

**4<sup>th</sup> ATLAS Critical Tourism Studies Asia-Pacific Conference  
Haikou, Hainan, People's Republic of China  
13-15 January 2025**

**Hosted by Hainan University-Arizona State University Joint International Tourism  
College (HAITC)**

**Conference Title – Tourism Afterworlds – Development and  
Deterioration in Asia-Pacific**

**Call for Papers – Session/Abstract Submission and Registration information coming soon!**

We invite papers for the 2025 conference that navigate the problems, tensions, and opportunities arising from *Tourism Afterworlds*. *Tourism Afterworlds* signals how consequential the current moment is for critical tourism studies but questions how it should be characterized, understood, and progressed. Discussions about post-development, post-tourism, post-pandemic, and post-growth have their merit but presume total global transformation when splintering and heterogeneity are equally formative in the future of tourism. Geographers, anthropologists, sociologists, tourism studies scholars, and other critical social scientists are at the forefront of work that places tourism at the center of what Neil Smith has famously called uneven development, or the geographically variegated project of capital accumulation. What tourism ‘afterworlds’ can be identified in an Asia-Pacific is as anxious as it is aspirational about how its leadership in the global tourism economy will affect local communities, environments, and cultures?

In February 2023, the 3rd Critical Tourism Studies-Asia Pacific conference was convened at British University Vietnam, Hanoi, with the theme *Tourism Metamorphosis: Creative Destruction and the Remaking of Tourism Geographies* - a timely and optimistic call to arms for critically engaged tourism academics. Since then, while various attempts at reconfiguring tourism have emerged, tourism metamorphosis has proven to be an elusive enterprise.

It has been three years since the global tourism industry – pressed by academics, commentators, policymakers, and the omnipresence of the COVID-19 pandemic – was reckoning with what a “new normal” might mean to global mobility, financial bottom lines, tourism-based livelihoods, and a spirit of escapism and discovery that travel provided. In the northern summer of 2023 and early 2024, there is evidently little doubt that tourism has returned to a familiar “old normal” where pre-COVID-19 travel mores have been reinstated: massive corporate profitability, environmental destruction, “bad” tourist behavior, and sustained precarity of the tourism employee. Tourism “development,” formerly used to connote tourism’s primacy in addressing social justice, equity concerns, and taking on new life through the pandemic shutdown, has now been usurped by tourism “growth,” and the tendency for tourism to acquire ever more pathways to rent-seeking and resource extraction. Overlaying the ‘old normal’ of the post-COVID tourism landscape we are also bearing witness to new forms of disaster

capitalism driven by the global tourism industry, a phenomenon where powerful elites consolidate their wealth through the inequitable acquisition of disaster-affected land, labor, and resources. This is the case for communities that have been affected by low visitor numbers since the pandemic as well as for places that were ostensibly ‘rehabilitated’ during the COVID tourism downturn and are now primed to re-open.

However, the tourism landscape is not all doom and gloom. Society’s challenges, including those shaped by tourism, are tackled head-on by the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). These seventeen mandates often benefit from tourism’s generation of capital and resources for host communities. Yet these efforts can also be sullied by its more destructive tendencies. To wit: tourism drives labour precarity yet also supports small businesses and livelihood diversity; it sucks up water while demanding water quality and conservation improvements; and it provides incentives and educational opportunities for responsible engagement even as tourism facilitates more extreme consumption patterns. Perhaps nowhere are these contradictions more interlinked than in Asia-Pacific, a region at the center of tourism mobilities, geopolitical clashes, and rising wealth and power. *Tourism Afterworlds* provides an exciting platform to critically entertain the SDGs and the tensions they engender.

Is the Asia-Pacific region a tourism behemoth without the critical intellectual or policy attention it deserves, or a fertile terrain for the formation of ingenious solutions? Tourism scholarship in Asia has its genesis in Anglo-Western concepts, interpretations and methodologies. The same could be said of the Pacific, where the predominance of constellations of humanistic, Marxist, feminist, post-structural, postmodern, and ontological approaches are self-reinforcing. Beyond the cultural and societal mismatches between the context of Asia and European/Western thought and practice, arguments for the field to be decolonised are loud and clear. Arguably, a political economy of critical tourism scholarship has negated conceptual pluralism. Given the presence of rich intellectual traditions inhabiting Asia-Pacific and the diversity of training of Asia-Pacific scholars, tourism afterworlds needs engagement rooted in the diverse knowledges the region holds. For instance, the sagely pedagogical ideals of bettering the worlds we live in by elevating oneself and others of neo-Confucian thinker Wang Yangming provide philosophical clues to how Chinese societies historically have grappled with visions and markers of critical thought. Contemporary scholar-led pro-poor initiatives in China also signal action founded on critical thought.

In the wake of three previous successful conferences (Yogyakarta 2018, Wakayama 2020, Hanoi 2023), ATLAS Critical Tourism Studies – Asia Pacific ventures to the People’s Republic of China for the first time. Hosting at Hainan, an island central to China’s collective domestic tourism consciousness and now open to much of the world through visa-free channels, is a means to bring the realities of tourism and development in Asia-Pacific to the fore. To what extent do the geopolitical realities of Asian tourism—and specifically tourism in and of China—reflect or clash with the island exceptionalism of Hainan?

Topics for organized sessions and panels are open. Some potential themes include:

1. Overtourism and undertourism
2. Tourism in the Asian Century
3. Environmental conservation and destruction
4. The forms and conflicts among Asian, regional, national, and indigenous identities
5. Tourism infrastructure
6. Disaster capitalism in tourism
7. (Im)Mobilities
8. Cross-border tourism investments
9. Digital nomads
10. Tourism infrastructure and logistics
11. Beyond the East-West binary?
12. Gender and/in/of tourism
13. Post-tourism or back to the future?
14. Sustainability – for whom and by what means?
15. Environmental change
16. Disaster/crisis
17. Biopolitics
18. Bordering and ordering tourism
19. Heritage and ethnic tourism
20. Anthropocene and the Capitalocene
21. Tourism, Islands, and Archipelagos
22. Inequality in academic knowledge production - sustainable future directions
23. Tourism in Protected areas

Please note the conference will be held entirely in-person and in the English language.

***Individual Paper abstract guidelines – rolling acceptance (more information on deadlines coming soon)***

Abstracts should include:

- Abstract title (descriptive and unambiguous)
- Author names, affiliations, and email addresses
- Research context and background
- Research question/problem statement
- Methods employed and rationale
- Findings and results
- Discussion and contribution to critical tourism studies
- Keywords (up to 5)
- Abstract to be labeled – *author surname\_CTSAP4 Abstract*
- 400-word maximum word limit

*\*Papers that are part of sessions should be submitted using the paper abstract submission form. Please indicate on the form the name of the session that your paper belongs.*

**Paper Session Abstracts -- rolling acceptance (more information on deadlines coming soon)**

Sessions are encouraged where organisers will collect papers under a coherent and unified theme. These can be (1) closed (organisers secure appropriate papers for their session) or (2) open sessions (organisers make a public call). Sessions will be comprised of up to four papers. Organisers should prepare a 400-word session description with theme(s) clearly outlined and should include:

- Session title (descriptive and unambiguous)
- Organiser/s names, affiliations and email addresses
- Concept/theme with clear description of background, aims and key guiding literature
- Session proposal to be labelled – *Proposer names\_CTSAP4 Session proposal*
- Structure required of abstracts (see below)

**Author Guidelines**

- The *4th ATLAS Critical Tourism Studies Asia Pacific* abides by APA7
- 12 Font, Times New Roman
- Single spaced

Any questions please contact us at: [criticaltourismstudies@gmail.com](mailto:criticaltourismstudies@gmail.com)