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THE TOURISM SECTOR ROLE IN SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

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Abstract; Tourism is now one of the world's largest industries and one of its fastest growing sectors. For many countries tourism is seen as a main driver and instrument for regional development, as it stimulates new economic activities. Tourism may have a positive economic impact on the balance of payments, on employment, on gross income and production, but it may also have negative effects, particularly on the environment. Unplanned and uncontrolled tourism growth can be compromised. The environment, being the major source of tourist product, should therefore be protected in order to have further growth of tourism and economic development in the future. This especially true with regard to tourism is based on the natural environment as well as on historical- and cultural heritage.

Sustainable tourism has three interconnected aspects; environmental, socio-cultural, and economic. Sustainable implies permanence, so sustainable tourism includes optimum use of resources, including biological diversity; minimizing of ecological, cultural and social impact; and maximization of benefits for conservation and local communities. It also refers to the management that is needed to achieve this.

The paper provides a theoretical framework for sustainable tourism. It comprises two parts. The first part presents general views on tourism and sustainable economic development, and some opinions on the relationship between tourism and the environment. The second part concentrates on strategies and policy instruments.

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1. Introduction Tourism is a global force for economic and regional development. Tourism development brings with it a mix of benefits and costs and the growing field of tourism economics is making an important contribution to tourism policy, planning and business practices. For instance, during the life of the Sustainable Tourism Cooperative Research Centre in Australia (TCRC) a series of research reports have been published putting forward a range of new perspectives and methods which have advanced the global understanding of tourism's contributions to destinations, resource use, evaluations and business practices.

Furthermore, tourism is a rapidly phenomenon and has become one of the largest industries in the world. The impact of tourism is extremely varied. On one hand, it plays an important and certainly positive role in the socio-economic and political development in destination countries by, for instance offering new employment opportunities. Also, in certain instances, it may contribute to a broader cultural understanding by creating awareness, respecting de diversity of

cultures and way of life. On the other hand, as a tool to create jobs, it has not fulfilled its expectations. At the same time, complaints from tourist destinations concerning massive negative impacts upon environment, culture and residents' ways of life have given rise to a demand for a more sustainable development in tourism. Different parties will have to be involved in the process of developing sustainable tourism.

This paper, focuses on what the tourism industry itself can do in order to increase its sustainability, defines major problems, and suggests possible tourism initiatives to help solve these problems should also be included in the discussion for it to become exhaustive.

2. Research Problem

Tourism is not, as many people assert, a non-clean polluting industry. A major problem is the lack of a common understanding of what sustainable tourism or "ecotourism" means. This ambiguity leads to violations of environmental regulations and standards. Hence, the environmental problems evolving from tourism are manifold. First of all, the tourism industry is very resource and land intensive.

Consequently, the interest of the tourism sector will often be in conflict with local resources available. An influx of tourists into the area will lead to a competition for resources. Employees working at the tourist sites compound this competition. Almost as a rule, tourists are supplied at the expense of the local population.

Moreover, tourist activities imply an intensified utilization of vulnerable habitats. Investors and tourists do not necessarily have awareness on how to use natural resources sustainably, and subsequently this utilization often leads to a degradation of resources. Tourism is also a major generator of waste. In most tourist regions of developing countries, sewage, wastewater and solid waste disposal are not properly managed or planned. Lastly, tourism is also responsible for a considerable proportion of increased volumes and mileage in global transport and hence the associated environmentally damaging polluted emissions. The tourism industry has not shown sufficient willingness to (internalize or) compensate the cost of conservation of bio-diversity in, for instance, protected areas, even though they can profit from it.

3. Economic and Tourism

Tourism is a major industry globally and a major sector in many economies. According to the United Nation World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), over past six decades, tourism has experienced continued growth and diversification to become one of the largest and fastest growing economic sectors in the world. The World Travel And Tourism Council (WTTC) estimate that tourism contributed 9.2 per cent of global GDP and forecasts that this will continue to grow at over 4 per cent per annum during the next ten years to account for some 9.4 per cent of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) (World Travel and Tourism Council, WTTC 2010). Over time, and increasing number of destinations have opened up and invested in tourism development turning modern tourism into a key driver for socioeconomic progress (Barbira, 1980).

For instance, the expenditure associated with tourism flows makes a substantial economic contribution to the Australian economy nationally, by state and region. In Australia, tourism makes a direct contribution to the economy of \$40.639 million in GDP of 3.6 per cent of total GDP and 4.7% of total employment (Australian Bureau Of Statistics, (2009). These figures increase by a further \$31 billion and 377,000 jobs with the inclusion of indirect economic contributions (Pambudi, 2009). Changes in this expenditure resulting from shifting destination market shares will impact on export earning with further changes to GDP and employment. This in itself indicates the importance of an understanding of the role tourism economics can play in policy formulation (Dwyer, & forsyth 2010).

Much of the tourism literature today appreciates the importance of developing tourism 'sustainability'. Whatever the precise meaning of this term, an essential element of a sustainability tourism industry in economic viability. It is sometimes forgotten that the concept of sustainability has an economic dimension alongside its social and environmental dimensions. Economic efficiencies result in less use of resources with potentially less adverse social and environmental impacts from their use (Anaedeo, and Giorgin, 2011) . Tourism development is fundamentally driven by business. However, governments play a significant role as partners in tourism development to an extent which is not replicated in most other industries through their extensive engagement, by all levels of

government, in tourism planning and strategy, marketing, infrastructure development, land use planning and responsibility for parks and public and natural attractions, and through their role in managing environmental and community impacts of tourism. The more comprehensive our understanding of the economic issues associated with tourism is, reflected in the decisions made by tourism operators and policies enacted by destination managers, the more able are economic efficiencies to be achieved in the overall objective of sustainable development of the industry (Buhalis, 2000).

4. Valuation Of Environmental Resources

The environment is important in attracting tourism flows with their attendant economic effects. Conservation of valued environmental features can help to maintain tourism visitation and tourism's contribution to the economy. Tourists, however, can also "love the environment to death", impairing the very thing that attracts them and bringing about its deterioration and destruction. Satisfactorily resolving this problem is important to the tourist industry, especially given a limited (and dwindling) supply of pristine environments and with tourism demand expected to grow into the future. Determining, enumerating and measuring environmental costs and benefits can be very challenging.

Tourism effects the environment through its interplay with natural, human, and built resources. Tourism impacts on the environment are both direct and indirect, and often are not easily observable.

Conversely, the range and quality of such resources can influence tourism flows. Thus, attention to environmental features of the tourism experience can result in an outward shift of tourism demand thereby increasing producer surplus. Over development, however, can impose costs on industry stakeholders as well as wider community (Richard, 2009).

Market prices serve as signals or incentives to guide resources and products into their most highly valued uses. If there are no markets for some valuable resources and products or if markets do not function properly, the resulting resources allocation will not be optimal. There are three major sources of market failure that are relevant to the environmental impacts associated with tourism. These relate to lack of property rights to environmental resources, public goods and externalities. The inevitable result is overuse, abuse;

congestion and quality degradation of increase scarce environmental resources (Shamanke, 1991).

The total economic value of a tourism environmental amenity is composed of its use value (actual use value) and non-use value. Components of non use value are option, quasi-option, existence, bequest, and vicarious value. Within this framework of thinking, the environmental impacts of tourism activity may be measured either directly (through there obvious effects in the marketplace) or indirectly (through the construction of proxy prices).

5. Defining Sustainability And Sustainable Tourism Development

5.1 Sustainability is one of the key-words of the 1990s. Sustainability and sustainable development were given impetus and made popular by the Brundtland report (World Commission on Environment and Development, 1987). It defined sustainable development as “development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs”. Both an equity dimension (intergenerational and intergenerational) and a social/psychological dimension are clearly outlined by this definition. The Brundtland report also highlighted the “essential needs of the world’s poor, to which overriding priority should be given ‘, and “the idea of limitations imposed by the state of technology and social organization on the environment’s ability to meet present and future needs’.

The Brundtland report stimulated debate both on the environmental consequences of industrialization and on the effects of present actions for future generations. Moreover, the report reactivated interest in the physical or ecological constrains of economic growth. As a result, sustainability and sustainable development began to appear in a range of contexts and to figure as an explicit goal in many domestic and international policy-oriented institutions.

For instance, at an international level, the Rio conference [United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, 1992] marked the beginning of a worldwide commitment which recognizes the principle that the right to development must be exercised in such a way that satisfies social and environmental needs of current and future generations, in an equitable manner. This acknowledges a commitment that significant the adoption of certain rules of resource and environmental management for the compatibility of economies

with their environments. In the same direction, at a supranational setting, the European Community in its Fifth Environmental Action Programme (Commission of the European Community, 1992) described the define of the 1990s in terms of the exigency of a far-sighted, cohesive and effective approach to achieve sustainable development.

But if the concepts sustainability and sustainable development have been progressively accepted by domestic and international policy agendas and seem more and more helpful in providing new fresh dimensions for the decision-making process and the basic economic problems of scarcity, economists have been generally slow in providing adequate responses to many important issues (Howarth, 1997).

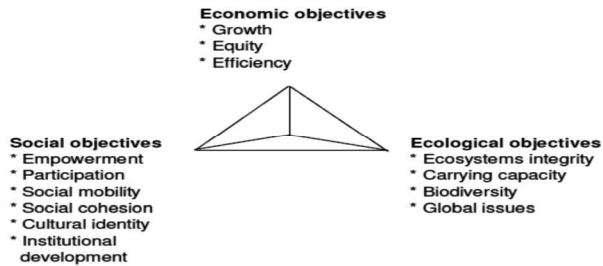
A number of implications and limitations of these concepts have not been discussed in as much length as it would be desirable, especially when the general paradigm of sustainability has been applied not only on a world scale, in the wider context of global environmental resources, but even at smaller territorial levels, both national, regional and local (Tars, 2000). A clear interpretation of the notion of sustainability is lacking in many analysis of sustainable policies, since this may depend on underlying subjective or ideological views (Creaco, 2001). The difficulties in defining sustainability at the various levels at which it could be achieved, together with the related incomprehension of how sustainability at different decision-making levels is related, have frequently led environmental policies which use such a new conceptual framework to rest on insecure and unstable theoretical foundations (Cotgrove, 1982).

On the other hand, if there are many interpretations of sustainable development, nevertheless, there is a broad consensus that, at a minimum, sustainable development does capture two central and basic ideas:

- That development has an economic, a social and an environmental dimension, so that development will only be possible if a sound balance is made between the different components that contribute to the general function of natural environments- the function of life support;
- That the current generation has a moral obligation towards future generations to leave sufficient social, environmental

and economic resources for them to enjoy of well being at least as high as our own.

Figure 1- Objective Of Environmentally Sustainable Development



If the core features of sustainability (ecology, economy, and equity) be considered as the tips of a triangle (see figure1), then it is the relationship between ecology and economy and equity respectively, that represent the key points in the sustainable development issue. In this systems approach, thus, sustainability is viewed as an “ exercise in the conditional optimization and fine-tuning of all elements of the development system so that system, as a whole keeps its bearing without one of its elements surging forward to the detriment of the others (Jose, 2010).

5.2 In analysis the details of concept of sustainability, many issues have emerged as points of controversy and departures for adherents to different views of environmental ideologies (Creaco, 2001). On the whole “four basic world views can be distinguished, ranging from support for a market and technology-driven growth process which is environmentally damaging, through a position favoring managed resource conservation and growth, to ‘eco-preservationist’ positions which explicitly reject economic growth (Pearce and Turner, 1990 p,13). These world views encompass different ethical values and policy strategies and, consequently, range from the extreme resource preservationist paradigm to the extreme resource exploitation stance (Jane, 2010). Interpretations of sustainable development can be correspondingly distinguished as ranging from very strong to very weak (Henderson-Sellers and Blong, 1989).

Figure 2, based on (Jane 2010), summarizes these major sustainable development positions, which in practice are less clearly defined and are overlapping. In general, weak sustainability is referred as an economic value principle which is based on the body of neoclassical

capital theory. In contrast, the concept of strong sustainability, founded upon the laws of thermo-dynamics (Daly, 2000) emerges “from the pre-analytic vision of ecological economics that economy is an open subsystem of the finite and non-growing global ecosystem” (Lundtrop & Wanhill 2001, p. 384).

Figure 2. Main Elements Of The Sustainable Development Spectrum

Sustainability positions	Defining features
Very weak	Anthropocentric and utilitarian; growth oriented and resource exploitative; economic growth ethic in material value term; natural resources utilized at economically optimal rates through unfettered market mechanisms operating to satisfy individual consumer choice; infinite substitution possible between natural and human made capital ; continued well-being assured through economic growth and technical innovation; instrumental value in nature.
Weak	Anthropocentric and utilitarian; resource conservationist; growth is managed and modified; concern for distribution of development costs and benefits through intra- and inter-generational equity; rejection of infinite substitution between natural and human-made capital with recognition of some aspects of natural world as critical capital; human-made plus natural capital constant or rising through time; decoupling of negative environmental impacts from economic growth; instrumental value in nature.
Strong	Eco-system perspective; resource preservationist; recognizes primary value of maintaining the functional integrity of ecosystems over and above secondary value through human resource utilization; interests of the collective given more weight than those of the individual consumer ; decoupling important but alongside a belief in a steady-state economy as a consequence of following the constant natural assets rule; zero economic and human population growth; instrumental and intrinsic value in nature.
Very strong	Bioethical and egocentric; extreme preservationist position; nature’s rights or intrinsic value in nature encompassing non-human living organisms and even a biotic elements under a literal interpretation of the Gain argument; anti-economic growth and reduced human population.

5.3 Parallel to the emergence of a large and variegated literature concerned with the concept of sustainable development , many studies begun to highlight tourism ecology interrelationship and, in particular, the harmful effects of mass tourism on natural, built and socio-cultural resources of host communities in order to meet the fundamental objectives of promoting their economic well-being, preserving their natural and socio-cultural capital, achieving intra- and intergenerational justice in the distribution of benefits and costs, securing their self-sufficiency, and satisfying the exigencies of tourists (Kopp and Smith 1993). As an outcome, a substantial and growing literature now exists relation to the notion of sustainable tourism development (Brown – turner Hanely and Spash 1993;

Cooper, 1994) Pearce, 1991 and Augural, 2003). In this vein of inquiry, particularly, (Clarke, 1997), in a brief theoretical contribution, supplies a simple and straightforward analysis of tourism development from the respective of an advocate of strong sustainability criteria.

However attractive the notion of sustainable tourism as balanced development that satisfies the exigencies and desires of tourist (demand) , the exigencies and desires of public and private tourism industry operators (supply) and the protection of the (natural built, and cultural) resource base for tourism, difficult questions remain to be addressed. For example, the search for a balanced tourist policy implies a comparison between the benefits of the tourist sector and the social costs imposed by this sector (WCED, 1987). . The assessment of these effects is however fraught with many difficulties.

- Balance of payments: for many nations, tourism is often the main source of foreign exchange earnings, although some reductions of the net benefits of the balance of payment can be expected because of the actions of foreign tourist operations,
- Regional development: tourism frequently spreads economic activities more across the internal border of the particular country;
- Diversification of the economy; because of its multi-faceted nature, tourism may foster the buildup of solid economic development;
- Income levels; the income effects of tourism may give rise to wide variations in income multiplier;
- State revenue: the state earns revenues due to tax collections, although it has been acknowledged that significant expenditures for building and construction activities may also be required;
- Employment opportunities: in most countries tourism is an important source of employment, especially for the unskilled and semi-unskilled labor –force.

Obviously, these effects will vary from one country to another according to a wide set of circumstances, such as the tourism lifecycle, local tourist promotion strategies and the utilization of adequate information system and marketing strategies. Moreover,

given the multi-activity and multi-sectoral nature of tourism, the tourist product shows a stark contrast to the traditional private goods model, perhaps a private good with some jointness characteristic, usually occur in tourist market. This mixture of goods cannot be encapsulated by a market system. Thus, it should not surprise us that appropriate measures for a sound economic evaluation of tourism benefits will not be feasible for most policies.

In all cases, the extent to which these positive effects will manifest themselves has to be considered in the light of the pressure of tourism business on the natural, cultural and socio-economic environments of tourism destinations. Such adverse environmental impacts are caused by over-consumption of resources, pollution and waste generated by development of tourism infrastructure and facilities, transport, and tourism activities themselves. Several of these impacts are, for all intents and purposes, irreversible and uncertain, while in many circumstances the social costs are not charged to the tourist and do not involve marketed goods with prices per unit. This is especially true with regard to tourism based on the natural environment as well as on historical-cultural heritage (Russo and Vander Borg, 2000).

On acknowledging the fact that unplanned and uncontrolled growth of tourism aiming at short-term benefits often results in negative and irreversible effects on the environment and societies, and the destruction of the basis on which tourism is built and thrives, questions arise as to whether it is possible to keep on developing tourism in a certain region without having external negative diseconomies, which means that such development must be ecologically bearable in the long term, as well as economically viable, and ethically and socially equitable for local communities.

This paper is part of the growing effort to provide and cultural framework for the analysis of the relationship between economic and development sustainable and tourism growth. The core of this analysis is the comprehension of the “sustainable tourism” concept, and the fact that clarity on the subject, and the values and premises that underlie it, is essential if sustainability aims are to be accomplished.

6. Towards Sustainable Tourism Policy

6.1 The principle of sustainable tourism was proposed as early as 1988 by the world Tourism organization, with sustainable tourism “envisages as leading to management of all resources in such a way that economic, social and aesthetic needs can be fulfilled while maintaining cultural integrity, essential ecological processes, and biological diversity and life support systems”. Recalling previous declarations on tourism, such as the manila Declaration on world tourism, The Hague Declaration and the Tourism Bill of right and tourist Code, the charter for sustainable tourism approved during the World Conference on sustainable tourism, held in Lanzarote in 1995, underlined the need to develop a kind of tourism that meets both economic expectations and environmental requirement, and respects not only the social and physical structure of its destination but also the local population.

However, what does such a way of understanding tourism development entail? Which are the major consequences of the adoption of a view aimed at ensuring the sustainable use of resources in tourism based on the diversity of opportunities offered by the local economy? From this perspective, it is useful to underline the principal aspects of sustainability when this is referred to the tourism sector (Cooper et al, 2000).

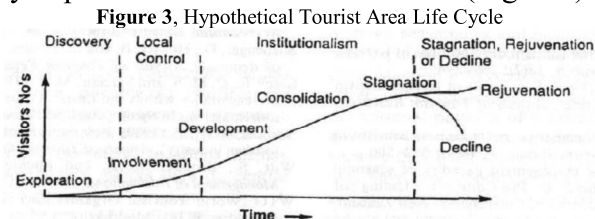
The concept sustainability has a twin valence: on one hand there is the ecological aspect, that is the conservation of the natural equilibrium of all the components of the natural environment (flora, Fauna, water resource, etc); on the other hand there is the anthropological aspect, which could be expressed by the persistence of enjoyment of this environment in spite of growing tourist flows.

It is obvious, at least for the economist, that there is a strong relationship between the two characteristics (ecological and anthropological) of sustainability in tourist enterprise. In fact, the degradation of the weaker components of the natural environment, especially if it is irreversible, provokes, first of all, a slowdown in the development of tourist activity, which substantial consequences at a social economic level. Such a situation of backwardness and impoverishment will subsequently result in a loss of interest in conversation and good use of natural and environmental resources, which are of great interest to tourists. Added to this there is also a

substantial loss even in the financial profitability of the different commercial activities concerned.

For this sake it is worthwhile underlining how this interaction between environmental deterioration and economic profitability can be considered as the point which lies at the root of the well-known phenomenon of the life cycle of tourist business. In fact, this cycle starts off in areas of great value both in culture and in landscape, when the territory is characterized by environmental high quality. As natural, cultural and environmental resources are assaulted by tourist exploitation, sooner or later the territory concerned passes from “luxury tourism” to “cheap tourism”, appealing to the masses. The short-sightedness of the public authorities and of private operators induces us to assert that the loss in quality- both of the client-tourist and of the natural environment- may be compensated by the quantity, by growth in the number of tourists, hotels, complexes to host tourists and entertainment places in general.

At the same time, the congestion created by the influx of a greater number of tourists determines degradation in the environments, in the landscape, in the flora and fauna while transport and restaurant services reach levels which are incomputable with an efficient running of the business from an economic point of view. When such a situation reaches drastic limits, the whole region-from an initial situation of a sort of “ heavenly isolated paradise” which justified “ luxury tourism” – is hit by phenomena of tourist desertification, with serious situations of environmental deterioration, which are frequently irreversible, which are linked with bankruptcy and the flight of the more qualified tourist operators. The five stages of Butler’s life cycle theory clearly express the tourist area evolution (Figure3).



The first stage, exploitation, is characterized by small numbers of adventurous visitors, simple facilities, unspoiled natural, cultural and environmental resources, and undisturbed local communities.

In the next stages, involvement, the local community is engaged in tourism activities: facilities and infrastructure are built; different agencies, authorities and organizations are involved in the development, management and implementation of tourism industry; the tourism market is defined and maintains a balance with other economic activities.

By the development stage, the area is experiencing an exciting and dynamic period of growth and evolution. The destination is clearly defined: attractions have been developed, and planning tourism is undertaken as part of overall development plans for any area. Large numbers of new visitors continue to arrive, fuelling growth and, at peak periods perhaps equaling or exceeding the numbers of local inhabitants.

In the consolidation stage, the volumes of tourists are still increasing, but a declining rate. The destination is now strongly marketed and tourism is seen as a main instrument for regional and local economy, with an identifiable recreational business district containing the major franchises and chains.

In the stagnation stage, the highest number of tourists is achieved. The tourist area is no longer attractive and fashionable. It relies on repeat visits and business use of its extensive facilities may by now have serious problems with wastes and other environmental, cultural and social costs.

Agarwall, (1994) has suggested a post-stagnation phase where a range of possibilities exist. These essentially continued decline, in which visitors are lost to newer resorts and the destination becomes dependent on a smaller geographical catchment for daytrips and weekend visits, or different forms for rejuvenation, in which the area still remains as a tourist resort but deciding on new uses, new customers, new distribution channels and thus repositioning the destinations.

6.2 The hypothesis on lifecycle of tourist businesses finds numerous and punctual empirical proofs, both in (Origination for Security and Co-Operation in Europe OCSE) countries, especially in various Mediterranean regions. For the latter, the principle that “environmental conservation is a luxury which the poor cannot afford” frequently applies, in dramatic terms. Recent studies, carry out by international organizations, have pointed out that in the case of

developing countries, the tourism sector is frequently in conflict with other production sectors and, above all, with traditional agriculture, in the allocation of scarce environmental resources, particularly water resources.

However, tourist desertification is not necessarily the inevitable result of the life cycle of tourist activities, not even in those countries where extreme poverty and lack of alternative activities can constitute an alibi for a short-sighted and greedy exploitation of environmental and natural resources.

Sustainable tourism is not only a utopian choice, or anyway a privilege, only for the elite, as it was in the past centuries: even in the era of globalization and of tourist activities on a wide scale tourism sustainability is a realistic objective for economic and environmental policies. However, it is worth underlining that the compatibility of the growth in supply of tourist services on one hand with environmental conservation on the other will be notably conditioned by the particular solution given for a series of complex problems, briefly stated hereunder:

Level of concentration of tourist business: the more the supply of tourist services with both fixed and mobile infrastructures which condition it is concentrated in the territory, the higher the risk of damages to the environmental equilibrium (Collins, 1999). Such damages will get worse, especially in developing countries, if pressure of tourist services tends to add up to the pressure on environmental resources of other productive businesses (agriculture, mining, fishing), which already critical in those regions of a particular country, which are highly populated and industrialized. Generally speaking, these costs of congestion will result much higher than the possible economies of scale which can actually be reached in the services and in the infrastructures with the concentration and the spreading of the tourist business themselves. Therefore, both in those countries which are economically advanced, but all in developing countries usually it is to be hoped that a high level of decentralization of tourist activities is achieved through the utilization of advanced “clean” technologies, such as biological agriculture, solar energy and the recycling of wastes.

Integration with the local ambient: a rigorous conservation of the natural environmental, thanks to the maintenance of technological,

cultural and traditional values, which have sometimes been perpetuated for centuries in the local populations, which usually seems hard to reconcile with an influx of a massive kind of tourism, inevitably oriented towards a cultural genocide with a show off of its hedonism and its capability of consumption. The defense of the natural environment, especially in poor countries, seems to be linked to the conservation of the traditional culture, in its various expressions: the use of agricultural land, water control, eating habits, social and housing architecture, and use of free time. The creation of a new supply of tourist services should not only respect these local cultural customs but also increase their potentials with the aim of launching a fruitful dialogue between the various elements: the local resident, jealous of his own cultural originality, and the foreign tourist, who is keen on discovering new places and different life styles, in the hope of a tourism that is more responsible towards our common heritage.

The contribution that a far-sighted strategy of a grow in tourist supply can directly offer towards the conservation of the environment is not to be neglected, especially in developing countries, which are to-day the most threatened by an irreversible ecological degradation.

Moreover, tourism can indirectly induce growth in the awareness of the public opinion on great ecological issues, having a worldwide dimension, both at an international and national level.

The solicitations coming from both the public opinion and the scientific community show that the task to draw out and accomplish the technological instruments which are necessary for the conservation of natural and environmental resources differ greatly from one country to another. From various research projects carried out by international institutions one comes to the conclusion that major environment problems crop up at a local level, and have to do mainly with the elimination of toxic or dangerous wastes, as well as water pollution. Instead, at a global level, public opinion is particularly worried by the progressive disappearance of forests and by sudden climatic changes.

Relationship between tourism activities and technological innovations: any “ecological scenario” one may assume for the coming decades it is extremely probable that each country will have to face phenomena both of scarcity of certain natural resources

(natural and forest resources) and above all, air and water pollution. This means that such problems will no longer be on a national scale but on a worldwide scale. At this point a crucial question crops up: will scientists and those involved in technology scenario now offer in an urgent and underlayable manner?

A historical analysis of technological changes does not reply to the worrying question if scientific progress should proceed in a completely independent manner with respect to the economical sphere- and only subsequently it could become a source of productive innovations- or if the casual process is actually moving in the opposite direction. In the sense that the autonomous evolution of the production of goods and services- to satisfy the necessities of mankind, expresses on the market through prices- is prosaically the real driving force of scientific and technological discoveries.

However, whatever the most probable interpretation of its role may have been in the past, it now seems ever more evident that, in the present situation, public opinion and economic agents put their trust especially in science to gain a tranquilizing solution for the emerging scarcity of natural and environmental resources. The performances of science-especially in the last decades-seem to be reassuring as far as its capability of overcoming the challenge that such emerging scarcities present. There is, however, an evident risk, that technological solution, imposed at an international level, in the name of presumed cultural primates and arrogant political imperialisms- may lack in flexibility and the promptness necessary to be able to face situations which differ greatly on a world wide scale.

The general trust in the capability of the scientific community to overcome the scarcity of natural resources- above all if it is capable of overcoming the national and scientific perspectives- points out, however, the risk that at the end one meets another limit, the only one which it is really impossible to overcome for the survival of mankind: the lacking cultural and ethical capability of respect for the poor and those who are “different” their dignity and their right to a creative decent survival.

7. Recommendations

- In general, the tourism industry should engage in promoting sustainability as a hallmark for investors. More specifically, investors in tourism should strive to adopt environmentally

sound technologies or other measures to minimize the consumption of local ground water. In the case of water utilization, such measures might be water saving equipment, desalination systems and collecting and utilizing rainwater. Using other types of resources in a sustainable manner is, of course, also crucial. There is a need to use ecological materials and installation renewable sources of energy systems (solar energy) in all new building and new construction. Furthermore there should be an acceleration of installation or solar/wind power in all public work projects of communities where tourism will be introduced. To prevent or minimize the impact of chemical inputs in soil, water and health, one should start utilizing sound ecological methods, including (International Pest management IPM),. Ecological methods need to be applied in all areas utilized for tourism, including in the maintenance of golf courts, gardens and recreational facilities.

- Pollution of ground and coastal waters must be prevented, and recommendations must made (perhaps even legislation) for tourism investors to invest in proper sewage treatment facilities. Appropriate waste disposal systems and ways to separate garbage into organic and non-organic waste should be developed. Organic waste can be composted and possibly reused on hotel gardens or even for local farming. This could be done through collaboration with local residents. Residents could organize themselves and manage the allocated dumping sites, and hence benefits from the system in receiving payment from the hotel for services rendered. A system to separate the different materials, and recycle some should be in place at the landfill site, thus reducing the waste even further.
- To avoid degradation of the natural environment, tourism projects can help finance protected areas and safeguard ecologically sensitive regions against further environment deterioration. By empowering local populations and have them participating in the entire process, sustainability will be ensured as it becomes accepted by and adjusted to the local communities. Also, a protected area might certainly be a suitable tourist-attraction, where tourists can experience

amazing nature and learn about conservation and traditional uses of natural resources in the area.

- Investors in tourism should always respect the traditional land tenure system in the area and the traditional user-right systems of resources. In regard to this, the communication and consultation with the local communities about resources-use is important. Tourism investors should not exclude local people from using local resources, and thus take away what they depend on for maintaining their well being. The tourism industry can and must take initiatives to implement that polluters pay a principle for pollution related to tourism operation. This may be organized and carried out through local tax system or through funds established by the tourism industry for local community development. However, the paid principle should be applied for minor pollution only and should not be developed into a possibly for investors to pay a symbolic fine for imposed irreversible negative impacts on the local environment.
- Inaccurate and/or mild environmental legislation in destination countries may possibly attract more foreign investors contributing to fast economic growth and development, but with environmental damage as a consequence. To avoid the dilemma, destination countries will have to choose between economic development and environmental protection international. Multinational enterprises must be committed to follow the environmental standards of their home country should these be stricter than those at the destinations.
- the tourism industry should promote projects, which are compatible with cultural identify of the local population's way of life. Furthermore, the tourism sector should always make sure it acts in accordance with the cultural heritage, and respect the cultural integrity of tourism destinations. This might be accomplished by defining codes of conduct for the industry and hence providing investors with a checklist for sustainable tourism projects.

8. Conclusion

Tourism, as a world-wide phenomenon, touches the highest and deepest aspirations of all people and it is also an important element of socio-economic and political development in many countries.

Government, other public authorities, public and private decision-makers whose activities are related to tourism, and tourists themselves, consider it a priority to protect and reinforce the human dignity of both local community and tourists. Because of this all these agents have registered a growing concern in sustainability as a guiding principle to allow the integration of economic development with environmental and social aspects within tourism policy and strategy.

But the incorporation of sustainability in tourism development is not a self-evident issue but a politically contested one, if the different interpretations of the concept which have been identified are taken into account. These differing, sometimes conflicting, interpretations are not accidental, but rather the outcome of particular ideologies, varies disciplinary backgrounds, value systems and vested interests. Despite the wide range of varying definitions, at its core tourism sustainability lies: strong emphasis to three simple concerns:

- The need to avoid the uncontrolled destructive degradation of the environment and the loss of local identity, while respecting the fragile balance that characterizes many tourist destinations, in particular environmentally sensitive areas;
- The need to actively pursue and strengthen the quality of life and equity between present generations;
- The exigency not to reduce the opportunities offered to future generation.

If the core elements of tourism sustainability- ecology, economy, and equity- are to be taken into consideration for balances strategies, there are many gaps in our knowledge that need to be filled if we are to be successful in controlling tourism in a way that puts this important economic sector onto a sustainable development path. Several analyses have emphasis this point. Nevertheless, there are no definitive answers, particularly in the field of fairness and distribution justice of tourism options.

This paper has identified issues for future consideration, especially in view of making tourism become compatible with the conservation of major ecosystems and with the preservation and good use historical-cultural heritage.

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