could we encourage off-peak visits and a better spread across the region? Which markets could we influence?
- Are there opportunities for new or enhanced experiences that could help us to meet our goals?
- Are there any gaps or limitations in the product offering?
- Are we managing high-demand sites (icons/heroes) appropriately in terms of carrying capacity and supporting infrastructure? Are we monitoring them effectively?
- Do the destination's core access modes and infrastructure support the destination or restrict it? (See the sections on Access and Amenities, Services & Infrastructure.)
- Are there opportunities to collaborate with other destinations in initiatives related to target markets, visitor journeys and product development?
- What are the micro- and macro-economic perspectives that affect our destination?
- What are they key product development opportunities for the future?

Use this section to inform the Target Market, Experience & Product Development (Attractions) components of the plan.

STRATEGIC FIT

DM planning needs to be cognisant of national and regional planning frameworks to reduce the potential for conflicting objectives and unfulfilled goals. Destinations also have a role in influencing the focus of these frameworks.

Central and local government strategies, policies, planning and regulatory frameworks determine the environment within which the tourism sector operates. This includes the location, type and scale of tourism activity that is permitted within a destination.

Consideration also needs to be given to the policies and plans of neighbouring regions if they have an influence on your visitors' movements (e.g. port and airport 'gateways', travel routes, consistent signage along a touring route if it crosses regional boundaries).

Tourism is integral to economic development and is a key driver and tool to achieve wider economic development goals.

The visitor economy should be a core component of economic development strategies.

Consideration of treaty partnerships and Crown–Māori relationships are part of managing the destination. At the national level, this may include Treaty Settlements Acts and Crown commitments and accords. Consider:

National Frameworks			
Sustainable Development Goals	Government Economic Plan	National Transport Strategies, Policies and Plans	Resource Management Act
New Zealand-Aotearoa Government Tourism Strategy (MBIE & DOC)	Tourism 2025 & Beyond (TIA)	Tourism New Zealand Strategic Plan	DOC Visitor & Heritage Strategy (in development)

Regional Frameworks			
Local Government District & Long Term Plans, Community Plans	Regional Tourism Strategy	Regional Economic Development Strategy	Labour Market Strategy
Conservation Management Strategies and National Park Management Plans	Regional Coastal and Freshwater Plans	Māori/iwi/hapū plans	Regional Land Transport Plans

ASK

- Have we considered the various national, regional and local strategies/plans/policies, their desired outcomes and measurement frameworks?
- How does our DM plan give effect to Te Tiriti o Waitangi?
- Do the regulatory and policy frameworks provide a supportive environment that manages the sector productively and sustainably?
- What opportunities and challenges do these present?
- Have we provided input into, and/or drawn from, the relevant plans and strategies through planning cycles and processes (e.g. Council Long Term Plans)?
- Are we familiar with the neighbouring regions' or destinations' frameworks? How do these affect us? Is there an opportunity to collaborate or share information?

Photo credit: Tourism New Zealand, Kawakawa Bay Track, Rotorua

BRAND POSITIONING

Successful destinations have a clear brand and positioning that captures the essence of the destination. Collections of people, places and experiences create the destination's brand story and value proposition. The destination's logo is a symbol that represents the destination and the experience offered.

Building a brand involves extensive research and consultation to identify the destination's strengths, weaknesses and opportunities, as well as the way visitors, the industry, Māori and the community see it. Listen, learn and engage before making decisions. Make sure local residents and businesses are engaged in the branding process.

After developing the brand story, share the 'brand assets' with stakeholders to make it easier for them to use and support the destination's brand.

Encourage your tourism operators to bring the destination's brand story to life through the delivery of their experiences and communications.

Domestic and international visitors can have different perceptions of your destination's brand offering and therefore you may need to be flexible when promoting to different markets at different times.

Remember: the people and the community own the brand, which is a reflection of them and their place; the Destination Management Organisation owns the brand strategy and is responsible for upholding its story, values/integrity, creative execution and application. Branding a destination is a long-term endeavour; it takes time to do it well.

ASK

- Does the brand capture the essence, character/personality and 'tone of voice' of the destination?
- Does it provide a clear point of difference or competitive advantage and support the destination's offering?
- Does it provide a strong platform for 'place making' and 'storytelling'?
- Do the industry, key stakeholders and community all support the brand?
- Does the brand incorporate the essence of the cultural experience? Are Māori/iwi/hapū involved in the branding process and its stewardship?
- Does the brand strategy clearly outline how to use the brand? Does it link with other sectors of the destination's economy?
- Do the marketing and communications accurately reflect the destination brand?
- Who is responsible for our regional brand strategy marketing and stewardship?
- Do we have a range of 'consumer led propositions' which allow the brand to be flexibly applied when promoting to international or domestic visitors and at different times of the year?

> Place DNA™ has helped us to become clear about who we are as a destination. This has been gold for us. We're just starting to implement The Love of Tourism, but we have a really clear picture of our DNA. Our people (community) have given this picture to us, so it has huge authenticity and truth to it.
>
> *Kristin Dunne, CEO, Tourism Bay of Plenty*

Photo credit: Miles Holden, Hooker Valley, Mount Cook National Park, Canterbury

TARGET MARKETS

It is essential to identify your target markets through your data/insights and destination analysis, as it should inform all planning, development and marketing activity. Include both domestic and international visitors and segment the markets where possible, based on the visitors' characteristics, motivations and behaviours.

A range of information sources can assist with this and TNZ produces comprehensive international market research and insights. In addition, it is helpful to conduct visitor surveys to guide destination and product development and to inform marketing activities and channels. (Refer to Data, Research & Analysis section).

ASK

- Do we have a clear understanding of our target markets?
- What does our 'ideal visitor' look like?
- Do our destination's brand and experience offerings align with the needs of our target markets?
- Are we focusing on the best value market for our destination?
- Can we encourage repeat visitation and increase the yield within our target markets?
- Can we encourage visitation in the off-peak season and greater regional dispersal?
- Could the destination appeal to new markets?
- Which markets are emerging? Are these worth considering?
- Are there market synergies with other regions with which we can collaborate?

> **How visitors experience New Zealand differs based on their culture, expectations and perceptions. Understanding what visitors want and need in their journey through Aotearoa ensures they go home smiling – with real affection for the amazing experience they had here.**
>
> *Rebecca Ingram,*
> *GM NZ & Government Relations,*
> *Tourism New Zealand*

Photo credit: Miles Holden, Ponsonby Central

EXPERIENCE & PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT

EXPERIENCE & PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT

(ATTRACTIONS)

Research shows that successful destinations provide visitor experiences that meet the visitors' needs and expectations and are true to the promises of their brand. They continuously maintain and enhance their existing products and where there are gaps or opportunities, they invest in new products, infrastructure, services and amenities that strengthen the destination's appeal and competitiveness.

Today's visitors are looking for engaging and enriching experiences with strong storytelling which is often multi-sensorial in nature. Designing great experiences requires good planning and understanding your ideal customer to create memorable experiences, provide value and high levels of satisfaction.

Encourage opportunities to support experience development and foster collaboration, entrepreneurial thinking, clustering and specialisation with other sectors where competitive advantages and mutual benefits exist.

> **Tourists are increasingly wanting highly personalised experiences in destination and the more they can be involved in the design and delivery of these experiences, the greater the value of the experience in terms of the visitor's satisfaction and willingness to pay a premium price.**
>
> *Professor Terry Stevens,*
> *Stevens & Associates, Wales UK*

ASK

- Are the offered experiences meeting the needs and expectations of the domestic and international target markets?
- Are we providing value and a quality visitor experience?
- What are the current assets and strengths in our destination for developing products or experiences that are genuine and authentic?
- Are there any gaps in the tourism offering and is there demand for it?
- How can we develop new tourism experiences or enhance the existing ones, with a focus on collaboration, innovation and authentic and indigenous/cultural experiences?
- Is there an opportunity to create a hero attraction(s) as a catalyst attractor?
- Who are the right partners/actors to develop the experience(s)?
- Is the sector actively engaged in quality assurance (e.g. Qualmark) and sustainability programmes (e.g. the TIA Tourism Sustainability Commitment)?
- What supporting infrastructure, services and amenities are required, in both the short and long term, to improve and manage the visitor experience better? Who are the potential partners in delivering these?
- What are the pathways for turning ideas into investable propositions?
- How do we attract investment?
- What support is required and how can we access this (e.g. RTO, EDA, Te Puni Kōkiri, NZTE, TNZ, New Zealand Māori Tourism)?

“

It’s always been a part of our vision at Hobbiton Movie Set to introduce a new experience or develop an existing one each year. This keeps the experience fresh and ever evolving. It’s crucial to keep the visitor experience at the core of what you do, and to ensure this is a priority for any tourism product development.

Shayne Forrest, GM Sales & Marketing, Hobbiton™ Movie Set

Photo credit: WellingtonNZ.com, Wellington - Cuba precinct

ACCESS

Access to and around a region/destination is a key enabler. It can either accelerate or hinder visitor growth.

The more transport modes and gateways that regions have (air, road, rail, sea), the more options visitors have. Physical connectivity (roading, public transport, walking and cycling options) supports visitor movement and it can also form part of the visitor experience (e.g. heritage train journeys, cycleway tours).

Soft infrastructure (signage, interpretation) contributes to the quality of the visitor experience and touring routes provide a guide to connecting visitors to places through a shared story, encouraging dispersal and visitation into less-known areas and communities.

Assess each type of transport mode for your destination for its quality, capacity and supporting infrastructure (e.g. air connections into target markets, capacity and frequency of flights, cost, airport terminal facilities and ancillary services such as rental cars, public transport). These should contribute positively to the visitor experience. Also consider how accessible your destination's experiences are for visitors who may have an impairment of some kind.

In addition you need to consider your emergency response requirements, taking into account New Zealand's physical and climatic conditions and our remote locations.

ASK

- How are visitors travelling to the destination?
- Does each form of access and supporting infrastructure cater for current and future visitor flows/volumes, as well as their expectations, satisfaction and safety?
- Who are the key agencies/businesses responsible for investing in and managing the infrastructure involved in accessing the area?
- What planning and regulatory frameworks do we need to consider?
- Is there a plan for each access mode in terms of maintenance, enhancement, expansion and investment?
- Do the destination's access modes connect to other services, to enable efficient movement and dispersal across the region and into neighbouring regions?
- Does the destination provide hub-and-spoke opportunities to connect urban areas to rural attractions?
- Is there a public transport service that meets visitor needs, especially during peak times?
- Have we considered the needs of less able or impaired visitors?
- Does the destination have a touring route or highway/bi-way strategy? How effective is it and are there opportunities to enhance the experience (e.g. signage, interpretation, themed itineraries)?
- Is there adequate directional and amenity signage to support the visitor experience? Is there a strategy and process for developing this?
- Can the digital infrastructure meet the current and future demand (including Augmented Reality/Virtual Reality)? Is it consistent across the destination?
- Is there a plan for the growth and development of digital services and infrastructure (e.g. Wi-Fi and mobile phone coverage)?
- Are there any risks with regard to access (e.g. poor-quality roads or port facilities)?
- Have we considered future travel trends (e.g. electric vehicles)?
- Have we considered all the potential/likely partners (public and private entities) in developing access infrastructure?

Visitors need to be able to get to where they want to visit safely in a timely way for an appropriate cost. This includes air, road, rail, sea, trails and cycleways. It is important we all work together on transport issues in the tourism sector. This requires a coordinated approach and the alignment of national and regional plans, strategies and polices.

Leigh Pearson, Acting GM, Engagement and Partnerships, New Zealand Transport Agency

Photo credit: Vaughan Brookfield, Matukituki River, Wanaka

ATTITUDES

While visitors primarily come to New Zealand for the scenery and natural environment, their most memorable moments are often the interactions with our people and cultures. Our manaakitanga and our local residents' acceptance of visitors and willingness to host them is important to the success of the destination.

A broader level of community engagement in DM and planning is required than has been undertaken in the past and not all communities see tourism positively.

Some communities have become less receptive to visitors because of overcrowding, visitor behaviour and the cost of infrastructure that supports the tourism sector. For communities to continue to welcome and host visitors, the tourism sector and enabling partners need to work to address these challenges and retain the social licence to operate.

Local residents often make assumptions about visitors' behaviour, expenditure, length of stay and so on. It is important that locals have access to data and insights to understand the value and benefits of the visitors coming to their place. Equally, it is important to address the evidence-based impacts of the visitors on the day-to-day lives of locals.

Each destination needs to establish their own definition of 'community'. Engagement will vary according to the size and demographics of the community. Meaningful community engagement requires involving partners and stakeholders who are associated with the visitors, are affected by them (directly or indirectly), or have a common interest.

Well informed and engaged communities and stakeholders enhance the visitor experience and help build social licence.

ASK

- What mechanisms and processes are in place to engage actively and meaningfully with the community (including Māori/iwi/hapū)? https://tearawhiti.govt.nz/te-kahui-hikina-maori-crown-relations/engagement/
- Have the views of the community been considered in the DM process?
- Are there some common interests that could assist with engagement and dialogue with fringe/less-connected groups?
- Are the tourism businesses committed to buying local and employing local?
- Can visitors contribute to/volunteer in community projects that deliver positive community outcomes?
- Are there incentives or benefits that support community-run tourism enterprises?
- Do we regularly have dialogue with the community, communicating accurate, consistent and timely information about the sector so they are well informed?
- Does the local community have a positive view of the tourism sector and its value to the community?
- How do we gather the local community views and address opportunities and issues?
- Can the local community freely access areas for recreation and leisure?
- Can the local community go about its day-to-day activities with relative ease alongside the visitors?
- Are some areas off-limits to visitors because of environmental/cultural significance; are these restrictions well explained?
- Are there partnerships between the public and private sectors?
- Are there programmes for developing community hosts and ambassadors?
- Do we encourage visitors to respect our destination and do we educate them about appropriate ways to behave? (See Tiakinewzealand.com, drivesafe.org.nz and mbie.govt.nz/responsible-camping)

Raising awareness of the benefits of tourism amongst communities is helpful, and the benefits can include:

- Boosting regional economies
- Helping sustain local facilities and services
- Stimulating civic pride and strengthening communities
- Creating jobs
- Encouraging good management of the environment – visitors may choose destinations that are well managed, clean and exhibit good environmental ethics
- Celebrating local culture and language.

Photo credit: Fraser Clements, Te Puia, Rotorua

MARKETING AND PROMOTION

(AWARENESS)

A destination's marketing and promotional activity is a core part of managing a destination effectively, targeting the right type of visitors, encouraging regional dispersal and addressing seasonality. For a region to create a viable, sustainable tourism sector, its needs to stand out in a highly competitive marketplace.

A region's RTO or EDA leads and coordinates the area's destination marketing activities, working in partnership with tourism operators, TNZ and the tourism distribution system e.g tourism travel trade.

RTOs/EDAs use a range of methods and communication channels to attract visitors (e.g. digital, print, social media, PR) and aim to influence visitor purchase decisions throughout the customer journey.

DOC and i-SITE visitor centres provide connections to local stories and experiences and can influence decision making, dispersal and responsible visitor behaviour.

ASK

- Are the marketing and promotional activities of the destination aligned with the aspirations of the tourism industry, stakeholders and community?
- How effective are the marketing strategies in creating the right visitor demand?
- Are there clear measures and tools for assessing visitor awareness, marketing effectiveness and return on investment?
- Do we understand the visitor journey and the information touchpoints that influence visitor decision making?
- Is there a coordinated, collaborative approach between the public and private sectors in the region?
- Is there collaboration with other regions, RTOs or EDAs?
- How effective are the internal/external communications, PR and reputation management?
- Are there opportunities for collective marketing?
- How do the marketing activities manage visitor behaviour and risks, as well as issues such as overcrowding at peak times?
- How do we use our communications to provide the local community with good information about the local tourism sector?

Photo credit: Hamish Johnson, Wellington Harbour, Aerial view

AMENITIES, SERVICES & INFRASTRUCTURE

Visitors (both domestic and international) require a range of services and amenities within a location to fulfil their needs and expectations. They share these amenities and services with the local residents. Visitors become 'temporary residents', often supporting a scale of community amenity that benefits the locals, helping to sustain the vibrancy, diversity and social, cultural and economic fabric of communities.

Adequate and future-proofed infrastructure and services are essential for both supporting the local population and providing an attractive destination for visitors. The key forms of infrastructure required are:

- **access** – e.g. road, rail, sea, air, digital (see the Access section)
- **general public infrastructure** – e.g. water, wastewater, refuse collection, car parking/transport hubs, toilets, signage, wayfinding.

The costs of this infrastructure can be a challenge in some places, particularly if the residential rating base of the community is small but the visitor numbers are high. These situations require the deliberate use of a wide range of revenue tools to distribute the costs fairly.

Data on current and future population and visitor numbers should inform infrastructure planning, product development and investment. An understanding of visitor volumes and behaviour can also help with identifying mechanisms to recover costs at the source, if appropriate.

Great places to live are also great places to visit. Creating vibrant places through place-making activities provides benefits for both the host community and its visitors.

ASK

- What is the projected growth for residents and visitors?
- What visitor infrastructure and amenities are required to support the destination effectively, both now and in the future?
- What additional capacity in 'mixed-use' infrastructure is required to support visitor and local population needs?
- What plans and regulations do we need to consider?
- Are there opportunities for partnerships between the public and private sectors?
- What are the financing options for the provision of mixed-use infrastructure (e.g. targeted rates, levies, user charges)?
- How can we maximise the amenity for the benefit of the community and emphasise local stories and values?
- What does the 20–40-year-plan for our infrastructure and funding needs look like?
- What are our funding pathways for infrastructure, amenity and service provision (if applicable)?

> **Planning & investing in the right level of infrastructure to meet the needs of future residents and visitors is a complex challenge for Councils. It is only by working collaboratively that we will be able to find sustainable & affordable solutions.**
>
> *Peter Harris,*
> *Economic Development Manager,*
> *Queenstown Lakes District Council*

Photo credit: Northland Inc Tourism, Northland Cape Reinga Lighthouse

ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP

New Zealand's visitor experience depends on our beautiful landscapes and natural environment; therefore, it is essential that we protect and restore our environment for current and future generations to enjoy.

Sustainability and environmental stewardship is a key focus of DM, given the connection between visitors, the natural environment and social licence within our communities. This requires us to understand and actively manage any potential risks to our natural and cultural heritage across our whole destination, as well as in specific locations with high visitor demand.

Climate change is affecting some locations, imposing the need for careful consideration and planning to allow for adaptation over time. As travellers become more environmentally, socially and culturally conscious, they, too, are seeking experiences that enable them to act responsibly and minimise their impact.

> **Our natural environment is the backbone of New Zealand-Aotearoa's economy, culture and wellbeing. To achieve sustainable tourism growth, we must protect the environment and manage activity within its limits so New Zealand-Aotearoa will be in great shape for the next generation.**
>
> *Steve Taylor, Director Heritage and Visitors, Department of Conservation*

ASK

- Is there a clear understanding of the potential risks and impacts of visitors on our environment (localised or widespread) across our destination, including in high-demand visitor locations?
- Is the right amount of infrastructure in place to manage the visitor experience at the location/destination sustainably?
- Do we understand the potential growth forecasts for those locations (and/or the destination as a whole) and their impact on the infrastructure needs for the future?
- Do the national/regional policies and planning support having a sustainable approach?
- Do our tourism enterprises have a commitment to environmental sustainability (e.g. TIA Sustainability Commitment, Enviro Mark)?
- What are the opportunities to support low-carbon-emissions visitor experiences?
- What are the opportunities to support achieving low waste levels and/or better waste management, including recycling?
- Are we recognising and supporting the cultural well-being of our people and place, as well as our Māori/iwi/hapū partner aspirations?
- Is there a commitment to protecting and enhancing the social licence to operate within communities?
- Is there a focus on educating visitors to behave responsibly? (See the Tiaki Promise.)
- Are we telling the story of our actions to protect the environment, to generate further momentum, improve visitor behaviour and support our social licence)?

> **Our marine product is the foundation of our business, if we do not look after our environment, our business will be gone in no time. Our business has sustainability at its core, we all are in it for the long haul, and thus sustainability becomes the only smart platform to use.**
>
> *Jeroen Jongejans, Owner and Director, Dive! Tutukaka*

Photo credit: Dean McKenzie, Nelson

CAPABILITY & DEVELOPMENT

Investment in people and capability building is critical to lifting the productivity of the tourism sector and delivering quality visitor experiences.

Tourism needs to be seen as an attractive career with clear pathways for student, employee and employer success.

We need to attract and retain a skilled workforce and build the capability of tourism businesses to improve their productivity, profitability and ability to innovate, develop and grow.

A skilled workforce

A range of factors needs to be considered in thinking about a destination's workforce, including:

- current national immigration and labour market regulatory settings
- employment levels and competition with other sectors for workers
- what the tourism sector is doing to attract, train and retain staff
- regional workforce planning
- housing, schools and other factors affecting people's ability to work and live in a particular location.

MBIE is currently working in partnership with the tourism sector to address some of the issues around the shortages of labour and skills. The 'Go With Tourism' initiative seeks to promote tourism as a valuable career (see https://www.gowithtourism.co.nz/).

In addition, a package of initiatives is being developed to:

- improve workforce planning and education systems to grow a skilled workforce
- upskill employers and employees to improve their business capability (including supporting them to understand and leverage off the profile of the modern workforce)
- provide a national governance and coordination function for consistency and efficiency
- make sure data and insight underpins all decisions and plans.

Business development and innovation

Many tourism operations are small to medium-sized enterprises that work in isolation without much connection into the area's networks. They are often unaware of the range of business advisory services available.

Facilitating the connections between businesses and capability services and supporting networking, sharing and collaboration across tourism and the wider business community encourages clustering and specialisation, as well as boosting opportunities for innovation and product development.

Quality visitor experiences are underpinned by investment in people and education. Upskilling of tourism businesses also plays a crucial role.

Networking, collaboration, partnerships and the creation of clusters help develop professionalism, innovation and entrepreneurial activity.

ASK

- What are the current and future workforce supply and skill requirements? Do we have data/evidence to support these?
- Are we promoting the sector as an attractive career option with clear pathways for students and employees?
- Have we consulted with the local education and training providers? (See Service IQ 'Regional Roadmaps' at https://www.serviceiq.org.nz/about-us/wfd/)
- Have we analysed our business capability (across employment, management and innovation dimensions) and created a programme to develop this further? Is a lead organisation coordinating it?
- Do we have connections to the various enterprise development programmes and services?
- Do we have a clear focus on quality/value services and products (e.g. Qualmark, the TIA Tourism Sustainability Commitment)?
- Could we assist tourism operators to develop new and existing visitor experiences?
- Do we regularly connect with others in the tourism sector for information sharing and support?
- Is there cross-sector engagement to encourage product development and innovation?
- Are Māori/iwi/hapū organisations and enterprises well supported and integrated/connected into the wider system?
- Are non-Māori tourism providers upskilled on tikanga, historic events and pronunciation of Māori place and tūpuna names?
- Is there a focus on innovation, clustering and investment readiness?
- Are there opportunities to build enterprise digital capability?
- Is there a commitment to building capability in sustainability and environmental stewardship?
- Do we have a focus on building DM capability and capacity across our leadership/stakeholder organisations?

Photo credit: Graeme Murray, Mount Maunganui, Bay of Plenty

LEADERSHIP & STRUCTURES

Leaders and champions are required across all aspects of destinations, and partnerships and collaboration are important for success. A focus and commitment to building DM knowledge and capability across all entities involved in supporting the destination is important.

Destinations should determine the most appropriate structure(s) required to support their areas.

A collective governance approach may be adopted where diverse stakeholders can work in partnership to manage the destination and implement the plan. This approach enables both public and private sector entities to combine relevant skills and capacities and can foster mutual learning and shared experiences. This requires a commitment to collaborate and reach agreement on solutions for each entity to take responsibility for leading and implementing relevant components of the plan. A focus on accountability and ensuring stability and consistency of the governance group is required.

Another option is that a lead agency is identified which takes overall leadership and coordination of managing the destination. The agency would ensure that all elements and stakeholders work effectively together to implement the plan. A stakeholder advisory group may support the lead agency and advise and monitor progress.

> **Competently managed, well-resourced Destination Management Organisations with strong leadership and a clear vision are integral to success.**
>
> *Professor Terry Stevens,*
> *Stevens & Associates, Wales UK*

ASK

- Do we have the right leadership and structure(s) to manage our destination successfully and achieve the community's vision, values and goals?
- Is the leadership inclusive and supported? Does it include Māori and the community?
- Does the leadership empower the community and stakeholders and coordinate shared delivery across multiple parties?
- Is there a strategic, inclusive and collaborative approach?
- Are there clear roles, responsibilities and accountability?
- Are there sufficient resources to give the leadership structure(s) the capacity to be effective?
- Do we have a commitment to building capability across our organisations and stakeholders?
- Do we have a clear understanding of how we function effectively across multiple parties in a supportive and collaborative manner? Do we need to formalise this (e.g. in a formal structure or Memorandum of Understanding)?

> **To make fundamental changes, Destination Marketing Organisations (DMOs) often require an expanded organisational mandate, and this is no different for us as we move to a Destination Management Organisation and lead the implementation of our ambitious destination plan called The Love of Tourism.**
>
> *Kristin Dunne, CEO, Tourism Bay of Plenty*

Photo credit: David Wall, Canterbury Plains, Canterbury

RISK & CRISIS MANAGEMENT

Risk management is vital, given New Zealand's propensity to natural disasters such as earthquakes, volcanic eruptions and severe weather events. Both the tourism industry and destinations must plan for such events, undertake risk assessments and pre-plan and practise response strategies.

New Zealand has developed a National Disaster Resilience Strategy for all who live in, work in or visit our country. This outlines the long-term goals for Civil Defence Emergency Management.
(See https://www.civildefence.govt.nz/cdem-sector/plans-and-strategies/national-disaster-resilience-strategy/)

ASK

- Are we familiar with the National Disaster Resilience Strategy and 'What Can You Do?' fact sheets?
- Have we planned for possible natural or man-made disasters?
- Are there good communication systems and stakeholder engagement in this area?
- Are there specific management plans in place for key 'hot spots' within your destination – that is, the places that are under pressure and where visitor safety is potentially at risk?
- Do we know the key contacts at the emergency services providers who can offer support, especially if visitors are affected?
- How will we respond to an emergency? Are the roles and functions determined and tested?
- What are our destination's key messages in times of disaster?
- Can/do we stay connected with the Visitor Sector Emergency Advisory Group in times of national disaster or with our local Civil Defence Emergency Management group during local emergencies?

CASE STUDY

VISITOR SECTOR EMERGENCY ADVISORY GROUP (VSEAG)

VSEAG works to ensure that the needs of international visitors to New Zealand are accounted for in emergency planning. VSEAG's membership includes representatives from the tourism industry, local government, central government and other agencies who work with international visitors, including the education sector.

During an emergency, VSEAG members use their networks to make sure visitors to New Zealand and international audiences receive timely and accurate information about the event. This makes sure our visitors know where it is safe to travel, and can help protect New Zealand's reputation as an international visitor destination. VSEAG can mobilise the tourism sector's resources to assist with national and local responses, and improve the visitor sector's resilience to emergencies.

Photo credit: Tourism New Zealand, Auckland

MEASURING SUCCESS

Successful destinations regularly revise and re-engineer their plans and structures according to the changing visitor needs and economic influences.

It is important to know what success in your destination would look like, based on your vision, strategic imperatives, goals and focus areas.

Measuring the indicators of sustainable tourism incorporates the four well-beings of social, economic, environmental and cultural, and encourages going beyond the traditional metrics of visitor volumes, nights and expenditure. Measuring visitor and community satisfaction though sentiment indexes or net promoter scores is also becoming more common.

Benchmarking your destination against others, both within New Zealand and internationally, can provide opportunities to assess how well you are performing and provide new ideas, approaches and learning.

> How can we fundamentally leave our place better than we found it? That's not a concept that we can own; it comes from our Indigenous Māori people. They have a beautiful way of viewing the world and doing business. What we're trying to achieve with this plan isn't our thinking. It's very much a return or an elevation of Māori thinking and values. The whole point is to leave the place better for future generations, and that means going further than sustainability. That's where we started to uncover regeneration, and now we're really passionate about this concept.
>
> *Kristin Dunne, CEO, Tourism Bay of Plenty*

ASK

- Are our key performance indicators aligned with our vision, strategic imperatives, goals and focus areas?
- Do our success measures match the community's aspirations and expectations?
- Do we monitor and report on visitor, community and industry feedback and satisfaction? Do the findings influence our planning and development activities?
- Are we monitoring and managing tourism's effects on the environment and community (at the destination, organisation and enterprise levels)?
- Are we benchmarking our destination against others?
- Are we regularly revising and reviewing our plans and structures to remain fit for purpose?
- Are we sharing/communicating our monitoring and evaluation data with the local sector, community and national groups, to support continuous improvement?
- How are we monitoring community satisfaction/sentiment about visitors and the tourism sector?

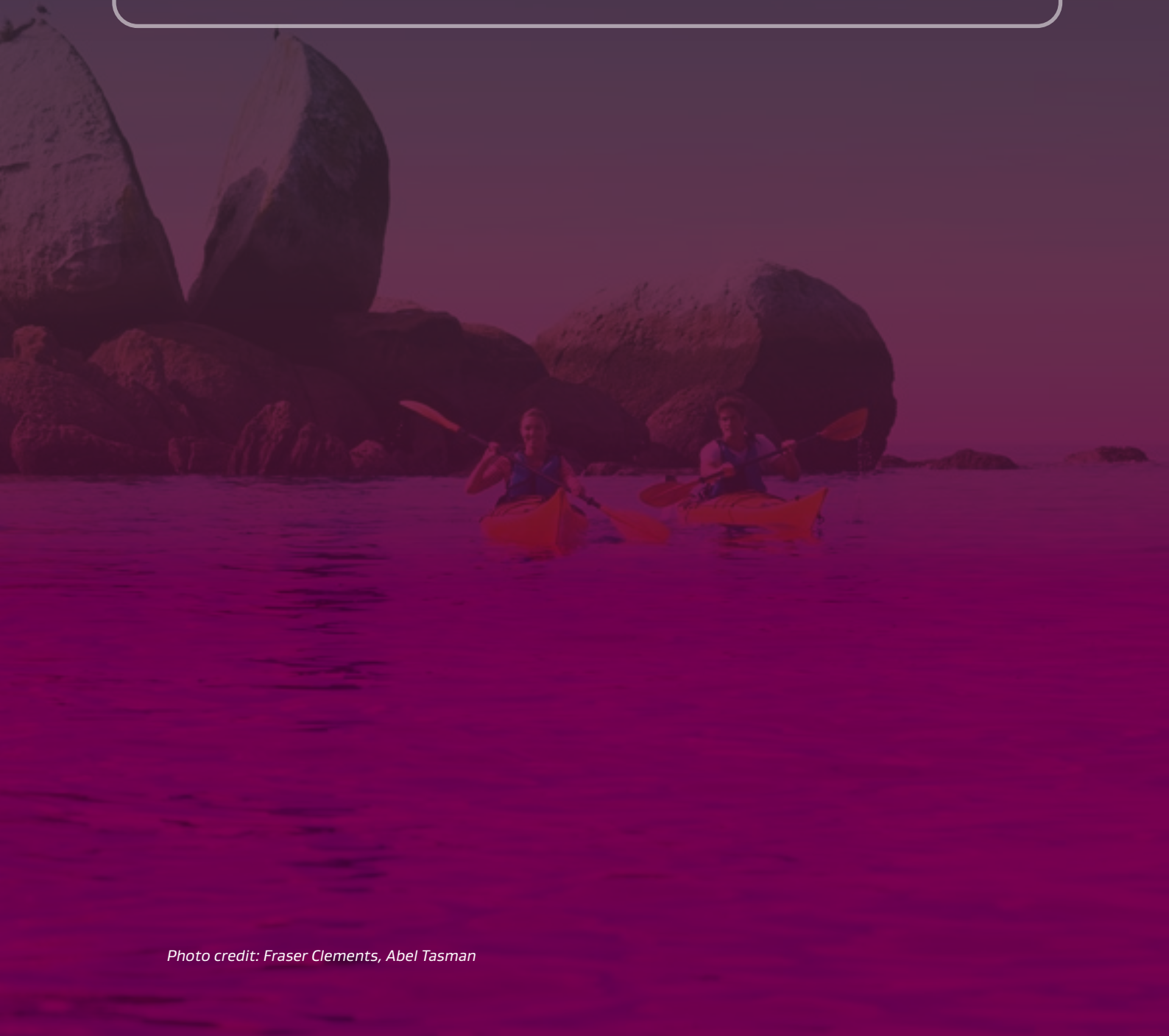


Photo credit: Fraser Clements, Abel Tasman

APPENDIX: USEFUL LINKS & INFORMATION SOURCES

- **Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment**
  - Tourism Strategy: https://www.mbie.govt.nz/immigration-and-tourism/tourism/new-zealand-aotearoa-government-tourism-strategy/
  - Tourism data: https://www.mbie.govt.nz/tourism-research-and-data
  - Regional Economic Development: https://www.mbie.govt.nz/business-and-employment/economic-development/regional-economic-development/
  - Regional economic activity: https://webrear.mbie.govt.nz/
- **Tourism Industry Aotearoa**
  - https://tia.org.nz/
  - Tourism Sustainability Commitment: https://tia.org.nz/advocacy/tia-projects/tourism/
- **Tourism New Zealand**
  - https://www.tourismnewzealand.com
- **Department of Conservation**
  - https://www.doc.govt.nz/
- **NZ Transport Agency**
  - https://www.nzta.govt.nz/
- **Te Puni Kōkiri – programmes for Māori enterprises**
  - https://www.tpk.govt.nz/en/whakamahia/maori-business-growth-support
- **NZ Māori Tourism**
  - https://maoritourism.co.nz
- **Te Arawhiti – Guidelines for engagement with Māori**
  - https://tearawhiti.govt.nz/te-kahui-hikina-maori-crown-relations/engagement/
- **New Zealand Trade and Enterprise**
  - https://www.nzte.govt.nz/our-services
  - New Zealand Visitor Activity Forecast https://freshinfo.shinyapps.io/NZVAF/
- **Regional Business Partner Network**
  - https://www.regionalbusinesspartners.co.nz/
- **Callaghan Innovation**
  - https://www.callaghaninnovation.govt.nz/
- **Business Mentors New Zealand**
  - https://www.businessmentors.org.nz/
- **Tourism Export Council**
  - https://www.tourismexportcouncil.org.nz

Photo credit: Whale Watch Kaikoura, Kaikoura Whale Tail