

## **CAUTHE Fellows' report Mid-year meeting June 2020**

Communication with the Fellows of CAUTHE about their activities and potential insights for CAUTHE members at this time was instigated by asking Fellows three questions. The questions and collated answers constitute the core of this Fellows' report. As might be expected from a senior and varied group, not all views were neatly aligned. In the summary below I have identified areas of genuine consensus as well as some sharp and differing perspectives.

The three questions were:

**1. Do you have or are you involved in any resources such as webinars and collated reports that might be of value to CAUTHE members?**

There was plenty of activity here. CAUTHE members may have seen some of the webinars or YouTube presentations featuring CAUTHE Fellows.

They included:

- Geoffrey Crouch and Sara Dolnicar: [\*The Future of Tourism Research in a Post-Pandemic World\*](#). 23 April 2020.
- Brian King via the Hong Kong Tourism Board: *Beyond COVID-19: Global Tourism's New Normal*, 24 June 2020 (Wednesday) 15.00 - 17.00 (HKT/GMT +8).
- Philip Pearce: *Rejecting myths. Stories from tourism research journeys*. Trisakti School of Tourism, Indonesia with James Cook University. 19 June 2020. 1400 registrations 34 countries. Available soon on YouTube.
- Noel Scott: *Wildlife Interpretation experiences. Wildlife Tourism Australia*
- Marianna Sigala, Noel Scott, Philip Pearce and others: Various webinars on COVID-19 and European responses and issues.

CAUTHE members may wish to contact individual fellows directly for access if any of the speeches and discussions are of interest to you.

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**2. Do you have clear views about writing papers in the COVID-19 situation?**

Views varied on this topic. Many, including several Fellows with key editorial roles, thought there was a corpus of poor work, and reported many articles being desk rejected. There was an accompanying perspective that any work in the future should acknowledge the pandemic so that the credibility of the research manuscripts being submitted was maintained. Suspect

practices among some tourism journals in publishing work very quickly was noted. Further, a strong view that tourism researchers should join with authors from other disciplines, notably health experts, was proposed. The goal of this collaboration was in part seen as desirable to avoid naïve assertions about the nature of epidemiological issues and infection rates. This call to work with other disciplinary scholars was seen as a potentially positive spark for creativity. The re-telling of what is offered about the pandemic and tourism in the media was roundly criticised. A strong emphasis was that the same scholarly standards must apply to work about this topic as to all other submissions.

The notion that there was an opportunity for a re-appraisal of key topics such as forecasting was not lost on some Fellows. Nevertheless, the wider conversation, sometimes involving Fellows and sometimes not, that has been suggesting a reconstruction and re-direction of tourism was an issue where strong differences emerged. Some Fellows criticised superficial analogies with previous crises and firmly suggested that a longer view of history and global power shifts needed to be incorporated in thinking about post-pandemic tourism. It is perhaps a view that is prescient given the tension between Australia and China and its effect on universities in this period. Several Fellows simply thought that it was just too early to write about the pandemic and the nature of “new” tourism in any meaningful way. It was noted that aspirational goals for new forms of tourism as offered by some researchers was not really research. Clarity in drawing the line between opinion pieces and studies needs to be observed when providing such commentary.

### **3. Do you have views about ongoing productivity at this time?**

One common view was the need for researchers and academics to support one another. This was largely conceived as a mental health issue for the tourism (research) community. The concern extended to empathy for struggling tourism and hospitality businesses, students in lockdown, and isolated peers. Some anxieties about the health of other Fellows was often noted. Given some extra vulnerability of many Fellows who are in a higher risk senior category, the expressions of genuine concern were heartfelt. Advice to scholars burdened by extra pressures of preparing online material rapidly and working from home amidst children was “don’t try too hard to be super productive”. A kind of “do what you can and maybe that will work out” was advocated, but above all do not expect superhuman performances in terms of research productivity.

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Notes prepared by Philip Pearce

Chair of the CAUTHE FELLOWS

18 June 2020