

The Factors with Majors Incidence in the Development of Sustainable Tourism

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Abstract: - Contemporary tourism is a social and especially a cultural process; it is a way of life of today's man. Up to modern times, the basic social relations represented a function of social proximity. The local communities, with a local cultural environment, sharing fundamental values, have eased the definitions of identity by the individuals and have given a meaning to the social groups, which are generally stable.

All the values are combined within the "mass culture" society, which leads to the isolation of an individual among the "many loners". The third stage that of the "tourist" transformation of the world is reached! The process is unfolded in various parts of the Globe. This aims mainly at the developed countries and regions, but it gradually expands to the whole world. Tourism is, before all, a form of the human behaviour. Man is the essential subject of tourism. This can be explained if we understand man, as a human being with its social, cultural needs. This article will look at the big picture of tourism development impacts and approaches to deliver low impact development. It will teach a holistic approach to planning and sustainable tourism development that reviews governments' and international donors' role in rural land development, stressing bioregional planning as a key tool for governments and their donors to move rural areas into a more thorough process for sustainable regional development. Two elements are essential in the tourism industry system: how to make use environmentally, sustainably of the tourism potential of the landscape and the anthropogenic potential. The following are dedicated to them. Why ecology in tourism? Why ecology of hospitality? Why ecology of tourism? These are questions that I have partially answered and the book tries to bring to the attention of tourism phenomenon lovers issues, thoughts, experiences. However, major changes in economic growth patterns are taking place by focusing on intensive types, on sustainable development, globalization and integration fields. In this context, tourism acts as a social component, with a significant participation in the overall progress and, not least, as a promoter of globalization and sustainable development factor.

Key-Words: - green economy, sustainable tourism, strategy, impact, ecology, globalization.

1 Introduction

Motto: "Your actions count. That is our message to the one billion tourists. Through the right actions and choices, each tourist represents an opportunity for a fairer, more inclusive and more sustainable future."
UNWTO Secretary-General, Taleb Rifai.

Tourism has reached a milestone in 2012: according the UNWTO reports, for the first time in human history more than one billion people travelled internationally. If we add the estimated

extent of domestic tourism, the figure would be four times higher. Consequences are not only positive: enormous negative triple bottom line impacts (ecology/planet, sociology/people and economy/profit) result from one-sided rather than requisitely holistic behavior. One billion tourists have travelled the world in 2012, marking a new record for international tourism – a sector that accounts for one in every 12 jobs and 30% of the world's services exports. On the symbolic arrival date of the one-billionth tourist (13 December 2012), UNWTO revealed the actions tourists can take to ensure their trips

benefit the people and places they visit, as voted by the public.

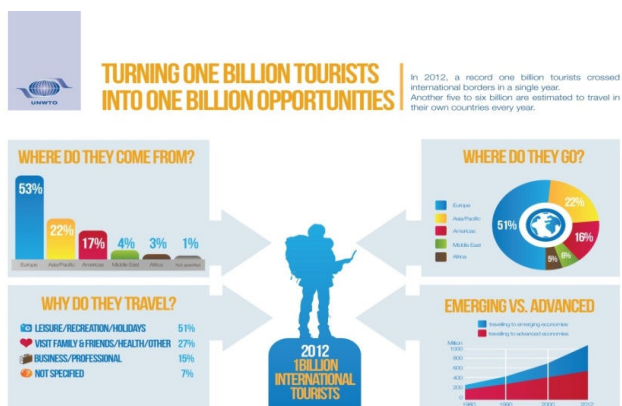


Fig.1 One billion tourists in 2012¹

International tourism has continued to grow in 2012, despite global economic uncertainty, to reach over one billion international tourist arrivals. The figure cements tourism’s position as one of the world’s largest economic sectors, accounting for 9% of global GDP (direct, indirect and induced impact), one in every 12 jobs and up to 8% of the total exports of the world’s Least Developed Countries (LDCs).

Recalling the positive impact even the smallest action can have if multiplied by one billion, UNWTO launched the One Billion Tourists: One Billion Opportunities campaign to celebrate this milestone, showing tourists that respecting local culture, preserving heritage or buying local goods when travelling can make a big difference. The public was asked to vote for the Travel Tip that would have the greatest benefit for the people and places they visit and to pledge to follow that tip when travelling.

¹ <http://media.unwto.org/en/news/2012-12-12/infographics-turning-one-billion-tourists-one-billion-opportunities>



Fig.2 Source: unwto.org.

The winning tip, revealed on the arrival date of the one-billionth tourist, was Buy Local, encouraging tourists to buy food and souvenirs locally, or hire local guides, to ensure their spending translates into jobs and income for host communities. A close second, Respect Local Culture calls on tourists to learn more about their destination’s traditions, or some words in the local language, before leaving home. Another research/report by WTTC:”The Comparative Economic Impact of Travel & Tourism “builds on WTTC’s ground-breaking Benchmarking study and looks at Travel & Tourism as an industry in terms of its economic linkages and leakages as well as the regional distribution of benefits, and compares these against six other industry sectors across 20 countries (comparator sectors included mining, education, chemicals manufacturing, automotive manufacturing, communications and financial services). This research also includes a look at the return on investment from destination marketing and uses case studies, findings from a specially-commissioned WTTC survey of senior industry executives and reviews of previous research to show that well-designed marketing campaigns consistently produce strong economic returns.²

² <http://www.wttc.org/research/benchmarking-travel-tourism/comparative-economic-impact-travel-tourism/>

One of UNEP's Tourism Programme strategic focus is to "encourage demand for sustainable tourism products and services". A critical point in that perspective is indeed to identify players and implement the possible tools and instruments that could contribute to the mobilization of a real and substantive demand for environmentally friendly tourism products. In this sense, tourism cannot truly become more sustainable unless consumers (tourists) consistently favour more sustainable destinations and activities in their purchasing decisions. This is because, generally, the industry is driven by market opportunity. Consumers play a direct and indirect role in supporting environmental conservation goals and linking tourism to poverty alleviation. Tourists' demand for more 'sustainable' tourism services and facilities can influence the performance of the private sector. Tourists can also directly prevent impact by avoiding certain behaviours that greatly impact on the environment, and in particular sensitive ecosystems such as coral reefs, and coastal and mountain areas.

Challenges to address include turning concern into reality with respect to holiday choices and behavior, through effective promotions, information and price signals, and also making sure that the industry is alert to new motivations such as cultural heritage and nature based tourism, rather than assuming that most tourists are uninterested in issues of environmental quality and impact.

Environmental sustainability and climate change is a global issue, with many cultural, organizational, technical, social, regulatory, and individual factors. Just as computer-based information systems have been the driving force for productivity improvements, Green IS can be a driving force for sustainability improvements. "Our quest for environmental sustainability needs an information strategy to parallel and complement engineering solutions." (Watson, Corbett, Boudreau, Webster, 2012). This paper aims to show how tourism can contribute to the ongoing efforts being made in response to the current crisis (creating jobs, promoting trade and accelerating the development), and a long-term challenge: turning tourism into a green economy.

2 Problem Formulation

„The roadmap for moving to a competitive economy³ both for European and global tourism outlines actions to support the global economy and the tourism sector, according to the 15 strategic axes divided into three interrelated components:

- ❖ **Ability to recover** – support for the sector to respond quickly, keeping staff and training them, establishing partnerships and regional, innovative support structures, and development of the use of cutting-edge technology in tourism.
- ❖ **Stimulation** – defends the principle of including tourism, in general, in economy boosting programs, particularly in the context of fiscal and monetary measures, highlighting its ability to contribute to the overall objectives' achievement which are: creating jobs and economic recovery
- ❖ **Green economy** – promoting tourism place and contribution in the green economy as a sector capable of inducing a motivating, reasonable increase, intelligent infrastructures and efficient jobs (with regard to energy consumption)

Transferred to Romanian conditions, **mandatory changes** which must be reflected in the policies of the post-economic crisis recovery in tourism are:

- **The focus should move to the general economic development**, rather to uncoordinated and inconsistent measures targeted for tourism industry
- **Promoting a policy in favor of tourists**, instead of granting priority now to tour operators and – to a lesser extent – the local tourist accommodation industry
- Improvement of communication by smarter branding and advertising actions
- Networking industry par excellence, Romanian tourism can accomplish even

³ <http://www.veilleinfotourisme.fr/feuille-de-route-pour-developper-le-tourisme-en-europe-commission-welcomes-recovery-in-the-european-tourism-sector--65231.kjsp>

more than other areas of the country's economy.

- Tourism has been defined as a system in which interdependence is essential and collaboration and cooperation between different organizations in a tourist destination create the tourist product.⁴
- **Under the impact of globalization**, the development of tourism in each world country is possible only under optimal public-private partnerships;
- **There is no real public-private partnership in the field**, and institutions authorized to create a specific education and behavior to support the sustainable development of Romanian tourism are not ambitious;

3. PROBLEM SOLUTION

Basically, in this crisis, Romanian tourism must maintain accommodation capacities and improve services. The real benefits will be obtained later;

The effects of the financial and economic crisis globally are felt by all market players, no matter where they work.

3.1. Objectives to follow for tourism sustainability

The existing EU framework for the development of economic, social and environmental policies based on the Partnership for Growth and Jobs and the Sustainable Development Strategy provides an adequate background for achieving Objectives on the sustainability of the European tourism and challenges to be addressed to objectives of this "agenda": economic prosperity, social equity and cohesion, protection of the natural environment and culture⁵.

These objectives should also guide European tourism stakeholders in their policies and actions affecting the impact of outbound tourism from Europe and in supporting tourism as a tool for sustainable development in host countries.

⁴ Mazilu Mirela Elena, *Actorii implicați în turismul durabil al unei destinații*, in Proceedings of The 2-nd INTERNATIONAL TOURISM CONFERENCE: "Sustainable mountain tourism-local responses for global changes", Drobeta Turnu Severin, 26-27-Sept.2009, Editura Universitaria, Craiova, pag. 215-221;

⁵ These objectives are detailed in the TSG Report (p. 3).

To achieve these objectives, a number of tourism specific challenges⁶ need to be addressed. They mainly include the preservation and sustainable management of natural and cultural resources, minimizing resource use of resources and pollution in tourism destinations including the production of waste, managing change in the interests of community welfare, reducing the seasonality of demand, studying environmental impact of local transport involved in tourism, making tourism accessible to all without discrimination and improving the quality of jobs in the sector, also addressing in the Commission migration policy⁷ the issue of employing third-country nationals whose stay is illegal.

Ensuring safety and security of tourists and local communities in tourist areas is another challenge and also a prerequisite for the successful development of tourism⁸.

These priorities may vary in space or time. Priority given to them, how they will be addressed and opportunities they can offer vary from case to case.

Stakeholders should continue to anticipate and monitor changes. Policies and actions must take into account how demand and offer will be affected by environmental challenges – such as climate change⁹ and water scarcity¹⁰ –, technology developments or other current political, economic and social issues.

Therefore, all challenges will be regularly updated in conjunction with all stakeholders.

⁶ These key challenges have been detailed in the TSG report (pp. 8-17) and are related to the seven challenges identified in the renewed Sustainable Development Strategy.

⁷ See also Proposal for a Directive providing for sanctions against employers of third-country nationals staying illegally, COM (2007) 249, p.2; Impact Assessment Report SEC (2007) 603, p.7.

⁸ Member States could benefit from the identification and sharing of best practices on the protection of individual sites and major events through the European Programme for Critical Infrastructure Protection which would allow appropriate coordination of relevant activities.

⁹ See also Green Paper "Adapting to climate change in Europe – options for EU action" COM (2007) 354 final of 29.06.2007.

¹⁰ See also "Addressing the challenge of water scarcity and droughts in the European Union" COM (2007) 414 final of 18.07.2007.

Achieving the objectives of this agenda and addressing the above challenges will require consistent action that can be supported by appropriate public policies: sustainable management of destinations, the integration of sustainability in the business environment and tourists' awareness on sustainability.

To achieve a competitive and sustainable tourism, the Commission invites all players to observe the following principles¹¹:

- ❖ **Holistic and integrated approach** – In tourism planning and development all the impacts it may have should be taken into account. Furthermore, tourism should be well balanced and integrated within the activities that have an impact on society and the environment.
- ❖ **Long term planning** – Sustainable development refers to the protection of needs of future generations and of this generation. Long term planning requires the ability to sustain actions over time.
- ❖ **Achieve an appropriate pace for development** – The level, pace and shape of development should reflect and observe the character, resources and needs of host communities and destinations.
- ❖ **Involve all stakeholders** – A sustainable approach requires widespread and committed participation in decision making and implementation by all those involved in the outcome.
- ❖ **Using the best available knowledge** – Policies and actions should be drafted by the latest and best knowledge available. The entire Europe should share information on tourism trends and impacts, as well as skills and experience.
- ❖ **Reduce and manage risk** (the precautionary principle) – Where there is uncertainty about outcomes, there should be full evaluation and preventative measures to avoid harmful effects on the environment or society.
- ❖ **Reflect impacts in costs** (user and polluter pays) – Prices should reflect the real costs to society generated by consumption and production activities. This has implications not simply for pollution but also the use of

equipment that generates significant management costs.

- ❖ **Set and observe limits, where appropriate** – The limit capacity of individual sites and regions should be recognized, and where appropriate, there should be willingness and ability to limit the number of tourists and tourism development.
- ❖ **Undertake continuous monitoring** – Sustainability is all about understanding impacts and being alert to them to make necessary changes and improvements.

Several stakeholders have already recognized the importance of sustainability and strive to improve their performance. Despite these efforts, it is necessary to make further progress. To obtain meaningful results, existing and future initiatives should work in a more visibly and synergistically.

This involves strengthening such a voluntary and continuous process. It should be promoted by all tourism stakeholders in Europe: the different levels of government – local authorities, destination management organizations, regions, Member States – and the European Commission, businesses, tourists and any other body¹² can stimulate, support and influence tourism.

The tourism sector involves many stakeholders from the private and public sector whose powers are decentralized.

In conclusion, tourism and its direct beneficiary: the tourist destination must join efforts towards the sustainable and competitive, to get that attribute of Excellence.

The latter is included in 'social responsibility' by ISO 26000. The European Union encourages the EU-member states and big enterprises (including their suppliers and other partners) and others to

4 Conclusion

Tourism is one of the most promising drivers of growth for the world economy. The sheer size and reach of the sector makes it critically important from a global resource perspective. Even small changes toward greening can have important impacts. Furthermore, the sectors' connection to numerous sectors at destination and international levels means that changes in

¹¹ Report of the Tourism Sustainability Group "Action for more sustainable European tourism" (Action for More Sustainable European Tourism), February 2007, pp. 3-4.

¹² Among others: educational establishments, universities and research centers, trade unions, consumer associations, NGOs and international organizations.

practices can stimulate changes in many different public and private actors.

Tourism policy development requires a strategy that promotes both sustainable development and poverty reduction, while also addressing specific issues like climate change and biodiversity. This strategy should include local, national and regional governments, consumers and residents in the implementation of programmes in pursuit of common goals. At the local level, integrated management is needed to protect essential resources and assets, make sure that tourism remains a viable activity in the long-term, and increase and better distribute its benefits. At the national and regional levels, policymakers should work together to protect what is attractive about a destination while at the same time promoting it.

Like all industries, the tourism industry can have adverse environmental, economic and social effects. These impacts are mostly linked with the construction and management of infrastructures such as roads and airports, and of tourism facilities, including resorts, hotels, restaurants, shops, golf courses, and marinas. Ill-managed tourism can put enormous pressure on an area and lead to soil erosion, increased air, soil and marine pollution, natural habitat loss, increased pressure on endangered species and heightened vulnerability to forest fires. It often puts a strain on fresh water resources, leading also to users' conflicts between tourist-related and local consumption. Finally, CO₂ emissions related to air transport in particular, with its growth forecast, poses a major problem in terms of sustainability: in particular for distant destinations, despite the known environmental impacts, air travel expansion is a necessary condition for economic development.

On the other hand, tourism has the potential to contribute to environmental protection and poverty reduction by capitalizing on biodiversity assets; to increase public appreciation of the environment and to spread awareness of environmental problems bringing people into closer contact with nature and the environment. Because of their tourism potential, many natural areas are now legally protected. Finally, sustainable tourism businesses can be

promoted as sustainable alternative livelihood opportunities in areas where current economic activities have detrimental effects on the host environment but where biodiversity and cultural assets could be a source of income.

If efficiently planned and managed, tourism could become an ally and a supportive economic and political force for conservation. That is the aim of promoting sustainable tourism or tourism that is compatible with sustainable development.¹³



In order to strengthen institutional capacities for information management and monitoring in support of decision and policy making, UNWTO launched the concept of the Global Observatory of Sustainable Tourism (GOST) based on the UNWTO methodology for sustainable tourism indicators. GOST intends to facilitate the establishment of a network of observatories at all levels, through the use of a systematic application of monitoring, evaluation (sustainable tourism indicators) and information management techniques, as key tools for the formulation and implementation of sustainable tourism policies, strategies, plans and management processes.

The “Monitoring Centre for Sustainable Tourism Observatories” was inaugurated on the Aegean Islands, the main archipelago of Greece. This first Sustainable Tourism Observatory in Europe under the auspices of UNWTO will monitor the environmental, social and economic impacts of tourism in the archipelago and serve as a model to expand the concept to a national level. (5 February 2013)

¹³<http://www.unep.org/resourceefficiency/Home/Business/SectoralActivities/Tourism/tabid/78766/Default.aspx>

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