



COVID-19 and CAREC Tourism
Sector

Harnessing the Role of Technology in Promoting Safe Tourism Destinations

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Study Objectives

The study aims to assess the potential for the adoption of technology to aid the tourism sector stakeholders to recover from the devastating economic effect of the pandemic. *The study does not focus on tourism sector review per se but on the role that technology can play in promoting safe destination tourism.*

The objective of this study is to assess the potential for adopting technology for the promotion of safe tourism destinations in the CAREC region, the assignment focuses on:

- Identifying the travelers' expected future needs in terms of safety and security
- Analyzing the implications of these emerging needs in the development, management, and promotion of tourism destinations
- Providing recommendations on how such needs could be met through the use of technology, also based on best practices from other regions and / or countries

Key Questions

- Is Technology adoption important for tourism development?
- Is technology really the critical binding constraint for tourism development and crisis recovery?
- What is the role of government versus the private sector actors ?
- Is there a regional dimension to technology adoption?

Key Stakeholders in Tourism Sector

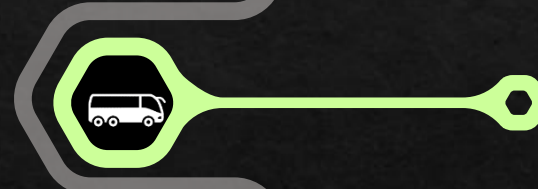
Government

Food and Beverage Establishment
(Restaurants / Bars / Pubs/ Cafes)



Accommodation Providers

(Hotel, Guesthouse, Private rooms, Heritage rooms, Airbnb, Hostels, Apartments)



Transport Services

(Private taxis, Uber, Ola, and Other private transport providers)



Aviation Service Providers
(Airlines and Airports service providers)



Tour Operators

(Tour Agencies / Travel Booking Office / Online and Offline Aggregators)

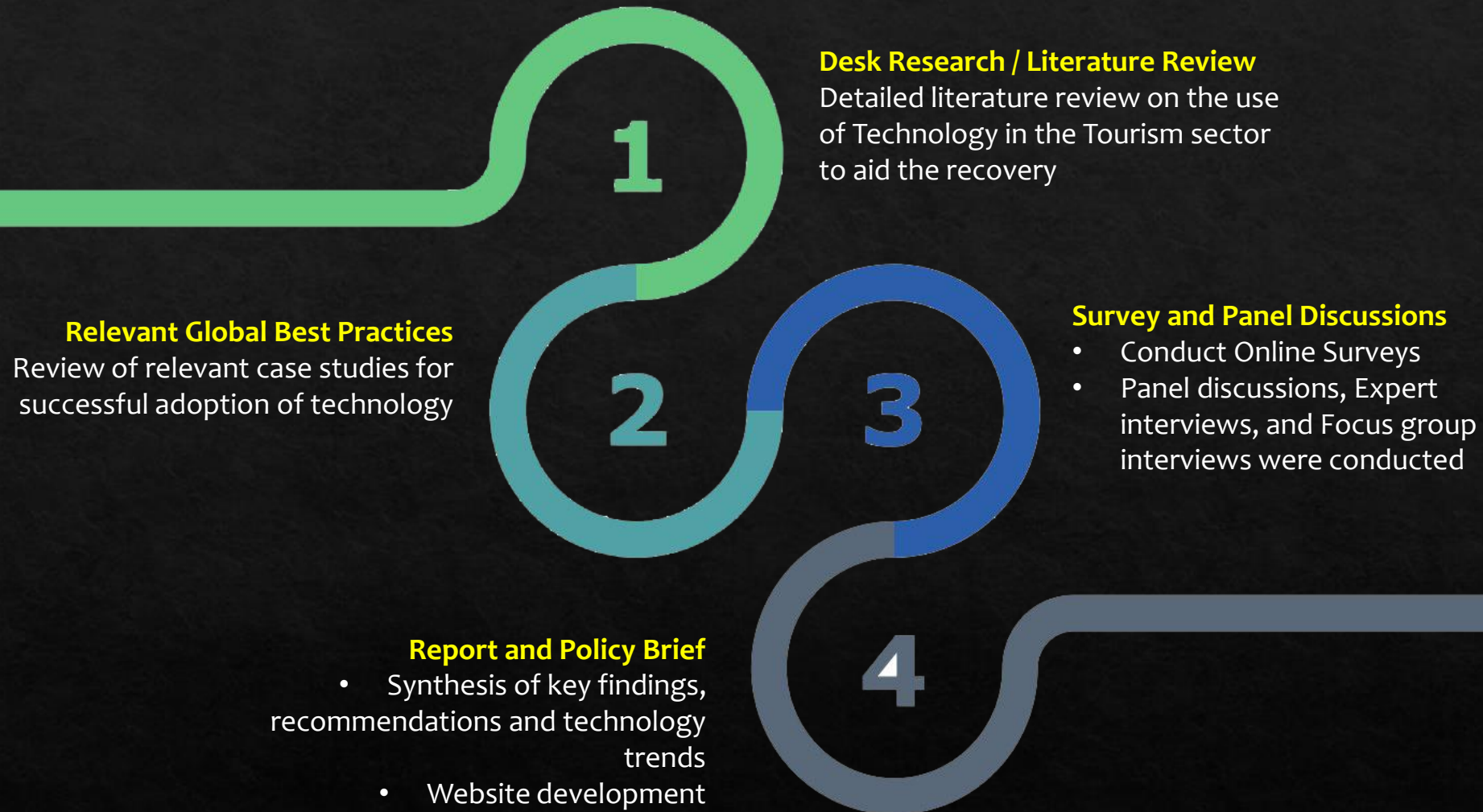
Tour Guides and Site Managers
Provide assistance and information as they directly interact with the tourists



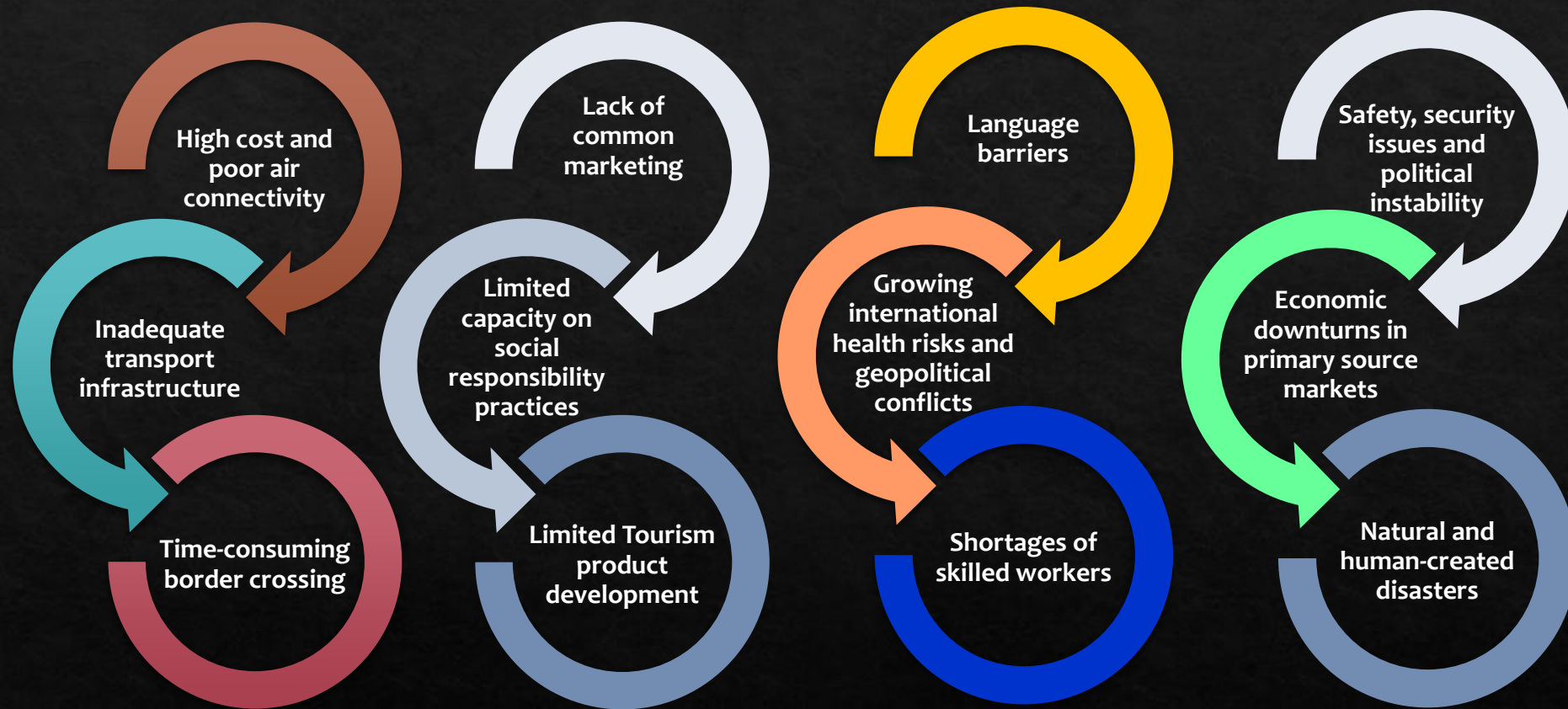
Tourists and travellers

Their feedbacks and choices can greatly influence and enhance the service provider's functioning

Research Methodology



What are the key challenges facing the tourism sector in the CAREC Region?



Will Technology adoption solve some of these issues?

Opportunities

Expected from adopting technologies

More immersive tourists' experience

Tailored & customized services

Increased tourists' visitation

Expand international reach

Local economic development

Constrains

Expected in adopting technologies

Lack of finance and other priorities

Lack of local ICT infrastructure

Costs and uncertain return on investment

Lack of trained inhouse workforce

Lack of 'ready' solutions within budget

Motivations

To adopt technologies

Local economic growth

Better destination management

Stakeholders cooperation and support

New tourism products development

Jobs creation and entrepreneurship

Obstacles

In implementing the technologies

Multiplicity of agencies

Limited awareness about ICT benefits

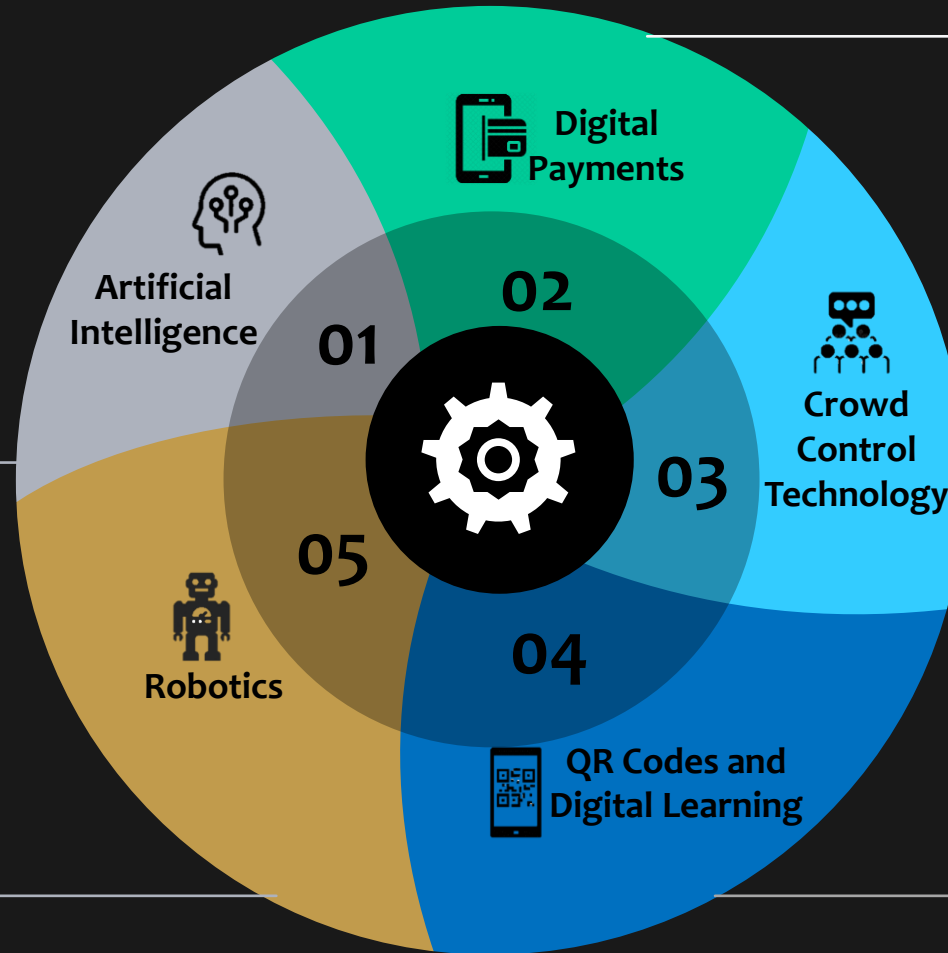
Financial assistance

Need for technical assistance

Political support

Key Technologies for Promoting Clean and Safe Destination Tourism

- Chatbots for handling customer queries and Booking and Providing information regarding Covid_19 precautions, thus avoiding human contact.
- Thermal Camera scanners enabled with facial recognition for mass scanning of temperatures and notifying in case of high temperatures observed.
- A combination of the biometric face scan with AI-enabled facial recognition for a safe and contact-less check-in and check-out and ensuring other precautionary measures are in place



- Contactless digital and online payments to replace cash transactions.

- Crowd control through mobile apps to ensure social distance norms in all public areas using cloud computing and geofencing technology
- Crowd Control Technology to ensure social distancing is being practiced and seating arrangements are evenly distanced in small enclosed establishments.

- Robots for disinfection and cleaning of common public areas in establishments.
- Robots to transfer or carry luggage, hence ensuring a contactless experience.
- Robots for disinfection and cleaning of common public areas in establishments.

- QR Codes to access reservations, bookings, digital menus for replacing paper menus to avoid touching of common surfaces
- Digital learning platforms for staff training, skill development, and providing Covid_19 related information and training measures.

Which factors Influence the adoption of innovative technologies?

Markets

Tourists demands, tastes, and preferences are everchanging. Technology helps in keeping up with the latest trends in market.

Economic

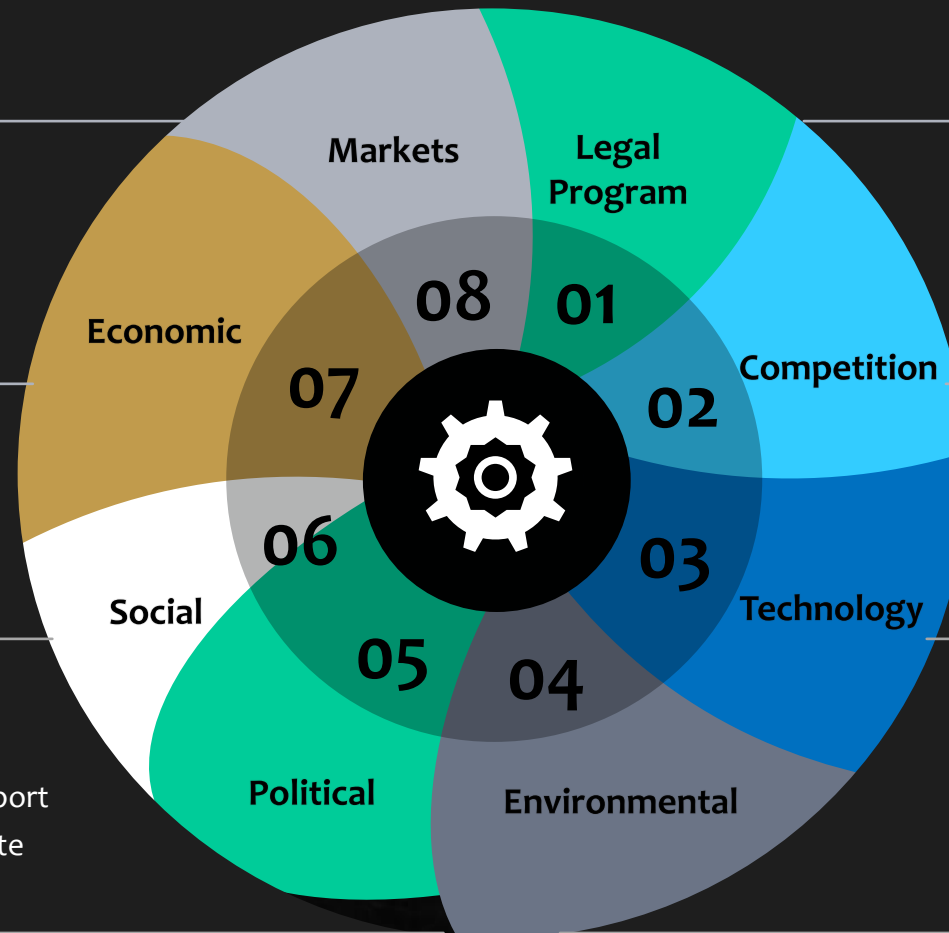
Technology adoption facilitates new value creation and expansion of value chains. Innovation requires innovative financing tools.

Social

Benefits to local communities and active support from them are critical for technology adoption.

Political

The political eco-system shapes public policy support for uptake of cutting edge technologies and create inducements for investments



Legal Framework

Legal framework needs to protect the interests of the investors and tourists alike, to create trust and confidence about data security and privacy

Competition

Competition drives the need for constant innovation and technology.

Technology

Availability of, access to, and awareness of different technologies as well as opportunities for skill development influence adoption.

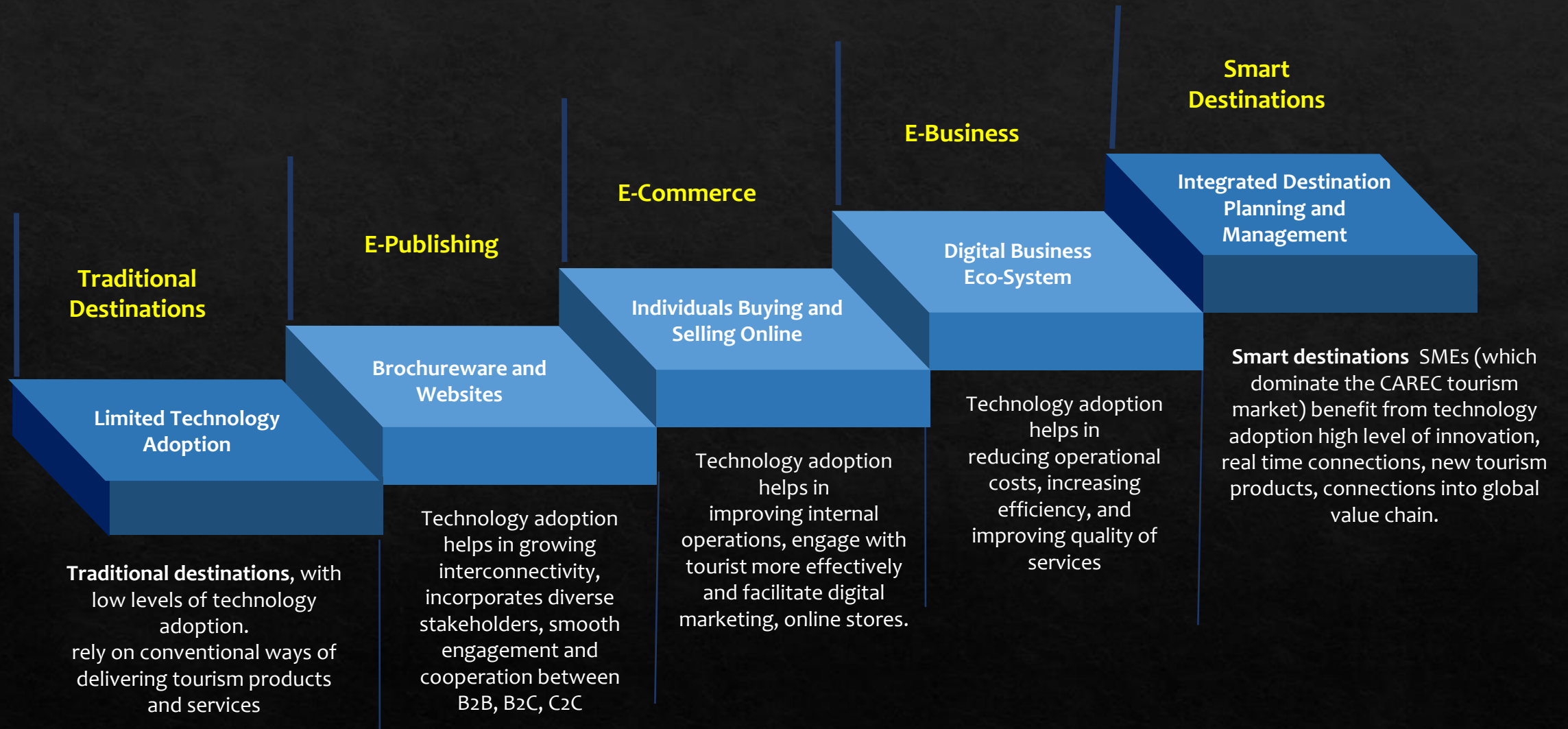
Environmental

Geographical location and connectivity to key destinations influence the adoption of technology, due to cost implications and reliability of digital infrastructure.

What can Governments do?



Roadmap: From Traditional to Smart Destinations



Policy Recommendations for CAREC Countries

Technology for Enhanced Experience

Ensure a more immersive experience



Make information ubiquitous



Digitize and establish a national database for arts and crafts.



Technology for Prevention and Mitigation

Maximize contactless and digital transactions.

Map and control risk of spread

Facilitate Smooth Technology Adoption

Rapidly scale up broadband internet connectivity



Incentivize shrink-wrapped solutions



Provide incentives for technology adoption



Incentivize innovative solutions through existing innovation fund(s)



Adopt an incremental approach



Technology for Marketing and Promotion

Deliver personalized, not standardized services

Design a comprehensive tourism portal and implement a full tourism satellite account

Legislate data privacy and protection

Launch targeted social media campaigns

Develop a national online register for all international tourists

Technology for Regional Cooperation

Facilitate air bubbles and cross-border travel



Adopt a regional approach



Use technology to smoothly facilitate the proposed Silk Road air pass



Support for Technology Adoption

Use technology to create and sustain jobs

Promote skills development

Institutional Support for Technology Introduction

Adopt a multi-stakeholder, multidisciplinary approach

Technology for enabling vaccine passports



Establish a national ICT task force to support the tourism sector

Potential Areas for Financial and Technical Support by ADB and other multilaterals



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Thank you