

The Economic and Social Contribution of Tourism from the Sustainable Development Point of View

DALIA SIMION

Faculty of Economics and Business Administration
University of Craiova - University Centre of Drobeta Turnu Severin
Str. Calugareni 1, Drobeta Turnu Severin
ROMANIA
daliasimion@yahoo.com

MIRELA MAZILU

Faculty of Economics and Business Administration
University of Craiova - University Centre of Drobeta Turnu Severin
Str. Calugareni 1, Drobeta Turnu Severin
ROMANIA
mirelamazilu2004@yahoo.com

MONICA PĂTRUȚESCU

Faculty of Economics and Business Administration
University of Craiova - University Centre of Drobeta Turnu Severin
Str. Calugareni 1, Drobeta Turnu Severin
ROMANIA
monik_cudts@yahoo.com

ROXANA ISPAS

Faculty of Economics and Business Administration
University of Craiova - University Centre of Drobeta Turnu Severin
Str. Calugareni 1, Drobeta Turnu Severin
ROMANIA
roxispas1972@yahoo.com

Abstract: Economic branch of interference, of great interest and important availability, Romanian tourism should become a dynamic component of the global economic system.

Subsystem of the national economy, tourism bears influences from other subsystems and exercises, in turn, an increasingly influence on their evolution. The tourism sector in Romania currently holds only a modest share of GDP, in particular because it has not been strongly supported by decision factors, its development being left to chance. It is widely recognized the ability of tourism to become a primary sector of the national economy, in a context that will meet national targets in this area.

Key-Words: economic development, information, natural resources, sustainable development.

1 Introduction

A priority in the process of sustainable development held in our country is the component that includes planning activities, operational planning and tourism exploitation as an integrant part of the sustainable development strategy of the area, region or country.

The ongoing process, as a result of applying the stipulated strategy, requires the use of additional costs

for environmental protection, resources to increase national investment value, as a result of the continued collaboration between tourism, other sectors, local authorities and government.

The literature dedicated to environmental protection in relation to tourism development generally approaches the subject of costs as a resource management problem and proposes the intervention of a system based on principles derived from those defining the sustainable development.

The impact of tourism on economic sectors of an area is divided in multiplying and stimulation effects in the production, income and employment.

The tourism's measurement, implicitly of the economic and social progress, in the view of the lasting development, implies the approach and the application of certain principles and methods which represent the basis of the formation and use of a set of indicators as complete as possible. The indicators' system which should gather a set as complete as possible has been analyzed by the OECD forum that considers that their efficiency is the highest as the information source is larger and more diversified. The measurement of the tourism's lasting development represents a need under the conditions of the deep interaction between the protection of the natural resources, the economic development and the satisfaction of the needs customers-tourists.

Within the sustainable development, tourism has the crucial role to observe and promote the general objectives of the company. Thus the optimal balance between tourist activities and specific objectives of sustainable development can be substantiated.

The national strategy for sustainable socio-economic development on medium term considers tourism as a priority sector, considering that it is able to contribute a considerable share in Romania's economic recovery and revival.

2 Problem Formulation

The elevation of the tourist product from the enshrined values to the relevant international standards, requires initiating and promoting activities which firstly include running education and training processes for a mentality appropriate for the current type of development, and, secondly, emphasizing the sustainable development in the reception areas. This requires the deepening in time and space of the environment-economy relationship, which involves balancing the negative and positive results from running tourism activities.

The need to coordinate efforts at both regional and national levels for projects in infrastructure, particularly transport and communications is related to spatial planning process, which requires the coordination of all the projects with spatial implications and solution of any conflicts arising in this context of profound transformations.

The fitting has sought to establish an assessment, hierarchy and identification model of the most appropriate and effective ways to reevaluate the tourist heritage, using a multi-criteria analysis for delimiting the tourist regions together with an outline of priority

actions in each case.

As a continuance of the tourist zoning, the planning of the territory and the appropriate policies must solve the environmental threats performed by some tourist activities or some industrial activities with direct impact on the results in the tourism sector.

Considering the resources and the sectoral structure of its economy, each county or region faces specific challenges to the environment.

A possible answer to these challenges should be the application of the concept of *mosaic ecodevelopment*¹, which proposes the implementation of the principles of sustainable development in smaller areas; then they will be gradually expanded so that on the long term, they should cover the entire national territory. In this approach, the ecological space should look, in its ideal shape, like a chessboard, where the large agricultural area should merge with smaller areas allocated to industry, infrastructure in various categories and parks and nature reservations. The complex alternation arises from the uneven spatial distribution of natural resources and the application of economic, social, environmental criteria. In this context ecology and bio-economy can offer original solutions for planning the territory, so that appropriate environmental areas should be allocated to each branch, having as a result the sectoral complementarity within the territory.

The complementarity thus resulted must be tackled not only functionally but also from the rational use of land, increasing the employment level and the income, the participation into inter-regional exchanges and the integration into European structures and flows, the complementarity with environmental restrictions points of view (Constantine DL., 2000).

The application of the sustainable tourism development projects begins as early as the design and construction of the technical and material base stages in order to harmonize with the environment, local community or other sectors of the economy, continuing to the stage of conducting tourism activities.

The deployment phases of projects can and should be followed up and stimulated by authorized organizations that even have the capacity to establish strategies for addressing the deficiencies arising

¹ **Mazilu Mirela Elena**, *The ecological component of the lasting development*, B.E.N.A International Conference: Sustainable Development in Balkan Area: Vision and Reality, Alba Iulia, July 18th-20th, 2007, published in Journal of Environmental Protection and Ecology JEPE, Book 1, vol. 10, ISSN: 1311-5065, pg.131-136, 2009.
<http://thomsonscientific.com/cgi-bin/jrnlst/jlresults.cgi?PC=MASTER&ISSN=1311-5065>

during the course of these phases.

For the purpose of the optimal (sustainable) revaluation of tourism resources and their protection and that of the environment, a legal and administrative frame regarding the organization and the deployment of the tourism activity in Romania (Government Ordinance 58/1998), development, approval and maintenance of ski slopes for leisure activities and of the mountain routes (GD 1269/1996), the use of the Black Sea tourist beach (GD 107/19996), the certification tourist resorts (GD 77/1996) has been developed and the criteria for the certification and the definition of the tourist areas, where the environmental issues and the tourist potential is a priority condition, have been completed.

Also, special rules on sanitary protection zones for the water supply and the use of the spa treatment resources have been developed (GD 101/1997). The Law 41/1995 on the protection of national cultural heritage defines the concepts of national cultural heritage and historical monuments, their components, the protection measures of historical monuments and the delimitation and increase manner of their protection zones, which are established by urban planning documents.

The environmental legislation (Law no. 137/1995), those relating to planning the activities involved in the planning process (Law no. 50/1992, Government Decision no. 31/1996 and other regulations of MLPAT come to support the sustainable development of tourism, by requiring traders to provide projects, quality tourist accommodation and equipment and not to harm the environment and tourist resources. The obligation to obtain an *environmental agreement* (OMPLAT no. 125/1996) to carry out an investment and to develop an environmental social and economic impact assessment to base the decisions on the location and size of the investment objective, its integration into the natural environment and local architecture, the exploitation of renewable resources, the treatment and the disposal of wastewater, waste, etc. has a particular importance for this purpose.

The conditions and operating parameters for the existing and the new activities based on the environmental agreement (Order 170/1990) are established through the environmental permit. Moreover, in accordance with EU Directives, all Member States have been obliged to introduce within the national legislation a measure which takes into account the impact that great investment projects have on the environment, including those in tourism (V. Glavan, 2000).

3 Problem Solution

Applying the criteria of sustainable tourism development is inevitably accompanied by the emergence of specific aspects of the design of programs specifically addressing issues of space economies and local communities. Thus, the deployment of a process of gradual implementation of measures to be taken on the line of the protection of tourism potential and of preventing its degradation, of the scientific and rational exploitation of tourism resources is mentioned, so that the exploitation rate should not exceed their recycling and regeneration rate, and the intensity of direct and indirect tourism relationships with the environmental factors should not exceed the tourist reception capacity limits.

The attention will be directed towards the environment since it is the component that allows the emergence of compensation in terms of positive and negative changes in the components of the welfare function. However, the ecological tourism has widened the values; its contribution to the sustainable development is undeniable. It is joined by the rural tourism, considered a new form of tourism, which currently is developing under the same lines, for the purpose of conducting tourism activities consistent with protecting and preserving the economic and social, cultural and historical traditions of the area where it is implemented.²

The tourism development, hence the economic and social progress, from the point of view of the sustainable development, requires the addressing and the application of principles and methods that form the basis of completing and using a set of indicators.

The tourism phenomenon requires the analysis and the application of appropriate methods of addressing the situation, the time, including those presented by Iordache Maria - Carmen in the paper "Prospects for Romanian tourism in the dynamic world of tourism", summarized as follows (MC Iordache, 2004):

1. - *the historical method* that shows the following main features:

- reviews the activities from a revolutionary angle, for the purposes of researching the causes of their innovation, growth or decrease and improvement of their interests;
- has limited use, not widely used.

2. - *the geographical method*, which has the

² **Mazilu Mirela Elena**, *Alternative Tourism vs. Mass Tourism*, published in vol. *Proceedings of International Conference „Alternative Tourism-Theory and Practice”, organised by the Institute of Geography, Bulgaria, Varna, 31-1 Noi. 2009, ISSN:978-956-400-157-5, pg.1-7*

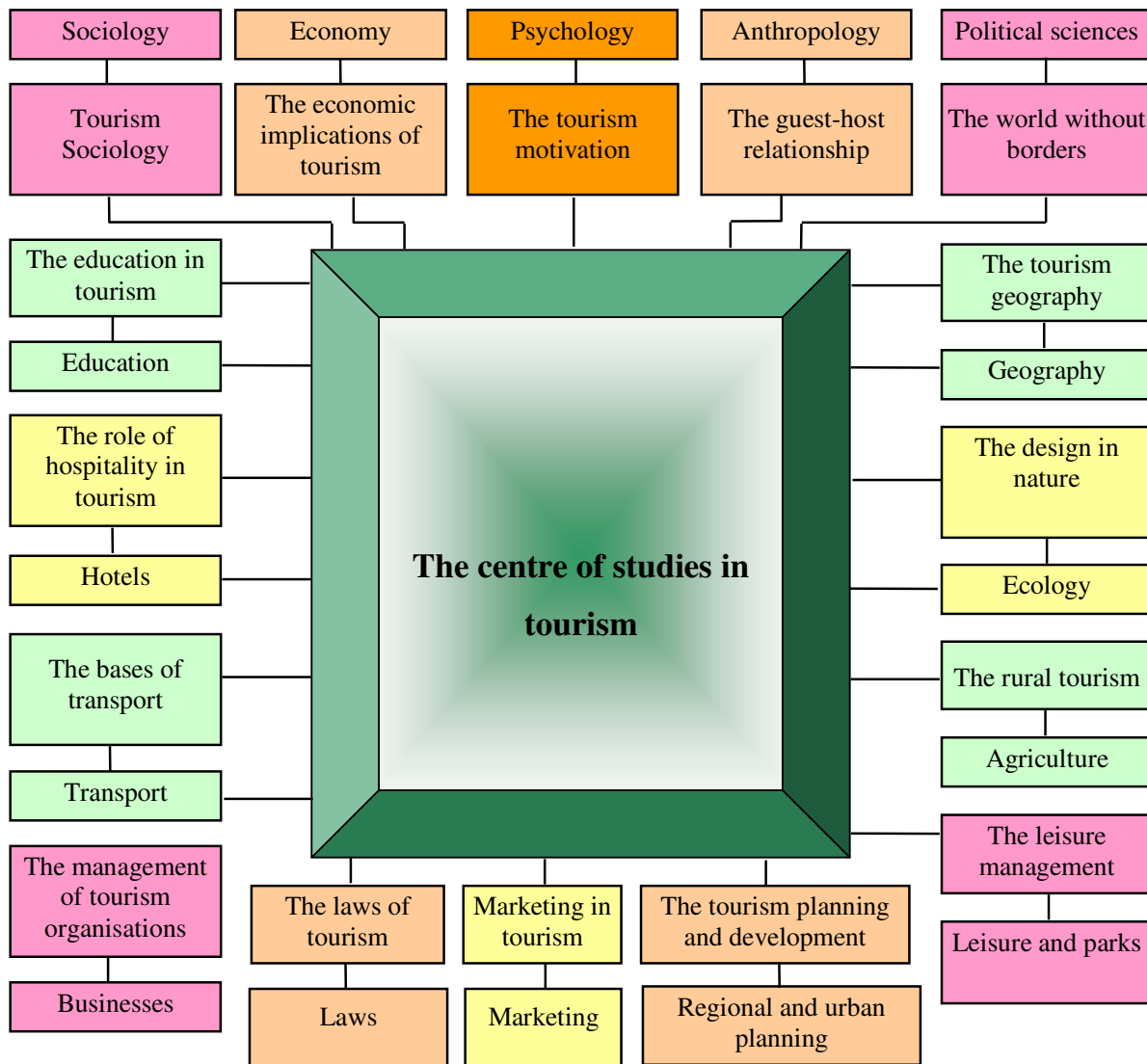
following features:

- highlights the location of tourist areas, the people's migration due to jobs created by the local tourism activity, the changes the tourism causes on the relief in the form of tourism on tourist facilities, the dispersal of tourism development, the physical planning and the economic, social and cultural problems;
- being very comprehensive, has many positive implications for tourism.

- the advantage consists of the various specialized agencies, leaflets, guides, annuals and statistical yearbooks with wide use;

4. - *the interdisciplinary approach:*

- is the result of the interference of multiple areas where tourism comes in a direct or indirect connection;
- the interdisciplinary nature of tourism studies, the reciprocity and their mutuality is as follows:



3. - *the institutional approach* that:

- involves the analysis of various intermediaries and institutions which run tourism activities (state institutions, agencies);
- needs to investigate the organization, the working methods, the problems, the costs and an economic location of travel agencies acting on behalf of customers buying services from airlines, car-hire companies, hotels etc.;

Fig. 1 – The Study of the subject choice and the method in tourism

Adaptation of the authors from: Source: www.world-tourism.org.

5. – *the sociological method*, presented as follows:

- studies the tourist behaviour at the individual or group level, and the impact of tourism on society;
- examines the social classes, skills and habits of the hosts and guests (the sociology of rest).

6. – *the product method*, which:

- involves the study of various tourism products, as they are produced, recovered and consumed;
- Since its implementation requires a fairly large consumption of time, it does not lead to quick results on the phenomenon of tourism.

7. – *The economic approach* requires:

- the examination of the request, the offer, the balance of payments, the exchange rate, the employment, the expenditure, the development, the multipliers and other economic factors;
- the creation of the necessary frame for the analysis of tourism, of its contribution to the economy of a country and its development, excluding environmental issues, culture, psychology, sociology or anthropology.

8. – *the management method* is geared towards:

- the microeconomic level, towards the company;
- the concentration and the increased application of management and marketing activities within tourism companies, including market research, pricing, advertising

9. – *the systems method*, presented as follows:

- consists of a set of interconnected groups coordinated to form a whole and organized to achieve goals;
- integrates the other methods, because both deal both at micro and macroeconomic levels, being considered a comprehensive method;
- examines the competitive environment of a travel company, its market, its links with other institutions, consumers and the intersection between company and consumer, and the whole tourism system of a country with its political, economic and social ties.

The system of indicators that must be combined in a complete set has been reviewed by the OECD Forum that considers that their effectiveness is even higher as the source of information is broader and more diverse. Such a set of indicators that has been proposed is presented schematically in Figure 2.

It is assumed that the effectiveness of the indicators presented takes into consideration their distribution on five levels:

- Basic, comprising **Regional and local indicators**;
- The next level including **sectoral indicators**, highlighting the impact of development and sectoral policies on the environment, the social conditions and the economic efficiency and the sectoral trends with implications on it;
- The third level is occupied by **resources indicators**, which examine the process of accumulation, consumption of natural capital, man-made and human, indicating the extent to which consumption will influence future opportunities;

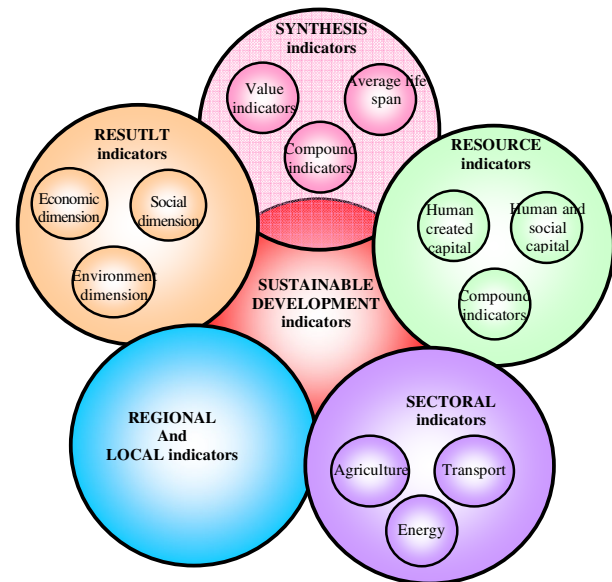


Fig. 2 – The sustainable development indicators

- The fourth step includes the **results indicators** disaggregated on three fundamental coordinates: economic, social and environmental. They characterize the current development trends and quality, therefore it is almost impossible to state very clearly which are the indicators included.

A proposed set of result indicators is shown schematically in Figure 3.

- Last level, but in fact most important, is the **synthesis indicators**, because processes and interprets the information from other levels, thus reoffering the overview of current achievements.

The main categories of indicators (*INS - National Human Development Report Romania, 2000*) which restore as accurately as possible the situation of the sustainable development, widely and globally used, are:

- value indicators: gross domestic product (GDP) and the consumption expenditure per capita;
- economic and social development outcome indicator: the average life span;
- compound indicators, calculated with other significant indicators for the undertaken research, using simple or weighted arithmetic average method.

Considered the most significant indicator, the Human Development Index (HDI) is used to characterize the human development level of a country. This is a composite index calculated by UNDP (United Nations Development Program) in the Human Development Reports.

The human development is the process of expanding the choices for people by developing their capacities. At all the levels of development, the three essential capabilities for people are to live a long and healthy life, to have knowledge and access to

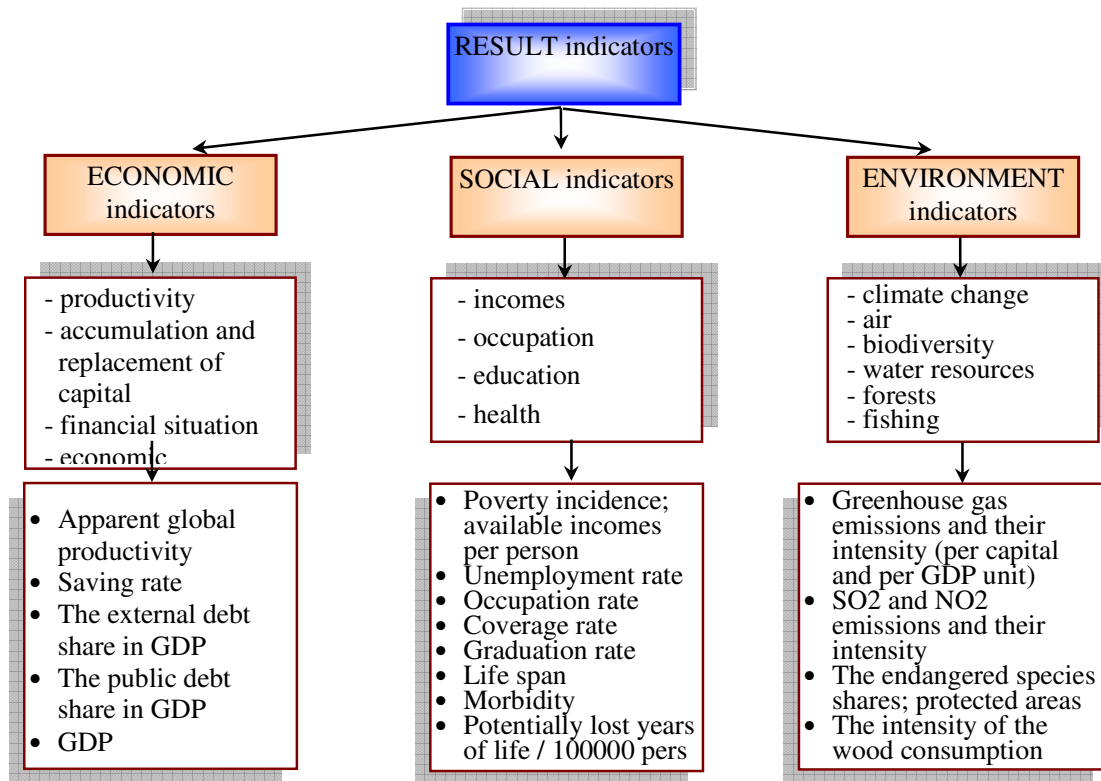


Fig. 3 – Result indicators

resources needed for a decent living.

This has led to the establishment of the following components of the HDI:

- life expectancy;
- Literacy of adult population;
- Gross rate of coverage in education.

Within these three components, the HDI has contributed substantially to attract more attention to the development assessment processes. However HDI should not restrictively be viewed as an attempt to focus on a raw index and to catch within a simple number the complex realities of development. Rather, it should be regarded as one of many components that together provide the data necessary to analyze the opportunities and obstacles in terms of human development policies. Therefore HDI has always been accompanied by an extensive analysis, a variety of information highlighting the social, economic or political characteristics which influence the nature and quality of human life.

Other two types of indicators for the analysis and assessment of the rural tourism are:

1. - Basic indicators: those applicable to all the national or international tourist areas;
2. - Additional indicators: used only in the tourist areas (seaside areas, mountain areas, coastal areas, cultural areas, unique ecological areas, national parks, urban areas, cultural heritage, small islands).

4 Conclusion

The imperative mutations that must be reflected in the policies to revive the post-economic crisis in the tourism industry are:

- *The focus should move on the general economic development, rather than on the uncoordinated and inconsistent measures targeted for tourism industry*
- *Promoting a policy geared towards the tourists, instead of the priority given to tour operators and - to a lesser extent - the local tourist accommodation industry*
- *Improving communication through smarter actions to create brand and advertising*
- *Networking industry par excellence, the Romanian tourism is even more able than other areas of the economy of a country.*
- *Tourism has been defined as a system where the interdependence is essential and the cooperation among various organizations in a tourist destination creates tourist products.*³
- *Under the impact of globalization, the development of tourism in each country in the world*

³ **Mazilu Mirela Elena**, *The Actors Involved in the Sustainable tourism of a destination*, published in Proceedings of The 2nd INTERNATIONAL TOURISM CONFERENCE: “Sustainable mountain tourism-local responses for global changes”, Drobeta Turnu Severin, Sept. 26th-27th, 2009, Universitaria Publishing House, Craiova, ISBN: 978-606-510-622-2, pg. 215-221.

is possible only in the conditions of an optimal public-private partnership;

- *there is a real public-private partnership* in the field and the institutions empowered to create a certain education and behaviour to support the sustainable development of Romanian tourism do not make the necessary efforts;

Basically, in this context of crisis, Romanian tourism needs to maintain the accommodation capacities and to improve services. The real benefits will be obtained later;

The effects of the global financial and economic crisis are felt by all the market players, regardless of their domain.

Table 1 – The basic indicators of sustainable tourism
SPECIFIC MEASURING INSTRUMENTS INDICATOR

1. – Site Protection	the category of the site's protection after the index of the International Union for the Preservation of Nature (IUCN)
2. - Pressure	The number of tourists who visit the site (year / month with maximum influx)
3. – Intensity of use	the intensity of use during peak periods (the number of people and per hectare)
4. - Social impact	the report tourists / residents (during the peak period, but also during the rest of the period)
5. - Development Control	the existence of a method of study of the environment or specific controls on the planning method of the area and the density of use
6. - Waste management	% of treated wastewater of the site (additional indicators may lead to structural limitations of other site infrastructure capacity, such as the water supply)
7. - Planning process	The existence of a methodical plan for the tourist destination in question (with a component "tourism")
8. - Fragile ecosystems	the number of rare species or endangered ones
9. - Customer satisfaction	visitor satisfaction (using a questionnaire)
10. - Satisfaction of the local population	satisfaction of the local population (using a questionnaire)
11. - Contribution of tourism to local economy	how much tourism represents (%) in all the economic activity

Aggregate indexes

A. - carrying capacity	aggregate means of measuring that warns in advance of the key factors influencing the carrying capacity of the site related to the various levels of tourism development
B - Site disturbance	aggregate means of measuring the levels of impact on the site (to know the natural and cultural features under the constraints cumulative effect of tourism and other sectors)
C. - interest	means of measuring the quality of the features of the site that make it attractive for tourists and can change over time

Source: "Guide à l'intention des autorités locales: développement durable du tourisme", WTO, Madrid, 1999, p. 143

References:

- [1] Andrei R., Gogonea M.R. *The Measurement of the Sustainable Development of Tourism*, Journal of Tourism, No. 2, pg.48-52, The Publishing House of the University of Suceava, 2007.
- [2] Constantin D.L., *Tourism and the Sustainable Regional Development Strategy, Effects and Costs*, Romanian Statistical Review, no. 8-9, Bucharest, 2000.
- [3] Glavan V., *Tourism and the Environment Protection - Priority Issues*, Romanian Statistical Review, no. 8-9, Bucharest, 2000.
- [4] Gogonea R.M., *Statistical Methods Applied in the Analysis of Rural Tourism* - doctoral thesis, Bucharest, 2005.
- [5] Iordache M.C., *Prospects of Romanian Tourism in the Dynamic Global Tourism* - doctoral thesis, Bucharest, 2004.
- [6] Mitroi M., *The Predictions of the World Organization of Tourism: 2000 to 2010*, Tribuna Economica Magazine, Bucharest, no. 27, 2000.
- [7] Mazilu M., *Ecotourism and Tourist Arrangements*, Scrisul Romanesc Publishing House, Craiova, 2004.
- [8] Mazilu M., *Tourist Geography*, Didactical and Pedagogical Publishing House, Bucharest, 2007.