

PRESS RELEASE
TOURISM DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT
MINISTRY OF PRIMARY RESOURCES AND TOURISM

UN TOURISM SPEARHEADS REGIONAL EXECUTIVE TRAINING ON TOURISM FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT IN ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

5 – 6 August 2024, Bandar Seri Begawan, Brunei Darussalam

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

1. The Ministry of Primary Resources and Tourism, in collaboration with UN Tourism, organized the UN Tourism Regional Executive Training on Tourism for Rural Development in Asia and the Pacific: A Practical Approach to Strategy and Product Development. Held on 5th and 6th August, 2024, in Bandar Seri Begawan, Brunei Darussalam, the event brought together over 30 participants from the Asia and the Pacific region, including local stakeholders from government, private sector, higher education institutions, tourism service providers, and local communities.
2. This 2-day executive training is part of the UN Tourism for Rural Development Programme, designed to build stronger policies and strategies for rural tourism in Asia and the Pacific contributing to diversifying tourism supply and stimulating community empowerment. It aimed to empower tourism leaders with the skills to create, implement, and evaluate effective rural tourism strategies, highlighting the benefits and marketability of rural tourism.
3. In her welcoming remarks, Ms. Salinah Salleh, Acting Director of the Tourism Development Department from Brunei Darussalam, stated: “This training programme exemplifies Brunei Darussalam’s commitment, alongside UN Tourism, to advancing rural tourism development across the Asia and Pacific region. It highlights our dedication to providing robust support and resources to Member States, fostering sustainable and inclusive growth within our communities.”
4. Mr. Harry Hwang, Director of the Regional Department for Asia and the Pacific at UN Tourism, emphasized the importance of the training in his speech: "This Executive Training is a crucial step in equipping our Member States in Asia and the Pacific region with the skills and knowledge needed to develop sustainable and resilient rural tourism strategies. By investing

in the capacities of our tourism officials, we are promoting inclusive growth and empowering rural communities across the region."

5. The training responded to the continuous learning, adaptation, and innovation needs of Member States in rural tourism. It served as a crucial tool for improving strategic planning, developing rural destinations, and enhancing marketing and experience design.
6. The training aimed to equip technical managers with the expertise needed to develop, implement, and assess rural tourism strategies and market tourism products on both national and international levels. It focused on using tourism to drive rural development, preserving and valuing rural landscapes, knowledge systems, and cultural diversity. The program addressed the growing demand for nature-based tourism and provided participants with the skills to support inclusive, sustainable, and resilient development in rural areas.
7. As part of the training, delegates also had the opportunity to participate in a technical tour organized by the Tourism Development Department to a longhouse, located in the Temburong District. The longhouse, known for its rich cultural and heritage significance, offered diverse activities including handicrafts, house tours, and cultural exhibitions, and has been a key site for community-based tourism since 2005, attracting over 4000 local and international visitors in the last 3 years. Additionally, the programme sought to promote innovative approaches to rural tourism that support the three pillars of sustainability—economic, social, and environmental—aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
8. In a rapidly changing world facing unprecedented challenges, and with the growing demand for nature-based activities and tourism in rural areas, skills development is essential. This training provided participants with the knowledge and capacities to plan and manage tourism in rural territories in a way that supports inclusive, sustainable, and resilient development. Last year in May, UN Tourism hosted a similar executive training for the Middle East in Riyadh.
9. As part of the training, delegates also had the opportunity to participate in a technical tour organized by the Tourism Development Department to a longhouse, located in the Temburong District. The longhouse, known for its rich cultural and heritage significance, offered diverse activities including handicrafts, house tours, and cultural exhibitions, and has been a key site for community-based tourism since 2005, attracting over 4000 local and international visitors in the last 3 years.