GLOBAL TOURISM
ACHIEVING SUSTAINABLE GOALS

Sustainable Tourism: International Cooperation for Development
ONLINE TOOL KIT AND RESOURCE SERIES

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Sustainable Tourism: International Cooperation for Development
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ST101. Global Tourism
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        A Step by Step Approach

ST103. Tourism Destination Management
        Achieving Sustainable and Competitive Results

ST104. Tourism Investment and Finance
        Accessing Sustainable Funding and Social Impact Capital

ST105. Sustainable Tourism Enterprise Development
        A Business Planning Approach

ST106. Tourism Workforce Development
        A Guide to Assessing and Designing Programs

ST107. Tourism and Conservation
        Sustainable Models and Strategies

ST108. Scientific, Academic, Volunteer, and Educational Travel
        Connecting Responsible Travelers with Sustainable Destinations

ST109. Powering Tourism
        Electrification and Efficiency Options for Rural Tourism Facilities

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Table of Contents

Preface

The target audience for this manual includes professionals working on tourism-related projects in developing countries, including staff from donor and government agencies, non-governmental organizations, consulting firms, universities, businesses, and other entities. Some specific examples of audiences that would benefit include:

- Residents or expatriate professionals engaged in development assistance activities
- Local authorities such as a destination management organization, tourism office, promotion agency, or organization exercising governance power over tourist activities
- Public, semi-public, or civil society administrators or professionals responsible for the development, promotion, or organization of tourism activities
- Destination management companies responsible for managing commercial activities for city, theme park, or resort destinations
- Local, public, or private tourism operators offering activities, transportation, lodging, food, attractions, events, or others concerned with enhancing the long-term sustainability and competitiveness of tourism destinations
- Private, local entrepreneurs
- Non-governmental organizations seeking to fulfill their missions through sustainable initiatives
- Consultants involved in tourism planning and development
- University professors teaching tourism or planning courses

We would like to express our deep appreciation and gratitude to a number of individuals who shared their knowledge and experience in the production of this publication, particularly Donald E. Hawkins, Annessa Kaufman, and Kristin Lamoureux of George Washington University.

The Global Sustainable Tourism Alliance Management Partners — FHI 360[1], The George Washington University, Solimar International, and the Nature Conservancy — provided helpful guidance. Roberta Hilbruner of USAID offered numerous reviews, suggestions, and outreach with those working in the field.

We also express our appreciation to the World Tourism Organization and the WTO Themis Foundation for permission to utilize information from their publications and to pilot test this publication.

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Brian T. Mullis and Frances Figart

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[1] FHI has acquired the programs, expertise and assets of the Academy for Educational Development (AED).

Acronyms

BINGOs — Big International NGOs
BITC — Business in the Community
CAP — Conservation Action Plan
CBD — Convention on Biological Diversity
CER — Certified Emission Reductions
CSR — Corporate Social Responsibility
DANTEI — Development Assistance Network for Tourism Enhancement and Investment
DMO — Destination Marketing Organization or Destination Management Organization
FDI — Foreign Direct Investment
EMG — Environmental Management Group
GATS — General Agreement on Trade in Services
GCET — UNWTO Global Code of Ethics for Tourism
GEF — Global Environment Facility
GDP — Gross Domestic Product
GRI — Global Reporting Initiative
GSTC — Global Sustainable Tourism Criteria
HRM — Human Resource Management
IADB — Inter-American Development Bank
IFC — International Finance Corporation
ILO — International Labor Organization
LDCs — Least Developed Countries
LOHAS — Lifestyles of Health and Sustainability
MDGs — Millennium Development Goals
NGOs — Non-Government Organizations
NTOs — National Tourism Organizations
PPP — Public-Private Partnership
RTAs — Regional Trade Agreements
SCALE — System-wide Collaborative Action for Livelihoods and the Environment
SIDS — Small Island Developing States
SME — Small and Medium Enterprises
STEP — STI's Sustainable Tourism Certification Program™
STSC — Sustainable Tourism Stewardship Council
TFD — Tourism for Development
TIA — Travel Industry Association
TTSA — Travel and Tourism Satellite Account
UNCED — United Nations Convention on the Environment and Development
UNDP — United Nations Development Program
UNWTO — United Nations World Tourism Organization
USAID — United States Agency for International Development
WHC — World Heritage Centre
WTO — World Tourism Organization

Unit 1 — Introduction to Sustainable Tourism

Many words and phrases have lost meaning and become cliché due to overuse, the word "sustainability" among them. It is important for this course, then, that such words avoid misinterpretation. But before we define terms, let us consider the origins of sustainable tourism. This will provide perspective for commonly used green tourism-related terminology.

A HISTORY OF THE SUSTAINABLE TOURISM MOVEMENT

In 1992 a hundred governments came together in Rio de Janeiro to attend the United Nations Convention on the Environment and Development (UNCED, also known as the "Earth Summit"). They discussed the state of the world's environment and measures necessary to decrease impacts of development on the natural world in pursuit of a sustainable future. Although they made many important decisions, tourism, as a tool for economic development, was not discussed. Nor did the summit address tourism's impacts, positive or negative.

Ten years later, world government leaders came together again, and this time they included tourism in their discussions. The World Summit on Sustainable Development, hosted in Johannesburg, South Africa in 2002, focused on assessing progress made since the 1992 Earth Summit, as well as addressing concerns for the future. By this time, the international travel and tourism industry had earned recognition as a powerful force in economic and sustainable development. The UN General Assembly also declared 2002 as The International Year of Ecotourism. The following year, the World Tourism Organization (WTO) general council and the UN agreed to convert the former into the United Nations World Tourism Organization as an agency of the UN.

Spurred by this international dialogue, in 2008 the UNWTO, Rainforest Alliance (RA), United Nations Foundation (UNF), and the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP) together created the Global Sustainable Tourism Criteria (GSTC). The GSTC, which we will discuss at length in Unit 8, seeks common ground and baseline criteria for sustainable tourism. It organizes criteria around four pillars:

- Effective sustainability planning
- Maximization of social and economic benefits to the local community
- Reduction of negative impacts to cultural heritage
- Reduction of negative impacts to natural and cultural heritage

These international agreements and coalitions reflect a broader environmental movement that, since the 1980s, has been pushing for sustainable development to which tourism could make a major contribution.

DEFINING SUSTAINABLE TOURISM

To continue this conversation, we must first define *tourism* and *sustainable development*. Tourism comprises activities of people traveling to and staying in places outside their usual environment for at least one night and no more than one consecutive year for leisure, business, and other purposes. *Sustainable development*, which became popular after the Rio Earth Summit in 1992, is broadly defined as "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs" (World Commission on Environment and Development, 1987). Sustainable tourism applies the same principle, but to travelers, businesses involved in the travel trade, and destinations impacted by tourism development.

Sustainable tourism is a form of tourism characterized by a level of intensity and technology that generates sustainable net social, economic, and environmental benefits. Sustainable tourism is a kind of tourism that develops in a fair and equitable manner for host communities, both human and natural. Sustainable tourism is economically viable in the long-term and avoids damage to the physical and cultural environment. In other words, it is tourism that participates in the management of all resources that fulfills economic, social, and aesthetic needs while it maintains cultural integrity and biological diversity, and environmental quality.

Although they often occur simultaneously, sustainable tourism and ecotourism are not the same. *Ecotourism* typically involves responsible travel to fragile, pristine, and usually protected natural areas, and which strives to be low impact and small scale. Like sustainable tourism, ecotourism focuses on environmental conservation and the improvement of the wellbeing of local people. When sustainable tourism is done in such a way that the local people not only benefit economically and socially, but also take a leadership role by initiating and operating the tourism activities, it is known as *community-based tourism*. Some believe, however, that practitioners should not invest too much time in distinguishing among definitions of different forms of alternative tourism given that they all point in the same direction. One global definition for this family of terms could be a tourism that generates net benefits for both human and non-human communities found at destinations and throughout the value chain.

Because sustainable tourism not only promotes economic development, but also environmental and cultural conservation — it employs the concept of a triple bottom line. The triple bottom line is an expanded baseline for measuring performance, adding socio-cultural and environmental dimensions to the traditional economic benchmark used in business. A positive triple bottom line represents net gains in environmental conservation, social benefits, economic profits for businesses, as well as local and regional economies. It is important to note that net does not imply the absence of losses or damages across these three dimensions, it only means that the final tally is positive, where positive impacts outweigh negative impacts. All human activity has impacts.

We will look more closely at the concept of the triple bottom later in this unit. But first, we examine differences between traditional and sustainable tourism and to examine the role tourism plays in the global economy.

TRADITIONAL TOURISM VERSUS SUSTAINABLE TOURISM

Traditional tourism has many drawbacks. It frequently lacks stakeholder involvement, suffers from an absence of any long-term planning, and has no enforced regulatory framework. Traditional forms of tourism apply direct pressure to the Earth's ecosystems, exert stress on host communities, compete for the use of scarce resources, pollute, are an unstable income source, and often foster community frustration.

The many environmental impacts of mainstream tourism include air, noise, and water pollution; congestion; destruction of scenic landscapes; improper disposal of solid waste; interruption in ecological processes; damage to archaeological and historical sites; and environmental disasters. Social impacts include clash of values; loss of local jobs; resentment from local communities; overcrowding; over-commercialization; and an increase in prostitution and sex tourism.

Sustainable tourism, by contrast, creates a viable long-term strategy for success, uses regulatory frameworks, and creates linkages to other economic sectors. It strives to take pressure off natural systems and to collaborate with host communities to foster infrastructure benefits and economic stability. It typically employs women and young people of legal age, creates opportunities for small entrepreneurs, has low start-up costs with few barriers to entry, and promotes cultural pride, awareness, and a sense of ownership.

When tourism is sustainable there are benefits for all stakeholders: to the traveler, to the company providing the tourism, and to interests within the host community. Those who choose sustainable travel of high experiential and interpretive quality can gain appreciation of other cultures, come away with an enhanced global perspective, take action to help protect the destination's special sense of place, and feel good about giving back. Companies who provide sustainable tourism usually benefit from improved profitability and competitive advantage, increased market strength customer loyalty, attraction of talent and enhanced employee loyalty. Host communities involved in sustainable tourism enjoy improved local employment opportunities, increased opportunities for local enterprises, improved infrastructure and access to services, and increased participation in decision-making.

TOURISM AS A GLOBAL DEVELOPMENT TOOL

Why is tourism so important to global economic development? Rapid and continuous growth over the past twenty years has made tourism one of the world's most significant sources of employment and of Gross Domestic Product (GDP). Tourism particularly benefits developing country economies, where most of the sector's new tourism jobs and businesses are being created. This rapid growth has encouraged many developing nations to view tourism as a key component to their economic portfolios.

To provide a perspective on tourism's impact on the global economy, the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC) and Oxford Economics estimate that the travel and tourism industry earns $6 trillion or 9.5% of the global GDP, with nearly 260 million people employed in the industry. By 2021 they predict that travel and tourism will account for $9.2 trillion of global GDP and 324 million jobs (WTTC & Oxford Economics, 2011).
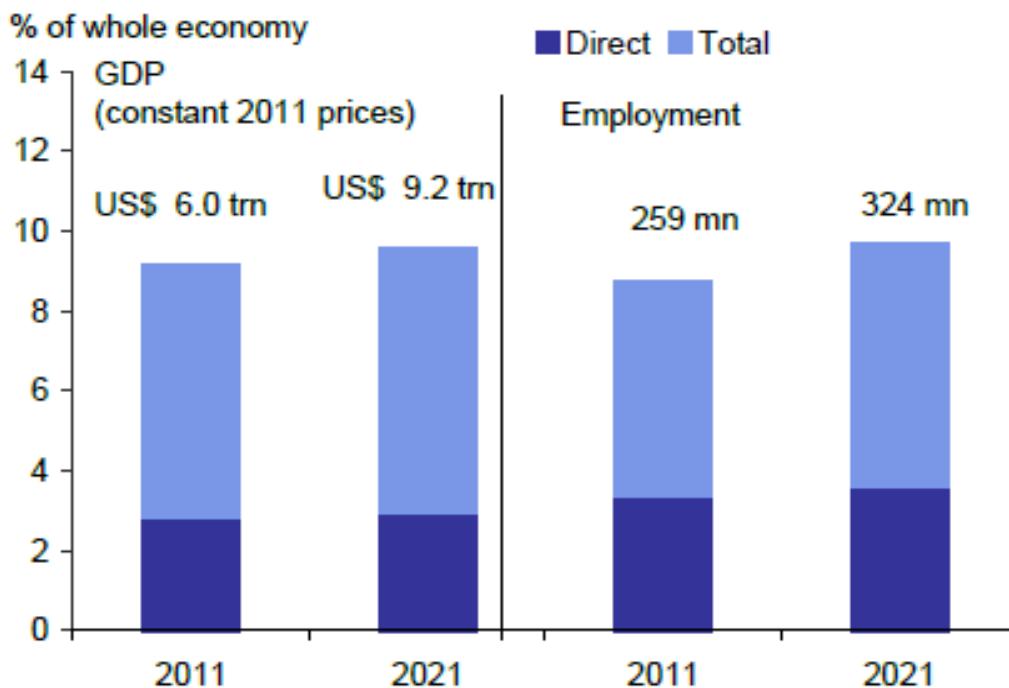
Figure 1.1. World Travel & Tourism Outlook (WTTC & Oxford Economics, 2011)

The United States uses a statistical instrument that measures relative size and importance of the travel and tourism industry, along with its contribution to GDP. The Travel and Tourism Satellite Account (TTSA), approved by the UN in March 2002 and endorsed by the UN Statistical Commission, has become the international standard. In fact, more than 50 countries employ the approach.

Tourism is big business, and when done right, has enormous cross-sector potential to contribute to economic growth and diversification, poverty reduction, biodiversity conservation, and natural resources management. It is a powerful tool for addressing other important cross-cutting agendas such as gender equity, global health, education, and local governance. But successful tourism requires proper planning and management.
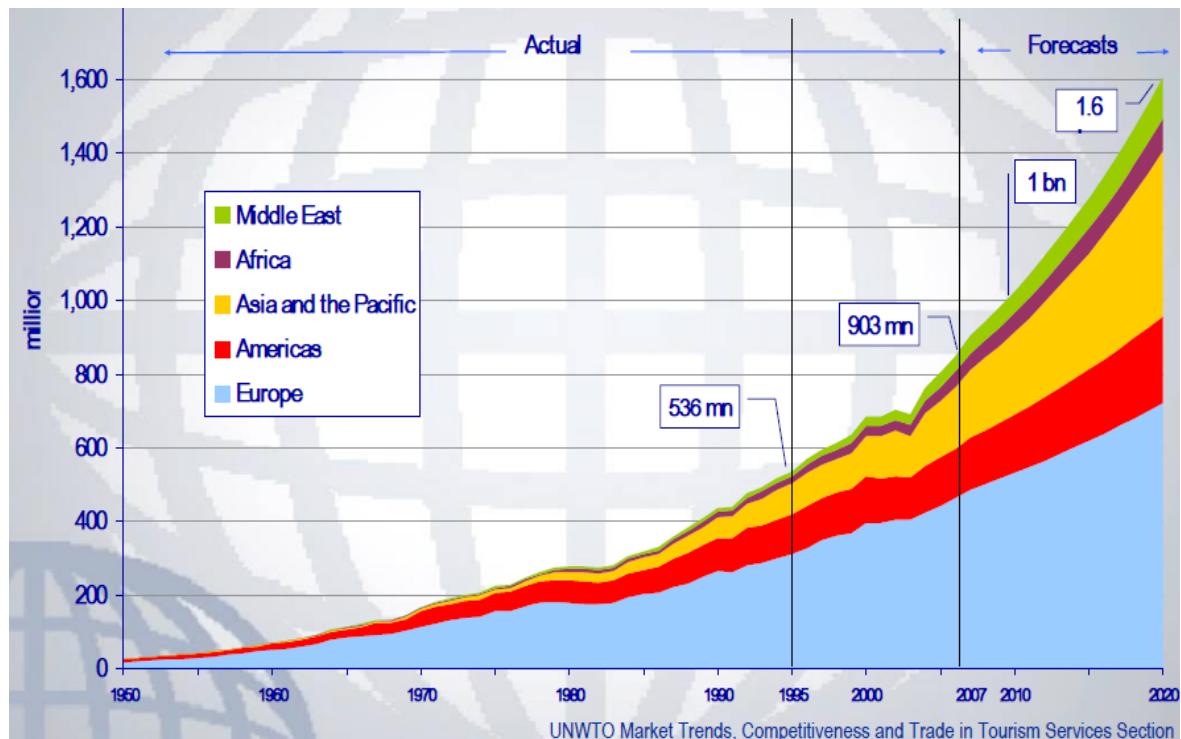
Figure 1.2. International Tourist Arrivals, 1950–2020, Current Situation and Forecasts (UNWTO, 2008)

THE TRIPLE BOTTOM LINE AND IMPACTS OF TOURISM

Generally speaking sustainable tourism protects people and places. It does this by addressing potential impacts of tourism on three main areas: environment, society-culture, and economy. Let us look at each in detail.

Tourism can impact land, air, water, and biotic communities. How a tourism business recycles waste, utilizes energy, controls water usage, minimizes greenhouse gas emissions, and protects natural ecosystems all contribute to environmental management. Organized efforts to minimize negative impacts can greatly improve the chances of sustainability and a healthier and cleaner environment.

Socio-cultural impacts affect communities' structures and cultures. Tourism providers benefit communities by discouraging cultural imperialism, supporting cultural diversity, and promoting tolerance and acceptance of different lifestyles and belief systems. When a tourism business enhance its positive socio-cultural impacts and helps local communities maintain their cultural integrity in the face of vast economic and developmental pressures, this can greatly benefit both business and community. Thoughtful efforts to foster pride in cultural traditions and promote cultural exchange in destination communities can effectively preserve cultural identity and improve quality of life.

Economic impacts are usually categorized as direct, indirect, or induced. Direct impacts affect all beneficiaries of monetary transactions such as the tourism businesses, wage-earners, tax collectors, and other service providers such as a hotel. Indirect impacts include changes in sales, income, or employment within industries or businesses that supply products and services to the tourism industry

(e.g., increased sales in linen supply firms results from an increase in hotel occupancy rates). Induced impacts are changes in economic activity resulting from household spending of income earned directly or indirectly from the tourism industry and include all sales, income, and jobs that result from household spending of increased wages or salary (e.g., hotel employees spending their income on housing, food, transportation, and household products and needs). This is sometimes referred to as a ripple or multiplier effect. From a development perspective, a tourism business's success will be reflected in its total direct, indirect, and induced economic impacts. Such effects generate employment and business opportunities while improving the bottom line, furthering economic development, and contributing to a region's overall appeal.

Leakage is another negative economic impact. When a tourism provider buys supplies or services from outside the region(s) in which it operates, or when most revenues associated with a tourism service do not remain in the host economy, money is said to leak out of the local economy and thus provide fewer local direct or indirect economic impacts. To be economically sustainable for the local economy, tourism providers minimize economic leakage to the greatest extent possible.

By focusing on the triple bottom line, those who practice sustainable tourism add socio-cultural and environmental dimensions to the traditional economic benchmark. A positive triple bottom line means a net improvement in conservation of the natural environment, social benefit for local communities, and profitability for shareholders as well as gain for national or regional economies.

A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE OF TOURISM'S ROLE IN INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The vision of tourism as a development instrument is perhaps as old as the concept of tourism. Tourism's capacity to generate income and wealth, to consolidate and enhance the value of cultural and environmental heritage, to transmit knowledge and information, and to contribute to peace and improved international relations has been discussed by many authors from different perspectives — academic, professional, and governmental — over past decades. It is also clear, however, that actual tourism policies have paid much more attention to the promotional, microeconomic, and entrepreneurial aspects of tourism, rather than to establishing methodologies and good practices in tourism for development.

One initial obstacle to TFD theory and practice has undoubtedly been confusion regarding tourism's capacity to generate growth rather than development. Even today, in the context of the United Nations Millennium Development Goals, we still speak frequently about eliminating poverty through tourism as if everything could be reduced to correcting inequalities in income and wealth. Even if proxy variables were used as indicators of development, it would nevertheless seem preferable to use more sophisticated approaches that use criteria such as "equal freedom and equal distribution of basic goods" (Rawls, 1977, 1988) or "freedom to realize oneself, but also the capacity to go beyond" (Sen, 2004). The effects of tourism, measured in these ways, and at least in the medium-term, would transcend the mere raising of incomes in specific geographic areas or social sectors.

The role of tourism as an instrument of development in the second half of the 20th Century encountered circumstances not conducive to tourism's actual implementation. From the 1950s to 1970s, tourism policy still had not contributed sufficiently to development theory or practice. In the 1980s and 1990s, the neoliberal theory of development impeded the use of tourism as a public

instrument. Today, we are truly beginning to establish a new paradigm of development, this time with a new vision of the role of governance and of public-private tourism policies (UNWTO, 2005).

Millennium Development Goals and the Alleviation of Poverty

As a new agency of the United Nations, the UNWTO is committed to achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The eight MDGs, targeted for 2015, are:

1. Extreme Poverty Goal: Halve extreme poverty and hunger
2. Primary Education Goal: Achieve universal primary education
3. Gender Equality Goal: Empower women and promote equality between men and women
4. Child Mortality Goal: Reduce under-five mortality by two-thirds
5. Maternal Health Goal: Reduce maternal mortality by three-quarters
6. HIV/Aids Goal: Reverse the spread of diseases, especially HIV/AIDS and malaria
7. Sustainability Goal: Ensure environmental sustainability
8. Partnerships Goal: Create a global partnership for development, with targets for aid, trade, and debt relief

Of the eight, UNWTO could have the most significant impact on extreme poverty. In fact, poverty reduction through sustainable tourism development has become a central objective of UNWTO since the Johannesburg Summit on Sustainable Development in 2002. Research indicates that tourism has immense potential to help the global anti-poverty campaign. UNWTO's analysis has led to the following conclusions:

- In the world's developing countries and particularly the LDCs, tourism is almost universally the leading driver of economic growth, foreign exchange earnings, investment, and job creation.

- It is one few potential comparative advantages common to all of these countries.

- It has unique potential to carry foreign exchange and investment directly to the local level as tourists and entrepreneurs seek new destinations.

- It can contribute significantly to rural development, agricultural transformation, community enrichment, and social empowerment, particularly for women.

- It can preserve cultural heritage for which excellent examples already exist.

UNWTO currently has a number of initiatives to address poverty. Through the "Liberalization with a Human Face" campaign, for example, UNWTO advocates progressive liberalization of tourism, with a focus on sustainability and special needs of developing states. This initiative encourages the rapid expansion of tourism to catalyze employment, wealth, investment, and poverty elimination (UNWTO, 2005).
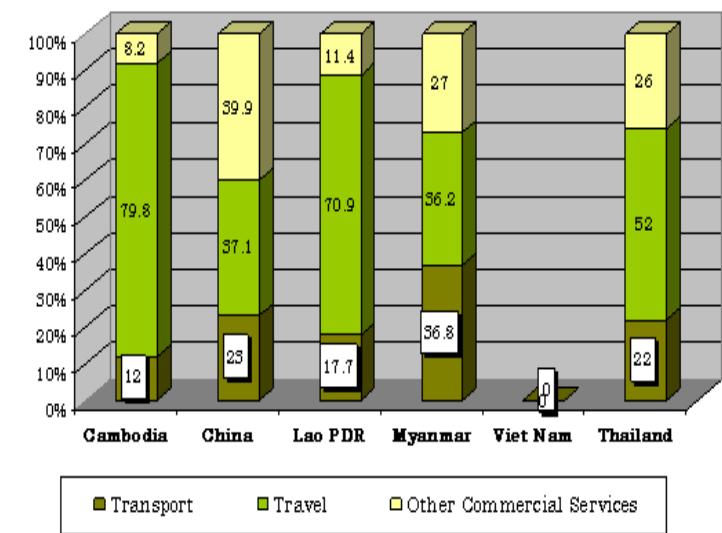

Figure 1.3. Breakdown of Economy's Total Services Exports (%) by Principal Service Items (World Trade Organization Trade Profile 2007, as adapted by International Institute for Trade & Development, 2008)

TOURISM POLICY, VISITOR EXPERIENCE, AND SYSTEMS THINKING

The development and implementation of sustainable tourism policies must be based on certain principles and approaches. Policy must take into account UNWTO's global vision, the commitment of multiple stakeholders, and a long-term strategy. It must consider both global and local impacts and frame all impacts within the Polluter Pays Principle. Finally, policy must reduce risks and respect the boundaries of tourism development. The next unit will discuss tourism policy in more detail.

Tourism policy then should "ensure that the hosting of visitors is done in a way that maximizes the benefits to stakeholders while minimizing the effects, costs, and impacts associated with ensuring the success of the destination" (Ritchie & Crouch, 2003). Tourism development policy moreover consists of six actions:

1. Promote sustainable development
2. Create products for specific visitor market segments
3. Gain and maintain competitiveness
4. Enhance visitor experience
5. Preserve local resources
6. Improve residents' quality of life

Sound policy and sustainable tourism development necessitate the management of visitor experiences at tourism destinations. The visitor experience consists of four phases:

1. The pre-trip experience requires both destination planning and tourism provider selection. In this phase, stakeholders provide information to potential visitors and travelers who make decisions about their vacations.
2. The access-to-destination experience begins when visitors travel to their destination. Airlines, immigration protocols, and other intermediaries influence this experience.
3. The on-trip experience starts when tourists actually arrive at the destination. Local stakeholders are important to this experience.
4. The post-trip experience occurs when visitors leave the destination and arrive home. This phase includes visitors' reflections on their experience and sharing of their stories with friends and relatives.
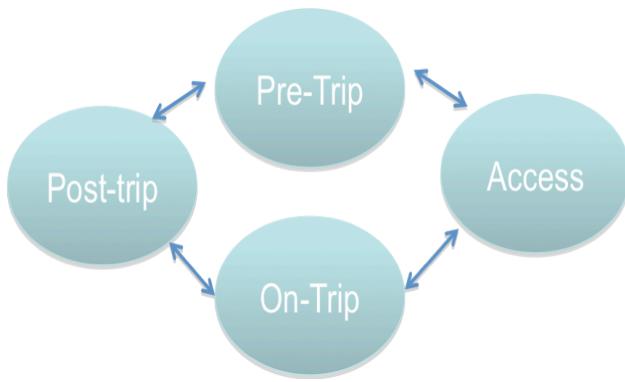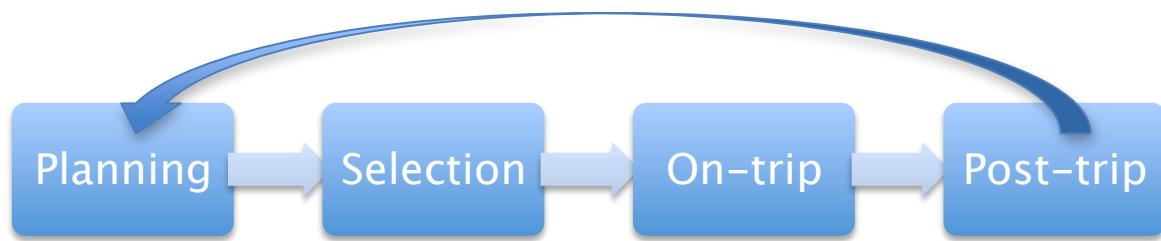
Figure 1.4. Four Phases of the Visitor Experience

Planning	Selection	On-trip	Post-trip
Segmenting	Disposable Income	Experiences desired	Resulting experience
Demographics	Price/Value decision factors	Arrival /departure—border	Experience feedback
Planning Window	Final selection criteria	formalities, customs, visas,	Frequency of return visits
What is planned in advance	Preferred package and	immigration, baggage	
Role of travel agent or	method of purchasing	transport	
distribution channel		Specific needs	Resulting experience
Information sources	Disposable Income	Accommodation	Experience feedback
Trip motivations	Price/Value decision factors	Restaurants	Frequency of return visits
Travel partner or group	Final selection criteria	Service, etc.	
Value propositions	Preferred package and		
	method of purchasing		

Figure 1.5. The Visitor Experience Value Chain
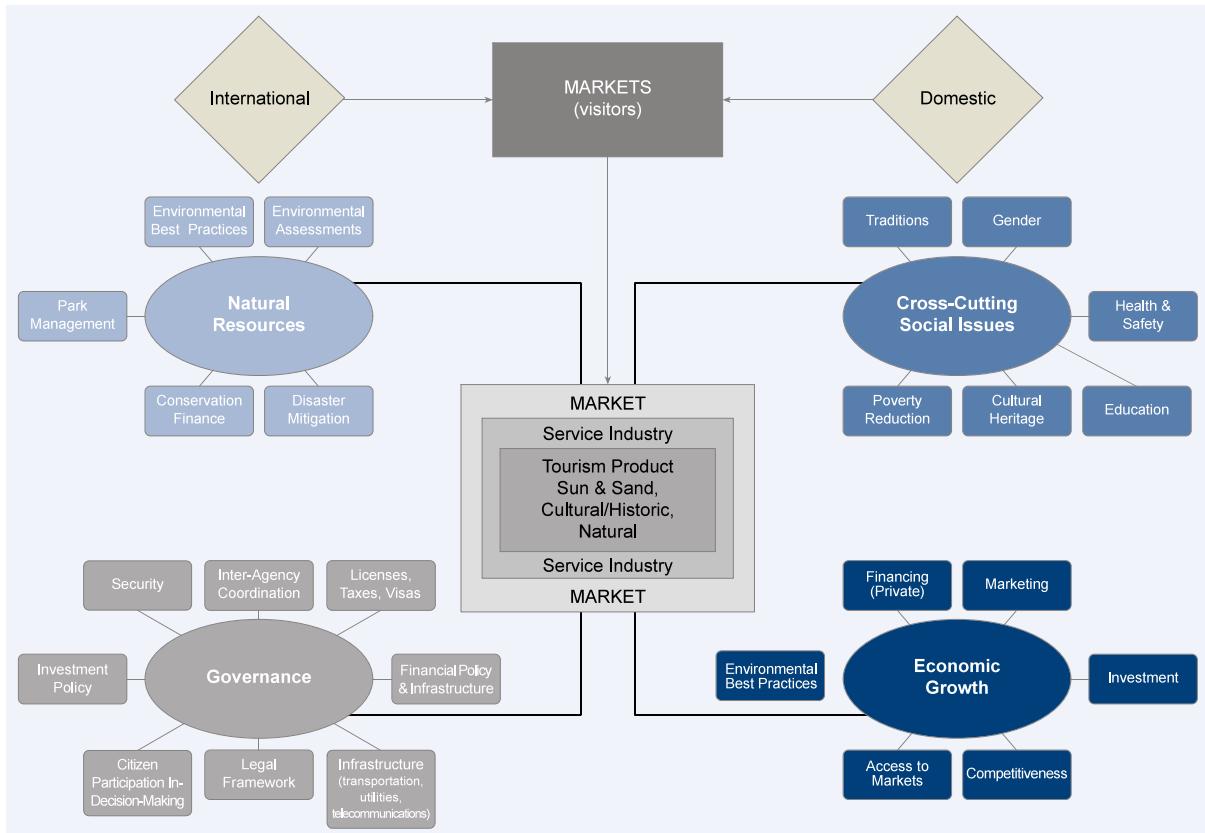
Figure 1.6. Tourism Systems Map of Issues (Volunteers for Ecomic Growth, 2011)

This phase breakdown is a systems approach helpful to understand sustainable tourism's components and how they interact (Figure 1.6). A system is a set of interrelated elements that changes over time. A systems approach presents the big picture, helps manage for the long term, identifies multiple entry points, weighs trade-offs and choices, and identifies stakeholders and partners. All are important for sustainable tourism.

The tourism industry value chain is another systems tool (Figure 1.7). The value chain illustrates various important linkages that exist between key businesses and their performance. It shows how they deliver services, explains how to differentiate services through standards and branding, and visualizes potential points to exploit market demand.
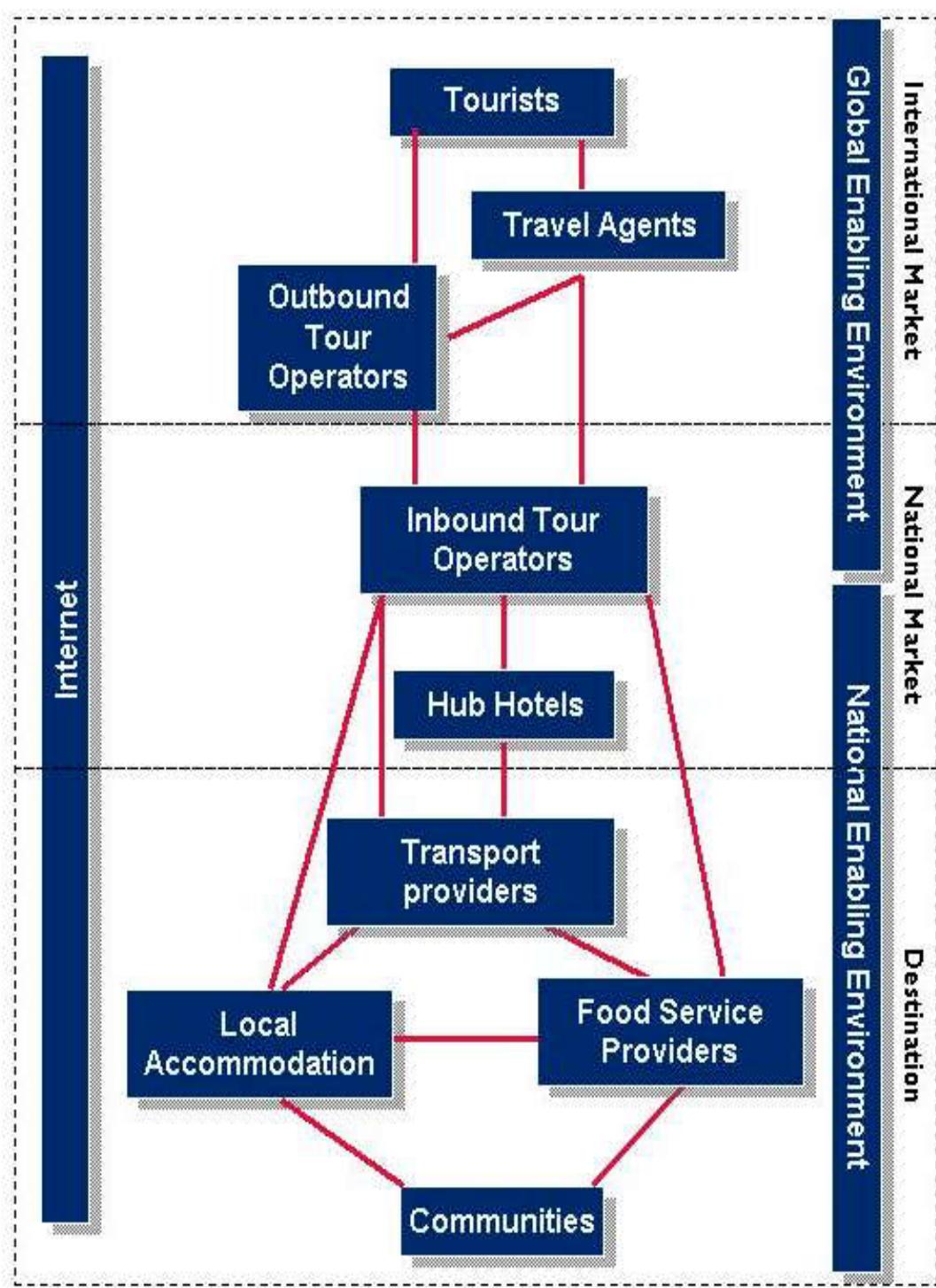
Figure 1.7. Tourism Industry Value Chain (Volunteers for Economic Growth, 2011)

TRENDS AND CHALLENGES THAT AFFECT TOURISM

Systems thinking applied to sustainable tourism reveals many interrelated factors that change over time affecting travel and tourism offerings. Localized trends affect destinations and international trends affect the travel trade. The coming decade and a half should see major shifts in the leisure and tourism industry, reflecting changing consumer values, political forces, environmental changes, and the explosive growth of information technology. No aspect of the industry will remain untouched. The challenge for tourism stakeholders in both the private and public sectors is to manage these changes to achieve and maintain a competitive advantage for their organizations.

Globalization is a major international trend that accelerates access across borders, which for tourism means more foreign tourists as well as increased global competition among international destinations. Discretionary income is the most powerful driver of tourism demand.

Political stability is also a prerequisite for the prosperity of most kinds of tourism. Destinations that do not grow economically because of political constraints generate fewer outbound and domestic tourists. Conflicts between countries constrain tourism flows but can also benefit destinations perceived to be safe, such as Costa Rica.

Tourism depends greatly on the natural environment. A region's attractiveness in turn depends heavily on climate and ecosystem type and integrity. Tourism development takes root near attractive natural features. Typically, tourism stakeholders, including researchers, have focused on how development may enhance management of environmentally sensitive areas and preserve unique environments, particularly when these become major attractions. In recent years, however, focus has shifted toward tourism's role in reducing environmental pollution and demands on resource use.

Finally, technological developments create opportunities as well as threats for the tourism and travel industry. Tourism is highly dependent upon information and transport technology. The industry needs to take advantage of technological innovations to renew and develop products and services (Dwyer et al., 2008).

SUMMARY

Since the 1980s, the environmental movement has fertilized the soil of sustainable development to which sustainable tourism can make a significant contribution.
It is important to understand the various terms associated with sustainable tourism, differences between mainstream and sustainable tourism, and that tourism becomes sustainable when it generates triple bottom line profits of environmental protection, socio-cultural improvement, and economic health. Sustainable tourism can alleviate poverty, generate income and wealth, consolidate and enhance the value of cultural and natural heritage, transmit knowledge and information, and contribute to peace and improved international relations. For tourism to become a tool to effect these changes requires sound policy that takes into account a global vision, commitment of multiple stakeholders, long-term strategies, and other considerations. It is helpful as well to apply a systems perspective to traveler experiences and the various relationships that exist in the travel milieu, as well as to consider trends and challenges that affect tourism locally and globally.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

- On value chain analysis, see the Project Development Module.
- On poverty alleviation and the Millennium Development Goals, see the SAVE Travel Networks Module.
- On management of the visitor experience, see the Destination Management Module.
- An example of a TTSA is The Alaska Tourism Satellite Account, found at www.gwu.edu/~iits/Sustainable_Tourism_Online_Learning/Mullis/TSA_Final.pdf

Unit 2 — Tourism Policies, Practice, and International Cooperation

Sustainable tourism is often understood as tourism that maintains the status quo and mitigates impacts on the environment, society, and communities. The last few decades have seen a change in both philosophy and practice of tourism. This unit addresses some of the ways tourism policies, practices, and cooperative initiatives employ a sustainable approach in search of the triple bottom line.

UNWTO TOURISM POLICY FORUM

The UNWTO Tourism Policy Forum in 2005 marked the first time that donor agencies, developing countries, and civil society met at a high-level international conference to focus on how to cooperate and harness the economic power of tourism for sustainable development. Organized by UNWTO and George Washington University — chair of the UNWTO Education Council — the forum attracted 200 participants and more than 200 observers from 52 countries, including 20 tourism ministers and top-level government officials. Participating donor agencies included multilateral banks such as the World Bank and Inter-American Development Bank, as well as bilateral development agencies such as USAID America, DGSC/MAE Italy, AECI Spain, DGCID/MAE France, SNV Netherlands, GTZ Germany, CIDA Canada, and JICA Japan.

The forum's recommendations in eight key areas led to an impressive declaration which serves as a useful checklist for stakeholders and policymakers. These recommendations have been particularly relevant to the MDGs described in Unit 1. Forum participants agreed to the following (UNWTO, 2005):

- Build partnerships of equal opportunity and fair representation within destinations, and to strengthen their leadership
- Engender local community awareness of the tourism planning and its benefits
- Foster buy-in for the concept of sustainability by all sectors including the sharing of guidelines and good practices
- Delegate authority for decision-making to the appropriate community level and build capacity there, and empower local development authorities
- Encourage and facilitate brand awareness and a collective image for a destination community
- Recognize the uniqueness of the business perspective as different from that of the public sector and to communicate effectively in business language
- Develop cross-sector demonstration projects that illustrate linkages, inter-relationships, and working partnerships
- Call upon governments, bi-lateral and multi-lateral institutions to facilitate access to capital of all kinds, and to provide guidance, training, and support on how to access such funding
- Develop land-use policies through a participatory process, and to provide policy incentives for private land owners

- Enhance communication and coordination between agencies including the use of advanced information communication technologies
- Develop educational programs directed to tourism policy stakeholders including local communities to promote understanding of cultural heritage resources, and the need for preservation and social responsibilities;
- Encourage the development of a regional network of researchers, practitioners, and donor agencies for sustainable tourism development

UNDERSTANDING THE VISITOR

The visitor creates the demand necessary for the survival of destinations and businesses. But what are the underlying motivations that shape this demand?
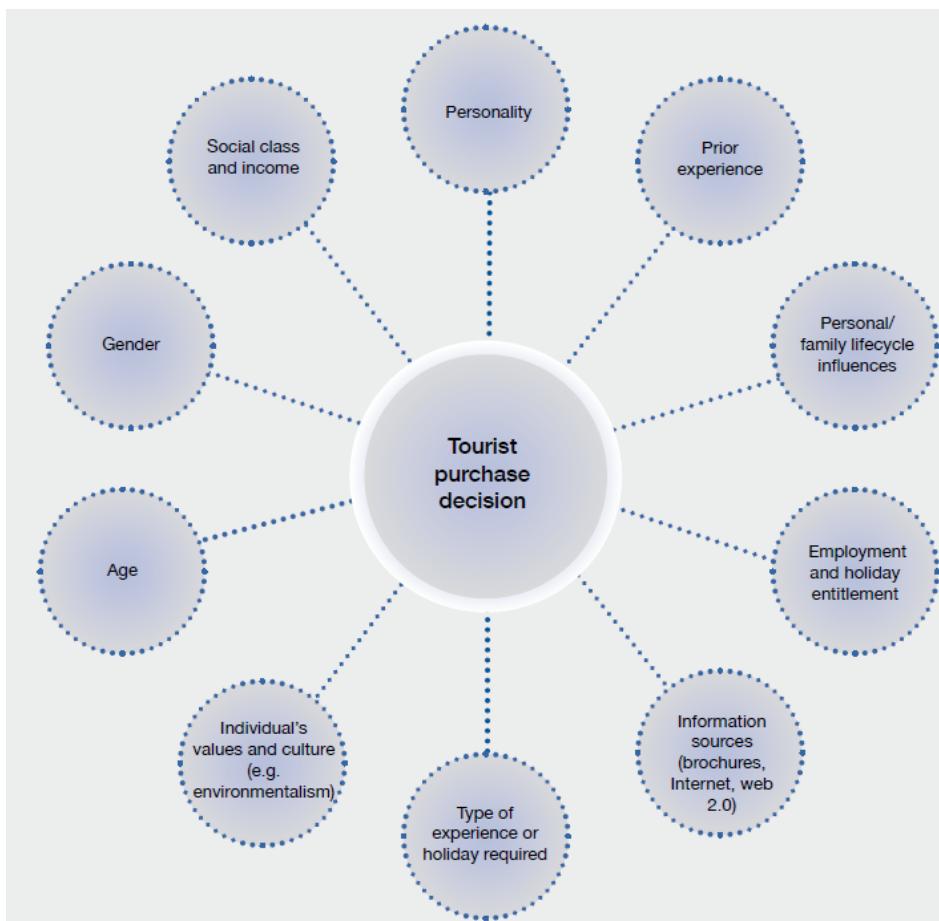
Figure 2.1. Tourist Purchase Decision (UNWTO, 2011)

Tourism is different from other consumer purchases because travel experiences cannot be tested in advance. Tourism involves extensive pre- and post-consumption stages, preceding and following the customer's journey from pre-planning and decision-making, through to booking, experiencing and post-travel evaluation and recollection (see Unit 1 for the phases of a visitor experience). Determinant motivations are often used as a starting point to profile different market segments of visitors. This

segmentation allows marketers and analysts to identify drivers behind tourism product purchases. Segmentation also relies on values to profile visitors, which is likely more reliable than other criteria, such as demographics, since people's values remain fairly consistent over time.

Criteria that shape visitor profiles in the 21st Century include population location and migration; variety of tastes; prosperity and attitudes towards work, leisure and tourism; and new technology. Global and local trends affect the visitor. Transnational companies cater to millions of mainstream tourists, while niche operators offer local products, services and experiences to individuals and groups. The rise of low-cost airlines has driven overall growth and democratization of air travel and the development of destinations not found near major airports, meaning that the air travel system requires high passenger volumes to ensure profitability.

In terms of market demographics, massive growth worldwide of the senior citizen travel segment means that the "young old" will continue to play a major role in the tourism industry over the next two decades and those catering to this market will need to be cognizant of their needs. The growing rate of divorce, increasing rates of remarriage, older parents with younger children, single parent families and family groups which include grandparents and even great-grandparents all change the conventional model of a traditional household and a holiday. The market is also shifting toward visitors purchasing with conscience. For example, the impact of air travel on climate change may influence some visitors' decision of which carrier to use.
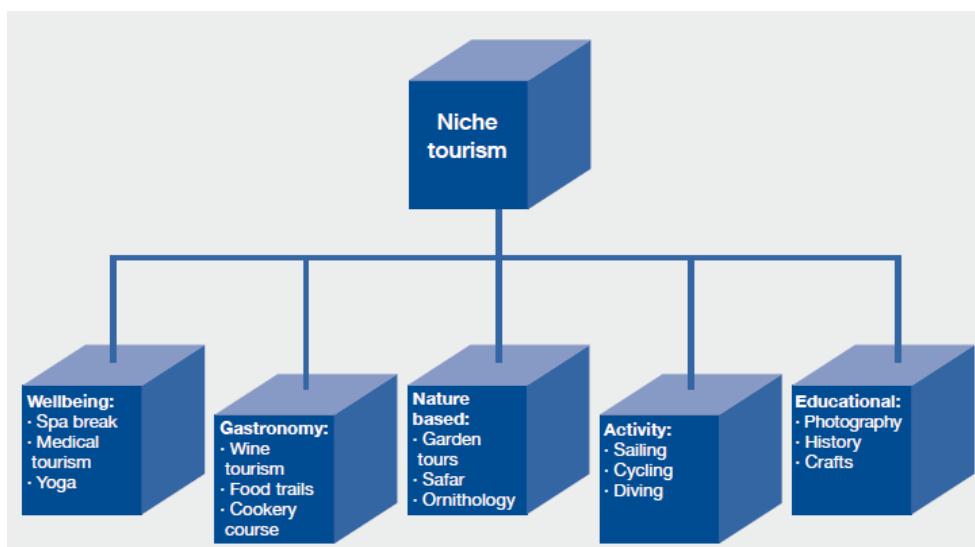
Figure 2.2. Niche Tourism (UNWTO, 2011)

THE ROLE OF PUBLIC POLICY INTERVENTIONS

Ultimately tourism development depends on political philosophies. The development of sustainable tourism has seen a growing interest and involvement of different stakeholders, with the public sector often playing a leading role. This role can be multifaceted in the way it promotes a sustainable route to tourism development with varying modes of intervention:

- Regulate activities and behavior
- Obligate compliance with policy objectives (e.g. via tax breaks or additional taxation)
- Encourage people to change their behavior through education, advertising, and social marketing
- Do not intervene at all

The UNWTO Sustainable Tourism Program has been active and influential in promoting a global framework to coordinate sustainable tourism. The UNWTO's long-term influence in policy development has resulted in wide ranging evaluation of sustainable tourism and an extensive range of research, reports, and conferences on the subject. Such policy work is vital to the development of sustainable forms of tourism, especially at destinations. Unfortunately the business sector has not uniformly adopted sustainable principles. Thus UNWTO believes that diffusing examples of best practice will stimulate voluntary interest across the sector
(UNWTO, 2011).

THE VALUE OF TOURISM IN COMMUNITIES

Human communities and cultures can be major attractions. Managers must sustain these resources so tourism does not erode their value. As tourism development affects more communities around the world, the social dimension of sustainability has grown in significance. The sustainability of communities and their dependence upon tourism has to be balanced with local needs and desires. This is especially relevant for indigenous attractions. Developers must understand community attitudes and needs and accommodate them in their development plans. The challenge of course is that within any community a wide range of opinions and stakeholders compete for attention. There is no such thing as a single community perspective.

When managed sensitively, tourism can empower people to take control of their own future. Much debate centers on the socio-cultural transformations that tourism can bring to communities. Interaction between visitor and communities can dilute or even destroy traditional cultures. Conversely, these encounters can also foment opportunities for greater understanding and learning. Although difficult to generalize, socio-cultural impacts typically depend upon the degree of cultural similarity or dissimilarity between the developers and communities as well as the following factors:

- The type and numbers of visitors to the community: In general the greater the number of visitors the higher the impact, although this depends on how visitors interact with the local community.
- The level of dependence that the community has on tourism
- The size, scale, and pace of development. Too fast development can overwhelm a system's capacity to adapt.
- Community attitudes towards

Community-based tourism has become increasingly popular. Recent developments include concepts such as Community Benefit Tourism Initiatives and Pro-Poor Tourism to create local economic benefits for communities through community control of tourism development. Here NGOs build local capabilities in the community necessary for the implementation of a sustainable development strategy. Many authorities cite ecotourism as an approach to empower communities (UNWTO, 2011). See Table 2.1.

Table 2.1. Ecotourism Impacts on Local Communities (UNWTO, 2011)

Impact	Signs of empowerment	Signs of disempowerment
Economic empowerment	Ecotourism brings lasting economic gains to a local community. Cash earned is shared between many households in the community.	Ecotourism merely results in small, spasmodic cash gains for a local community. Most profits go to local elites, outside operators, government agencies, etc. Gain not evenly spread because some lack capital and/or appropriate skills.
Psychological empowerment	For some, self-esteem is enhanced because of outside recognition of the uniqueness and value of their culture, their natural resources and their traditional knowledge. This leads to increased confidence in seeking education and subsequent access to employment.	Many people have not shared in the benefits of ecotourism, yet they may face hardships because of reduced access to the resources of a protected area.
Social empowerment	Community cohesion is improved as individuals and families work together to build a successful ecotourism venture. Some funds raised are used for community development purposes, e.g. to build schools or improve roads.	Many in the community take on outside values and lose respect for traditional culture and for elders. Can cause resentment and jealousy as individuals, families, ethnic or socio-economic groups compete.

ENVIRONMENTAL DIMENSIONS OF SUSTAINABILITY

The quality of the environment, both natural and man-made, is essential to tourism. Tourism's relationship with the environment, however, is complex. It involves many activities that can adversely alter the environment. Many impacts arise from infrastructural construction such as roads, airports resorts, hotels, restaurants, shops, golf courses, and marinas. Tourism can gradually or rapidly destroy the very resources on which it depends. On the other hand, tourism has the potential to benefit the environment by protecting it. Tourism can raise awareness of environmental values and serve as a tool to finance protection as well as increase their economic value (UNEP, 2011).

> In the 1950s it [tourism and the environment] was viewed as being one of coexistence… However, with the advent of mass tourism in the 1960s, increasing pressure was put on natural areas for tourism developments. Together with the growing environmental awareness and concerns of the early 1970s, the relationship was perceived to be in conflict. During the next decade this view was endorsed by many others…at the same time a new suggestion was emerging that the relationship could be beneficial to both tourism and the environment (Dowling, 1992, p. 33).

Tourism's environmental impacts have generated significant debate in relation to sustainability. Such impacts include noise, scenic deterioration from development (e.g. high rise hotels), transport-related congestion and atmospheric emissions (i.e. greenhouse gases) as well as solid and effluent discharges. Yet the destination environment is arguably one of the main attractions of tourism and is the resource base upon which tourism depends.

Tourism development leads to land use change, energy consumption, and impacts on wildlife. However, it is difficult to determine how much change directly results from tourism compared to natural environmental change, and resident behavior. Natural attractions may need public sector intervention to manage visitors. The precise environmental impacts and their subsequent management will vary according to environment. There are numerous strategies to manage demand at destination and specific sites (UNWTO, 2011).

ECOTOURISM AND BIODIVERSITY

Tourism, especially ecotourism, can benefit the environment. The case study "Positive outcomes of ecotourism" demonstrates some positive outcomes of ecotourism (UNWTO, 2011).

Ecotourism requires regulation, and the following case study "Ecotourism Kenya's Eco-rating scheme" illustrates the approach taken by Ecotourism Kenya to promote certified ecotourism and sustainable tourism practices (UNWTO, 2011)[*].

Tourism can either threaten or support biodiversity. UNWTO and the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) have been collaborating since the International Year on Ecotourism in 2002. In 2006 UNWTO established the Consulting Unit on Tourism and Biodiversity. UNWTO also participates in the UN inter-agency Environmental Management Group (EMG) report on advancing the biodiversity agenda within the UN system. This work contributes to the preparation of the CBD's Strategic Plan for 2011–2020. The EMG report 1) aids the formulation of post-2010 biodiversity targets; 2) provides information about policy interactions within the UN with respect to biodiversity; creates awareness in the UN about the CBD process; and identifies how collaboration in the UN can support the biodiversity agenda (UNWTO, 2011).

TRANSPORT AND INFRASTRUCTURE

Global organizations that monitor climate change forecast that by 2030 transport-related carbon dioxide emissions will rise 80% from their 2002 levels. The insatiable global demand for travel and the modern attachment to the car, make changes to tourism challenging.

Many climate scientists predict that society must reduce emissions by 50–80% to avoid major climatic shifts at the same time that tourism is increasing its emissions. While global agreements such as the Kyoto Protocol set targets for cutting emissions, the transportation and tourism sectors continue to grow. This presents a major challenge for tourism's long-term sustainability, since existing travel

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[*] To see case studies visit
www.gwu.edu/~iits/Sustainable_Tourism_Online_Learning/Mullis/Policy_Practices_UNWTO_book_feb.pdf

patterns must change in order to reduce emissions. More fuel-efficient, less polluting technologies alone will not entirely compensate. Travel patterns must change, perhaps radically. Reduction targets then may imply slower growth in air travel, perhaps even a decline.

Two shifts may include an increase in rail and other terrestrial transportation, though these two run risks of congestion and limited capacity. Tourism in industrialized countries, then, will need to slow growth to compensate for growth in emissions in developing countries. Ultimately the most radical solution will be the de-carbonization of the tourism industry, assisted by new technologies and travel management, based on emissions quotas and pricing structures to limit growth. This will require major leaps forward in transportation technology and policy innovation to achieve such drops in carbon emissions.

A study of low carbon-based land transport in the United Kingdom by Bristow et al. (2008) offers a number of useful insights and suggestions for how technological change may assist de-carbonization including:

- Efficiency gains of the internal combustion engine (presupposing available oil supplies)
- Hybridization of car engines in smaller, more efficient vehicles
- Hybrid buses and electric vehicles powered with fuel cell technology
- Greater use of bio-fuels
- Electrification of the rail network, which could save 12% compared with conventional diesel engines, and could be improved further through regenerative braking and lighter trains
- Restraints on demand through new price structures
- Improved pricing and quality service of public transportation
- Workplace transportation strategies such as car sharing and telecommuting
- Policy measures such as allowing continued increases in petrol prices

In aviation other measures are emerging such as the European Emission Trading Scheme proposing a greater user pay approach to air travel. Policy, nevertheless, is only slowly addressing carbon emissions (Bristow et al., 2008). Technology is a partial answer. Tourist behavior must also change. See the case study (UNWTO, 2011). on how Iberian Airlines is reducing its carbon emissions at http://www.gwu.edu/~iits/Sustainable_Tourism_Online_Learning/Mullis/Policy_Practices_UNWTO_book_feb.pdf

CULTURAL RESOURCES AND CLIMATE CHANGE

Climate change also affects cultural resources. According to Climate Change and Tourism: Responding to Global Challenges, (UNWTO &UNEP, 2008) climate change can harm architectural heritage:

- Rising sea level may flood coastal structures
- Coastal erosion can cause flooding and structural damage
- Increased rainfall can flood foundations
- Reduced drainage could increase flooding
- Increased wind could damage roofs and walls. Deteriorated structures especially may suffer.

In 2005, the UNESCO World Heritage Centre assessed the impacts of climate change on World Heritage. The 2007 report contains 26 case studies of natural and cultural heritage. It found, for example, that buried archaeological material could be rapidly lost if soil structure and composition changed due to altered precipitation patterns, permafrost melting, and floods. Though costly, possible mitigation strategies for cultural heritage include:

- Implementation of master and response plans, such as water supply planning (in drought susceptible destinations), risk assessment and preparedness strategies, and early warning systems.
- Use of monitoring to assess changes and justify protection.
- Reconstruction and stabilization of historical buildings and archaeological sites combining traditional materials and skills and modern engineering

ENERGY USE AND ECO-EFFICIENCY

The term eco-efficiency refers to how resource use in tourism can evaluate energy use and economic use. As energy use is the principal contributor of emissions, this tool helps to logically measure and compare the relative efficiency of tourism versus other sectors of the economy and different forms of tourism. The energy efficiency of the tourism sector can be divided into three discrete sectors: transport, accommodation and the activities of visitors at the destination. The examples below demonstrate some of the measures being undertaken by accommodation providers to save energy and water.

> Globally, there are significant variations in eco-efficiency levels that are often a result of the impact of long-haul travel on the tourists' carbon footprint (Gössling et al., 2005). Tourism is much less favorable in terms of its eco-efficiency compared to other industry sectors, since it is a highly energy and resource-intensive activity. Interestingly, Gössling et al. (2005) question the efficacy of pro-poor tourism strategies that are dependent upon the movement of long-haul tourists from western industrialized nations to developing countries. Given the poor eco-efficiency of such tourist flows, this is a major challenge to our thinking on sustainability and poverty alleviation. If greenhouse gases are to drop by 80% by 2030 or 2050, we need a major reorientation of tourist travel away from long haul to more local and shorter haul destinations. The longer the traveling distances, the less eco-efficient the trip, but this may be offset to a degree by staying longer at the destination with higher expenditures per day.

> Other issues like long-term energy supplies of oil may lead to a reorientation and re-pricing of long-haul travel alongside more environmental polluter-pay type measures that will certainly provide obstacles to tourist travel. In this respect, the challenge for tourism businesses is to implement a future aimed at carbon neutral tourism, to reduce costs and the energy consumption, to offset the uncompetitive position this may place destinations in over the long-term. Yet natural limitations, such as water, may also add a degree of constraint on future tourism development as the next section shows (UNWTO, 2011, pp. 68–70).

WATER SUPPLY AND SHORTAGES

Climate change impacts freshwater supplies, making them scarcer in some regions of the world. Tourism depends on water for meeting visitors' basic needs (drinking, sanitation, and hygiene). Tourism has to compete with other sectors of the economy (e.g. agriculture and industry) and domestic needs for water. Studies have shown that the average tourist can use anywhere from 200 to 2,000 liters a day. This use can be significant in regions of water scarcity.

A World Wildlife Fund (2004) study of tourism and water use in the Mediterranean found that daily average tourist water use in Spain ranged from 300 and 850 liters where swimming pools and golf courses were present. Gössling et al. (2005) calculated the global average for tourist water consumption to be 222 liters per day.

The UNWTO 1st International Conference on Climate Change and Tourism in 2007 highlighted threats and risks of water scarcity to tourism. In small island states, water supplies can be directly impacted by highly consumptive tourists. Already some islands now ship in fresh water during peak season. Some countries, such as the United Arab Emirates, have turned to desalination, despite the method's high costs of money, energy, and greenhouse gas emissions (assuming the use of fossil fuels, rather than solar). Political conflict has already begun to stir due to competition for limited water.

Long-term sustainability depends greatly on how water is used. Places that overpump ancient aquifers, for example, suffer saltwater intrusion. In addition to these problems, climate change compounds the availability and distribution of water. Among the most obvious solutions include the reduction of water use (such as halting irrigation of ornamental plants and replacing them with more drought-tolerant choices). Hotels can redesign swimming pools and increase desalination. Golf courses can recycle treated effluent, rather than use potable water to irrigate. They can also use saltwater on salt-resistant grass (UNWTO, 2011).

ETHICAL CODES AND SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Communities and organizations are beginning to use codes of practice to guide tourism development and visitor behavior. The UNWTO Global Code of Ethics for Tourism (GCET) (www.gwu.edu/~iits/Sustainable_Tourism_Online_Learning/Mullis/WTOGlobalEthicsCode.pdf) is a prime example. Adopted in 1999, GCET is a comprehensive set of principles whose purpose is to guide stakeholders — central and local governments, local communities, tourism sector and its professionals, as well as visitors, both international and domestic — in tourism development. The UNWTO General Assembly passed a resolution to create the Code in Istanbul in 1997. More than 70 UNWTO member states and other entities participated in its development. In October 1999, the General Assembly in Santiago unanimously approved the ten-point Global Code of Ethics for Tourism (UNWTO, 2011).

Corporate social responsibility (CSR) is another catalyst for social development. CSR is a voluntary self-regulation by businesses of their own adherence to rules, regulations, ethical standards, and laws. Companies self-report their effect on the environment, communities, stakeholders, and consumers. Thus leading corporations not only produce an annual report of financial performance, but also their performance in sustainable development and responsible business. Core elements of a sustainability report include corporate policy, strategy and objectives to achieve and maintain sustainable

development, and data to reflect performance measured against specific environmental and social targets. They also include future targets and a summary of key steps to help achieve these targets.
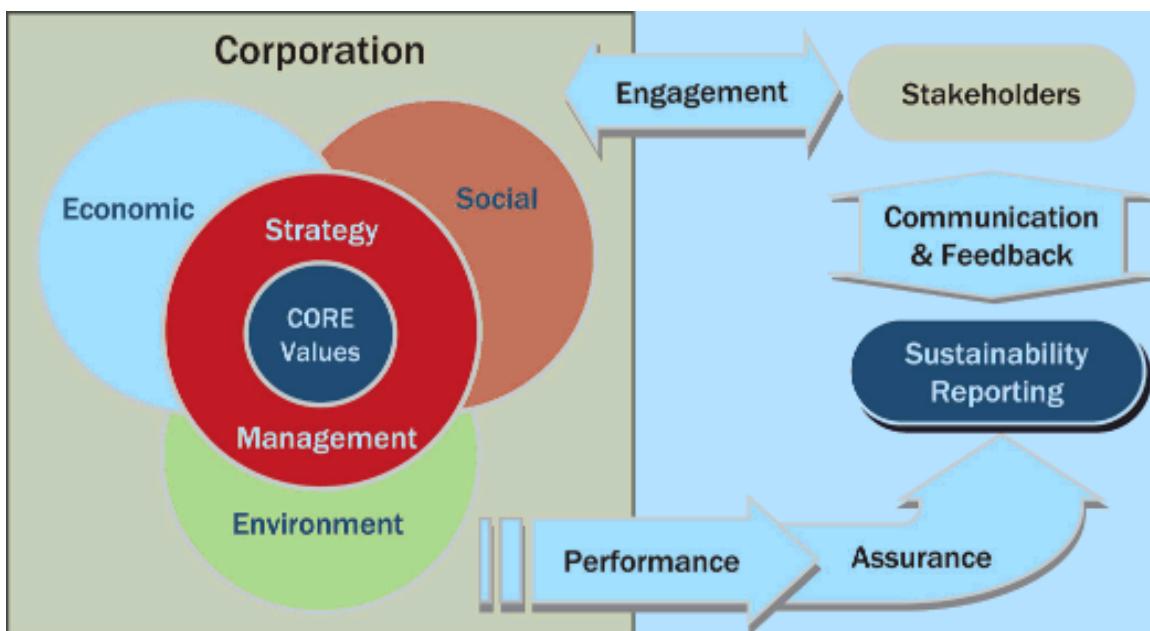
Figure 2.3: What is Sustainability Reporting? (BMT Group, 2008)

Thousands of organizations disclose their greenhouse gas emissions, water use, and climate change strategies through The Carbon Disclosure Project, an independent not-for-profit organization that maintains the largest database of corporate climate change information in the world (https://cdproject.net/en-US/Pages/HomePage.aspx) The Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) is a network that pioneered the world's most widely used sustainability-reporting framework. GRI is committed to the framework's continuous improvement and worldwide application. GRI's goals include mainstreaming disclosure of environmental, social, and governance performance (www.globalreporting.org/Home).

The CSR approach depends on self-interest as well as philanthropic interest in stakeholders as well as pursuit of short-term profits. CSR also reflects growing interest among consumers concerned that companies improve relations with both communities and the environment.

To advance this agenda across the global tourism community, UNWTO launched TOURpact GC in September 2008. This new CSR framework for companies, associations, and other tourism stakeholders reflects the principles of the Global Compact and UNWTO's GCET. The Global Compact is a voluntary initiative designed to mainstream ten key principles of social responsibility in business and to catalyze support for the UN MDGs.

POVERTY ALLEVIATION AND COMMUNITY WELLBEING

Tourism as a force for poverty alleviation cannot be underestimated. Extreme poverty is widespread in many developing countries where access to clean water, food, shelter, and medical care is limited. According to World Bank (2008) revised estimates on poverty, 1.4 billion people live at or below the poverty line of $1.25 per day.

In many developing countries, tourism is already a major economic player. Tourism is a principal export in over 80% of developing countries and the main export of one third of them. In some developing countries, notably small island states, tourism can account for over 25% of the GDP (UNWTO & SNV, 2010a).

Pro-poor tourism is tourism used strategically to help reduce poverty. The concept has a relatively short history since the late 1990s. It reflects prevailing rhetoric and interest in "solving" poverty. The "war on poverty" earned credence with the MDGs established by the UN, goals which range from halving extreme poverty to halting the spread of HIV/AIDS and providing universal primary education by 2015. UNWTO has focused on poverty alleviation, recognizing the pivotal role tourism can play.

SOCIAL MARKETING AND NEW MEDIA

Social marketing involves the application of commercial marketing principles and other social change techniques to achieve socially desirable goals and influence individual behaviors. Social marketing communicates benefits of more responsible tourism, such as that used to reduce poverty. But social marketing is more complex than advertising. It applies marketing concepts to improve human welfare. NGOs in particular have used social marketing. There is a growing recognition of its potential in responsible tourism (UNWTO, 2011).

DESTINATION DEVELOPMENT AND COMPETITIVENESS

What makes a destination truly competitive?

> The ability to increase tourism expenditure, to increasingly attract visitors while providing them with satisfying memorable experiences, and to do so in a profitable way, while enhancing the wellbeing of destination residents and preserving the natural capital of the destination for future generations (Ritchie & Crouch, 2003, p.2).
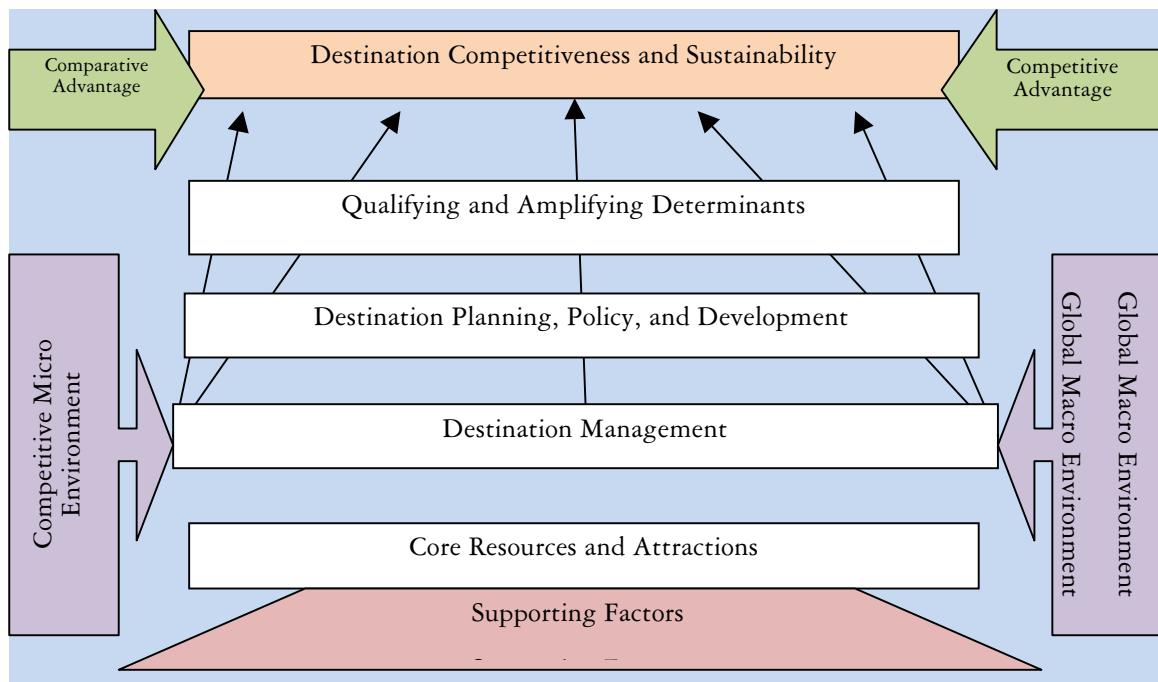
Figure 2.4. Model of Destination Competitiveness (Ritchie & Crouch, 2003)

Tourism, by virtue of its nature, will always be subject to extraneous local and global issues that impact market trends relating to travel. For destinations to improve their competitiveness, it is advisable to adopt an approach that can ride out the highs and lows of the tourism rollercoaster and which preserves destination appeal for years to come. The tourism product should be able to evolve and adapt, not just to attract and retain visitors, but to balance economic growth with shifts in the social and environmental needs of the destination (UNWTO, 2011).

INNOVATION IN DESTINATION MANAGEMENT

Without innovations, business cannot attain sustainable growth and development. As tourism has expanded and become increasingly competitive, destination management organizations have had to focus and specialize to stay ahead.

Innovation can be seen from various points of view. First, being strategic and intelligent can be identified as the main driving force for the innovation. For example, the unexpected decrease in tourist arrivals to the destination motivates management to act and develop an innovative strategy to reverse the downturn. On the other hand, the goals can be the driving force for the innovation. For instance, if the tourism destination set its goal to increase income from international arrivals,

it might introduce new cultural tourism products.
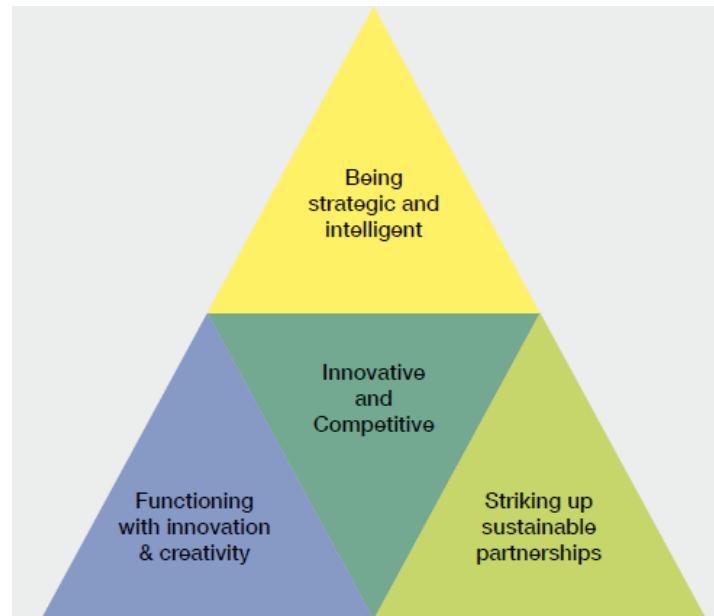
Figure 2.5. Factors that Characterize Innovative and Successful Tourism Destinations (UNWTO, 2011)

HUMAN RESOURCES

Tourism is first and foremost a people business: people turn the supply of resources into experience opportunities, which are then consumed by visitors. The high level of human involvement in tourism experiences is key to creating value for the consumer. The relationship between consumer and employee can make or break the experience and is entirely dependent upon three interconnected elements to human resource development: education, training, and personnel management.

UNWTO has a critical role in promoting human resource development (HRM) and some of its affiliate members have provided examples of best practices. The diverse range of tasks requires an understanding of labor markets and the overall management of staff activities. In addition, one of the greatest challenges is to manage a diverse work force with different cultural, age, and gender demographics.
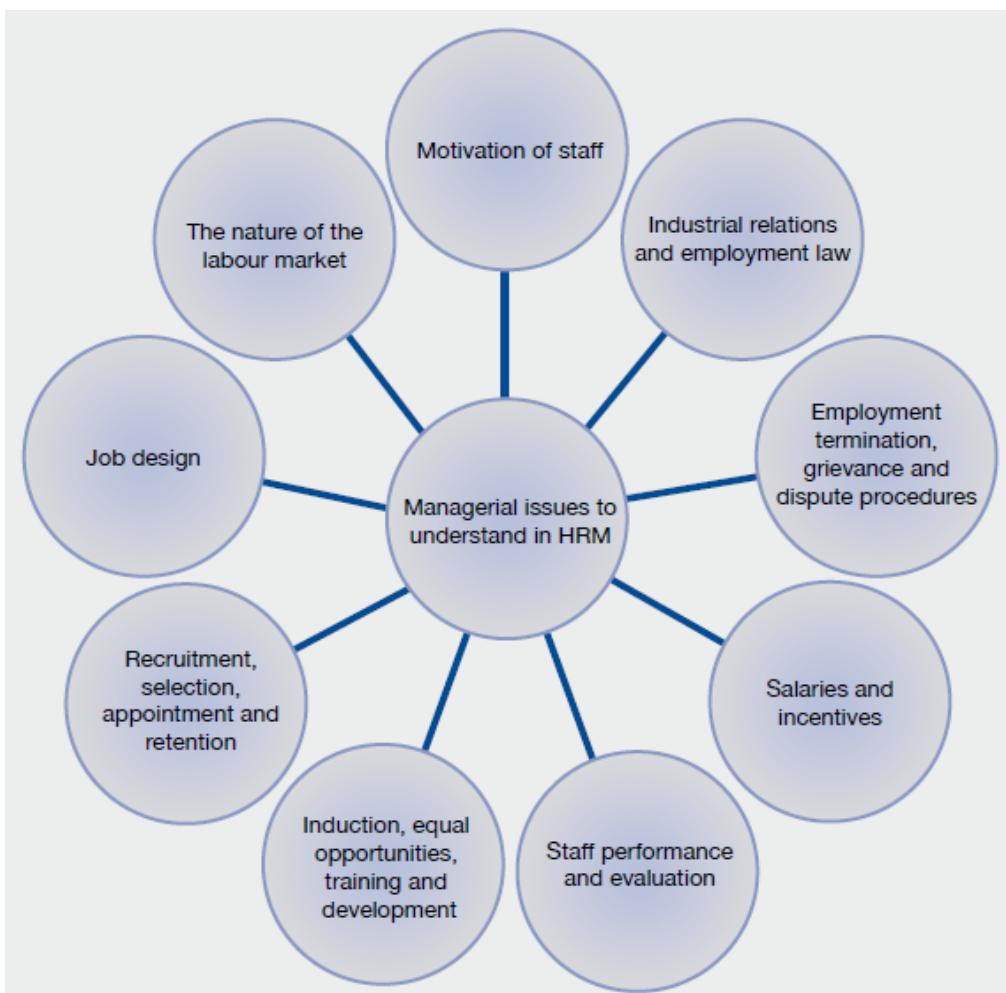
Figure 2.6. Issues for the Human Resource Manager to Understand (UNWTO, 2011)

MANAGING CRISES AND DISASTER

Prosperous tourism requires macroeconomic stability and relative stability of other factors that shape tourist decision-making such as the market's perception of the destination. When shocking events such as terrorist attacks, natural phenomena, and other disasters such as the onset of SARS or swine flu occur, tourism is one of the first sectors to absorb the impact. There have been a growing number of such events year after year (Glaesser, 2006). Global media immediately alert the world to these events which can contribute to a tourist's decision to cancel or change destinations.

The first-impact nature of tourism demands advance crisis planning especially many crisis management plans relegate non-essential activities such as tourism to the lowest priority. In the midst of crisis, political attention understandably concentrates on stabilizing the situation and providing basic needs such as shelter, food, water, and medical care.

Tourism stakeholders need to ensure capacity to weather crises. Without such foresight, destinations will unlikely build capacity to recover (UNWTO, 2011).

CREATING SUSTAINABLE PARTNERSHIPS

There is growing recognition within the tourism community that the effective destination tourism management is best achieved through effective public and private partnerships. Consequently, in the last two decades, management theory has broadened its traditional focus on planning, leading, organizing, and coordination to include partnerships, cooperation, and collaboration. UNWTO now actively promotes greater collaboration among stakeholders in the tourism sector.

Collaboration is vital for increasing destination competitiveness. Several elements increase competitiveness. Greater emphasis on partnerships enables public institutions to address the dispersed perhaps unconsolidated network of providers that has afflicted the tourism sector. To remain attractive, destinations must pursue innovation across the tourism supply chain. The cooperation of different stakeholders helps make the destination more visitor-focused so that the different interactions the visitor has with the destination can be enhanced and value added. This in turn helps fulfill visitor satisfaction, encourages repeat visitation, and increases word-of-mouth marketing.

The concept of social capital is also meaningful in this context. Many organizations and enterprises recognize that investing in this form of capital — in communications, linkages, and networks with others — and the support and exchange of ideas this investment brings, they are investing in their survival. Often the motive for multi-stakeholder collaboration is expressed quite generally — simply that the task of delivering sustainable tourism is too complex and there are too many stakeholders, so it is essential to work together (UNWTO & SNV, 2010b).

Some sustainable tourism partnerships include:

Public-private partnerships: Tourism, like other economic sectors, has always sought methods to govern its own affairs with the greatest level of stakeholder cooperation. This is why public-private collaboration occupies a preeminent place in public tourism policy at any destination anywhere.

Tourism business networks: Small and medium enterprises (SMEs) are the dominant business form in most countries, but they are highly fragmented and uncoordinated. One action that many public sector entities with an interest in tourism have promoted is the formation of SME networks. Successful network development depends on several factors, as is illustrated in Figure 2.7.
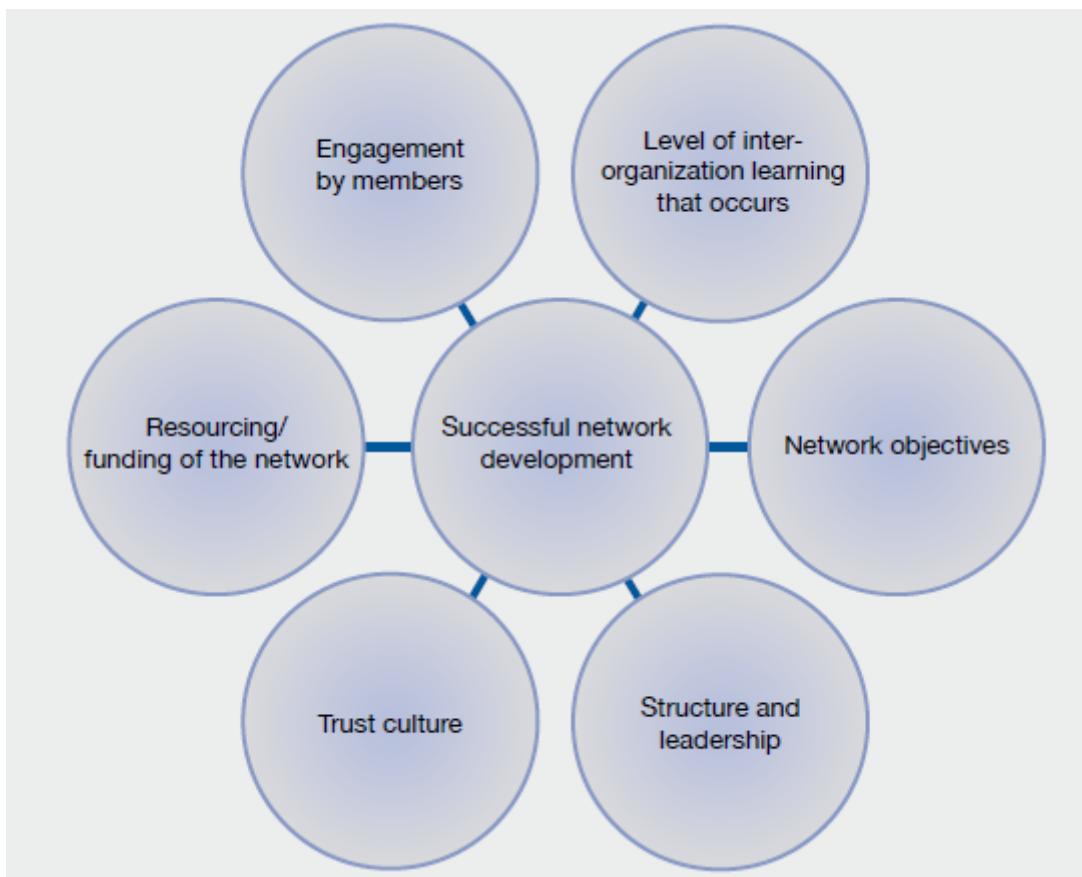
Figure 2.7. Critical Success Factors in Network Development for SMEs
(UNWTO, 2011)

Destination management organizations: At a regional level, the DMO should actively engage all its stakeholders. The private sector in particular likes the DMO's marketing role. Often the DMO will have its own marketing budget but it will also be a bridge between national agencies and the industry. While the national tourism authority will almost certainly be the single most significant tourism marketer, the collective industry budget will be much greater. If the DMO can bring together public and private resources so that they mutually reinforce, the collaboration can leverage those resources to a greater extent.

WIDER COLLABORATION AND FUTURE AGENDAS

Alongside SME collaboration, there should also be collaboration of the public and private sectors and with other organizations. Ideally public and private sectors collaborate with academia (Figure 2.8), known as the Triple Helix Model.

This model has a number of drawbacks, not the least of which is forging agreement between parties with different objectives. The collaborations that have seen the most success are those involving public-private partnerships rather than those that include academia, NGOs, or civil society. This deficiency may arise from different forms of knowledge that are not easily shared and understood between academia and other

Figure 2.8. Triple Helix Model (UNWTO, 2011)

sectors. As a result, knowledge sharing remains limited and the Triple Helix model has only been embraced in a limited number of settings despite the role of government policy to promote such knowledge exchange from academic tourism researchers to institutes in many countries.

In the future, there is need for the wider use of adaptive management to enrich public-private partnerships and to make the Triple Helix operational (UNWTO, 2011).

MECHANISMS FOR DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE

Efforts to gather data on grants and loans to promote ecotourism are obscured by ecotourism's vague definition and confusion with larger development initiatives. However, research by George Washington University's International Institute of Tourism Studies (GWU/IITS) provides a point of context. Through their Development Assistance Network for Tourism Enhancement and Investment (DANTEI), researchers found that from 2001 to 2010, at least US$9.43 billion will have poured into 363 projects from donors for tourism development projects around the world. Foundation funding for ecotourism would make up less than one percent of this amount, which averages $US one billion each year.

Many developing countries today look to tourism as a potentially promising avenue for economic and human development. This perception is relatively new for some of them, and reflects the rapid increase in tourism arrivals, numbers and revenues for many developing countries in recent years. Traditionally, tourism has been given lower priority than agriculture or manufacturing since it has not been

considered a significant or appropriate source of growth. Increasingly, however, the sector is valued as a means of earning export revenues, generating jobs, promoting economic diversification, supporting a more services-oriented economy, helping to revive declining urban areas and cultural activities, and opening up remote rural regions. Foreign direct investment (FDI) is one vehicle through which developing countries can develop their tourism sector; but the dynamics of FDI and its implications in this growing sector have been relatively little studied. Because tourism is an industry that needs to be managed carefully, with or without FDI, and because FDI in this activity presents special challenges and concerns, policy makers need to design policies that take advantage of opportunities it offers while minimizing its costs.

The impact of tourism-related FDI can vary according to specific country and historical contexts. It finds, for example, that much depends upon the host country's level of economic and human development, including the extent to which it can leverage the presence of transnational corporations to foster domestic enterprise. This ability relates to host countries' absorptive and productive capacities, which in turn is associated with the extent to which foreign enterprises have linkages with the domestic economy, be it in ways that are complementary or competitive vis-à-vis local companies. These elements can, to some degree, be influenced by government policy (UNCTAD, 2007).

THE FUTURE OF TOURISM

Understanding how the tourism sector changes and anticipating how tourism demand and supply will develop in the future remains a subject of intense interest for businesses and destination management organizations alike. Anticipating if and how tourism will change in the future is a strategic requirement for the tourism sector, especially since the public sector needs to understand implications of tourism growth to develop infrastructure and facilities of the future. Given lead times for new infrastructure development (typically in excess of ten years for airports and transportation infrastructure) managers need both to know what the future may look like and also understand some tools and techniques for outlining it. Tools and techniques to develop an understanding of the future of tourism will be examined in more depth in Unit 5 (UNWTO, 2011).

SUMMARY

UNWTO has been instrumental in setting policy and practice recommendations for sustainable tourism. As a product, tourism is different in that it involves extensive pre- and post-consumption stages, so it is important to understand the visitor as well as destination management strategy when making policy. Market segmentation provides a useful framework for understanding different visitor characteristics. Many other social, environmental, and conservation-related factors affect the sustainability of policy and practices. As we will see in later units, the negative impacts of tourism development can gradually destroy the environmental resources upon which it depends; yet tourism is uniquely positioned to make a positive contribution to conservation. Tourism also can be a force for social change as more travel companies engage in corporate reporting and develop new media marketing strategies. Because tourism as an industry sector is very fragmented and because of its inherent challenges, sustainable collaboration with partners and other stakeholders is critical to achieving competitive and sustainable tourism.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

- On funding and investment, see the Sustainable Investment and Finance for Tourism Module.
- On destination development, see the Tourism Destination Management Module.
- For a copy of the Global Code of Ethics go to
  www.gwu.edu/~iits/Sustainable_Tourism_Online_Learning/Mullis/WTOGlobalEthicsCode.pdf

Unit 3 — Sustainable Tourism Tools and Strategies

Owing to its potential for growth and that it is by nature a local product, tourism can become an important strategy for local development. It generates jobs, increases worker income, and stimulates capital investments through new business opportunities, resulting in new organizations. But tourism development can also pose many threats to the economic, social, and environmental sustainability of the local community. The direction and intensity of tourism's impact depend on the way local actors organize and interact to achieve common goals concerning improved local standards of living, broadened attractions, competitiveness, and the protection of cultural and natural resources. This unit will address the business case for sustainable tourism, examine strategies for implementing sustainable tourism at business-to-business and destination levels, and identify tools for ensuring successful outcomes (Kindl da Cunha & da Cunha, 2005).

BENEFITS OF SUSTAINABLE TOURISM FOR CONSUMERS

Some worry that tourism development may lead to destinations' losing their cultural identity by catering to tourists, particularly internationals. Research shows, however, that most tourists travel not to visit a home away from home, but because they want to experience the personality and authentic character of towns, communities, and other attractions. The experience should be different from what they can see or do at home and this includes the lifestyle of destinations they visit. Sustainable tourism is thoughtful tourism. It is "derived, not contrived" (Town of Gawler, undated).

Consumers who choose to travel in sustainable ways perceive themselves to be travelers, not tourists — and they seek the benefits of making responsible travel choices. "Personal passions" are key drivers of their vacation planning — and vacations designed to incorporate one or more passions result in longer trips and higher spending. Top passions identified include: culinary interests, sporting events, adventure, music, and education. American Express released a travel survey in July 2008, finding that despite the current economic conditions at that time, 87% of respondents indicated that travel involving personal interests would remain the same or increase over the next two years.

Consumers benefit from sustainable travel by gaining appreciation for other ecosystems and cultures, thus enhancing their global perspective. They also feel good about giving back — economically supporting the communities they visit, contributing to environmental conservation, and helping to protect that special sense of place in their chosen destination. In 2003, Travel Industry Association and National Geographic Traveler research found that 61% of Americans believe their experience is better when their destination preserves its unique natural, historic, and cultural attributes. In addition, 41% of these travelers said their vacation experience is better when they can see and do something authentic.

BENEFITS OF SUSTAINABLE TOURISM FOR DESTINATIONS

Destinations benefit from responsible travel as well. Sustainable tourism choices stimulate economic growth and business development, thereby creating stronger market differentiation and a more resilient industry; these choices also significantly contribute to local development, as well as international trade, diplomacy, and cultural exchange.

Other benefits for destinations fall into three areas. For social benefits, sustainable travel strengthens communities, encourages civic involvement and pride, values culture and traditions, advocates for peace, and develops tourist facilities that residents themselves can also use. Economic benefits include contributions to local economies, employment generation, stimulation of infrastructure investment, foreign exchange earnings, and contribution to government revenues. The environmental component of sustainable tourism benefits destinations by improving environmental regulatory measures, environmental management and planning, raising environmental awareness, and increasing protection (UNEP, 2011).

Growth in the travel sector has converted tourism into a major generator of employment. As a highly labor-intensive activity, tourism and tourism-support activities create a high proportion of employment and career opportunities for low-skilled and semi-skilled workers, particularly for poor, female, and younger workers. Many in the global tourism industry are migrant workers. For many developing countries, tourism services provided by their nationals working abroad result in significant remittance inflows. Countries hosting migrant workers also benefit from tourism and travel services exports generated by the expenditures of migrant workers in their economies (UNCTAD, 2010).

A community involved in the planning and implementation of tourism has a more positive attitude, is more supportive, and has better chance of making a profit than a population passively ruled — or overrun — by tourism. One core element of sustainable tourism development is community development: the process and capacity to make decisions that consider the long-term economy, ecology, and equity of communities.

Services such as tourism act as an economic "shock absorber" helping to support communities, particularly in rural areas, through economic drought, as services are more recession-proof than goods. The tourism industry is "decentralized," meaning that there is little dependence on urban centers and imports to sustain tourism activity. Sustainable community-based tourism relies on small, locally operated business, local features, and products and thrives on individual entrepreneurial activity. Especially in community owned and operated businesses, tourist dollars re-circulate, multiplying their effect for the local economy. Visitors inject money into the community by paying for products, services, and experiences: largely food, accommodation, travel, and entertainment. While overnight visitors provide greater economic benefits, daily traffic also leaves substantial benefits.

Tourism is an interface for cultural exchange, facilitating the interaction between communities and visitors (domestic and international). Tourism can raise awareness. Branding local products and achievements reinforces regional identity both nationally and internationally. Tourism sustains local crafts, foods, and personalities while raising funds for the community. It can boost the preservation and transmission of cultural traditions. This often contributes to the sustainable management of natural resources, protection and revival of local heritage, such as indigenous practices, arts, and crafts (Town of Gawler, undated).

TOURISM'S THREATS TO DESTINATIONS

The rapid and radical transformation of the international tourism industry that began in the late 1980s has continued into the current decade, likely to persist. On the demand side, political instability, war, terrorism, global economic recession, volatile oil prices, growing competition, and an increase in knowledge and experience among travelers drives transformation. Supply side transformation determinants include damaging natural phenomena and human-induced disasters, pursuit of more sustainable forms of tourism, climate change, and significant advancements in information technology. Other threats include a lack of market differentiation, loss of biological and cultural diversity, and destination dependence on tourism.
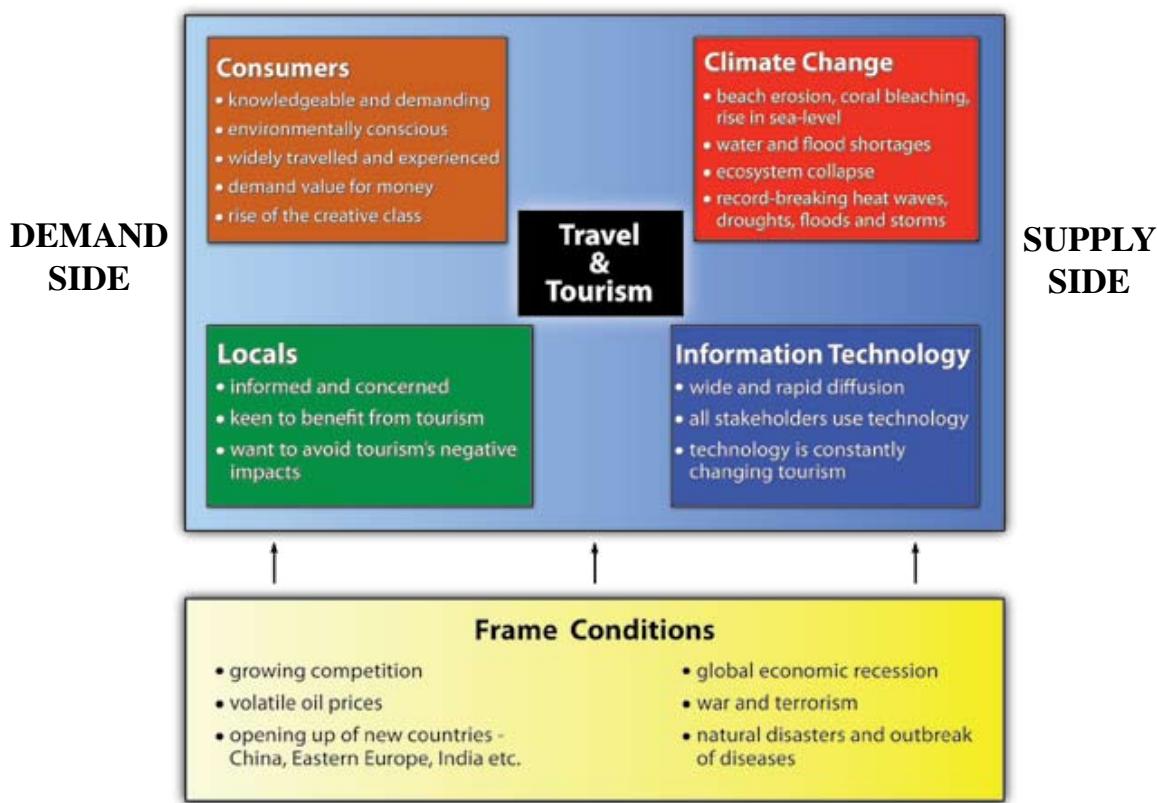
Figure 3.1. Key Factors Driving Travel and Tourism, Trinidad and Tobago (Ministry of Tourism Trinidad and Tobago, 2010)

Uncontrolled, unsustainable, and massive tourism growth provoke many fears about tourism. Private enterprise with the purpose of making money by selling experiences dominates tourism. Business planning can fall short of sustainable tourism objectives and tends to forget environmental, social, and cultural impacts.

On the extreme end, tourism has contributed to a wide range of issues, that damage local residents' quality of life: intrusion on daily life, loss of privacy, and crowding contribute to ill feelings towards tourism development. Lack of information, false impressions, misinformation, poor communication and knowledge also drive these feelings (Town of Gawler, undated).

BENEFITS OF SUSTAINABLE TOURISM FOR BUSINESSES

Since sustainable tourism focuses on generating positive impacts, let's take a close look at benefits for business.

Improved profitability and competitive advantage

Corporate responsibility has become a competitive advantage. Sustainability can and should be seen as an integral part of any business in good times and bad. Industry leaders now put more effort into and apply more resources toward "green" initiatives during trying economic times which enables them to cut costs as well as increase competitive advantage. Business in the Community (BITC) published a report that revealed that the Financial Times Stock Exchange 100 stock index companies which actively manage and measure corporate responsibility outperformed the FTSE 350 on total shareholder return by 3.3–7.7% between 2002 and 2007. The research demonstrated the higher the company scored on the Corporate Responsibility Index and thus the better the company manages its environmental and social impacts, the less volatile the stock price returns (BITC, 2008a). Similarly, the Dow Jones Sustainability Index 2008 report confirmed a positive, significant correlation between corporate sustainability and financial performance (BITC, 2008b). Focusing on profit alone does not increase shareholder value; the bottom line is that increased ROI and sustainability interrelate.

Increased market strength and customer loyalty

Research shows that when consumers perceive quality and convenience as equal, they select eco-friendly products and services when available — and some even pay 5-10% more. In 2002, 55.1 million American travelers demonstrated preference in their travel and consumption for companies that support sustainable tourism (Travel Industry Association and National Geographic Traveler, 2002). Thirty percent of adult Americans or 58.5 million people make purchases based on personal, social, and environmental values (Natural Marketing Institute, 2008). The Ypartnership (2009) found that 85% of Americans considered themselves environmentally conscious. And an impressive four out of ten stated they would consider shifting their patronage to a travel service supplier who demonstrates environmental responsibility. In 2009, according to PhoCusWright's report "Green Is Good for Environment, but is it Good for Business?" one third of U.S. travelers would pay premiums on travel, but with the anticipation of practices that go above and beyond cursory sustainable measures.

Attraction of talent and enhanced employee loyalty

Sustainability is a key value of today's new workforce. A company committed to this value holds a market advantage in recruiting talent. Both graduates and industry professionals increasingly look for green jobs. A poll on green employment in the Wall Street Journal found that 80% of young professionals are interested in a job that positively affects the environment, and 92% would be more inclined to work for an environmentally friendly company (Mattioli, 2007). Key findings from the 2008 Corporate Sustainability Employee Study revealed that

most employees have embraced principles of corporate responsibility: they want change and look for ways to bring their values to work (Fresh Marketing, 2008). To facilitate this, they need to understand their employer objectives and have a stake in setting them.

TOURISM'S THREATS TO BUSINESSES

Tourism can threaten business by increased operating costs, increased competition, lack of market differentiation, and decreased customer and employee loyalty.

Travel and tourism of course depend on energy consumption. The costs of energy continue to increase along with energy demand. Investing in renewable energy, like OARS (www.oars.com) has done, for example, allows companies to stabilize energy costs.

Travel and tourism providers are now being targeted as a primary culprit of climate change. Travel providers can minimize the risk, nonetheless, by managing expectations and involving all relevant stakeholders in their efforts, including management, staff, suppliers, and public lands agencies.

Similar to the advent of online marketing, companies that do not lead in sustainability will eventually follow, because if they do not, they will get left behind.

SUSTAINABLE TOURISM STRATEGIES FOR DESTINATIONS

Destinations can employ the following strategies to increase the sustainability of their touristic operations:

- **Stakeholder engagement:** This all-important effort to forge partnerships among sectors identifies local issues and increases transparency and ownership. It helps ensure that local communities drive the initiative, fostering long-term success rather than impeding it.

- **Tourism assessments:** Destinations can undertake impact assessments to identify lapses in sustainability strategies, prioritize them, and select projects, systems, and employees to manage them.

- **Sustainable tourism planning**: Just like businesses do, destinations can implement a sustainability plan and related management. This tool helps destinations to make informed decisions and build a sense of accountability.

- **Traveler philanthropy**: Destinations can encourage voluntary action of conscientious consumers and responsible travel companies to donate money, time, and talent to protect the natural and cultural heritage that they visit.

- **Capacity building and development:** Tourism businesses can train themselves in small business management, sustainable tourism best practices, marketing, and micro-enterprise development. Their products and services will increase the destination's appeal to travelers.

- **Cluster development:** Networks of tourism-related businesses provide centralized points of coordination for tourism promotion and good practice. They benefit local businesses by increasing communication and knowledge sharing.

- **Carbon neutral tourism planning:** Strategies for tourists to offset their carbon footprint can improve travel sustainability. Carbon reduction saves money and carbon offset projects improve the natural environment aesthetically that enriches communities and attracts visitors.

- **Sustainable tourism standards and certification:** The Global Sustainable Tourism Criteria, discussed in Unit 8, help travel professionals evaluate their tourism development at business and destination levels. The criteria provide recommendations for adopting profitable and sustainable solutions.

- **Market access:** Linking destinations to new markets connects travelers to the products and services they want. Tours can be packaged together into multi-day, niche-specific itineraries to create stronger and more diverse offerings at the destination and ensure that local businesses remain profitable.

- **Marketing and promotions:** Marketing and branding should hone a destination's unique qualities and leverage the growing market desire for sustainable options. Local community members should be involved in the development of these materials.

- **Micro-economic enterprise development:** Strategic development helps local businesses access the resources they need to grow. It benefits locals by providing income and travelers by creating products and services that they want in a destination.

- **Geotourism:** A type of tourism originally defined by National Geographic Society that sustains or enhances the geographical character of a place, its environment, culture, aesthetics, heritage, and the well being of its residents, geotourism incorporates the concept of sustainable tourism — that destinations should remain unspoiled for future generations. Geotourism also takes a principle from its ecotourism cousin — that tourism revenue should promote natural and cultural conservation (Kindl da Cunha & da Cunha, 2005).

Bocas del Toro Sustainable Tourism Alliance

Its archipelago of pristine islands as well as laid back Caribbean culture has made Bocas del Toro very popular among travelers from Panama City or Costa Rica. With tourism having grown over 70% in the past decade, unplanned tourism development was putting tremendous pressure on the area's natural resources. By not addressing threats from unsustainable tourism development with a sustainable alternative, Bocas del Toro risked losing its main. The environmental impacts of tourism development were changing the place's character, as the area lost its local traditions.

The destination sorely needed a public-private partnership to improve management and promotion. The solution came with the establishment of the Bocas Sustainable Tourism Alliance comprising key public and private tourism stakeholders, in other words, a destination marketing organization. The DMO for Bocas del Toro coordinates promotions and addresses conservation issues. Many tourism stakeholders were extremely receptive because they felt the need for a common vision and improved sustainable tourism management in Bocas del Toro. They also created a geotourism stewardship council based on the National Geographic Society Center for Sustainable Destination's methodology, guided by geotourism.

One of the Alliance's main objectives is destination sustainability. Aside from the formal alliance functions, spontaneous relationships between stakeholders rapidly emerged as people realized how their collective efforts can achieve common objectives. Momentum has grown as local stakeholders (many of whom had never worked together before) form committees to address issues at the destination.

Access the full case study at:
www.gwu.edu/~iits/Sustainable_Tourism_Online_Learning/Hawkins/Bocas_del_ToroCaseStudy.pdf

Sustainable Tourism Strategies for Businesses

Sustainable tourism can lead to management of all resources in such a way that economic, social, and aesthetic needs can be fulfilled while maintaining cultural integrity, ecological processes, and biological diversity. To improve sustainability, companies can evaluate where on the sustainability spectrum they lie.

Other strategic considerations include sustainability management systems that enable an organization to identify, measure, monitor, and control its environmental, socio-cultural, and economic impacts. A sustainability management system is part of the overall management system that includes organizational structure, activities, responsibilities, practices, procedures, processes and resources for developing, implementing, achieving, reviewing, and maintaining a sustainability policy. A sustainability management plan sets standards and procedures, responsibilities, performance criteria,

resources, and work practices that protect the environmental, socio-cultural, and economic needs of a community, ecosystem, habitat, or protected natural area.

As intermediaries between tourists and service providers, tour operators package a variety of tourism-related services, which they market to customers directly or through travel agencies. Each package generally consists of accommodation (often including some food provision), transportation to, within, and from the destination, and activities. Because most goods and services in holiday packages are provided through a supply chain of subcontracted companies, organizations and agents, tour operators do not always directly control these services' environmental and social impacts. Yet consumers increasingly expect that the tour operators ensure that their products do not only provide quality and value-for-money, but also safeguard environmental and social values.

Supply chain management then becomes a useful tool to meet this market demand. Having a sustainable supply chain reduces costs while supporting environmental conservation and fair trade. In terms of internal and external operations, a company begins with products and services that it purchases in volume, and then establishes sustainability criteria. On the product side, the company evaluates cleaner and greener options (e.g., fair trade-certified coffee, certified organic, or locally produced foods). On the service side, the company determines who the green leaders are for each segment, whether a hotel, airline, or car rental agency (Carbone, 2003).

Travel, transportation, and tourism are major contributors to climate change, accounting for significant global greenhouse gas emissions. The average American emits over 10 tons of CO_2 per year. If everyone in the world emitted this much, we would need more than 2 ½ planets to support us all. Carbon offsetting is a form of carbon management. People or institutions can offset their emissions, in principle, by avoiding the release of carbon elsewhere in the world or sequestering carbon already in the atmosphere such as through tree planting or organic agriculture. Carbon offsets are a means for addressing climate change.

Renewable energy also reduces carbon emissions since renewable energy sources (solar, wind, water) replace fossil-fuel energy sources. As long as the sun continues to shine, we have a ready supply of energy (www.re-energy.ca).

The increasing demand for energy efficiency and rising prices of petroleum products have been driving higher efficiency technologies in all sectors of society. There are numerous emerging efficiency technologies and rating systems, such as the US Environmental Protection Agency's Energy Star® label (Green Seal, 2010).

A final form of carbon management depends on the kind of land use. Industrial agriculture and its support services, such as transportation, is a heavy consumer of petroleum and destroys soil carbon. This land use model may be responsible for up to a third of all global carbon emissions (Scherr & Sthapit, 2009), most of which related to agriculture. Their report cites five main strategies to reduce and sequester terrestrial greenhouse gas emissions:

1. Enrich carbon soil
2. Farm with perennials
3. Climate-friendly livestock production
4. Protect natural habitats
5. Restore degraded watersheds and rangelands

Considering that agrotourism is a growing niche, tourism can educate about and promote carbon management through the agricultural sector as well.

Other strategies for sustainable tourism businesses includes travelers' philanthropy as well as voluntourism, a type of tourism in which travelers visit a destination and take part not only in traditional tourism activities but also volunteer their time in benefit of the local community. Projects can include restoration or construction of buildings and environmental cleanups.

Sustainable tourism standards and certification are other strategies discussed in Unit 8. Certification is a voluntary procedure that assesses, monitors, and gives written assurance that a business, product, process, service, or management system conforms to specific standards. It awards a marketable logo or seal to those who meet or exceed these standards, i.e., those that comply with national and regional regulations and, typically, fulfill other declared or negotiated standards prescribed by the certification program (Honey, 2010). Some form of corporate social disclosure is the most direct expression of a company's attitude and behavior regarding social responsibility.

SUMMARY

Tourism affects the economy and lives of communities and has proven to be a lifesaver for many destinations. Fears attributed to tourism development, largely emanate from poorly managed or mass tourism ventures. As with any economic activity, tourism can inflict impacts on communities. These must be minimized and measured against the benefits that tourism brings. A vibrant national tourism sector can serve to diversify the economy and generate social and environmental benefits. However, the economic, social, and environmental benefits of tourism are not automatic. Ineffectively managed tourism can also result in social and environmental costs. Governments must actively manage tourism through policies and actions that maximize beneficial developments. Tourism that leverages existing attributes often generates benefits to host communities. Community support will follow developments that service the community and provide ongoing benefits. Companies must take responsibility for ensuring the sustainability of all inputs that go into their products. For tour operators who offer products comprised almost entirely of contracted goods and services, this means that effectively implementing sustainability policies requires working closely with suppliers to improve sustainability performance in all the components of a holiday.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

- On sustainable tourism strategies for destinations, see the Tourism Destination Management Module.
- On sustainable tourism strategies for businesses, see the Sustainable Tourism Enterprise Development Module.

Unit 4 — The Green Economy and Tourism

Global energy demand is escalating. The cost of oil is escalating. Greenhouse gas emissions and average global temperature are escalating. Biodiversity is declining and cultural heritage is being lost. These are all signs of unsustainable development. What can be done to stabilize our economy and our ecology in the face of such challenges? Growing evidence suggests that the greening of tourism can lead to broad economic, social, and environmental reforms for host countries and their communities. The potential of tourism to create jobs, support livelihoods, and enable sustainable development is huge. We now examine why investments should be made to "green" the tourism sector.

THE ECONOMICS OF SUSTAINABILITY

Tourism is the world's largest industry. It generates about 10% of total world GDP and employs over 10% of the global workforce — and tremendous growth may still lie ahead. International arrivals are expected to reach 1.56 billion by 2020 (UNWTO 2009).
Sustainable tourism currently represents only 4% of the overall travel market, but could increase dramatically. Consumer purchasing trends today (both within and beyond the tourism industry) point to an emerging force behind this market shift (Travel Industry Association and Ypartnership, 2007).

Tourism, in fact, follows a deeper value shift in society at large, a shift from what some call Modernist values — scientific materialism, empiricism, secularism, competition, individual liberties, technocracy — to Postmodernist values such as inclusivity, multiculturalism, spirituality, human rights, egalitarianism, minority and animal rights, environmentalism, conservationism, peace, community, consensus-based decision-making, and others. These same Postmodernist values now manifest in tourist demand seeking green, fair-trade, sensitive, responsible, local, equitable, and other aspects embodied first by the multiple tourism niche markets described in Unit 1 and hopefully expanding into the mainstream (Woodhouse, 1996). The driving force behind the evolution of values is likely the growing discontent and consciousness among many people with respect to the state of the environment and society in the world today (McIntosh, 2007).

We can see this shift in many different statistics and poll results. For example, more than a third of travelers favor environmentally friendly tourism and are willing to pay for related experiences. The growth of traditional mass tourism has been leveling off. In contrast, ecotourism, responsible tourism, and soft adventure tourism are growing rapidly and may continue to do so over the next two decades. It is estimated that global spending on ecotourism is increasing about six times the industry-wide rate (UNEP & UNWTO, 2011).

Forty-four percent of U.S. travelers consider environmental impact to be important to them when planning travel. The propensity of green supporters to vote with their wallet opens opportunities for premium green travel (PhoCusWright, 2009).

Going green is good for business. Although most Americans are unfamiliar with the term "carbon footprint," fully 85% consider themselves to be "environmentally conscious." And an impressive four out of ten now state they would consider shifting their patronage to a travel service supplier who demonstrates environmental responsibility (Ypartnership, 2009).

These statistics evidence the tremendous momentum garnered by the sustainable tourism movement over the past 5-10 years. Yet, despite this rapid growth, we're barely realizing the potential impacts from the world's largest industry. For better or worse, our environmental, climatic, and cultural problems are not disappearing, and in order to thrive in this uncertain future, we have to protect the very resources on which our industry depends.

BENEFITS OF GREEN TOURISM INVESTMENT

Tourism drives growth of the world economy. Tourism represents 5% of world GDP, while it contributes 6-7% of total employment. International tourism ranks fourth (after fuels, chemicals, and automotive products) in global exports, with an industry value of US$1 trillion a year, accounting for 30% of the world's exports of commercial services or 6% of total exports; 935 million international tourists were recorded in 2010 and 4 billion domestic tourists in 2008. In over 150 countries, tourism is one of five top export earners, and in 60 it is the number one export. It is the main source of foreign exchange for one-third of developing countries and one-half of LDCs (UNEP & UNWTO, 2011).

The greening of tourism involves efficiency improvements in energy, water, waste systems, and food security, which create new jobs and help to reduce poverty. It is estimated that one job in the core tourism industry creates about one and a half additional or indirect jobs in the tourism-related economy (UNEP & UNWTO, 2011). The share of tourism spending and related economic activities determine the local economic effects. By increasing local hires and sourcing opportunities, tourism contributes to the local economy and poverty reduction.

Increasing the involvement of local communities, especially the poor, in the tourism value chain can contribute to the development of the local economy and poverty reduction. This can include the local supply of products, labor, tourism services, and increasingly green services in energy and water efficiency and waste management. There is increasing evidence that more sustainable tourism in rural areas can lead to more poverty-reduction (UNEP & UNWTO, 2011). Investing in green tourism can reduce the cost of energy, water, and waste, and enhance the value of biodiversity, ecosystems, and cultural heritage. Investment in energy efficiency has been found to generate significant returns within a short payback period (UNEP & UNWTO, 2011).

The investment required for conservation and restoration is small relative to the value of forests, mangroves, wetlands, and coastal zones including coral reefs. Investment in cultural heritage is among the most significant and often times profitable investments a society or destination can make. Under a green-economy investment scenario, tourism makes a larger contribution to GDP growth and significant environmental benefits include reductions in water consumption (18%), energy use (44%) and CO_2 emissions (52%) compared with business-as-usual (UNEP & UNWTO, 2011).

Examples of Green Jobs created by the Green Economy (UNEP, 2008):

- Globally, more than 2.3 million workers are employed in renewable energy industries that could increase to 20 million jobs by 2030.
- Greening buildings in EU & US would create 2 million jobs.
- In China, there are 10 million jobs in the recycling sector.
- Organic agriculture provides more than 30% more jobs per hectare than industrial agriculture.

GREEN GROWTH: CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

The rapid growth of both international and domestic travel, the trends to travel farther and over shorter periods of time, and the preference given to energy-intensive transportation are increasing the fossil fuel dependency of tourism, resulting in the sector's contribution of 5% of global greenhouse gas emissions. Other challenges include excessive water consumption compared with residential water use, discharge of untreated water, generation of waste, damage to biodiversity, and threats to the survival of local cultures, built heritage, and traditions (UNEP & UNWTO, 2011).

Government investments, tax concessions, and subsidies tied to green policies can leverage private sector capital investments in sustainable tourism. Government spending on public goods such as protected areas, cultural assets, water conservation, waste management, public transportation, renewable energy infrastructure, and general procurement reduce the cost of green (or whatever the government is purchasing) investments by the private sector in sustainable tourism. At the same time, resource use, energy use, and waste generation prices must internalize externalities so as to reflect true costs to society.

Sustainable tourism businesses need better access to financing and favorable interest rates. Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in particular need better access to capital. In-kind support such as technical, marketing, or business administration assistance is helpful. Governments and international aid organizations can facilitate capital flows to sustainability-minded businesses. And public-private partnerships can spread around costs and risks of large sustainable tourism investments.

THE EXAMPLE OF SOLID WASTE REDUCTION

Improved waste management can save money for tourism businesses, create jobs, and enhance destination attractiveness. Recycling currently plays a limited role in solid waste management in many countries because sufficient markets for recycled materials do not exist or because the local culture has not yet adapted to the new practice, especially source separation of materials. The travel trade can substantially reduce the costs of solid waste management, however, by implementing zero waste policies that support waste reduction programs in purchasing and operations.

In destinations where tourism dominates the local economy and generates a majority of the waste, the travel industry itself has to take responsibility for solid waste management. Incentives to do so include reducing operating costs and demonstrating responsible behavior in order to capitalize on green market trends. Joint action by tourism stakeholders must convince suppliers to provide products in bulk, reduce packaging, and collect packaging and shipping containers. Nonetheless, it is possible to develop recycling programs for some materials (e.g., aluminum, cardboard, and some plastics) particularly if governments can find ways to reduce or subsidize transportation costs. Trash-to-treasure programs are also becoming a more popular.

In destinations where tourism contributes a relatively small proportion of total solid waste, the government could provide necessary infrastructure and regulations to improve solid waste management across all sectors — for example by offering financial incentives for businesses to reduce wastes they generate (Downing, Hurd, Muscalino, and Poland, 1999).

WORKING TOWARD A LOW-CARBON ECONOMY

Any plans to address sustainability in the tourism industry have to include carbon management. Fortunately, more nations and businesses are aiming for significant reductions in emissions. Some countries are even racing to be the first carbon neutral destination in the world! The Carbon World Cup includes the following contestants: Costa Rica, Iceland, Norway, New Zealand, Maldives, and Monaco.

For example, in 2010 Costa Rica National Chamber of Ecotourism announced the Climate Conscious Travel Initiative, whereby tourism businesses could voluntarily contribute to carbon offsets of international flights — $0.72 per person per hotel night, which would be paid by hoteliers. Through this program, the industry would mitigate the nearly 6.7 million tons of CO_2 produced from the approximate 1.3 million visitors who arrive to Costa Rica every year via air.

Sustainable Travel International works with Tourism Corporation Bonaire to implement a comparable program called the Carbon Neutral Tourism Program that supports local renewable energy, energy efficiency, reforestation and avoided deforestation initiatives. Other comparable initiatives are being launched in Samoa and Fiji.

OVERCOMING ENTRY BARRIERS TO THE GREEN ECONOMY

Much of the economic potential for green tourism is found in SME capital. Their single greatest barrier for participating in the green economy is lack of access to capital. Governments and international organizations can facilitate financial flows to these actors with an emphasis on contributions to the local economy and poverty reduction. Besides reducing administrative fees and offering favorable interest rates for green tourism projects, in-kind support such as technical, marketing, or business administration assistance could also help.

In developing tourism strategies, local governments, communities, and businesses need to establish mechanisms to coordinate with ministries responsible for environment, energy, labor, agriculture, transport, health, finance, security, and other relevant areas. These ministries need to work together to draft clear policies for protected areas, zoning, environmental regulations, labor rules, agricultural standards, tourism standards, and health requirements particularly related to energy, GHG emissions, water, waste, sanitation, and food production.

Certain enabling conditions are necessary to achieve a green economy such as international trade, technology transfer, implementation of environmental legislation, and development of markets for ecosystems services such as a global carbon market.

THE ECONOMIC FUTURE AND GREEN TRAVEL

The emerging green economy is likely to be characterized by the following attributes (UNEP & UNWTO, 2011):

- An increasingly older population supported by fewer workers
- A focus on happiness as well as wealth
- A focus on renewability rather than planned obsolescence
- Parsimony regarding waste and energy use
- A movement of global power eastward and southward

In this environment, tourism must change to a greater or lesser extent as follows (UNWTO, 2005):

- Brazil, Russia, India, and China become top 10 tourism source markets
- Domestic and regional tourism become centrally important
- Carbon neutral and reduced destinations become rising star destinations
- Destination transportation options become more important
- Long haul travel becomes longer duration too
- Fewer trips per tourist, more destinations
- Health becomes a major component of travel offerings

Summary

Consumers demand greener travel options and green tourism can respond as well as create new jobs and reduce poverty. Significant challenges stand in the path of green tourism development. Investing in the greening of tourism can reduce the costs of energy, water, and waste, and enhance the value of biodiversity, ecosystems, and cultural heritage. Reducing solid waste and carbon emissions are two areas where tourism can have a particularly large impact. Green investments need to be included in the regular government budget and public-private investment funding mechanisms need to be created by placing investments in sustainable tourism at the core of stimulus packages. As future travel trends emerge, the private sector, especially small and medium-sized firms must mobilize to support green tourism.

For More Information

- On Destination Planning and Development, see the Tourism Destination Management Module

Unit 5 — Tourism, Trade, and

This unit will provide a better understanding of the interrelationships between tourism, trade and development and the process for sustainable tourism planning at a destination level.

SUSTAINABLE STRATEGIC TOURISM PLANNING

Destination planning and development strategies are the first step toward greening tourism. Sustainable tourism development strategies provide destinations with a blueprint for improving inter-agency cooperation, creating linkages between critical governmental ministries and other stakeholders who need to be engaged in making tourism more sustainable. Strategic tourism planning unites disparate planning and development activities to an overall tourism strategy.

Strategic tourism planning:

- Contains a long-term vision, developed through visioning and scenario building
- Encourages consensus-building around existing, new, and future tourism development
- Specifies goals (ends) and actions (means) to achieve them
- Sets resource targets
- Is dynamic, flexible, and adaptable
- Ensures that formulation and implementation of the strategic plan are closely linked through constant monitoring and evaluation which enables proactive response and adjustment

To become sustainable, tourism planning must move away from focusing exclusively on a traditional growth-oriented model to one that places equal emphasis on opportunities for employment, income and improved local well being, while ensuring that development decisions reflect the full value of natural and cultural resources. The management of public goods such as water, air, and common lands should include accountability on behalf of users to ensure that these resources are not overused or depleted.

A sustainable approach to strategic tourism planning requires:

- Close coordination with local and regional legislative and political structures
- An innovative and inclusive organizational structure for joint planning
- Community participation and support
- Planners to design plans and educate stakeholders about the process by providing technical expertise
- A plan designed primarily by those who have stakes in the outcome
- A learning community that is informed, educated, and aware

- Applying sustainable tourism development principles to ensure the long-term sustainability of the environment, local economy, and socio-cultural values of the host community, while distributing benefits equitably among stakeholders

Sustainable strategic tourism planning assists destinations in managing risks (e.g., climate change, food and energy security, etc.) and achieving responsible destination stewardship goals. Actions to achieve goals include destination-level planning, infrastructure development, product development, quality assurance, marketing, etc. In summary, sustainable tourism planning is important because short-term vision leads to short-term success in which resources are used up and destinations decline. Long-term returns require long-term care, so that resources can be used, but also conserved, and then reused.

There are seven steps to developing a sustainable tourism plan (United Nations, 1999):

1. Analyze current and past performance
2. Identify current issues (e.g. reef quality, labor availability, power stability, economic leakage, storm vulnerability, attraction deterioration)
3. Examine how alternative growth scenarios (low, medium, high) could affect the issues
4. Envision the preferred future state of the system
5. Establish what needs to be done to achieve that future state
6. Create a plan with continual monitoring
7. Establish mechanisms to coordinate with ministries responsible for environment, energy, labor, agriculture, transport, tourism, health, finance, security, and other relevant areas. These ministries need to work together to draft clear policies for protected areas, zoning, environmental regulations, labor rules, agricultural standards, tourism standards, and health requirements particularly related to energy, greenhouse gas emissions, water, waste, sanitation, and food production.

CRISIS MANAGEMENT AND THE MEDIA

As we learned in Unit 2, crisis planning has assumed a significant position in the tourism sector, given that many crisis recovery plans assign non-essential activities (such as tourism) low priority. In the midst of a crisis, where human life is threatened, political attention is normally directed towards stabilizing the situation and providing basic human needs. The speed and onset of a crisis pose problems for business continuity and a destination's ability to continue with its tourism activities.

There are three distinct phases to crisis management: (1) Taking precautions, (2) coping with the crisis as it unfolds, (3) recovery (Glaesser, 2006). Within each stage, risk management managers continuously analyze threats and risks, measures to protect the visitor and updates to stakeholders about the current state of affairs (UNWTO, 1996).

A 2007 UNWTO publication, "Communications and Incentives: The Importance of Fast and Sincere Reporting," observes that the tourism sector is often less prepared for coordinated crisis response than other sectors. It highlights four primary suggestions for working with the media during a crisis:

1. Be quick. Information speeds around the globe in a matter of minutes. If you do not provide information quickly, then media will still report the news, but without benefit of your input. You want your information included as part of the first story when an incident

occurs at your destination. The story should translate vague and therefore harmful impressions of the event and locations into a more accurate assessment of risk probabilities at destinations.

2. Be honest and factual. National tourism administrations need credibility with the media. Disasters, crime, and health problems know no boundaries. If an event occurs at your destination, provide full information — who, what, when, where, how — and add as much background information as possible to put events into perspective.

3. Be responsive. Your first press release may generate additional requests for information, background, or interviews. Cooperation with the press can pay long-term dividends.

4. Be prepared. The national tourism administration should have a designated person for dealing with the media. That person should be familiar with all information relating to safety and security and should have a database of press representatives in the country and abroad. A country's overseas tourism offices should replicate this information. The media will be more understanding if they know the tourism press person and have worked with him or her before (UNWTO, 2011).

The strategy of disaster mitigation involves complex decisions. Investment in disaster mitigation, despite the advantages, may also seem expensive. It is essential to realize that disaster reduction is not an end in itself, it must

1. Reduce deaths and injuries in tourism-receiving areas
2. Reduce property losses and environmental degradation in tourist areas

These losses could be direct (suffering immediate damage) or indirect (i.e. longer-term damage to livelihoods in tourist areas such as when hotels remain closed for long periods). Indirect losses may seem less tangible; they could in fact wreak greater losses due to tarnished national image which could affect tourism arrivals. Of course, one negative report widely distributed in the media could hurt the destination in the market, way out of proportion to the scale of the actual crisis.

A national tourist safety and security plan should address the following areas:

- Identification of potential tourist risks according to types of travel, affected sectors, and locations
- Detection and prevention of crimes against tourists
- Protection of tourists and residents from drug trafficking
- Protection of tourist sites and facilities against unlawful activity
- Establishment of guidelines for site managers in the event of such activity
- Responsibilities for dealing with the media, at home and abroad
- Information provided to the international travel trade on safety and security
- Organization of crisis management in the event of a disaster or other emergency
- Adoption of safety standards and practices at tourist facilities and sites
- Development of liability rules for tourist establishments
- Safety and security requirements for issuing tourism licenses, such as for accommodations, restaurants, taxi companies, and tour guides
- Provision of appropriate documentation and information on tourist safety to the public, for both outgoing and incoming travelers

- Development of national policies about tourist health, such as reporting systems of tourist health issues
- Development of tourist insurance and travel assistance insurance
- Promotion, collection, and dissemination of reliable research statistics on crimes against travelers (UNWTO, 2011).

Many risk managers clarify that natural phenomena constitute important components of Earth's natural functions and thus are not disasters. In fact, events such as hurricanes, earthquakes, and floods usually serve to renew biological systems, fomenting greater diversity. From a human perspective such natural phenomena may provoke significant damage to human systems, rightly disasters. But the events that caused those disasters are not disasters in and of themselves, thus we avoid the term "natural disaster."

SCENARIO PLANNING

According to Duinker and Greig (2007), scenario planning performs two important functions: 1) risk management, in which hypothetical scenarios facilitate the development of response strategies and 2) decisions to be tested across various scenarios.

In the tourism sector, scenario planning is still in its infancy, though some companies, such as British Airways, use it. Publicly available examples include the series of studies undertaken by Visit Scotland on a wide range of futures scenarios focused on war influenza pandemics, and other scenarios that could affect tourism (Visit Scotland, 2005; Page, Connell, Yeoman, Munro, and Walker, 2006). As two of these studies show, there are a number of steps to take in tourism scenario planning (adapted from Page et al., 2006; Page & Connell, 2009):

1. Review the literature on the subject
2. Scan environmental trends
3. Interview industry players to develop a list of potential drivers for each scenario
4. Construct up to four scenarios incorporating the drivers to understanding how each scenario could play out
5. Host a workshop to test scenarios with a group of industry experts asked to react to the scenarios
6. Have respondents map, rank, and rate issues and workshop results
7. Prioritize a list of phenomena that could occur in each scenario
8. Discuss potential policy options that respond to main risks and challenges for the organization
9. Publish results internally and, if possible, disseminate them to the tourism sector
10. Implement strategies to minimize risks

Forecasting Demand

Forecasting is an attempt to estimate future demand using a range of possible scenarios based on existing datasets and trends. Forecasting demand is important for three main actors:

- Suppliers to understand demand for their products and services
- The public and private sector to understand investments required in destination infrastructure
- Governments to make policy for their tourism economies

All managers require some forecasting or planning in order to manage risks. Forecast accuracy affects the quality of the management decision. Reliable forecasts are essential for managers and decision makers to try and ensure adequate supply is available to meet demand and to facilitate planning. The three principal methods of forecasting are:

1. Extrapolating how previous demand may shape future patterns
2. Statistical analysis using weights or variables
3. Structured group discussions (Jefferson & Lickorish, 1991)

UNWTO's 2008 Handbook on Tourism Forecasting Methods outlines the wide range of techniques now used in tourism forecasting and their application. The main techniques examined are:

- Simple and advanced extrapolative models
- Autoregressive moving average methods
- Causal models including linear regression, multiple regression, structural economic models
- Qualitative forecasting methods (including the Delphi method, scenario planning)
- Mixtures of methods
- How to choose a forecasting methodology and case studies from around the world of where different techniques have been used

Although using statistical techniques such as moving averages may be easy and relatively inexpensive, they are non-causal. This means that they do not explain what specific factors shape trends, they only indicate what happens. In contrast, econometric causal models look for statistical relationships about causes that influence. These techniques are considerably more complex.

Typically modelers test the magnitude of effect of numerous variables on tourism demand. Common variables include:

- Number of tourist trips
- Total tourist expenditure and expenditure per capita
- Market shares of tourism
- The tourism sector's share of gross domestic product

Depending on the complexity of the methodology employed, the forecasting model may examine how one dependent variable (e.g. tourist trips) and other independent variables (e.g. the state of the national and international economy, leisure time, levels of disposable income, inflation and foreign exchange rates) affect demand (Page, 2009; UNWTO, 2011).

Having said this, it is important to recognize that the world is complex and dynamic and uncertainty increases as one forecasts farther in the future and as one forecasts increasingly complex interactions. One example of the forecasting risk in tourism comes from Costa Rica. In 2002 the Costa Rican Tourism Institute published a forecast that predicted a doubling in hotel accommodation demand in La Fortuna and Monteverde, two of Costa Rica's most popular destinations, from 2,400 rooms in 2002 to 5,000 rooms in 2012. Hoteliers were irate last year when they realized that not only did projections fall short and they had overbuilt, but the government would offer no assistance to ease the pain (La República, 2010).

GLOBAL TOURISM TRENDS AND DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

Globally, tourism is a $3 billion-a-day industry from which all countries at all levels of development benefit to some degree. The worldwide contribution of tourism to gross domestic product (GDP) exceeds 5% and its annual turnover has been growing faster than GDP. International tourist arrivals have grown exponentially from 25 million in 1950 to 922 million in 2008, with tourism receipts rising from $2 billion to $944 billion during the same period. UNWTO states that tourism returned to growth in the last quarter of 2009 and growth will continue. The recovery is expected to endure over the longer term with 4% annual growth in international arrivals through 2020, when it should reach 1.6 billion – nearly 70% above current levels.

Europe, East Asia, the Pacific, and the Americas are projected to be the top three receiving regions followed by Africa, the Middle East, and south Asia. Growth rates in Asia and the Pacific, the Middle East and Africa are forecast to exceed 5% a year, and growth in more mature regions, Europe and the Americas, under 4%. Although Europe will retain the highest share of world arrivals, its share will continue to decline from 60% in 1995 to 46% in 2020.

Today, developing countries account for 40% of world tourism arrivals and 30% of the world tourism receipts. Figures for 2008 indicate that three quarters of all international tourists are from developed countries, and developing countries are the destination for over one third of all international tourists. Developing country tourism statistics from 2006–2008 reveal significant regional and country variations. Although international arrival growth in the Americas remains moderate, in Africa, Asia, and the Pacific, they continue to exceed expectations. Asia and the Pacific, Cambodia, Thailand, India and Philippines are the highest growth markets. But it is in Africa, growing at a rate nearly twice the global average, where tourist arrivals are increasing most rapidly.

Common perceptions that a large share of foreign direct investment (FDI) for tourism flows to developing countries and that foreign investment dominates their tourism industries are largely unfounded. Although developing countries were the target of 21% of tourism-related mergers and acquisitions from 2002 to 2005, and hosted 70% of tourism-related "greenfield" investments, FDI inflows to their tourism sector account for only around 10% of global FDI inflows. The growing presence of large multinational hotels and restaurants in developing countries are often franchises or under management contracts without foreign equity ownership, pointing to the importance of domestic investment in the tourism sector.

Comprehensive tourism data are indispensable to developing countries seeking to strengthen their tourism sectors. Travel services exports recorded in national balance of payments statistics include foreigners' expenditures for hotels and restaurants, travel agencies, tour operators and tourist guides. Yet tourism-related exports are considerably greater since the sector has strong backward and forward linkages within national economies. To more accurately gauge national tourism exports, many countries compile national tourism satellite accounting systems to track spending by foreign visitors in order to more accurately estimate direct and indirect economic impacts (UNCTAD, 2010).

TOURISM AND DEVELOPMENT IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

Growth in the sector has made tourism a major employment generator. As a labor-intensive activity, tourism and its support activities create a significant employment for low-skilled and semi-skilled workers, particularly poor, female, and younger workers. The World Travel and Tourism Council reports that the industry currently provides over 220 million jobs and accounts for 8% of employment, or 1 in 12 jobs and about 10% of GDP. Women make up 70% of the labor force in the tourism sector, and half of all tourism workers are 25 or under. With an economic recovery, job growth in the sector is expected to resume with the creation of nearly 60 million new jobs by 2020. The International Labor Organization (ILO) has estimated that unemployment induced by the financial crisis oscillates between 11 and 17 million workers in developed countries and between 19 and 42 million workers in developing countries. The tourism sector can be an important source of employment for many unemployed workers.

Despite the sector's realized and potential employment gains, some raise concerns over poor employment conditions in some countries for workers in the tourism sector. A number of countries work with ILO to sensitize tourism employers and workers to the importance of encouraging decent work in the tourism sector, addressing decent work deficits, promoting the sector as a viable avenue for employment and enterprise creation, and attracting and retaining workers. A key international initiative towards improving employment conditions in the sector is the UNWTO Global Code of Ethics for Tourism, covered in Unit 2.

In many developing countries — particularly LDCs and other countries with limited economic diversification, including small island developing states (SIDS) — leakage remains a main challenge. Some studies point to high levels of leakage in developing countries' tourism sectors. For example, studies of tourism in The Gambia and the Lao People's Democratic Republic found large shares of tourist expenditures absorbed by international tour operators, foreign airline companies, and foreign-owned hotels and restaurants, with only 14% and 27% of total tourism expenditures reaching the poor living in destinations (UNCTAD, 2011). While the capture of even these small percentages of tourism expenditures has positive pro-poor impacts and is preferable to no tourism at all, emphasis should be placed on reducing leakage so that benefits can be increased.

In many developing countries with a sizeable tourism industry, large-scale mass tourism poses a growing threat to the preservation of cultural and natural resources. Growing demand for land for new tourism facilities and its increased use as a repository of wastes generated by the industry are reaching unprecedented levels in some tourism destinations. Tourism's high water and energy requirements may exceed local sustainable limits and displace other economic and social activities. In locales with fragile ecosystems, tourism's environmental impacts can be irreversible.

There are many ways that governments and tourism stakeholders can make tourism more sustainable. Long-term prospects for growth depend on building adequate infrastructure and supply chains, and strengthening policies and institutions to ensure that tourism activities are carried out sustainably, meeting economic, social, and environmental objectives. With its demonstrated success in recent years, ecotourism has received attention from policymakers from developing countries endowed with rich natural resources such as Montenegro which has declared itself an ecological state in its national constitution (www.ecologicalstate.com). The variety of products and their linkage with other economic sectors can help host countries to strengthen and diversify their economy through ecotourism while

promoting rural community development and generating profitable businesses that conserve natural resources. The viability of some tourism destinations may be threatened by climate change. The private sector is responding to climate change through efforts to integrate their tourism businesses into the green economy.

To aid their efforts to become more sustainable, specific market niches such as ecotourism, adventure tourism, and community tourism capitalize on the plethora of voluntary standards and associated certification schemes that have emerged during the past decade. These are discussed at length in Unit 8 (UNCTAD, 2010).

FORGING NATIONAL TOURISM STRATEGIES AND POLICIES

Developing countries that have been most successful in tourism development possess dedicated institutions and national tourism strategies. Among them, several LDCs have capitalized on their national tourism strategies in recent years, including Benin, Cambodia, Maldives, Nepal, and the United Republic of Tanzania, among others. Regulation provides a direct means for governments to promote sustainable development of the tourism sector. Comprehensive regulation, including incentives, creates a competitive business environment, establishes national quality and safety standards to be met by tourism firms, helps ensure decent employment in the sector, and promotes the protection of natural and cultural resources.

Attracting FDI remains important for those countries where domestic resources are limited. To attract investment in tourism facilities, tourism development projects must meet several criteria required by private investors. National tourism agencies help plan and coordinate both public and private investments around national tourism development strategies that progressively build supply along the tourism value chain. Governments often offer tourism investment incentives that usually contain tax and import duty exemptions, import facilitation measures, promotion assistance, and subsidies and guarantees. However, according to a recent UNCTAD study (UNCTAD, 2007), for many foreign investors, financial incentives may be less important than having in place an enabling environment for tourism to succeed, including high quality infrastructure, education, and training policies. The study also finds that, while many developing countries set attracting tourism FDI as a priority, few have policies in place to fully achieve
the goal.

Beyond securing investment, another objective of developing countries involves reducing leakage so that benefits of inbound tourism can be maximized. Leakage can only be reduced through creating in-country linkages. Governments and other stakeholders must carefully identify existing and potential tourism linkages, and develop policies to strengthen them so that they also generate pro-poor gains. There is now an increasing number of developing countries that have established dedicated "tourism linkages programs" that amplify links. Activities in India, for example, harness tourism's direct linkages and multiplier effects for community employment and poverty eradication. Jamaica emphasizes agrotourism linkages.

International trade offers significant opportunities to develop tourism through foreign investment and to expand tourism-related exports. National strategies could examine how trade and immigration policy could be tuned to reduce barriers to tourism trade. In East Africa, for example, Kenya has lowered its tourist visa fee to $25, lower than surrounding countries

(http://wolfganghthome.wordpress.com/2011/02/26/news-update-kenya-keeps-visa-fee-low/). National policies could ensure participation of foreign investors and firms in national tourism markets and encourage tourist arrivals from regional and global markets (UNCTAD 2010).

BOOSTING TOURISM THROUGH TRADE AND COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS

The General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS) opened tourism markets in different parts of the world while regional trade agreements (RTAs) facilitated cross-border service provision regionally. National commitments under such agreements can play a significant role in promoting tourism, including intraregional tourism among developing countries. By reducing trade barriers, these agreements enhance tourism gains. As of May 2009, 133 World Trade Organization members, including 29 LDCs, had made GATS commitments in tourism and travel-related services, more than in any other sector covered by GATS.

UNWTO member countries can voice their concerns with respect to GATS and RTAs. In 2001, several members — Bolivia, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama, Peru, and Venezuela — proposed a draft annex on tourism to reduce anti-competitive practices and improve use of information in the tourism sector. The draft annex proposes to tackle anti-competitive practices by adopting measures to prevent (a) abuse of market dominance; (b) discriminatory use of information networks; and (c) misleading or discriminatory use of information.

In 2004, a group of developing countries (Brazil, Colombia, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, India, Indonesia, Nicaragua, The Philippines, and Thailand) proposed several criteria to assess the extent of commercially meaningful market access and national treatment commitments on tourism services: (a) facilitation of movement of natural persons supplying services in tourism and recognition of their qualifications; (b) elimination of anti-competitive practices and unfair competition; (c) elimination of requirements for commercial presence; and (d) elimination of nationality and residency requirements. In 2007, Colombia, Mauritius, Morocco, Panama, Thailand, Ecuador, and Peru circulated a multilateral request for tourism services to 15 high-income developed and developing country members of UNWTO. It called for increasing the level of these agreements to reflect the status quo for tourism-related liberalization and the removal of restrictions on market access, national treatment and most-favored nation exemptions, and increased access for all modes of supply for tourism and travel-related services.

A growing array of regional trade agreements has stimulated services trade. Regional approaches to market access tend to be more far-reaching than GATS. The Southern African Development Community (SADC) adopted the Protocol on the Development of Tourism in 1998. It (a) optimizes resource usage through joint development of infrastructure; (b) involves small and micro-enterprises, local communities, women, and youth in tourism; (c) and facilitates travel through easing of visa restrictions. The protocol also provides for a regional body to market the SADC region as a collective tourism destination. The Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) fosters a coordinated approach for regional promotion and marketing of tourism. It encourages members to remove restrictions on tourist movement, promote regional tourist circuits, and coordinate tourism policies.

Regional tourism policy promotes joint ventures between local and foreign entrepreneurs, fosters conservation practices to ensure environmental sustainability, and links with sectors such as transportation and communications. Member countries of the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) cooperate to promote the region as a single destination and facilitate intra-ASEAN travel and freer tourism services trade. A working group on tourism and tourism-related services (e.g. business services, maritime transport, telecommunication, information and communication technology services) examines ways to strengthen regional tourism linkages. These and many other regional initiatives provide platforms for inter-state cooperation to assist developing countries in building regional tourism capacity, develop mutually supportive national tourism policies, and establish regional tourism circuits (UNCTAD, 2010).

WHY PLANNING IS IMPORTANT

Planning is multi-dimensional and integrative. The nature of sustainable tourism development requires planning and management that integrate interests and concerns. Tourism planning continues to be contentious and somewhat nebulous, because most government officials and tourism industry practitioners harbor their own definitions and parameters of the task.

There is significant evidence that destinations operate without strategic plans or do not implement the ones they do have. Consequently many sites have experienced deterioration. Some managers and decision-makers complain about being overwhelmed with plans and planning. Others argue that destinations require more regulation and planning in order to ensure that the goals of sustainable tourism can be met. Others still maintain that less planning and regulation would be best. There is no right answer to the level of planning that a particular situation calls for and clearly each societal context will determine what is appropriate. Although sustainable tourism calls for a high level of local involvement in planning and developing tourism, the amount and quality of resident participation will vary depending on the cultural and political factors in the destination. It is obviously useless to develop a sophisticated planning system if there is no political or community support for it.

It is also arguably a waste of resources to invest in a plan and then not implement it which is what happens to tourism plans around the world in significant numbers. Some practitioners such as Public Use Planning, an effort supported by UNESCO's World Heritage Center supports World Heritage sites to increase the implementation of their plans by making processes more participatory, more adaptive, and adopting technologies that promote continuous planning rather than one-time, expensive scientific studies that centralize control in the hands of experts (Kohl, 2011).

Traditional planning also tends to focus on developing regulations as opposed to suitable mechanisms for achieving planning objectives. The failure of traditional and rational approaches to planning can be attributed to four primary factors (United Nations, 1999).

1. Lack of flexibility. The logical, rational approach to planning generates rigorous, rigid plans incapable of adapting to changing conditions. If the external environment were actually static, then a detailed stepwise, scientific protocol could be implemented. But the environment is increasingly not static. Thus a dynamic approach enables a flexible, iterative, non-linear, on-going planning process to better adapt to changes.
2. Lack of strategic thinking and vision. Some researchers criticize traditional, rational planning that such plans lack leadership vision. Strategic visions by leadership (not technical planning

experts) increases the chance that stakeholders do not perceive the plan as merely an operational plan, but provides direction for achieving the organization's broad goals and interests.

3. Ineffective top-down planning. Top officials and external planning experts cannot capture an organization or community's diverse opinions, needs, and attitudes. Successful implementation of such a top-down plan is further inhibited by the lack of community support and involvement in the process, because the planning process is biased toward technical expertise of the consultants rather than the local and experiential knowledge of other stakeholders. Under these conditions, few if any stakeholders feel ownership for the plan and consequently choose not to be accountable and responsible for it.

4. No accountability. Another major impediment to planning has been the inability to link the aims of plan to implementation means. The lack of clear, easy-to-implement actions and responsibilities that might otherwise produce accountability for carrying out actions, deters implementation. A clearly defined relationship between the planning and implementation must exist before planning even begins.

DEVELOPING THE TOURISM MASTER PLAN

A master tourism plan is comprehensive and wide-ranging, while thematic plans may focus particular issues such as a business plan, security plan, or forestry management plan. Master plans use different planning horizons. Some plan out five years (perhaps to coincide with national planning cycles), or may use longer horizons. Some may not use a horizon at all, rather they describe desired futures. Other differences in approach may include the flexibility with which a plan can be updated; incentives and technical assistance for planning stakeholders; benefits desired; integration with tourism-related activities; certainty of site prescription; supervision; regulation and strategy support.

The degree to which a plan integrates with national or regional plans influence the degree of leverage proposed policies might muster by tapping into broader resources. Tourism plans might reference ecological sustainability, environmental conservation, cultural heritage conservation, and sustainable development of heritage resources.

A generalized table of contents might include an analysis of principal stakeholders; principal responsibilities; regional cooperation; policy framework; roles and functions of the private and public sectors; infrastructure; tourism services; visitor attractions; development implications (economic, environmental, and socio-cultural); and the principal means of securing implementation, including financing and investment; incentives; marketing; promotion; tourism information systems; tourism awareness programs; and human resources development.

LAND USE PLANNING

In order to implement tourism development proposals at various scales (international, national, regional, destination and site), a suitable land use plan may be necessary. It is important to recognize that many countries may have land use strategies that are unevenly enforced and lack local support. In some cases, there may not yet exist policy. There are four widely accepted approaches to land use planning (United Nations, 1999):

1. Blueprint planning presupposes full and exact implementation of that which the blueprint proposes. Such an expectation is unrealistic, because no plan and no person ever enjoy complete information within a completely controlled environment. Such a plan type is too inflexible for anything more complex than particular constructions.
2. Regulatory planning relies upon performance standards and codes.
3. Market-driven planning is planning based on actual market and customer feedback. It is best suited to individual projects or entrepreneurial ventures, rather than entire communities or regions.
4. A systems-driven approach to planning has become more common, especially as situations grow increasingly complex. This approach includes review, monitoring, and adjustment as circumstances change. The land use planning system most likely will combine the compatible elements of the systems-driven methodology and the regulatory approach to planning. In many cases, the control system for land use planning derives from standard European or North American planning codes and then modified to meet needs of national governments. Usually, a land use planning control system enjoys legislative backing and control over land use and development.

For tourism development, the most important land use planning issues include tourism use zoning; accessibility to and travel within tourism districts or zones; development standards; design standards; traffic problems; quality of the built environment; landscaping of tourism developments; free-standing major developments; tourism attractions in rural environments; location of the major transportation nodes such as airports and bus terminals; and impact of tourism development on local architectural styles and important heritage areas.

To achieve a standard of land use development, the planning system should coordinate development-related infrastructure requirements; implement appropriate concepts and ideas in order to achieve acceptable, conventional standards for aesthetics, health, convenience, and diversity (of interest, experience, and culture); promote development where and when appropriate; provide the developer with prior knowledge of development requirements (in the form of performance standards); prevent prejudicial development (by type, location, timing, or quality); reflect acceptable changes in standards and fashions; and facilitate innovation (United Nations, 1999).

COMMON ISSUES OF SUSTAINABLE TOURISM PLANS

Aside from the planning process that one adopts, there are also a variety of topics that frequently apply to sustainable tourism planning. The following list shares some of the more common.

- Nations must assess their governance structure and tourism industry structure to prepare for the impending growth and manage the associated risks for environment and economy.
- Given that global travel and tourism is expected to grow more rapidly in coming years, sustainable tourism development and land use planning strategies must be incorporated into the mainstream national development agenda.
- Limits of acceptable change must be established to manage conditions such as visitor traffic, impacts on populations, biodiversity, and other resources
- Zoning regulations (terrestrial and marine) need to be established, for example, to address competing activities on a beach — vending, tourists, fishermen, etc.

- Health, safety, and security must be taken into consideration. For example, public safety programs to reduce crime against and harassment of visitors. In Costa Rica the US Embassy lobbied the government to allow Americans to carry only photocopies of their passport around the country since so many passports had been stolen. The government agreed and applied the policy to all tourists.
- Means to disseminate visitor information
- Quality standards and certification to ensure that tourism products are of quality and incorporate sustainability principles
- Strategies for climate change adaptation given concerns about sea level rise, drought, more intense hurricanes, flooding, etc.
- Balance between cruise tourism with overnight tourism, leakage, getting more from the cruise industry, dock facilities, etc.
- Linkages with local communities to ensure more equitable distribution of tourism benefits
- Competitive environment marked by more demanding, informed, and discerning customers and the application of rapidly evolving information technologies
- Energy security in the face of volatile energy prices
- Green investments need to be included in regular government budgets and public-private investment funding mechanisms need to be created. Example includes adding investments in sustainable tourism to stimulus packages, subsidies, or tax breaks.
- Employment, training, and tourism education i.e., build capacity within the industry and among tourism institutions to plan, manage, develop, implement, and monitor sustainable tourism
- Range and scope of education and training opportunities for youth, provide career guidance in the tourism sector, and support job creation in the industry
- Dependence on tourism at the destination
- Tourism marketing

SUMMARY

The tourism sector continues to be among the most dynamic in the world economy, offering many development opportunities. With strong backward and forward economic linkages, tourism can stimulate broad-based economic growth and become a rich source of development benefits, generating increased income, foreign exchange earnings, economic diversification and employment. However, tourism can also contribute to environmental degradation, dislocated communities, and fragile employment conditions. Effective tourism strategies, policies, regulation and enforcement mechanisms are thus needed, not only to generate economic benefits, but also to help prevent negative environmental and social impacts. Sustainable tourism development plans should set stringent infrastructure guidelines in order to meet environmental and social objectives. Building tourism supply capacities, stimulating entrepreneurship, and attracting investment are priorities for most developing countries. Many have successfully advanced the development of the tourism sector by mainstreaming tourism into national development and economic policymaking through comprehensive national tourism strategies. This involves creating effective policies for infrastructure, employment, trade, investment, education, quality standards, and cultural and environmental protection, with a view to achieving mutually supportive policies, sustainable development and pro-poor results. In addition, trade policies must be carefully elaborated to facilitate the passage of investors and tourists, globally and regionally, to national tourism markets.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

- On foreign direct investment, see the Sustainable Tourism in the International Development Assistance and Cooperation Environment Module.

Unit 6 — Biodiversity Conservation and Protected Areas

The great diversity of life — biodiversity — continuously evolves, but this evolution requires certain conditions. Today biodiversity faces many threats throughout the world. Tourism development, unfortunately, is one that can have a profound impact on a destination's natural systems. Biodiversity hotspots are areas that have especially high rates of not only different kinds of organisms, but endemic organisms that can be found nowhere else on the planet. Diverse and unique forms of life very often attract streams of visitors, but areas that boast such attributes are not the only destinations in need of protection. Travel-related businesses are in a unique position to protect natural capital, as well as improve guest experiences by supporting biodiversity and integrating conservation practices into their operations. In this unit we learn about biodiversity and its various threats, examine tourism's role in biological and ecosystem conservation, and explore linkages between sustainable tourism, natural resource management, and biodiversity conservation. For more information, see: www.conservation.org/where/priority_areas/hotspots/Pages/hotspots_main.aspx

WHY IS BIODIVERSITY IMPORTANT?

> Biodiversity goes beyond the provisioning for material welfare and livelihoods to include security, resiliency, social relations, health, and freedoms and choices (Millennium Ecosystem Assessment, 2005).

Biodiversity can be defined as the diversity of living organisms in all forms and levels of organization — including genes, species, and ecosystems as well as evolutionary and functional processes that bind them. Living processes combine with other chemical and physical cycles to provide clean air, productive ecosystems, fresh water, and fertile soil. Biodiversity serves as the fount for much of the organic living material from which we prospect and extract new medicines, materials, engineering models, foods, and other services.

Despite the prescriptions of the Green Revolution and its emissaries that promote the worldwide use of a very few crop varieties whose seeds are owned by just a few multinationals, historically agriculture throughout the world and in a climate changing future requires agrobiodiversity to find and develop crop varieties that can thrive in the infinite number of local conditions across the planet. Biodiversity also supports these crops through pollination, pest control, healthy soils, and complex multi-species agroforestry systems.

Cities depend upon forests and grasslands to secure drinking water. Intact ecosystems are critically important for the poor; 70% of the world's poorest people depend upon biodiversity for their survival, including for food, water, shelter, medicine and their livelihoods. Wild animals make up more than 20% of animal protein in over a third of the world's countries. In addition, biodiversity provides the natural infrastructure to buffer against, and enable adaptation to, climate change impacts (USAID, undated).

Lest we not forget, no discussion of biodiversity should limit itself simply to utilitarian terms. While diversity affords human ingenuity with options to fight new diseases, derive new foods in climate changing conditions, new models for medicines, biodiversity also holds a different place in light of Postmodernist values (see Unit 5). Many people who conserve other organisms do so because of ethical and aesthetic motivations. They imagine a frightful world with vastly diminished biodiversity, a world in which it might hardly worth being alive. They consider that other organic beings have as just as much endowed right to live and reproduce as we do. So while this unit's conversation may focus mostly on biodiversity use to humans, we should remember that the Modernist value of utility as an input to human progress is by far not the only lens through which we observe life on earth.

Threats to Biodiversity

The consequences of biodiversity loss are, unfortunately, already clear. Many animals and plants that once thrived have now approached the brink of extinction or already moved beyond. There are myriad anthropogenic threats to biodiversity. The most serious include:

- Habitat loss from construction and conversion to agriculture
- Invasion of non-native species
- Over-harvesting such as logging, hunting, and fishing
- Pollution such as acid deposition, pesticides, effluents, oil spills
- Climate change impacts include coral bleaching, desertification, sea-level rise, and temperature change that changes habitats

The result of these drivers is that species and communities of species become imperiled or extinct, ecological structures and processes become altered, and ecosystems can no longer sustain themselves in the form upon which we have come to depend. The cumulative result of all of this damage has been the unprecedented loss of biodiversity over the past 40 years. Since the turn of the 20th century, 75% of the world's plant genetic diversity for food and agriculture has been lost according to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. Current extinction rates are approaching 1,000 times the background rate, and may climb to over 10,000 times the background rate during the next century if present trends in species loss and climate change continue. As many as 70% of the world's known species are at risk of extinction by 2100 if global temperatures rise more than $3.5°$ Celsius. The consequences of this loss for human wellbeing are incalculable.

Biologists, conservationists, and many other professionals struggle to conserve Earth's biodiversity, but such responsibility exceeds the work of a few dedicated people. Their work is based on a few important concepts that influence how we perceive tourism's role in biodiversity conservation. Identifying, preventing, and mitigating threats are the cornerstone to most biodiversity conservation.

Biodiversity is more than the sum of its parts; maintaining individual species within an ecosystem is not enough to conserve biodiversity; scientists must also maintain key ecological processes in order to sustain biodiversity over time. Biodiversity is dynamic and in constant flux over various time scales. Biodiversity is influenced by underlying landforms; geology, topography, slope, aspect, elevation and rainfall all influence species variety and community composition.

TOURISM'S ROLE IN BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION

As tourism develops, its natural impact provokes growing concern. Tourist impact comes chiefly through transportation, land development, water consumption, excessive energy demand, and increased waste generation. Popular destinations often draw their attractiveness from environmentally sensitive areas, thus some places have become victims of their own attraction.

For many people, nature, beauty, and calm are the first criteria for choosing a destination, even before price. Uncontrolled tourism development has led to a degradation of many habitats, particularly along coasts and in mountains. Even as high-volume tourism has become more accessible through holiday packages, more and more tourists, typically Baby Boomers, have the resources to pay for more expensive low-volume, high quality experiences, particularly in natural and cultural sites (De Bono, Kluser, Giuliani, & Peduzz, 2005).

Because many visitors want to visit places rich in life, much of the world's tourism occurs in biodiversity hotspots. British ecologist Norman Myers defined the biodiversity hotspot concept in 1988 to address the dilemma that conservationists face: which areas are the most immediately important for conserving biodiversity? Over 50% of the world's plant species and 42% of all terrestrial vertebrate species are endemic to 34 biodiversity hotspots. These places hold especially high numbers of endemic species, yet their combined area of remaining habitat covers only 2.3% of the Earth's land surface. Each hotspot faces threats and has already lost at least 70% of its original vegetation (Conservation International, 2011).

To determine critically threatened areas, Conservation International developed a methodology for defining biodiversity hotspots, where urgent conservation actions may be required. They comprise the Earth's richest and most endangered terrestrial systems, which once covered more than 12% of the Earth's land area, and have cumulatively lost nearly 90% of their original vegetation. What now remains accounts for only 1.4% of the planet's terrestrial environment, giving refuge to more than 44% of all plant species and 35% of mammals, birds, reptiles, and amphibians. Most of these endangered terrestrial systems are also key regions for tourism: an increasing number of biodiversity hotspot countries are experiencing impressive tourism growth. Twenty three countries with hotspots recorded over 100% growth in the last 10 years. More than half of these receive over one million international tourists per year, while 13% of hot spot countries receive over five million international tourists per year (De Bono et al., 2005).

Examples of rising tourism in biodiversity hotspots:

- Galápagos, Ecuador has tripled visitors to 170,000 in last 10 years
- Eduardo Avaroa Reserve in Bolivia rose from 8,000 in 1999 to 60,000 in 2006
- Torres del Paine, Chile increased from a few thousand a year in the 1990s to 117,000 in 2006

But biodiversity hotspots are not the only places where the threats of tourism must be considered. In many parts of the world, tourism threatens water supply, particularly in dry, sunny holiday destinations where water resources are often relatively scarce, such as in Guanacaste, Costa Rica. Furthermore, water infrastructure necessary to supply this very highly seasonal demand (reservoirs, dams, aqueducts, pipelines) remains underutilized during the rest of the year. Energy consumption of the global tourism sector could reach five million GWh per year, close to the yearly total energy use of Japan. Consumption levels are linked to the number of luxury of hotels: one-star hotels consume about 57 kWh per m^2 per year, and four-star hotels up to 380 kWh per m^2 per year (IFEN, 2000).

Uncontrolled tourism pressures many of the planet's sensitive locations, especially in small island developing states, where low-impact energy sources such as solar panels are often available only in restricted quantities, and where seawater desalination can consume significant amounts of fuel. Tourism pressure is extraordinarily high in countries where tourists outnumber local residents.

Tourism development often takes place in a rapid and unplanned manner, resulting in drastic landscape transformation in a very short period of time, including deforestation and drainage of wetlands. Such habitat disruption can result in significant biodiversity losses (De Bono et al., 2005).

Travel industry businesses rely directly on natural attractions. So not only is it in the best interest of travel providers to protect that natural beauty and wonder, but it also makes good business sense. More often than not, tour operators and other travel industry leaders can have a positive impact when it comes to protecting the environment. We will talk more about the special role of the travel professional at the end of this unit. First, let's look at how tourism planning can aid conservation.

It is important to note that there exist tourism business models that do not value conservation and sustainability. CEMDA, the environmental law non-profit in Mexico, (Summit Foundation, 2008) argues that some Spanish hotel chains, such as ones currently in Cancun, calculate their profits based on a business lifetime for their hotels of some 15 years after which those markets become saturated and lose value, so they sell their hotels to condominium managers. If this is true, then this model does not value long-term sustainability since the developers plan to move on to a new location.

CONSERVATION ACTION PLANNING

Conservation Action Planning (CAP) is a method for defining conservation targets and strategies to manage them, as seen in Figure 6.1.

Figure 6.1. Conservation Action Planning (Conservation Measures Partnership, 2007)

CAP guides conservation practitioners to analyze the conservation situation of a place at some scale, identify the conservation targets of importance, define threats, choose actions to conserve those targets, implement the actions, measure the outcomes of their actions, learn from these outcomes, and refine actions over time (The Nature Conservancy, 2006). This is the basic formula for all of adaptive management.

Questions that travel professionals should consider when they undertake CAP include:

- Which stakeholders should be involved in the planning?
- Which elements of biodiversity need attention and their status?
- Which threats exist and what is their importance?
- Which specific outcomes do we want to achieve?
- Which actions should we take to achieve the desired outcomes?
- How do we know if our actions are working?
- How can we learn and adapt our actions to achieve broader impact?

CAP practitioners call on any strategy that might mitigation the threats to target elements. In some cases, those strategies might involve tourism, although more commonly tourism is seen as the threat,

not the solution. Nevertheless, in such cases it is seen as a mitigation strategy, tourism stakeholders must be involved. Any social benefits that arise from tourism, of course, would depend on its design.
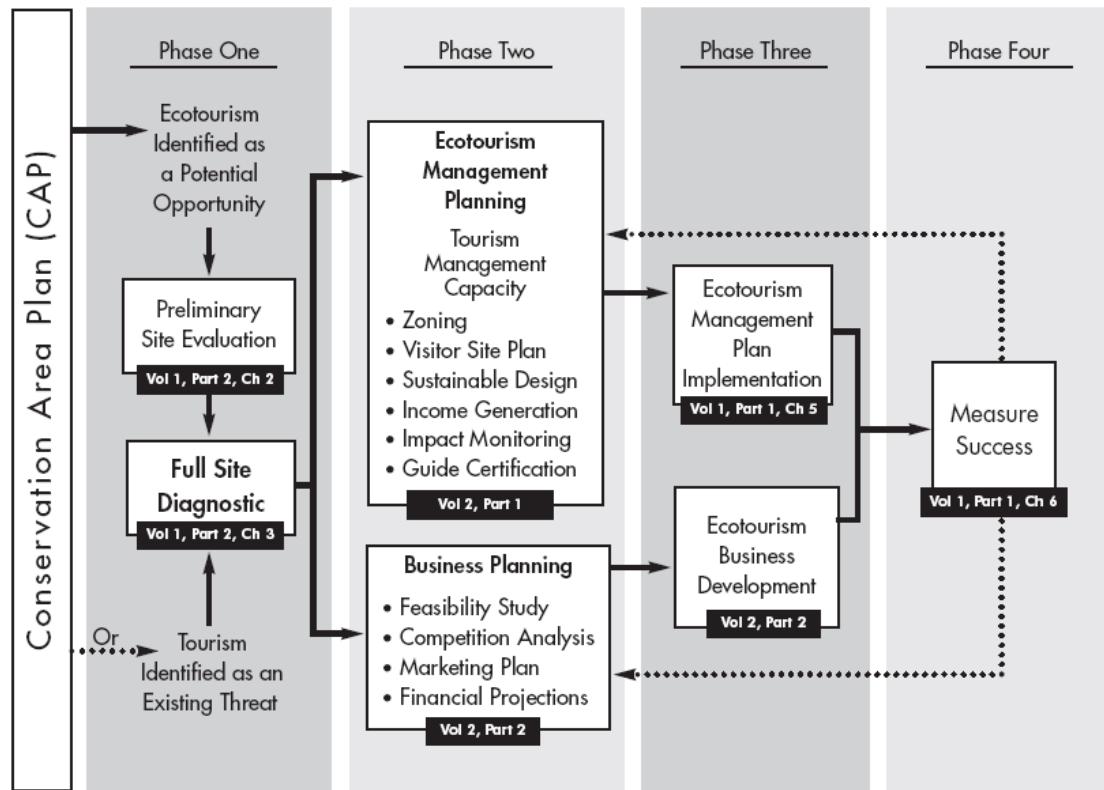

Figure 6.2. Phases of Tourism Development Planning in Protected Areas (USAID, 2011)

There are four phases of tourism development that should be considered for the CAP. First the CAP identifies tourism as an opportunity. When this happens, then we can begin with Phase One, when a preliminary site evaluation is performed. Alternately, CAP identifies tourism as a threat and goes directly into a full diagnostic assessment. Phase Two incorporates ecotourism management planning for tourism management capacity, including elements such as zoning, visitor site plan, sustainable design, income generation, impact monitoring, and guide certification; it also involves business planning, which includes a feasibility study, competition analysis, marketing plan, and financial projections. In Phase Three the ecotourism management plan is implemented and the business is developed. Phase Four is devoted to formal measurement of ecotourism's progress both as a business and also as a strategy to mitigate a threat or as a threat mitigated by proper management.

UNDERTAKING A PRELIMINARY SITE EVALUATION

In Phase One, the preliminary site evaluation helps to determine how ecotourism might address the conservation threat. Questions that should be taken into consideration for the evaluation include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Are there potential natural or cultural attractions in the area? For Example:
   a. Endemic or rare species, e.g., flightless Galapagos cormorant, Komodo dragon
   b. Charismatic species, e.g., Toco toucan, scarlet macaw, whale shark
   c. Healthy charismatic habitats, e.g., coral reef, primary rain forest
   d. High indices of bird or mammal diversity, e.g., 300+ bird species, or 100+ mammal species
   e. Spectacular geomorphological formations, e.g., high or voluminous waterfalls, caverns
   f. Significant cultural events and sites, e.g., Mayan temples, Inti Raymi festival

2. Do visitors have adequate access to attractions?
3. Can attractions be protected acceptably from visitor impacts?
4. Can security be effectively ensured by local authorities?
5. Does the protected area have sufficient management capacity to effectively manage the site?
6. Is there a reasonable expectation that initial funding to develop ecotourism could be available?

7. Are protected area managers, tour operators, and communities willing to conform to ecotourism guidelines, i.e., low impact, small groups, impact monitoring, working with and actively involving communities?
8. Could visitation reduce threats to conservation targets?

ESTABLISHING AND MONITORING INDICATORS

Indicators help us measure key issues such as damage to natural, cultural, and socio-economic resources. Sustainable tourism indicators are typically categorized as economic, environmental, and social. Indicators can also be classified as to how they measure changes as quantitative or qualitative.

The UNWTO uses the following criteria for selecting indicators (UNWTO, 2004):

- Relevance of the indicator to the selected issue
- Feasibility of obtaining and analyzing needed information
- Credibility of information and reliability for users of the data
- Clarity to users
- Comparability over time and across jurisdictions or regions

When creating a performance monitoring and evaluation plan, it is important to identify specific goals and targets; clearly articulate intervention hypotheses (causal chains); develop indicators for predicted changes; and describe how the project will collect, analyze, and use the information for program management and decision-making.

What follows are some examples of conservation indicators:
- Number of people with increased income derived from sustainable natural resource management and conservation as a result of US Government assistance.
- Percentage increase in conservation funding from travel philanthropy programs
- Increase in conservation funding through increased protected area entrance fee collection
- Number of hectares in which tourism volunteer assistance operates
- Number of policies, laws, agreements, or regulations promoting sustainable natural resource management and conservation
- Number of participants in US Government-supported training in natural resource management
- Metric tons of CO_2 equivalent offset as a result of travel philanthropy and carbon offset programs

CONSERVATION FINANCE

Tourism development plans should include cost-benefit analysis of their proposals. There are many tools and instruments for financing biodiversity conservation through tourism. The direct financing generates revenue directly from tourism activities. Several common approaches include taxes, hotel and airport surcharges, recreational permits, entrance and concession fees, and operating licenses.

BOX 6.1

NAMIBIAN CONSERVANCIES PROMOTE ECOTOURISM

Namibia has 26 parks and reserves that protect rare and endangered species. This has been very important for conservation since almost half of all species in Namibia are of some conservation concern. The conservancies (local protected area category) have helped to expand migration corridors and increase the perceived value of wildlife which has helped to mitigate human-wildlife conflict and increase ecotourism development. Many wildlife populations are now rebounding including the black rhino, elephant, lion, and cheetah.

The communal conservancy tourism sector is now a dynamic and integral part of Namibia's tourism industry. There are currently 44 joint ventures working with conservancies countrywide. This total includes 29 joint venture lodges and campgrounds, another four that operate without any formal agreement, and 11 that are in active negotiation with conservancies.

Four different types of communal conservancy tourism operations or ventures are featured here:

Arts and Crafts
Namibian artisans fabricate many crafts from natural resources which include basketry, beadwork, carvings, tapestry, and textile weaving. These traditional handicrafts generate income for residents, especially women.

Community Campsites
Several community-owned campsites exist throughout Namibia. They provide an accessible and affordable option for travelers to explore Namibia, and they provide revenue for the communities.

Joint Ventures
Some 29 joint venture lodges and campsites operate in partnership with more than 30 communal conservancies. They provide travelers with a range of options from luxurious eco-lodges to more rustic tent camps. This in turn provides adjacent communities with more than 1,000 jobs and a secure revenue stream.

Traditional Villages
A number of villages openly share their traditions with outsiders. This helps to conserve Namibia's cultural heritage while providing a source of employment and revenue for local communities.

Since direct financing is usually insufficient to finance area management, managers must seek other sources such as grants or government funding. Another source is payment for ecosystem services, in which beneficiaries of ecosystem services, pay for those services. Services might be for water storage by forests, carbon storage by forests, water cleansing and storm water surge management by wetlands, hurricane protection by mangroves, pollination by forest insects.

BOX 6.2

LA RUTA MOSKITIA, HONDURAS

La Ruta Moskitia, located in Honduras's two-million-acre Rio Plátano Biosphere Reserve, a UNESCO World Heritage site, became a model of how sustainable tourism development can provide training and education, support infrastructure development, and foster cultural preservation and environmental awareness. Founded in 2003 in partnership with the non-governmental organization RARE Conservation for Tropical Conservation (www.rareconservation.org), La Ruta Moskitia became the area's first indigenously operated NGO run by a board of directors comprised entirely of community members. The project consisted of community-run ecolodges and tours, with a focus on long-term commitment to an authentic travel experience grounded in quality service. With a US$189,000 grant from the United Nations Development Program's Small Grants Program, five communities began capacity and infrastructure development. Four community leaders were trained as "ecotourism technicians" and returned to their communities to identify future ecotourism opportunities and stakeholders, and to assist with the formation of tourism associations and boards in the initial phase of the project. The project included a commitment to facilities built with local, legal, non-endangered renewable materials. Twenty-six farmers and fishermen were selected and trained for three months as naturalist guides, and in 2006 a test group of clients ("fan trip") identified improvements. La Ruta Moskitia opened in 2006, with 82% of the revenues going directly to communities. Clients paid each individual community directly for services, and could subsequently see how their money benefited the community and supported environmental and cultural conservation. The remaining 18% of monies generated supported RARE and a conservation fund, expected to raise US$50,000. As the project had grown, community members expressed a growing appreciation for the area's natural resources — an appreciation that they themselves learned from their guests. Community elders worked through La Moskitia to reclaim the area's past biodiversity and provide greater educational opportunities for their children into the future.

Payment for carbon sequestration can be used to meet carbon market caps on the amount of emissions permitted by a given industry. In order to reach reduction targets firms can buy carbon credit offsets from farmers or forest owners that plant trees or protect forests that sequester carbon. Though the United States is not a signatory of the Kyoto Protocol which calls for this kind of offsetting, there are several voluntary carbon markets in the US and mandatory ones in Europe. Companies can buy credits with accredited land managers in developing countries (FAO, 2010). There numerous projects in Costa Rica (see for example www.ClearSkyClimateSolutions.com) that cater to such companies as well as a highly acclaimed government-sponsored payment for forest services program financed through gas taxes that pays priority landowners to conserve their forests.

THE SPECIAL ROLE OF THE TRAVEL PROFESSIONAL

Educating visitors may be the single most important and long-lasting way that travel professionals can help sustain biodiversity and ecosystem conservation. By training staff, and incorporating knowledge and respect for wildlife into the travel experience, travel professionals can enrich travelers' experiences.

To protect biodiversity, tourism companies can contribute to local conservation projects. Providing travelers with the opportunity also to participate in a project can be very effective and financially successful. Perhaps the most famous example is Linblad Expeditions Galapagos Conservation Fund which has raised over
$2 million entirely dedicated to the conservation of the islands.

Such visitor philanthropy projects do not just receive financial donations but also in-kind and volunteer time, among possible contributions. The key to the success of such a program is to motivate visitors through quality interpretive storytelling and then provide them the opportunity to contribute in the moment of highest emotional involvement, just before they return home (Kohl, 2002).

SUMMARY

The importance of biological diversity to human society is hard to overstate. Tourism is a biodiversity dependent industry and recent trends and forecasts point to a spreading of tourism to new destinations. Although this may bring opportunities for economic development and poverty alleviation, it will also introduce the environmental impacts of tourism to areas which may hitherto have been unaffected by tourism development.

Much of the world's tourism occurs in biologically diverse geographical areas. Travel professionals are therefore in a unique position to steward conservation strategies. They have the opportunity to educate guests about conservation and involve them in projects by working with local partners. Tourism contributes to biodiversity conservation through financial contributions, strengthening protected area management capacity, and sharing benefits with local communities. Tourism is not an economic panacea but it does contribute to diversified economies while protecting biodiversity.

HOW YOU CAN HELP

- The Hawaii Department of Land and Natural Resources provides an overview of ways in which you can help conserve coastal environments: http://state.hi.us/dlnr/chair/pio/piocontips.htm

- Mongabay.com gives insightful examples of the effects of world deforestation and offers advice on how to stop and reverse the destruction: http://news.mongabay.com/2005/1115-forests.html

- The American Museum of Natural History's Center for Biodiversity and Conservation website contains links to information on how you can learn more about protecting and conserving biodiversity: www.research.amnh.org/biodiversity

- The Monterey Bay Aquarium's Seafood Watch is an excellent resource for restaurants and individuals alike. The site offers regional seafood guides, printable pocket-size shopping and dining guides, and an action guide; it also includes explanations of how the fish are caught or farmed and the reasons for their listing location in the guide: www.mbayaq.org/cr/seafoodwatch.asp

FOR MORE INFORMATION

- On developing an ecotourism business, see the Sustainable Tourism Enterprise Development Module
- On generating funding for an ecotourism business, see the Sustainable Investment and Finance for Tourism Module

Unit 7 — Collaborative Mechanisms and Social Networks

Knowledge cannot be separated from the networks that create, use, and transform it. The last two decades have witnessed rapid intensification and evolution of networking activities, driven by information and communication technologies as well as globalization. These networking activities and technologies make it possible for individuals to exchange data, information, and knowledge within mere moments; work collaboratively; and share their views much more quickly and broadly than ever before. This unit will examine the various methodologies for facilitating effective stakeholder communication through collaborative mechanisms and social networks.

WHY COLLABORATE?

By working together stakeholders are better able to solve problems and take advantage of opportunities. The more stakeholders collaborate the more resources and ideas they can bring to bear. In complex times when any single institution does not have the resources to achieve all that it must and does not have all the ideas or political support it requires, it must work with others. Only through collaboration then do other stakeholders build ownership in a plan, a project, or an idea, and only through this feeling do they choose responsibility and accountability for its success. Collaboration is particularly relevant to achieving competitive and sustainable tourism for two reasons:

1. Tourism as an industry is very fragmented. The product that provides a visitor experience opportunity is made of many elements supplied by many providers.
2. The issues associated with sustainable tourism are complex and touches the interests of many stakeholders. To mount sustainable tourism, then, requires an integrative approach to its related stakeholder community.

The concept of social visibility is meaningful here. Many organizations and enterprises recognize that by investing in communications, linkages, and networks with others — and the support and exchange of ideas this brings — they are investing in their future. Often the motive for multi-stakeholder collaboration is simply that the task of delivering sustainable tourism is too complex, so it is essential to work together (UNWTO & SNV, 2010b).

Table 7.1. Sustainability Aims and Implications for Collaboration
(adapted from UNWTO & SNV, 2010b)

AIM	IMPLICATIONS FOR COLLABORATION	EXAMPLES
Economic viability to ensure competitiveness of tourism destinations and enterprises, so that they continue to prosper in the long term.	• Governments (national and local) collaborate with the private sector to understand their needs and to provide the right conditions for trading. • Public sector and educational bodies support industry through research, training, and business support services. • Local authorities and private sector work together on destination marketing. • Private sector tour operators deliver access to markets for community-based tourism.	ISTOS — coordinated provision of advice, training and other support for businesses by bringing educational bodies and business associations into partnership. Bhutan — Tour Operators Association provides market access for a community-based tourism project.
Local prosperity of host destination, maximizing the proportion of visitor spending retained locally.	• Collaborate to develop linkages between tourism and other sectors (e.g. agriculture) to strengthen economic integration and local supply chains. • Improve business-to-business clusters and networking. • Collaborate between suppliers and markets to create packages.	EUROTEX — business clustering and network support to strengthen income earned locally from handicraft sales. Nicaragua — integrated tourism planning and product development at destination level.
Employment quality, including pay level, service conditions and availability without any kind of discrimination	• Focused work between the private and public sectors at a destination to create products and marketing campaigns to extend the season, thus increasing number of permanent jobs. • Government, companies, and trade unions collaborate to establish labor regulations and practices. • Collaboration between private sector enterprises, representative bodies, and vocational training organizations, supported by government HR/ training policies, to improve skills.	Stakeholders work together to improve training, e.g., working group on standardizing hospitality training in Ghana.
Social equity to seek widespread and fair distribution of economic and social tourism benefits from tourism, including improved job opportunities, income, and services available to the poor.	• NGOs/civil society and international agencies work with governments and the tourism sector to integrate tourism development work into poverty-reduction policies. • The above bodies support collaboration between local and indigenous communities, women's groups, etc. on improving benefits to	Pafuri — employ indigenous Makuleke and channel revenue to community projects. Bhutan — specific village tourism services designed to generate community revenue. Ghana — participation by SNV in national level

	poor people through direct employment in tourism. • Strengthen collaboration between enterprises and indigenous communities in which they are work, using business and market expertise to deliver a range of community benefits. • Collaborate between national and local government, private enterprise, and local communities to ensure community benefits from new tourism infrastructure.	collaboration to promote pro-poor tourism policies. Nicaragua — local stakeholders from poor communities collaborate with local NGOs and SNV.
Visitor fulfillment to provide a safe, satisfying, and fulfilling experience for visitors, available to all without discrimination.	• Collaborate between government agencies and tourism enterprises to set, inspect, and deliver quality standards. • Engage consumer groups of all kinds. • Collaborate with civil society groups on advice, standards, and information for people with disabilities. • Collaborate between private sector and local communities to improve quality of local products and services sold and stimulate positive interaction between tourists and host communities.	ISTOS — promote quality standards and certification amongst tourism businesses. Bowland — attend to countrywide access for people with disabilities using advice from knowledgeable bodies and user groups.
Local control to empower local communities to plan and decide about tourism management and development in their area, in consultation with other stakeholders.	• Involve local and indigenous communities in relevant collaborative processes concerning tourism planning and development. • Capacity building to ensure effective participation by local groups. • Strengthen local democratic processes and effective representation of community perspectives. • Attend to gender and minority issues.	Bhutan — extensive preparatory work and project engagement amongst indigenous communities. Pafuri — contractual partnership created with Makuleke. ISTOS — local Agenda 21 processes in three islands. Nicaragua — deep participation process with communities.
Community wellbeing to strengthen the quality of life in local communities, including social structures and access to resources, amenities, and life support systems, avoiding any form of social degradation or exploitation.	• Collaborate between local government, community groups, and tourism enterprises to manage visitors. • Community participation to provide feedback on tourism impacts. • Local tourism enterprises work with civil society to make facilities available to local people. • Tourism enterprises collaborate with civil society to combat anti-social behavior, backed by government.	Costa Rica — extensive collaboration between civil society, private sector groups, and government on campaign to combat sex tourism.

	• Tour operators collaborate to provide information to guests on cultural sensitivities in advance of travel. • Collaborate between tourism enterprises and NGOs to set up voluntary giving schemes for community development projects.	
Cultural richness to respect and enhance the heritage, culture, and traditions of host communities.	• Collaborate on conservation of cultural heritage sites between local government, site managers, neighboring communities, local tourism enterprises, and tour operators. • Links between tourism enterprises, cultural NGOs, education bodies, and local communities to strengthen representation of local culture in the tourism sector through design, local produce, cuisine, handicrafts, events, etc. • Collaborate between civil society and local communities on conservation and heritage interpretation. • Tour operators facilitate inter-cultural understanding between visitors and local communities.	EUROTEX — linking tour operators with handicrafts as a form of cultural heritage. Nicaragua — project development using coffee as a central theme. Bowland — integrated approach to interpretation of natural and cultural heritage involving local stakeholders.
Physical integrity to enhance the quality of urban and rural landscapes	• Cross-sector collaboration at national and local level to strengthen spatial and land use planning. • Work between scientific and educational organizations, government, communities, and tourism industry to improve awareness of climate change consequences on tourism. • Collaborate between local government, communities, and private sector to develop design guidelines for new tourism developments. • Collaborate between tour operators, communities, and conservation interests to reduce physical impact of tourists.	Bowland — link tourism and conservation planning. Nicaragua — local communities involved in fight against deforestation.
Biological diversity to support the conservation of natural areas, habitats and wildlife.	• Link tourism, environment ministries, and civil society organizations. • Collaborate between protected area managers, tourism interests, civil society (conservation bodies), and local communities to prepare and implement sustainable tourism	Pafuri — wildlife conservation benefits result from collaboration between private enterprise, national parks, and local community. Bhutan — form partnerships between national parks,

	strategies for protected areas. • Encourage local communities to support conservation without sustainable tourism benefits, supported by private enterprise, NGOs, and protected area authorities and local government. • Collaborate between tourism enterprises and civil society to raise income from tourism to support conservation.	communities, and tour operators leading to conservation awareness.
Resource efficiency to minimize use of scarce and non-renewable resources in the development and operation of tourism facilities and services.	• National and local government and tourism industry address water and energy supplies in tourism planning. • Link government, tourism industry, NGOs, and educational bodies to promote and certify private environmental management practice. • Work with tourism enterprises to encourage visitors to reduce water and energy use.	Bowland — promote environmental certification amongst tourism enterprises in protected areas.
Environmental purity to minimize air, water and land pollution by tourism enterprises and visitors.	• National and local governments, civil society, and tourism industry collaborate to promote less polluting modes of transport and investment in appropriate infrastructure. • Collaborate between tourism industry, government, and scientific community to research new transportation technologies. • Collaborate between local government, transportation operators, and tourism enterprises to improve tourist information on transportation options and promote carbon offsetting schemes. • Collaborate between tourism enterprises and local government on management practices and infrastructure to reduce, manage, and treat waste and sewerage. • Initiatives between tourism enterprises, local communities, and tourists to clean up local environments.	Bhutan — build capacity with community on environmental cleanliness and maintenance. Bowland — develop and promote public transportation, walking, cycling, and horse riding.

FORMS AND FUNCTIONS OF NETWORKS

Over the past decade, there has been increased emphasis on networks in our society. Their success in creating channels of communication between geographically separated individuals and organizations has been fueled by globalization and facilitated by technological innovation. However, few studies have examined the nature of networks, and their impacts on management and strategic development.

What we do know about the concept of a network is that it has six important functions. First, it acts as a filter that organizes and emphasizes various pieces of information. Second, a network is an amplifier, which disseminates relatively unknown ideas and makes them more widely recognized. Third, a network invests in its members and provides them with the resources they need to perform their duties. Fourth, the network brings all different types of people together; this is its convening function. Fifth, a network builds community in that it aligns those with common values, objectives, and opinions, and builds trust among formerly disconnected people. Sixth and lastly, the network is a forum for learning and facilitating, assisting members in performing their duties more efficiently and effectively.

All networks share some common internal and external characteristics. To learn more about a particular network, we may want to ask the following questions:

1. What roles and functions does the network perform?
2. What behaviors and processes govern its short and long-term functioning?
3. Where are the network and its members located, both physically and in terms of the focus on their interests?
4. Who are the network's members and how are they related to each other?
5. Does the network, including its members, have the capacity and skills necessary to perform its functions?
6. Does the network have access to the resources needed to function?
7. Does the network have appropriate communication strategies to perform its functions, both amplifying messages outwardly and sharing messages and information internally?
8. What are the external influences affecting the network
9. Is the network capable of managing changes or crises in its internal and external environment? Can it manage these alone or does it depend on others?

For additional details on applying a humanitarian approach to network functions, go to
www.odi.org.uk/resources/download/579.pdf

How to Build Networks of Practice

Today, less and less of an organization's knowledge resides within its formal boundaries. Networks play increasingly significant roles in how individuals, groups, and organizations learn. Therefore, the study of networks of practice is a prime interest for both researchers and practitioners.

John Seely Brown and Paul Duguid originated the concept of networks of practice. The notion refers to the overall set of informal, emergent networks that facilitate information exchange toward practice-related goals. These networks range from communities of practice where learning occurs to electronic or virtual networks of practice (Serrat, 2009a).

They differ from work groups created by formal organizational mandate. The underlying implication is that, to be competitive, organizations should promote participation in both traditional communities of practice and networks of practice and stimulate interaction between the two.

BOX 7.1

Principles for Supporting Networks

In order to operate, networks need long-term investments and support. What follows are 10 principles that stakeholders and decision makers can consider when setting out to build and further support networks (Serrat, 2009a).

1. Networks are complex. There are no templates for success and one should expect setbacks.
2. Work with networks to agree on their functional balance and support that balance.
3. Interventions to develop a network cannot be conceptualized as projects driven by a "logical framework" — other approaches such as outcome mapping can provide a better alternative.
4. Support networks to function as networks with and through their members rather than to deliver specific services that could be delivered by their members or other types of organizations.
5. Do not treat networks as traditional non-government or civil society organizations, and do not allow funds to undermine community-building functions.
6. When networks carry out a funding role, ensure they have the necessary skills and that other functions are not affected.
7. Network support time frames should consider the different stages of network development.
8. Appropriate support for the network and its members is needed to develop the right competencies and skills to collaborate.
9. A culture of knowledge and learning is a cornerstone of network development.
10. Sustainability should be judged against the needs of the members of the network.

Networks are ordinarily founded on the aphorism that we can accomplish more by working together than by working alone. Successful networks produce better sense of belonging, ownership, and understanding; improved outcomes that would not otherwise be attained; and higher performance and productivity. To achieve such benefits, the facilitating organization pays attention to the forms and functions of networks, establishes rules of engagement, circumscribes and promotes success factors, and evaluates operations with knowledge performance metrics.

NETWORK ASSESSMENT

Networks need to be monitored and evaluated from two perspectives: the effectiveness and the efficiency of the network. What follows are some simple network assessment tools based on the four common design principles of structure, context, support infrastructure and delivery.

What networks need to do to achieve success:
- Networks need clear governance agreements to set objectives, identify functions, define membership structures, make decisions, and resolve conflicts.
- The larger the numbers involved, the greater the political weight that will be given to networks.
- Representation is a key source of legitimacy and thereby influence.
- The quality of knowledge products and services affects both the credibility and legitimacy of arguments.
- Good packaging of knowledge products is central to effective communication.
- Influence often requires persistence, sustained pressure over a long period.
- The membership of key influential figures in the policy arena will strengthen networks.
- Informal links are critical to achieving many network objectives.
- By their nature, networks add most value when they complement, rather than duplicate, official structures.
- Good use of information and communication technology and other networking opportunities.

There are several criteria by means of which knowledge-sharing programs and activities can be assessed. Here is a sample process for network assessment (Serrat 2009a and b):

Member consultation. Preliminary information on the reason for the assessment: Is it self-directed or conducted by an external consultant? Is it being done at the request of members or coordinators or donors? Discussion with members on what the goals and objectives of the assessment should be; request for relevant documentation.

Documentation review. The method in which the network creates proposals and reports to its donors. How minutes of network meetings and conference calls are conducted. How to use contracts with members, describing activities to be undertaken as part of receiving funding for participating in the network. This includes workshop reports, memorandums of understanding, and governance agreements.

Interview protocol with individual members. Questions are framed to elicit from members signs of changes in research capacity; relationships with decision makers or with other network members; and other changes resulting from their participation in the network.

Interview protocol with people/organizations the network is seeking to influence. Questions are framed to elicit indications of whether the network's knowledge products and services are relevant to the needs of those people/organizations; how they engage with the network.

Network meeting plenary session discussion: An Appreciative Inquiry approach orients the assessment process towards positive experiences: What is working? What has provided excitement, enrichment, and information to one's action? At a network meeting, in plenary, members are asked to share their thoughts and stories: Describe the best experience you had with the network. When did you feel most excited about the network? When did you feel you accomplished something valuable as a result of being part of the network? What did you value the most about the network?

Draft review of assessment and recommendations. This should be circulated to all members for comment, verification of findings.

Assessment report work plan for response to recommendations. The report should not be the end of the assessment. Part of the assessment process should include the development of the work plan for the next phase of the network.

Assessment Items	AGREE	UNSURE	DISAGREE
The network has a clear purpose and direction.			
The network has a realistic timetable for delivery.			
The network members understand and are committed to improvement.			
The network is widely inclusive both in the range of disciplines involved and their seniority.			
Network members demonstrate trust, respect, and mutual support.			
Network members are supported by their host organizations.			
Members access and use technology appropriately to support their networking activities.			
There are clear channels of communication among team members.			
Network members share their learning with others.			
Network members ask each other for support and receive it.			
The network delivers success and demonstrates it.			

Figure 7.1. Network Assessment Tool (Serrat, 2009a)

Table 7.2. Evaluation Framework for Knowledge-Sharing Programs (Serrat, 2009a)

CRITERIA	INDICATORS (ILLUSTRATIVE)	EVIDENCE (ILLUSTRATIVE)
Relevance	• Programs and activities anchored in corporate and country priorities • Programs and activities built on Asia Development Bank comparative advantage • Institutional support aligned with knowledge-sharing strategy	• Knowledge-sharing strategic objectives including client and audience, well defined and linked to corporate, country, sector, and thematic strategies, and core business processes
Quality and Timeliness of Knowledge Products and Services	• Aggregated knowledge is tailored and timed to client needs, clearly presented, technically sound, and state-of-the-art	• Staff, client, and expert reviews and surveys ADB content management processes
Accessibility and Reach of Tacit and Codified Knowledge	• Intended users/clients have ready access to up-to-date knowledge and expertise needed to do their jobs	• Dissemination tracking, usability testing, usage monitoring of published and online knowledge and information and knowledge services • Staff, client participation in knowledge sharing events • Staff, client feedback surveys, focus groups, reviews
Utility	• Knowledge products and knowledge-sharing activities incorporated into core business processes • Shared knowledge adapted and applied by clients in policies, programs, and institutional developments • Lessons learned and good practices captured and feedback to ADB and client	• Knowledge strategy articulated in country partnership strategies and operations • Knowledge products and activities built into staff and client (team) learning activities • Staff and client feedback surveys • Program and activity self-assessments • Self- and independent assessments of knowledge-sharing process in country assistance programs, and lending and non-lending services
Likely Impact	• ADB and client knowledge bases and capacities enhanced • Targeted improvements in ADB portfolio performance Interim and longer-term development objectives achieved	• Ongoing knowledge assessments • Self- and independent assessments of program and activity outcomes relative to stated objectives
Cost Effectiveness	• Programs and activities carried out without more resources than necessary to achieve objectives	• Tracking and benchmarking of the costs of programs or activities

MANAGING STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS AND SOCIAL CAPITAL

Important to the management of strategic communications is the concept of social capital, defined as relationships and bonds among different people and groups. Social capital is crucial because it increases the likelihood of system-wide change.
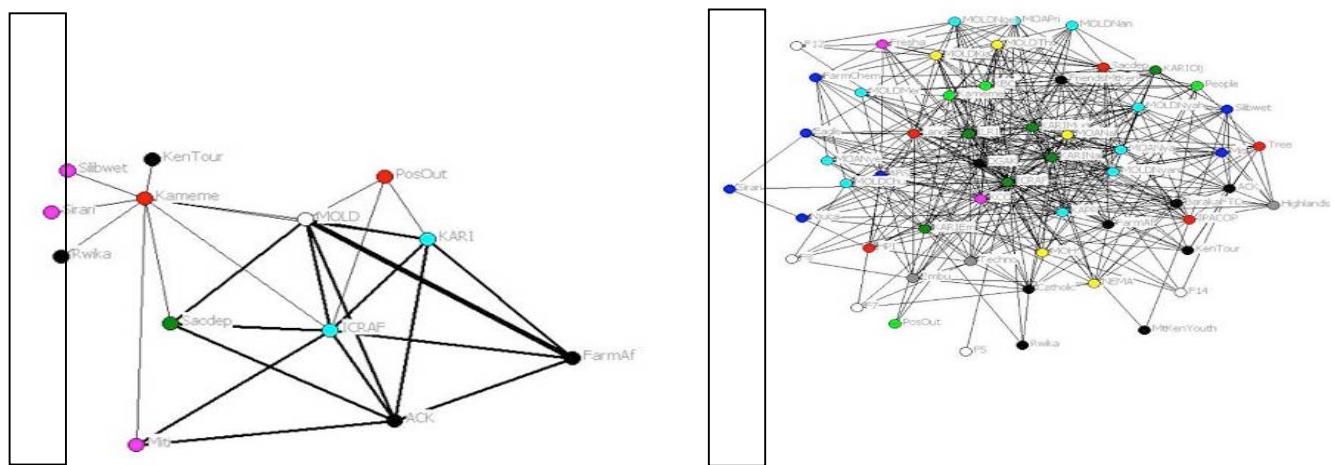
Figure 7.2. Effects of Strategic Communications.
(Volunteers for Economic Growth Allinace, 2011)

The concept of social capital encompasses not only relationships and bonds among different people, but also the value of connectedness and trust between people. Research shows that people who live in households with greater social connectedness have higher incomes, better health, and educational achievements, and tend to live longer (USAID, Communication and Networking, pp. 12–13). High social capital in the general population leads to improved social cohesion and more honest governmental structures. Socially connected businesses adapt better to rapidly changing market conditions and strategies.

Improving communications strengthens trust and partnerships, creating two important types of social capital:

- Bonding capital — horizontal ties; links among groups with similar outlooks and objectives or a similar role in the value chain
- Bridging capital — vertical ties; links with others that may have different views or a different role in the value chain

The use of social networking strategies are listed in the Box which follows.

BOX 7.2

SOCIAL NETWORKING

Also important to strategic communications are social networks. The information revolution has given birth to new economies based on information and knowledge management. Social networks can be visualized as nodes of individuals, groups, organizations, and related systems that tie in one or more types of interdependencies: these include shared values, visions, and ideas; social contacts; kinship; conflict; financial exchanges; trade; joint membership in organizations; and group participation in events, among numerous other aspects of human intercourse. Indeed, it sometimes appears as though networked organizations outcompete all other forms of organization — certainly, they outpace vertical, rigid, command-and-control bureaucracies.

When they succeed, social networks influence larger social processes by accessing human, social, natural, physical, and financial capital, as well as the information and knowledge content of these. In development work, they can impact policies, strategies, programs, and projects — including their design, implementation, and results — and the partnerships that often underpin these. To date, however, we are still far from being able to construe their public and organizational power in ways that can harness their potential. Understanding when, why, and how they function best is important. Here, social network analysis, explained below, can help (Serrat, 2009).

The purpose of social networking is to catalyze action by increasing benefits and reducing barriers. To use this methodology, it is important to understand what the target audience needs and wants in exchange for using a technology or service or adopting a best practice, and design a program that responds to these wants and needs by creating a mutually beneficial exchange.

Use ongoing social science research to consult the target audience and put the audience in the driver's seat for shaping the strategy. Segment the target audience. Break the general audience into smaller subgroups that share a set of common characteristics and design the strategy specifically for one of those audience segments. The program will be more responsive to the characteristics, needs, and wants of that specific group of people. Understand the determinants of current behaviors, negotiate feasible behaviors with clearly stated benefits, and empower the target audience to adopt the new behaviors. Use principles of the market mix — product (options), price (cost), place (distribution points), and promotion (communication) — to strengthen the design and implementation of the program (GreenCOM, 2004).

COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES

Communication strategy designed to create stakeholder engagement works best when it supports stakeholder group action plans, involves stakeholders in strategic leverage point activities, and provides opportunities to be involved in collaborative actions towards common goals.

Participants at the VEGA Sustainable Tourism Workshop (Volunteers for Economic Growth Allinace, 2011), emphasized several key points about the importance of communications. Among the most effective communication methodologies are social marketing, advocacy, mass communication, education and training.

- Social marketing is a process for influencing human behavior on a large scale, using marketing principles for the purpose of social benefit rather than for commercial benefit. We can use this method when the purpose is to catalyze action by increasing benefits and reducing barriers. It is geared toward a specific audience segment that shares common characteristics and whom we want to influence to adopt and use specific behaviors, services, products, ideas and concepts. Social network analysis involves mapping and measuring relationships and flows between people, groups, organizations, or computers.

- Advocacy is a collection of strategies aimed at policy and decision-making, the goal of which is using policy as solution to concrete problems. We can use this method when the purpose is to influence policy and decision making at organizational, local, regional, national and international levels. The target audience is a specific person or persons who can make decisions that will "positively" change a specific policy, program, or institution.

- Mass communication as a strategy involves the use of multiple channels of communication to increase knowledge, positive attitudes, and best practices. We use this method when the purpose is to diffuse information in appropriate, attractive formats through multiple, yet integrated channels. This form of communications is geared to a specific audience segment that shares common characteristics. The effect we want to achieve is to increase awareness, knowledge, positive attitudes, and best practices related to a given issue.

The figure which follows describes mass media approaches in terms of the art of listening, learning, and sharing.

Figure 7.3. Mass Communication Media (Solis and Thomas, 2008)

Education and training encompass any form of life-long learning process, both formal (school) and informal, which can be used to increase values, knowledge and necessary skills. A specific set of students in an institution or participants in a workshop is the priority audience with this communication strategy. We want this group to apply a learning process that develops scientific and social literacy, problem-solving skills, technical skills, and leads to an informed and involved understanding of connections to determine appropriate action.

BOX 7.3

SOCIAL CHANGE TOOL APPLICATION

SCALE — System-wide Collaborative Action for Livelihoods and the Environment — is an approach for broadening development impact. SCALE has evolved from more than a decade of work by GreenCOM, a former US Agency for International Development global environmental communication program integrated into the Academy of Educational Development today known as fhi360. GreenCOM has had the unique opportunity of working with people in more than thirty countries around the world to address an extensive range of issues. By providing a framework to achieve widespread change, SCALE helps improve people's livelihoods and quality of life by helping them manage their natural resources in a sustainable way.

The SCALE framework encourages the use of a combination of social change methodologies and tools including civil society participation and mobilization, advocacy, social marketing, organization development, mass communication, education, and conflict resolution. In most programs, one methodology alone is not sufficient to create change. The following criteria are helpful for selecting the most appropriate and effective methodology or combination of methodologies for the specific context.

The purpose or goal of a program plays a major role in determining which methodologies and tools are selected. The overall program purpose may be achieved by establishing multiple objectives, each of which might require a different combination of methodologies. For example, the goal "stop illegal logging in the northern region of the country" requires a different mix of methodologies than the goal "get illegal logging on the political agenda of the presidential election." For the former, it might be appropriate to use a combination of civil society mobilization and mass communication. For the latter, social marketing and advocacy might be better.

Some methodologies are more effective for achieving discrete, short-term changes. Others may be more suited to strengthening governance and civil society participation, which is a long-term process. Social marketing and mass communication are generally more effective if the objective is to generate immediately measurable change, such as a change in people's knowledge, attitudes, and/or practices on a given issue. Participation and mobilization are more effective for developing the democratic processes needed to achieve sustainable change in the long term.

Another criterion to consider when selecting methodologies is whether an individual or family, an organization or group, or an entire community needs to take action to achieve the objective. For instance, social marketing may be most effective if the level of action is the individual or family (for example, reducing farm or home water use). Participation and mobilization may be most effective if the level of action is the community (for instance, community-based forestry management). Organization development may be useful if the level of action is the group or institution (for example, strengthening an NGO or coalition). Often the best strategies involve several levels working on parallel tracks (GreenCOM, 2004).

MARKETING SUSTAINABLE TOURISM PRODUCTS

Tourism began to use the Internet around 1995. A company that lacks an on-line presence today stands out. E-business and e-marketing are now widely diffused terms. The use of e-business varies. A bed & breakfast may have a slick web site, but use a paper notebook to record bookings irrespective of whether they arrive by telephone, mail, e-mail, or through the front door. Another B&B may have a computerized booking system, but the owners attract bookings without a web site of their own. These examples illustrate a key point for businesses: new media can be used for marketing and promotion or administration, but it is most beneficial when used for both. Businesses that treat e-marketing as an aspect of becoming an e-business are more likely, in the long run, to be more efficient as well as offer more attractive services to their customers.

Every year new media are much faster, higher capacity, and connect with greater reliability whether wired or wireless, are in development in more and more countries. At the same time, more intelligent software and devices, especially smart phones and internet-enabled TV services are appearing and integrating for the traveler. In the future, smart phones will be the point of first contact for most communication. This convergence of devices and services will drive the growth of more open sharing of services between customers (social networking), as well as between businesses. A business's web site will remain important, but not as important as being talked about on other web pages. Open sharing of resources will allow businesses to distribute each other's information, to enhance their products, and gain more market reach. Amid such revolutionary change, video, imagery and sound will continue to increase in importance. In this forthcoming world of superfast connections, tourism businesses that are at ease with the unstructured here-and-now of the online world will thrive (UNWTO, 2011).

As we learned above, social marketing involves the application of commercial marketing principles and other social change techniques to achieve socially desirable goals and influence individual behaviors, including more responsible visitor behavior, via online communication. Social marketing can play a potential role in communicating benefits of more responsible forms of tourism, such as tourism that is used strategically to help reduce poverty. But social marketing is more complex than advertising. It reflects the application of marketing concepts that replace the focus on profits with one based on human welfare and wellbeing. Social marketing has been widely used within the leisure domain by NGOs to promote their activities and to communicate to target audiences. There is a growing recognition of its future use in tourism, given the success of some of its strategies (UNWTO, 2011).

SUMMARY

Extensive media coverage of applications such as Facebook, MySpace, and LinkedIn suggests that networks are a new phenomenon. They are not. The first network was born the day people decided to create organizational structures to serve common interests thousands of years ago. Networks are an important alternative for individuals, groups, and organizations trying to influence practice (Serrat, 2009a). However, surprisingly little has been written on their strategic development and management, and even less is known about how capacity can be built. Investigation into their forms and functions provides a natural entry point into thinking about the resources, capacities, and skills networks can offer or might need to develop. Moreover, since networks exist for a purpose. There is interest also in their use of evidence to influence practice, and ways to improve that. More research is needed on simple but effective means to evaluate performance. In the past few years, organizational boundaries have been stretched, morphed, and redesigned to a degree unimaginable a decade ago. Networks of practice have come of age. The sustainable organization pays attention to their forms and functions, evolves principles of engagement, circumscribes and promotes success factors, and monitors and evaluates performance with knowledge performance metrics.

Unit 8 — Sustainable Tourism Standards and Quality Assurance Systems

Standards, quality assurance systems, and certification bring about a more sustainable tourism sector because they provide participating organizations with an action plan for improvement and give consumers a baseline from which to make sound decisions about travel. We will learn in this unit how certification works, the history of its development, and the latest efforts to consolidate quality assurance standards and make them more accessible on a global scale.

UNDERSTANDING QUALITY ASSURANCE AND STANDARDS

Quality assurance is the systematic evaluation of a project, service, or facility to ensure that minimum standards are being met. A recognized body approves a standard which details the use of a prescribed set of rules, conditions, or requirements.

A tourism quality standard provides customers with an assurance that a tourism operator's facilities and services (or whatever practice meets a standard) meet third-party, verified levels of quality. It eases the work of a tourism board which must recommend businesses according to quality level, which in turn motivates businesses to improve.
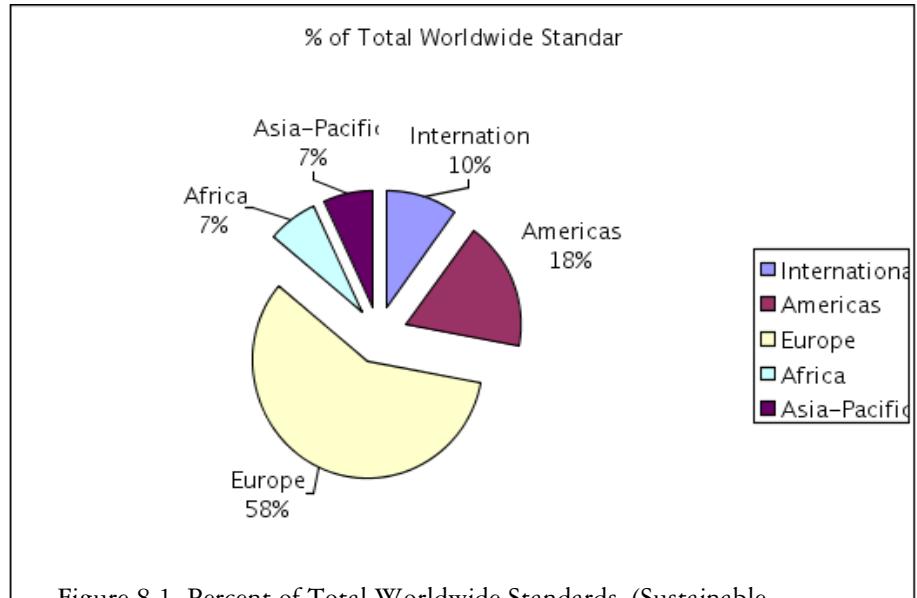

Figure 8.1. Percent of Total Worldwide Standards. (Sustainable Tourism International, 2008)

There are over 80 sustainable tourism standards in use worldwide. The seven international certification standards include Green Globe, Earth Check, and the Sustainable Tourism Certification Program™.

ECOTOURISM KENYA'S ECO-RATING SCHEME

Ecotourism Kenya is a civil society organization founded in 1996 to promote ecotourism and sustainable tourism practices in Kenya. Born with enormous industry support, the organization was charged with the responsibility of supporting the development of ecotourism and sustainable tourism in the country.

Ecotourism Kenya manages a scheme that certifies tourist accommodation facilities in Kenya. The Eco-rating Scheme is an initiative of the Kenyan tourism industry designed to recognize efforts that promote environmental, social, and economic values. Eco-rating is a systematic approach for verifying an accommodation's performance evaluated against a suite of criteria. The scheme is voluntary; any hotel, lodge, camp, bush home, or *banda* can participate. Being awarded a label under the scheme confirms that the facility has invested time and resources in the environment and welfare of local communities.

To participate, facilities undertake a self-assessment by completing a questionnaire and returning it with all supporting documents to the secretariat at Ecotourism Kenya. The secretariat undertakes a preliminary evaluation of the questionnaire to ensure that all requirements for application have been met. It then convenes a meeting of the eco-rating committee (an independent evaluation team), which reviews applications to verify compliance with criteria and make recommendations for certification. This committee has representation from a broad cross-section of institutions, both private and public, as well as leading personalities in conservation and tourism, and is re-constituted every two years.

Source: www.ecotourismkenya.org/news.php?newsid=102

A tourism sustainability standard provides customers with an assurance that a tourism business is operating in accordance with agreed-upon and verified sustainability criteria. It provides businesses with a framework to move towards more sustainable business operations. Sustainability standards encompass far more than just environmental best practices. They also include sustainable business policy, workplace practices, supply-chain management, resource-use, and community impact. It is important to remember when dealing with quality assurance issues, that sustainability is not an end in itself, but a process, continually evolving and requiring constant attention.

THE TYPES AND BENEFITS OF CERTIFICATION

Certification awards a marketable logo or seal to those that meet or exceed baseline standards (Honey, 2010). Certification can be an important quality assurance tool to help tourism businesses set standards and distinguish between good and not-so-good practices. It raises industry standards and offers real economic and social benefits. It helps businesses to improve themselves; provides marketing advantages to certified businesses; offers environmentally and socially responsible options to tourists; protects niche markets; and requires businesses to protect the environment and respect local culture. Ultimately

though, eco-certification allows a company to integrate sustainability into its operations, and offers a framework for continual improvement.

Geographic Distribution of
Certification Tourism Program

Tourist Industry Sectors of
Certification Programs

- Accommodations
- Tour Operators
- Transportation
- Destinations
- Sports/Leisure Facilities
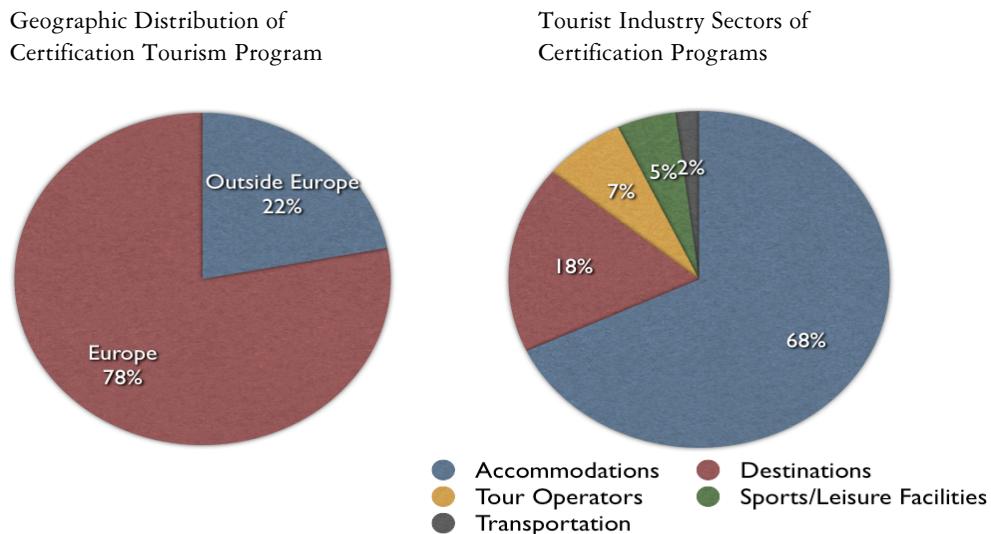
Figure 8.2. Incorporating Sustainability Standards and Certification Systems (UNWTO, 2002)

Certification provides a mechanism for validating a company's sustainability claims as well as a method for consumers and industry professionals to identify a certified company. One cannot manage what one does not measure. So any certification must verify how well standards are being met. Verification usually occurs with an audit: a systematic, documented, periodic and external evaluation of how well a particular entity (company, product, program, individual, destination, etc.) is performing compared with a set of pre-determined standards (Honey, 2010).

Although the travel sector is making great strides in creating common standards, many of them in fact, the industry's certification market is still relatively new. Because it has recently become popular to be green, the majority of existing eco-certification programs have been defining "green" for themselves, so there has been a marked increase in greenwashing. As a result, 56% of U.S. travelers are skeptical of companies that tell about their green practices (PhoCusWright, 2009). Over one-third of LOHAS consumers would like to see other trusted sources endorse the companies' claims, and 85% of those would like the endorser to be a non-profit organization (Natural Marketing Institute, 2009).

Currently, no certification programs that have a triple-bottom-line focus can claim more than a few hundred certified businesses. Most programs that have certified more than 100 are first-party certification programs (as opposed to second- or third-party certifications), which are considered by most stakeholders to be greenwashing.

First-Party Certified refers to a company that performs a self-assessment of its own practices.

Second-Party Certified refers to a company whose practices have been assessed by a certification program assessor.

Third-Party Certified refers to a company whose practices have been assessed by an independent assessor to assure practices are in accordance with the certification standards.

First- and second-party certification programs are generally more attractive to businesses because they typically cost a few hundred dollars for the application and any required verification, whereas third-party certification can cost upwards of a few thousand dollars.

OVERVIEW OF QUALITY ASSURANCE IN TOURISM

Tourism quality certification programs have a long history with automobile associations and their use of anonymous inspections. Being relatively new, tourism sustainability certification programs are often based more on educational assessments. There would be advantages to integrating the two systems, such as cost and management efficiency, higher instance of certification, and the linking of sustainability and quality. A fully integrated project was recently attempted by Qualmark New Zealand, which added a sustainability rating system to a pre-existing quality system. The program worked for a short period. As a result of rising costs, adverse reactions from businesses, and heavy pressures on assessors, however, the environmental and quality components of Qualmark have been separated.

The American Automobile Association (AAA), the Mobil five-star system in the United States, the Michelin guides in Europe, and the worldwide five-star system of hotel quality have existed for most of the 20th Century. These systems have traditionally measured the quality of the tourist product (usually lodging and restaurants), as well as some aspects of health, hygiene, and safety. In recent years, negative environmental and social impacts of tourism have become obvious in many parts of the world, and some of these places have lost market position. As a result, some tourist industry leaders have started promoting the triple bottom line of sustainability as recommended business practice.

Traditionally, though, tourism certification programs typically concern themselves only with quality, while governments have tended to regulate health, hygiene, and safety. And the first green certification programs emphasized only environmental impacts without considering socio-cultural and economic sustainability.

Environmental certification of tourism services began in Europe in 1987 with the Blue Flag Campaign for beaches in Denmark (now worldwide). The following year Austria established the Silberdistel label for lodgings and restaurants in Kleinwalsertal. In the decade between the Earth Summit in 1992 and the International Year of Ecotourism in 2002, more than 60 environmental tourism certification programs were developed, according to an ECOTRANS study commissioned by the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO, 2002). Most were based in Europe, few took socio-cultural factors into account, and all were voluntary. Only three programs in the study certified ecotourism. The vast majority of programs evaluated lodging only, although some certified all aspects of tourism. By 2007, as many as 80 programs existed or were under development.

Aware of the dangers of uncontrolled proliferation — confusion of the consumer, lack of brand recognition, and widely varying standards — many of the most important sustainable and ecotourism certification programs met in 2000 at the Mohonk Mountain House (a 120-year-old sustainable tourism hotel in the mountains of New York) to develop a common language and common minimum standards. This conference produced the Mohonk Agreement (www.rainforest-alliance.org/tourism/documents/mohonk.pdf), a consensus about minimum standards for certifying sustainable tourism and ecotourism, as well as distinguishing between these two types of tourism (Bien, 2006).

THE GLOBAL SUSTAINABLE TOURISM CRITERIA

By 2010, there were over 150 sustainable tourism certification programs globally, and over half of U.S. states now have some sort of green travel certification program. As mentioned above, in essence all of these programs have been defining "green" for themselves, and historically there has been little attempt to consolidate disparate efforts. Up to this point, the travel industry and consumers have not had a common lens for what it means to be green or sustainable.

This trend is beginning to change through new efforts to standardize certification undertaken by the Partnership for Global Sustainable Tourism Criteria (GSTC), now called the Global Sustainable Tourism Council. Directed by world leaders in sustainable tourism, including the United Nations Foundation (UNF), UN Environmental Program (UNEP), the Rainforest Alliance (RA), and the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), the GSTC Partnership is a coalition of 32 organizations fostering increased understanding of sustainable tourism practices and the adoption of universal sustainable tourism principles.

In October 2008, UNF, RA, UNEP, and UNWTO announced the first-ever globally relevant sustainable tourism criteria. Based on thousands of best practices, the GTSC guide the emerging practice of sustainable tourism and help businesses, consumers, governments, NGOs, and educational institutions ensure that tourism supports local communities and the environment. In all, more than 4,500 criteria were analyzed, more than 80,000 people were invited to comment on them, while 1,000 actually sent in comments.

The Partnership for Global Sustainable Tourism Criteria and the Sustainable Tourism Stewardship Council (STSC) merged late in 2009. The result was the Global Sustainable Tourism Council, an international membership council that offers a common understanding of sustainable tourism and the adoption of universal sustainable tourism principles and criteria. The intent of the GSTC is to:

- Define sustainable tourism criteria
- Accredit certification standards to certify businesses
- Create international recognition and build credibility around accredited sustainable tourism certification program

The GSTC's 38 criteria have become the baseline for any tourism company that wants to call itself green. They were selected because they are already represented in sustainable tourism certification programs, they are universal, achievable, and readily verifiable. The GSTC represents a much needed common understanding of sustainable tourism, and will likely become the global baseline for sustainable tourism that any tourism business should aspire to reach. Although the criteria were initially intended for use by the accommodation and tour operation sectors, they are applicable to the entire tourism industry.

The GSTC are organized around four main themes (http://new.gstcouncil.org/page/adopt-the-criteria):

- Effective sustainable management
- Social and economic benefits for the local community and minimal negative impacts
- Benefits to cultural heritage and minimal negative impacts
- Benefits to the environment and minimal negative impacts

Sustainable management. Key considerations include an implemented long-term sustainability management system; compliance with health, safety, labor, and environmental legislation; adequate training; customer satisfaction and corrective action mechanism; design and construction of buildings and infrastructure; and accuracy of promotional materials providing natural and cultural heritage information to customers.

Local social and economic community benefits. The focus is on active involvement in community development; local employment and training opportunities; local and fair-trade goods and services being used where available; code of conduct being developed with local and indigenous communities; creation of policy against commercial exploitation, especially of children; fair and equitable hiring practices; and demonstrated assurance that the activities of the organization do not compromise the basic services of neighboring communities.

Cultural heritage. These criteria offer guidelines for the conservation of cultural and historic sites; compliance with legislation regarding the sale, trade, or display of artifacts; demonstrated contribution to the conservation of cultural heritage sites; and the incorporation of local cultural heritage, art, and architecture into the operation of their facilities while respecting intellectual property rights.

Environment. These criteria evaluate methods of reducing impacts and opportunities to improve the environment by policies that favor the use and purchase of environmentally friendly products; monitor and reduce energy and water consumption; monitor and reduce greenhouse gas emissions; facilitate effective treatment and re-use of wastewater; monitor and reduce solid waste; implement practices to eliminate or reduce all sources of pollution; ensure that all use or consumption of wildlife is in compliance with applicable legislation and is sustainable; prescribe the use of native vegetation for landscaping and avoid invasive non-native species; support the conservation of biodiversity and natural heritage values; and reduce impacts to natural ecosystems and encourage rehabilitation and conservation efforts.

THE CONTROVERSIAL NATURE OF GLOBAL CERTIFICATION

A "one size fits all" approach cannot possibly suit the unique needs of any given destination, culture, or region. Sustainable tourism certification programs must take a multi-stakeholder approach to address needs, issues, and complexities of the destination in which they are offered. Work is now afoot to put minimum standards in place, tailored to local circumstances. But there is strong opposition to certification that addresses several contentious issues.

Some who oppose certification feel that a business cannot be truly sustainable since it cannot guarantee that its clients' actions will be kept in check. While this is valid, it is important to note that certification programs only certify what businesses can control: their own operations, supply chain management, staff, and guide training.

Another argument is that global criteria oversimplify the impacts and undermine the complexity of tourism, lulling consumers into submission upon seeing the eco-label, and keeping them from thinking for themselves.

Some opponents of global certification programs perceive them solely as a marketing opportunity. Compliance with a credible certification standard is definitely a way to differentiate in the market from

those that merely claim to be green. But as a certification matures and its certified members uphold its standards, it will gain credibility in the marketplace just like any successful brand might. Eventually come to trust it and know that it represents far more than marketing wash.

Finally, there is the argument that certification is not guaranteed to deliver on its promises, and that a lot of money and effort are expended for little or no return on investment, especially for small, medium, and micro-sized enterprises. Fortunately, voluntary global standards have demonstrated ROI in many industries time and time again, from forestry to fisheries to organic and natural food (2007, New Society Publishers). If a company has a system in place to measure and manage their impacts, ROI can be proven. The business case for sustainability is stronger than ever and taking a systematic approach makes sustainability more accessible.

BOX 8.2

SUSTAINABLE TOURISM CERTIFICATION PROGRAM™

Certification can be an educational, measurement, and management tool for companies to deepen their green commitment.

Sustainable Travel International's (STI) Sustainable Tourism Certification Program™ (STEP), endorsed by the National Tour Association (NTA), is the world's first comprehensive, global sustainable tourism eco-certification program offered by a non-profit organization, aligned with the GSTC and awaiting global accreditation through the same. STI designed STEP with an educational focus to help businesses self-assess their practices and incrementally ramp up their sustainability initiatives.

The STEP process assists travel providers in mitigating their negative environmental, economic, and socio-cultural impacts and maximizing the benefits they provide to the environment, local and indigenous people and their communities. It entails three separate steps and is not based on a pass/fail system:

Step 1 — Access Sustainability Management. STI's twelve-month license gives applicants access to the online Sustainability Management Framework and Self-assessment Tool. Designed to help businesses implement best practices, the annual fee includes the *Planning & Reporting Guidebook*, policy templates, benchmarking tables, and enrollment in STI's Partner Program. Program benefits include exclusive webinars, marketing opportunities, and a consultation with an eco-certification specialist.

Step 2 — Apply for STEP. Once enrolled in the online Sustainability Management Framework, applicants have the option to apply for eco-certification anytime. They only need to submit the Required Policies and Documentation. An assessor then evaluates the information to ensure adherence to required criteria. If an applicant's documentation is approved, he will receive 1 Star eco-certified logo valid up to three years.

Step 3 — Assessment of operations. Next, applicants can schedule an on-site assessment with a STEP-accredited assessor who verifies adherence with STEP criteria. The assessor documents and compares findings with the information provided in applicant's application and self-assessment. STI's Evaluation Committee then reviews the assessor's report and determines whether to eco-certify applicant's business and at which level. Successful applicants receive a 2 to 5 Star eco-certified logo valid up to three years.

There is also required monitoring. To maintain eco-certification at any level, recipients must renew their license (Step 1) and submit annual monitoring reports. These reports may consist of benchmarking tables and data and policy updates, for example.

For more information on STEP, visit www.ecocertification.org

SUMMARY

Standards, quality assurance systems, and certification schemes can play an important role in bringing about a more sustainable travel industry. Eco-certification provides a mechanism for validating a company's sustainability claims as well as a method for consumers and industry professionals to identify a green company. With the popularization of sustainable lifestyles, greenwashing travel companies have multiplied in recent years and consumers would like trusted sources to validate company claims. Until recently, the travel industry and consumers have not had a common framework to define "green" or "sustainable." New efforts to standardize certification by the Global Sustainable Tourism Council are changing that. Still, certification and quality assurance is a controversial idea within the travel industry.

To learn more about the history and role of certification in sustainable tourism, read What Role does Certification Play in Responsible Tourism (Responsible Tourism and the Market, Occasional Paper No. 4 – November 2005 by Harold Goodwin from the International Centre for Responsible Tourism, www.icrtourism.org/certification.pdf.

Glossary

Biodiversity: The diversity of living organisms in all of their forms and levels of organization including the diversity of genes, species, and ecosystems as well as the evolutionary and functional processes that link them. *(British Columbia Ministry of Sustainable Resource Management)*

Biodiversity Hotspots: Over 50% of the world's plant species and 42% of all terrestrial vertebrate species are endemic to 34 areas that hold especially high numbers of endemic species, yet their combined area of remaining habitat covers only 2.3% of the Earth's land surface. Each hotspot faces extreme threats and has already lost at least 70% of its original natural vegetation.

Biodiversity/Conservation Indicator: A selected factor measured to help understand key issues such as how to avoid damage to natural, cultural, and socio-economic resources; how to plan for sustainable tourism development that benefits the tourism industry and the local community; and how sustainable tourism development can contribute to biodiversity conservation and economic growth.

Bonding Capital: Social capital represented by horizontal ties; links among groups with similar outlooks and objectives or a similar role in the value chain.

Blueprint Planning: Type of land-use planning based on the expectation that the full plan as prepared will be implemented exactly and in its entirety.

Bridging Capital: Social capital represented by vertical ties; links with others that may have different views or a different role in the value chain.

Capacity Building: Tourism businesses being trained in small business management, sustainable tourism best practices, marketing, and micro-enterprise development so that their products and services will increase the destination's appeal to travelers.

Carbon Disclosure Project: An independent not-for-profit organization holding the largest database of primary corporate climate change information in the world.

Carbon Neutral Tourism Planning: Strategies for and businesses and tourists to offset their carbon footprint, saving money and improving the natural environment aesthetically in a way that enriches communities and attracts visitors.

Carbon Offset: The result of any action specifically undertaken to reduce carbon emissions or increase carbon sequestration. Each carbon offset equals one metric ton of carbon delivered over a specified period of time. *(SGS UK)*

Carbon Offsetting: The term given to a mechanism that seeks to counterbalance carbon emissions through either the sequestration of carbon in biomass or through the purchase of carbon credits on the international market.

Carrier: Transportation company such as an airline, motor coach, cruise line, or railroad which carries passengers or cargo.

Carrying Capacity: The maximum number of individuals of a given species that a site can support during the most unfavorable time of year, without causing deterioration of an ecosystem, habitat, or protected natural area. In recreation management, touristic carrying capacity refers to the amount of use an area can sustain without degrading the environment or significantly decreasing the quality of the experience.

Certification: A voluntary procedure that assesses, monitors, and gives written assurance that a business, product, process, service, or management system conforms to specific requirements. It awards a marketable logo or seal to those that meet baseline standards, i.e., those that at a minimum comply with national and regional regulations and, typically, fulfill other declared or negotiated standards

prescribed by the program. *(Ecotourism & Certification, Martha Honey)*

Certified Emission Reduction (CER): CERs are examples of "carbon credits, or carbon offsets. They are issued in return for a reduction of atmospheric carbon emissions through projects under the Kyoto Protocol's Clean Development Mechanism. One CER equates to an emission reduction of one ton of CO_2. CER holders are entitled to use them to offset their own carbon emissions as one way of achieving their Kyoto or EU ETS emissions reduction target. *(carbonpositive.net)*

Climate change: Term commonly used interchangeably with "global warming" and "the greenhouse effect," but more general. Climate change literally refers to any long-term change in the climate. Used commonly however to refer to the buildup of anthropogenic gases in the atmosphere that trap the sun's heat, causing changes in global mean temperatures and consequently weather patterns and other biophysical phenomena across the planet, such as changes in rainfall patterns, sea level rise, droughts, habitat loss, and polar ice cap melting. *(National Safety Council)*

Cluster Development: Network of tourism-related businesses that coordinates tourism promotion and good practice, benefiting local businesses by increasing their communication and knowledge sharing.

Community-based Tourism: Socially sustainable tourism that is initiated and almost always operated by local people. It tends to emphasize community wellbeing over individual profit, balances power within communities, and fosters traditional culture, conservation, and responsible stewardship of the land.

Conservation: The protection and management of natural and cultural resources.

Conservation Action Planning: Methodology developed by The Nature Conservancy for identifying conservation targets, their threats, and strategies for their protection.

Corporate Social Responsibility: A chosen company obligation to be accountable to all of stakeholders (i.e., employees, customers, service providers, etc.) in all operations and activities

with the aim of achieving sustainable development not only in the economical dimension but also in the socio-cultural and environmental dimensions. *(Wikipedia)*

Crisis Management: Dealing with crisis situations that involve planning and taking precautions, coping with the crisis as it unfolds, and recovery after the crisis.

Destination: The place to which a traveler visits. In the travel industry, any city, area, or country which can be marketed as a single entity for tourists. A destination may contain one or more touristic attractions or sites.

Eco-certification: A voluntary procedure that assesses, monitors, and gives written assurance that a travel business, product, process, service, or management system conforms to specific eco-friendly requirements, in particular standards related to mitigating their negative environmental, economic, and socio-cultural impacts and maximizing the benefits they provide to the environment, local and indigenous people, and their communities.

Economic Impact: An effect in an economy. In the travel industry, there are three types of economic impacts — direct, indirect, and induced. Direct impacts are those that affect tourism without mediation from other factors. These include profits of travel providers and wages earned by employees. Travel providers also purchase goods and services from other companies. The additional profits and wages associated with providing these goods and services are indirect economic impacts. Finally, employees in the travel industry spend their wages on food, cars, homes, and other goods and services and thus induce additional economic activity for the providers of these goods and services. The resulting economic activity is an induced impact of tourism.

Ecosystem: A complex set of interrelationships between organisms, habitats, and the abiotic surroundings that occur at multiple scales. Some ecologists bound ecosystems based on energy flows.

Ecotourism: Environmentally responsible travel and visitation to relatively undisturbed natural areas, in order to enjoy and appreciate nature (and accompanying cultural features) that promotes conservation, has low negative visitor

impact, and provides for beneficially active socio-economic involvement of local populations. *(The World Conservation Union)*

Energy Conservation: The practice of decreasing the quantity of energy used or increasing the energy efficiency of a system. Reductions may be achieved through the implementation of efficient energy technologies, in which case energy use is decreased while achieving a similar outcome, or by reduced consumption of energy. *(Wikipedia)*

Energy Efficient: Technology or practice that does the same amount of work with less energy than another that achieves the same end. Where available, energy efficient products may be identified by bearing the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Energy Star® label or similar rating systems in other countries *(Green Seal)*

Environmental Impact: Any change to the environment, whether adverse or beneficial.

Ethics Policy: Organizational statement concerning its intended conduct involving moral principles, values, and behaviors that may apply to its employees, clients, and local communities.

First-Party Certified: Claims of certification by a company based on its own self-assessment without the intervention of an external assessor.

Forecasting Demand: Process whereby future changes in demand are estimated.

Foreign Direct Investment: External capital invested in a country in order to earn a return on the investment.

Geotourism: A type of tourism defined originally by the National Geographic Society that sustains or enhances the geographical character of a place, its environment, culture, aesthetics, heritage, and the wellbeing of its residents.

Global Code of Ethics for Tourism (GCET): GCET is a comprehensive set of principles which guides tourism stakeholders — central and local governments, local communities, the tourism sector and its professionals, as well as visitors, both international and domestic — in tourism development.

Global Reporting Initiative: A multi-stakeholder process and independent institution whose mission is to develop and disseminate globally applicable sustainability reporting guidelines. Within the travel and tourism sector, the Tour Operators Initiative (detailed below) offers the relevant protocol.

Global Sustainable Tourism Criteria: Thirty-eight criteria that are the baseline standard for any company that wants to call itself "green." They were selected because they are already represented in sustainable tourism certification programs; they are universal, achievable, and readily verified.

Green Growth: Category of economic growth that corresponds to industries and technologies defined as green, that is, are low-impact or improve current environmental conditions.

Greenhouse Gases: Atmospheric gases that trap heat radiated from the surface of the Earth including water vapor (H_2O), carbon dioxide (CO_2), methane (CH_4), nitrous oxide (N_2O), hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs), perfluorocarbons (PFCs), and sulphur hexafluoride (SF_6). Anthropogenic emissions caused by the burning of fossil fuels, emission of pollutants, deforestation, and industrial agriculture precipitate a rise in mean global temperatures above recent human historic norms.

Greenwashing: The exaggeration or falsification of objective requirements for environmental conservation, ecological sustainability, and socio-cultural responsibility so as to present a misleading environmentally responsible public image. *(Green-Travel.com)*

Impact Assessment: The process of identifying future consequences of a current or proposed action, to ensure that projects, programs, and policies are economically viable, socially equitable, and environmentally sustainable. *(Convention on Biological Diversity)*

Invasive species: A non-native species which becomes established in a habitat in which it did not evolve and threatens the stability of the local system due to an absence of natural checks such as predators or competing organisms on its growth.

Land Use Management: Any configuration of strategies to achieve desired uses and conditions of a piece of land.

Land Use Planning: The systematic assessment of land and water potential, alternatives for land use and economic and social conditions in order to select and adopt the best land-use options. Its purpose is to select and put into practice those land uses that will best meet the needs of the people while safeguarding resources for the future. The driving force in planning is the need for change, the need for improved management, or the need for a different pattern of land use dictated by changing circumstances. (*fao.org*)

Leakage: The percentage of capital or revenues spent in a local economy that escapes or leaks from that local economy due to business ownership outside the given area of interest. For example, money spent on a hotel in Colombia leaks out of the country because the hotel owners leave in another country. Generally perceived as negative because a higher leakage means fewer resources remain in the local economy.

Micro-enterprise Development: Development that helps local businesses access the resources they need to grow, benefiting locals by providing income and travelers by creating products and services they want in a destination.

Multilateral Aid: Financial assistance delivered by an international organization such as the World Bank, which pools donations from several countries' governments and then distributes them to recipients.

Network Assessment: Criteria used to assess knowledge-sharing programs and activities.

Network Functions Approach: Six steps to help those facilitating, acting within, or supporting networks to reflect on their activities and frame them in a more structured fashion.

Networks of Practice: Overall set of various types of informal, emergent social networks that facilitate information exchange between individuals with practice-related goals (*Wikipedia*).

Policy: A deliberate course of action for purpose of expediency.

Protected Areas: Private or public extensions of land or water set aside for protection.

Quality Assurance: The systematic evaluation of various aspects of a project, service, or facility to achieve some minimum standards of quality.

Regulatory Planning: Type of land use planning that relies upon the application of development performance standards.

Renewable Energy: Energy derived ultimately from the sun (solar, wind, hydro, geo) that renews itself in a short time scale. Tends to be less polluting than fossil-fuel use.

Responsible Travel: A type of tourism practiced by tourists who make responsible choices when planning their vacations and by travel providers who offer environmentally, economically, and socio-culturally responsible services.

Risk Management: A systematic approach used to identify, evaluate, and reduce or eliminate the possibility of injury or accident.

SCALE: System-wide Collaborative Action for Livelihoods and the Environments, an approach for broadening development that evolved from more than a decade of work by GreenCOM, a US Agency for International Development global environmental communication program, assumed by the Academy for Educational Development, which was then assumed by FHI360.

Scenario Planning: Planning tool that tests the effects of hypothetical scenarios.

Second-Party Certified: When a company's practices have been certified by an assessor employed by a certification program. The external certifier is the second party.

Socio-cultural Impact: Any change to the social or cultural environment, whether adverse or beneficial.

Social Capital: Concept encompassing not only the relationships and bonds among different people, but also the degree of connectedness and trust between them.

Social Marketing: The application of commercial marketing principles and other social change techniques to achieve socially desirable goals and influence individual behaviors, including more responsible visitor behavior.

Social Networking: Communication among individuals, organizations, corporations that have as their goal to catalyze action by increasing benefits and reducing barriers.

Solid Waste Reduction: Any reduction in solid waste generation.

Solid Waste: Any garbage, refuse, sludge, or other discarded material.

Stakeholder Engagement: Effect of sharing power with actors interested in a particular initiative with the goal of increasing transparency, fairness, and perceived ownership, in order that those actors participate in the implementation and sustainability of the initiative.

Standard: Document approved by a recognized body that provides for common and repeated use of a prescribed set of rules, conditions, or requirements.

STEP: STI's Sustainable Tourism Certification Program™ is the world's first comprehensive, global sustainable tourism eco-certification program offered by a non-profit organization, aligned with the baseline Global Sustainable Tourism Criteria. STEP is designed to educate industry and consumers about sustainable tourism practices.

Strategic Tourism Planning: Planning that strategically integrates disparate tourism development activities to achieve a desired future.

Supply Chain Management: Defined by the Sustainable Tourism Eco-certification Program™ (STEP) as an approach to ensure that a service provider's products and services are offered in the right quantities, locations, and times, in order to maximize resource productivity and minimize system-wide costs, waste, and other negative socio-cultural, environmental, and economic impacts while satisfying customer needs.

Sustainability Management Plan: A plan that sets standards, procedures, responsibilities, performance criteria, resources, and work practices that protect the environmental, socio-cultural, and economic needs of a community, ecosystem, habitat, or protected area.

Sustainability Management System: A management approach that enables an organization to identify, monitor, and control its environmental, socio-cultural, and economic impacts. A sustainability management system is part of the overall management system that includes organizational structure, activities, responsibilities, practices, procedures, processes and resources for developing, implementing, achieving, reviewing and maintaining a sustainability policy.

Sustainability Policy: Organizational statement of its intentions and principles in relation to its overall environmental, socio-cultural, and economic behavior.

Sustainable Development: Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. *(World Commission on Environment and Development - the Brundtland Commission.)*

Sustainable Tourism: Sustainable tourism is a form of tourism characterized by a level of intensity and technology that generates sustainable net social, economic, and environmental benefits.

Sustainable Tourism Standards and Certification: The Global Sustainable Tourism Criteria help travel professionals evaluate tourism development at a business and destination level and provide recommendations for building profitable and sustainable solutions.

Third-Party Certified: When an independent external assessor (third party) evaluates and certifies the practices of a company (first party) using standards set by a certification program (second party).

Tour Operators: Companies that take tourists to travel destinations. Small- to medium-sized tour operators are defined as tourism providers that have less than 20 full-time employees. Large-sized tour operators are

defined as tourism providers that have more than 20 full-time employees.

Tourism: The activity and industry by which people travel to and stay at places outside their usual environment for not more than one consecutive year for the purpose of leisure, business, and other purposes.

Tourism Business Network: A network formed by small and medium-sized enterprises.

Tourism Assessment: A study undertaken by a destination or business to identify sustainability issues and impacts, prioritize them, and select projects, systems and employees to manage them.

Tourism Quality Standard: Document that provides customers with an assurance that a tourism operator's facilities and services meet third-party verified levels of quality. It enables a tourist board to organize and recommend properties and businesses according to quality level and it provides motivation and guidelines to help businesses to improve.

Tourism Sustainability Standard: Document that provides customers with an assurance that a tourism business is operating according to agreed-upon and verified sustainability criteria. It provides businesses with a framework and guidelines to move towards more sustainable business operations. Sustainability standards encompass far more than just environmental best practices. They also include sustainable business policy, workplace practices, supply-chain management, resource use and community impact.

TOURpact GC: A new framework for corporate social reporting open to companies, associations, and other tourism stakeholders which reflects the aligned principles of the Global Compact and UNWTO's Global Code of Ethics for Tourism.

Travel Philanthropy or Altruistic Travel: A voluntary contribution of conscientious consumers and responsible travel companies who donate financial resources, time, talent and money to protect and positively impact the cultures and environments they visit.

Triple Bottom Line: An expanded baseline for measuring performance, adding social and environmental dimensions to the traditional economic benchmark. Though there is interdependence between each aspect of the triple bottom line, ideally, each cost and benefit is assessed independently, so companies are not in the black unless all three bottom lines — social, environmental, and economic — are positive. *(Ecological and Carbon Footprints)*

Triple Helix Model: Successful innovation and collaboration occurring when the public, private, and academic sectors to meet and share knowledge.

Unsustainable Development: Development that frequently lacks stakeholder involvement, suffers from an absence of long-term planning, has no enforced regulatory framework, puts direct pressure on the Earth's fragile ecosystems, exerts stress on host communities, competes for the use of scarce resources, contributes to pollution, and often fosters community frustration.

Verified Emission Reduction (VER): A carbon offset created by a project which has been verified outside of the Kyoto Protocol. One VER corresponds to one ton of carbon dioxide equivalent emission reductions.

Voluntary Carbon Standard: A robust, new global standard for voluntary offset projects which ensures that carbon offsets that businesses and consumers buy can be trusted and have real environmental benefits. *(Voluntary Carbon Standard)*

VolunTourism: A type of tourism in which travelers visit a destination and take part not only in traditional tourism activities and attractions but also in volunteer projects that benefit the local community. Projects are commonly nature-based, health-related, or involve such things as restoration or construction of buildings and cleanup of environmental damages.

Waste Management: Products, systems, and services for the collection, handling, treatment (including recycling), and disposal of municipal, commercial, and industrial wastes. Examples include landfill liners and composters (products), landfill gas extraction (systems), and collection and disposal (services). *(Envirolink UK)*

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