

Sustainable development and tourism

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Abstract

The intent of this study is to investigate the role and responsibility of tourism from the perspective of sustainable development. The objective of the research was to evaluate the extent to which international tourism in developing countries meets dimensions of sustainable development. The goals and processes of development are reviewed as they evolved after the end of World War II along the path to sustainable development.

Tourism, as a major development option, has been promoted for its potential to offer a unique combination of features that provide opportunities to meet established sustainable development dimensions. To examine this hypothesis, a theoretical and methodological framework is constructed with five key dimensions arranged to recognize that, for development to be sustainable, it must embrace social and human as well as economic development goals achieved through processes and institutions operating within the context of protecting existing human cultures and natural environments.

Extensive data were collected from sixty sample case-studies across twenty-eight destinations to see if there were occasions where indicators from all five key dimensions of sustainable development were successfully applied. No occasions were found where all the dimensions of sustainable development have been successfully addressed as measured by positive indicators taken from the sample-case studies. This suggests that tourism may not be compatible with sustainable development. Future research should investigate whether sample-case studies describing more recent tourism development show a trend of improvement in the movement towards sustainability.

Key Words: sustainable development, tourism development, international tourism development, dimensions of sustainable development

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1. Introduction

This essay summarizes a larger study² that investigated the role and responsibility of tourism from the perspective of sustainable development. The objective of the research was to evaluate the extent to which international tourism in developing countries meets dimensions of sustainable development.

Five key dimensions are identified and arranged to recognize that, for tourism development to be sustainable, it must embrace social and human as well as economic development goals achieved through processes and institutions operating within the context of protecting existing human cultures and natural environments. Goals and processes of development since the end of World War II are briefly reviewed prior to the presentation of a theoretical and methodological framework that will be used to evaluate sixty sample-case studies covering 28 tourist destinations. The objective of the analysis is to examine whether there are occasions where these five key dimensions of sustainable development were successfully applied and attained. Finally, the results of the analysis of these data are presented and discussed and recommendations provided.

2. The Origins of Development

Concepts of development, over the last few hundred years, have been discussed in the context of human dominance over nature and natural resources. Since man was thought to be in control of his own destiny, changes could be prescribed to achieve progress in the improvement of the human condition. The progress achieved in Western Europe during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries was exported through colonial expansion until the Second World War (WWII).

Over the 40 years since the end of WWII showed that in spite of the impressive and rapid recovery and reconstruction of the post-war Western European and Japanese economies, government planning and massive influxes of financial capital focused on modernization and industrialization did not produce the anticipated economic growth in many developing countries (development in the 1950s and 1960s) (Commission on International Development, 1970; Meier, 1974; OECD, 1985; Hettne, 1990, Escobar, 1995). Neither did expanding beyond the narrow focus on income and economic growth to include short-term basic needs of the poor through active intervention of government-led policies (development up through the 1970s) produce the expected outcomes in many developing countries. Neither was responding to economic crises through ‘anti-interventionist’ (Escobar, 1995, p. 58) market-based policies (development in the 1980s) sufficient to achieve expected levels of economic development and poverty alleviation in many developing countries.

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3. The Shift Towards Sustainable Development

In future approaches of development interventions both well-functioning government and free-market institutions would need to be integrated through processes that combine both the state and the market as complementary rather than mutually exclusive alternatives (Fongang, 1997; Stiglitz, 1997). Besides addressing the desired goals of solving economic challenges, it would also be necessary to solve social and human challenges and to acknowledge the uniqueness of each country's local culture and the importance of the participation of the beneficiaries in decision-making processes. Finally, it was recognized that natural resources and the environment imposed limits to development (McCool & Moisey, 2001).

Development theory and practice expanded the 'first pillar' (Streeten, 1995, p. 21) of achieving economic goals of income and growth through investment and trade to include more equitable distribution through the creation of productive employment and locally owned small businesses. The 'second pillar' (Streeten, 1995, p. 21) of providing basic social services (e.g. health and nutritional care, education, and housing) as prerequisites for the long-term growth of an economy was also expanded to a larger perspective of social and political participation and to promoting respect for human rights and fundamental political freedoms (Fukuda-Parr, 2003)

People were no longer considered 'passive targets' or productive inputs to development but were 'active participating agents' (Streeten, 1995, p. 21). They and their well-being were the goals and the development of human capabilities was a means toward achieving those goals (Anand & Sen, 1994; UNDP, 1996). It became important to invest in the development of human beings for the purpose of attaining the full potential of their human capabilities (Streeten, 1995; Huysentruyt, 2003). The ultimate goal and driving force of development was to impact the social and human development of the local people and the type of life they wished for themselves and for their future generations (Anand & Sen, 1994; UNDP, 1996). The UNDP acknowledged this by emphasizing the broader goal of improving human well-being rather than just material well-being (Fongang, 1997).

Adapting development processes to the local culture takes advantage of the extensive talents and experiences of the indigenous community (Kleymeyer, 1992; UN, 2001) and the interactions and collaboration of existing social networks (UNDP, 1996). A greater emphasis was placed on collaboration, self-organizing, and self-management among the various stakeholders and on the formation of networks through which they would interact (Turner & Hulme, 1997). Basically individuals and organizations in a community, working together in an idiosyncratic local institutional context, could more successfully identify the strategies and changes needed to achieve the type of development desired by that community (Robertson & Speier, 1998).

By the end of the 1980's, awareness began to surface that natural resources and the environment imposed limits to development. In 1987, this link was formalized in the publication by the World Commission on Environment and Development of its report, *Our Common Future*, also known as The Brundtland Report, which articulated what became the most often referenced definition for sustainable development (Guimarães, 2001;

Saunier, 2000; Lewis, 2000). That is, "paths of human progress that meet the needs and aspirations of the present generation without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs" (Rahman, 2002, p. 267).

Although this definition for sustainable development may be one of the most quoted since its publication, there are so many others, that it has taken thirteen pages to include more than 60 definitions (Moffatt, 1995 citing Pearce, Markandya, & Barbier, 1989). Entire issues of journals, for example the 1995 edition of the *Journal of Planning Literature*, have been devoted to discussing sustainable development. It is quite remarkable that, though there may be little agreement on a specific definition for sustainable development there appeared to be considerable support for it and no significant constituent explicitly opposed to it (Guimarães, 2001).

Discussions evolved beyond merely the sustainability of natural resources and the environment to include other dimensions that incorporated a permanent improvement to the quality of life over the long-term (Anand & Sen, 1994). The emphasis became the relationships between other components of sustainable development and the requirement to resolve any conflicts and find equilibrium between them (World Business Council for Sustainable Development, 2000).

In spite of this awareness, humanity was still confronted with failed approaches to development that were environmentally damaging (exhausting natural resources and deteriorating ecosystems), socially offensive (worsening poverty, famine, infirmity and illiteracy, and maintaining inequitable distribution among and within nations), politically unfair (preventing equal access to assets and benefits), ethically objectionable (advocating anthropocentricity) (Guimarães, 2001) and culturally destructive (forcing homogeneity). As a response, the United Nations (UN) organized the UN Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), or Earth Summit, which took place in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil in 1992.

The most important agreement that resulted from the Earth Summit discussions became known as Agenda 21, which was basically a plan of action for the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development (MacDonald, 1998). Agenda 21 was an extensive 40 chapter document which recognized that integrating environment and development was expected to "lead to the fulfillment of basic needs, improved living standards for all, better protected and managed ecosystems, and a safer, more prosperous future" (Agenda 21, Chapter 1: Preamble. 1.1).

4. Applying Sustainable Development to Tourism

One of the most important results of the Earth Summit in Rio was the establishment of the UN Commission on Sustainable Development (UNCSD) which extended the discussions of environmental protection to the realm of tourism development by establishing the International Work Program on Sustainable Tourism (Middleton & O'Keefe, 2003).

Tourism, in contrast to other options available for development (i.e. manufacturing, mining, or forestry) was thought to offer some features that could be uniquely combined to

provide opportunities for achieving sustainable development. Tourism was indicated as a relatively environmentally clean and renewable alternative (Berno & Bricker, 2001) and must have a symbiotic relationship with the ecosystems on which it depends for its viability. It has been promoted as a 'smokeless industry' (Berno & Bricker, 2001) and for its utilization of free natural (e.g. sun, sea, sand, wildlife), historical, social and cultural resources (Berno & Bricker, 2001; Bennett, Roe, & Ashley, 1999), assets that were typically abundant in less developed countries particularly among the poor (Bennett, et al., 1999; Cattarinich, 2001).

Tourism was recognized to have a particularly important positive impact on improving the quality of life of the poor in developing countries (Bennett, et al., 1999) and to offer a unique potential for poverty reduction (UN, 2003) and for social and human development. Tourism's economic agenda expanded into a 'multi-faceted phenomenon' (Louw and Smart as cited in Tisdell & Roy, 1998, p. 69, 75) or a more multi-dimensional approach to development. The depth and scope of this complex set of economic, social, and institutional relationships has made tourism development unique in its potential to contribute as a vital force for promoting peace and cooperation among nations and mutual understanding among peoples (Edgell, 1990; Klancnik, 2003).

Pressure by key stakeholders worldwide mounted for the adoption of the principles of Agenda 21 into the development goals and processes at tourism destinations (Pearce & Butler, 1999). This eventually led, through an association between the World Travel and Tourism Council, the World Tourism Organization, and the Earth Council, to the generation of the 'Agenda 21 for the Travel and Tourism Industry' in 1995, and ultimately to the formulation of Local Agenda 21 plans for various tourism-based communities (UN, 2001a; Pascale, 1999).

5. Assessing Sustainable Development of Tourism

But as tourism spread throughout the world and increasingly became consumed by growing masses of tourists, there were mounting expressions of disappointment with many of its impacts. Tourists themselves eventually started showing a greater concern for the quality of their experience and demanded a more considerate approach to the environment and the indigenous cultures and societies (UN, 2001a; Hassan, 2000). Responding to this demand, tourism suppliers began diversifying by offering 'alternative forms of tourism' or 'niche market' tourism as options to mass tourism (Smith & Eadigton, 1992; Pleumarom, 1994; Cattarinich, 2001). In contrast to mass tourism, these new types of tourism experiences were theoretically focused on specialized markets frequently more flexible, smaller in size, and more diffuse in place and time (Williams & Shaw, 1998; Cattarinich, 2001).

Recognizing the importance of tourism as a development option, many international entities have been in the forefront of creating and investigating ways to better enable the assessment of tourism's progress towards sustainable development. These efforts have attempted to include the concepts discussed above such as expanding development goals to include social and human as well as economic development, recognizing the uniqueness of each country's indigenous culture, and acknowledging the limits imposed by natural

resources and the environment. These efforts further recognized that development processes would need to be expanded to integrate both well-functioning government and free-market institutions and to enhance inter-sectorial partnerships and the participation of the beneficiaries in decision-making processes.

These concepts have been included in several frameworks discussed and approved by the UN Commission on Sustainable Development in their 1995 “Indicators of Sustainable Development: Guidelines and Methodologies”, by The Council of Europe in their 1995 “On a Sustainable Tourist Development Policy in Protected Areas” and by the OECD Council in their 1997 “Report of the High-Level Advisory Group on Environment.” Together these frameworks encompass five key dimensions of sustainable development: 1) economic development, 2) social and human development, 3) environmental protection, 4) cultural preservation, and 5) processes and institutions. In this way, the assessment frameworks recognize that for development to be sustainable it must embrace social and human as well as economic development operating through processes and institutions ensclosed within existing human cultures and natural environments.

In this study these frameworks have been combined and are represented into a single framework:

Table 1: Five Key Dimensions of Sustainable Development

SUSTAINABLE GOALS	
1. SOCIAL/HUMAN DEVELOPMENT	2. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

SUSTAINABLE CONTEXT	
3. ENVIRONMENTAL	4. CULTURAL
5. PROCESSES AND INSTITUTIONS	

This dimensional approach is taken to discuss, in general terms, some of the aspects and challenges pertaining to the move of tourism development towards sustainability. The key dimensions consist of groups of indicators designed to offer a set of harmonized assessments of positive and negative impacts of human activities, processes, and patterns on sustainable development. These indicators are taken from numerous sources in the literature and international organizations and are reviewed below.

The five dimensions consist of distinct aggregations of specific indicators, although they are interrelated and often overlap making specific categorization sometimes difficult. For example, a general view supported in many UN reports recognizes that progress towards economic and social/human development cannot be isolated from each other nor from the ongoing changes in the local institutional and natural and cultural environments in which they occur (Africa, 2003). It is also true that environmental and social problems have economic and institutional dimensions; for example, major causes of environmental degradation are due to externalities and to the lack of well-defined property rights and environmental and social policies.

5.1. Social and human dimension of tourism

As tourism activity expanded to involve, respond to, and be accountable to the people who would live with the results of the development effort, the first dimension of sustainable development, social and human development, became increasingly considered (Kingsbury, Remenyi, McKay, & Hunt, 2004). Some indicators with positive impacts include adequate nutrition, standard sanitation, dependable access to quality potable water, and healthcare. Education, training and literacy are also considered vital factors not only for building social and human capabilities but also for facilitating the empowerment of individuals and their community for participation in decisions that affect their lives and development choices (Kingsbury, et al., 2004). Local inhabitants also benefit by having access to infrastructure projects built by the private sector. These include roads, solid waste disposal plants, and water and waste water treatment facilities. Additionally, some private sector enterprises provide education and training as part of the human resource development programs for their local employees.

The literature presents a host of negative social indicators as nations expose their people to ever larger numbers of visitors (Earley & Singh, 2000). There are changes in personal behavior and community life-styles (Mathieson & Wall, 1982 citing Fox, 1977), manifested as an increase in consumption and consumerism, as buying behavior of the local people changes to mimic those of the wealthy tourists (Mathieson & Wall, 1982). Uncontrolled growth in tourism development seeking short-term economic rewards often jeopardizes or weakens traditional social structures as the aesthetic and utilization value of their existing resources, residences, and communities are replaced by accommodations, attractions, and infrastructure constructed to benefit the tourists (Earley & Singh, 2000; Tisdell & Roy, 1998). Existing social structures for power allocation (Apostolopoulos, Leivadi, & Yiannakis, 1996 citing Apostolopoulos, 1993) among the economic and political elites often preclude any equitable distribution of the benefits and burdens of tourism (Kingsbury, et al., 2004).

One of the most significant negative social indicators is the deterioration of the moral standards and safety and security of the host population (Mathieson & Wall, 1982 citing Fox, 1977). They sometimes are subject to a number of social ills, such as prostitution and child exploitation, as well as a rise in criminal behavior, black market enterprises, gambling, illicit narcotics, and, increasingly, sexually transmitted diseases (Tisdell & Roy, 1998; Pleumarom, 1994 citing O'Grady, 1990; UN, 2001a; CEC, 1999; Honey, 2003).

5.2. Economic dimension of tourism

The second dimension, economic development, has always been considered to be the most important aspect of development. In tourism, some of the economic indicators have the potential to uniquely coalesce to stimulate local, national, and regional development and diversify and expand the economy (Pearce & Butler, 1999 citing Pearce, 1989; Tisdell & Roy, 1998). Some potentially positive indicators include generating foreign earnings, national income, government revenues, private commercial activity, employment, and investments (Apostolopoulos, et al., 1996; Coccossis & Nijkamp, 1995; UN, 2001; Pleumarom, 1994).

Tourism's linkage to production in other economic areas boosts the overall economy and stimulates the importation of capital goods (Cattarinich, 2001) - the multiplier effect. These substantial linkages have offered prospects for and benefits to local entrepreneurs, boosting the extent of participation of both the formal and informal economic sectors (Bennett, et al., 1999). It is usually the informal sector that has the greater capacity to create micro and small enterprises, which potentially could provide jobs and the benefits for participation of some of the most disenfranchised people, such as women, the youth, and the poor (Bennett, et al., 1999; UNEP, 2002). In this way, tourism, particularly in developing countries, has been thought to be more labor intensive (Tisdell & Roy, 1998; Williams & Shaw, 1998) than other non-agricultural development options, such as manufacturing (Bennett, et al., 1999), and to offer significant employment especially for the unskilled and semi-skilled (Bennett, et al., 1999; Edgell, 1990; Berno & Bricker, 2001). In addition, the increased economic activity and growth have usually stimulated investment in infrastructure projects, such as transportation, roadways, harbor facilities, airports, electric generating stations, and telecommunications. All these multiplier effects have made tourism uniquely more varied and expansive than many other development options.

There are some negative economic indicators, for example, few economic linkages and high income leakages, inflationary pressures, poor distribution of income, and volatility of earnings (Pleumarom, 1994; Bennett, et al., 1999; Mastny, 2002; Tisdell & Roy, 1998). Economic linkages are limited when large transnational corporations with their more abundant capital and superior technology, knowledge, and sophistication, drown out fledgling domestic companies (Pleumarom, 1994; Tisdell & Roy, 1998; Cattarinich, 2001). From a half to two-thirds of the tourism income generated in a developing country often does not stay in the local economy, but is leaked back to foreign multinationals in the form of import expenses or revenues (Pleumarom, 1994 citing Prosser, 1992; Mastny, 2002; Tisdell & Roy, 1998). This has been particularly characteristic of large tourist projects catering to mass tourism.

Another negative impact is the potential for inflationary pressures as wealthy tourists bid up the prices. This effect is often exacerbated by the behavior of the local people as they attempt to imitate the spending patterns and lifestyles of the wealthy tourists resulting in a spiraling increase in aspirations and consumerism (Tisdell & Roy, 1998).

Problems with the distribution of income occur as many of the economic gains frequently are concentrated in the hands of existing local wealthy elites (Tisdell & Roy, 1998). Most of the local inhabitants do not have the human or financial capabilities, or access to the public bureaucracy, that are necessary to start or build private enterprises. Although some local residents benefit economically, historically simpler ways of life are replaced by inadequately paying menial jobs, such as waiters, guides, porters, drivers, gardeners, maids, cleaners, clerks, and kitchen staff (Pleumarom, 1994 citing O'Grady, 1990; Williams & Shaw, 1998). Only infrequently are local people employed in higher wage jobs such as administration or in other decision-making functions (Pleumarom, 1994).

The seasonality patterns of tourism demand is particularly challenging to local economies as the number of visitors can change significantly depending on climate, holiday, and work patterns (Edgell, 1990). In addition, tourists' preferences are fickle and change as the large

multinationals, e.g. airlines, hotel chains and tour operators, rigorously promote new destinations. The result is often a volatility of earnings, unpredictable income, and uneven development levels at a particular destination.

5.3. Environmental dimension of tourism

As sustainable development of tourism increasingly becomes a strategic focus, the third dimension becomes more evident as the potential for tourism to minimize the impact on the environment receives greater attention and funding. There has been a surge in voluntary industry programs and initiatives intended to commit international businesses to environmental standards supporting the sustainability of tourism development. These are expected to contribute to positive indicators such as environmentally sensitive hotel building and management, ecologically sensitive development projects, and limited impact sightseeing that directly benefits the host indigenous population (Pleumarom, 1994).

However, so many negative environmental indicators are being experienced, that about half the research published in the *Annals of Tourism Research* indicated that environmental degradation was the main cause for the decrease in tourism to a destination (Tenenbaum, 2000). The broad carrying capacity of the natural and physical environments (Tisdell & Roy, 1998) limit the number of people that can be absorbed before a threshold is exceeded leading to irreparable damage and ultimate avoidance by tourists (Tisdell & Roy, 1998 citing Mathieson & Wall, 1982).

Besides the drop in tourist visits and decrease in the level of prosperity of the community, increased pollution, ecological damage, and urban sprawl directly reduces the general well-being of the local inhabitants. Many of these negative impacts can also be seen in the alternative forms of tourism, as their popularity reaches such proportions that they begin to take on some of the consumer characteristics of mass tourism – negative impact on the natural resources, environment, culture, and society of the host communities (Pleumarom, 1994).

5.4. Cultural dimension of tourism

Analogous to the limitations imposed by the natural environment, tourism development is also limited by the capacity of the local cultural environment to absorb such development. Sustainable development of tourism is expected to be planned and managed in a way to help preserve and sustain the ‘culture, traditions and value systems’ (Sharpley & Telfer, 2002, p. 227) of the indigenous population (UN, 2001; CEC, 1999). It is to be a channel that reinforces the cultural identities and enhance the dignity of the host society (Sharpley & Telfer, 2002).

Cultural elements often are viewed in two broadly interconnected perspectives, cultural tourism (e.g. experiencing ‘exotic foreign’ traditions) and the impact that tourism development has on the existing host culture. Tourism can potentially stimulate the revival of traditional festivals and customs, local cultural lifestyles, as well as artisanal production (Stabler, 1997; Sharpley & Telfer, 2002) and can further enhance the preservation of the local traditional cultural heritage sites.

It has been acknowledged that unrestrained growth in tourism development focused on immediate economic gains has the potential to upset or deteriorate the indigenous cultural traditions and values (UN, 2001a; Bennett, et al., 1999; CEC, 1999). There is a great risk that the authenticity of the local cultural traditions will be lost as they become commercialized to entertain the tourist (Tisdell & Roy, 1998) and degenerate into a mere 'tourist show' (Earley & Singh, 2000, p. 186) or manufactured 'pseudo-culture' (Tisdell & Roy, 1998, p. 33). Occasionally, rather than preserving authentic forms of culture, counterfeit settings are recreated to attract foreign tourists and fulfill commercial requirements (Aronsson, 2000).

Cultural clashes occur when the behavior of tourists differs substantially from that of the host population. Individual tourists, in their egotistical search for pleasure (CEC, 1999), are occasionally forceful, spendthrift, and promiscuous which often conflicts with behavior in traditional societies and leads to feelings of resentment, envy, or disgust in the local population. Another potential source of conflict arises when a location is designated and promoted as a heritage site or traditional destination without the consent of the host population. This classification obliges the host community to preserve their historic ways of living and deprives them from enjoying the potential benefits that can come from modernization (Sharpley & Telfer, 2002).

5.5 Institutions and processes dimension of tourism

Respect for and protection of local cultures and natural environments can be achieved more readily by including the fifth dimension - processes and institutions that increases participation of multiple stakeholders in collaborative processes with the purpose of attaining the economic, social and human development goals of sustainable development (Tisdell & Roy, 1998; Klancnik, 2004; Cattarinich, 2001; Priestley, et al., 1996; Strong, 1995; UN, 2001a). Leadership by the public sector at the local, regional and national levels and supportive public policy become increasingly more important in these participatory endeavors of stakeholders from the public, private, and non-profit sectors.

Berno & Bricker (2001) noted, however, that in practice, historical evidence suggests that attempts to incorporate stakeholders do not lead to mutual inclusion but rather to excluding many stakeholders from decision making deliberations and to disregarding cultural diversity. The breadth and complexity brought about by the extent of different and oftentimes conflicting goals of these many stakeholders suggests that they experience potential conflicts in their needs, resource and information availability, participation, and distribution of the costs and benefits. In some situations, the lack of coordination of actions between the public, private and non-profit sectors has led to negative consequences for the local environment, economy and way of life (Travis, 1980 citing Calocardou-Binas, 1976).

6. Assessing Sustainable Development of Tourism - Methodology

This study investigates tourism development's role and responsibility from the perspective of sustainable development. Following the extensive practice of using published sample-case studies to investigate international tourism development (Burr, 1995; Hardi and Zdan,

1997), substantial data were collected from sample-case studies in order to explore linkages between tourism development and sustainable development.

Because of the enormity of tourism development, it became necessary to narrow the focus of the study. The study focused on international tourism because it is relevant to two major current trends: 1) globalization and 2) the expansion of the World Trade Organization into services including tourism. The focus was further narrowed to developing nations because international tourism development plays a much more significant and increasingly vital role for their development and poverty reduction (Sharpley & Telfer, 2002).

The impact that tourists may have on the local destination depends to a large extent on the relationship between the number of tourists and the local population. This relationship has been defined as the ratio of visitors to local inhabitants and when this ratio is high, the effects on the local destination and its population, including cultural and social impacts and social stress (UNDESA, 2001), is considerably more pronounced (Mathieson & Wall, 1982). This aspect of tourism served to further limit the investigation to destinations that experienced a relatively high ratio of visitors to locals.

6.1. Establishing indicators for evaluation

For the purposes of this evaluation of sustainable development of tourism, the indicators from the five key dimension framework discussed above are enhanced with additional indicators from numerous international, regional, national, and local sources. This broader based approach recognizes that diverse routes to development occur and permits generalizations to be formed across sample case-studies providing a useful method to analyze the sustainability of tourism development in this and other situations.

Sources at the international level included the United Nations (e.g. indicators of sustainable development approved by the Commission on Sustainable Development, 1995); the Agenda 21 adopted at the World Summit in Brazil, 1992; the 'Agenda 21 for the Travel and Tourism Industry: Towards Environmentally Sustainable Development' adopted at the World Summit in South Africa in 2002; the Charter for Sustainable Tourism adopted at the World Conference on Sustainable Tourism, in Lanzarote, Spain, 1995 (based on the Manila Declaration on World Tourism of 1980, the Hague Declaration on Tourism of 1989, and the Tourism Bill of Rights and Tourist Code adopted in Sofia at the Sixth Assembly of the World Tourism Organization); the Mali Declaration on Sustainable Tourism Development approved in the Maldives, 1997; the Manila Declaration on the Social Impact of Tourism endorsed in the Philippines, 1997; and the World Tourism Policy Forum adopted in the USA, 2004, attended by leaders of the Inter-American Development Bank, the World Bank, and US Agency for International Development. Examples of indicators representative of efforts by international non-governmental organizations were obtained from the World Wildlife Fund. Indicators from sources at the regional level include the Tourism Policy Guidelines for tourism development adopted by the Economic Ministers from Pacific Island Countries in July, 1998.

Responding to demands of Agenda 21, stakeholders at the national and local levels participated in adapting assessment criteria to better suit their unique needs. As examples

of indicators adjusted to measure sustainability of tourism development at the national level, indicators were obtained from the Dutch International Development Approach. At a local level, indicators were taken from initiatives undertaken in the state of Montana, USA.

Indicators that were identified from these many sources are placed in one of the five dimensions conforming to guidelines of the OECD, the UN, the World Tourism Policy Forum (WTPF), and the World Conference on Sustainable Tourism (WCST). The indicators placed into the Social/Human Development Dimension include such items as equity issues (e.g. gender, local community and social, distributional, intergenerational, and focus on the poor), health (e.g. nutrition, health care), education and training, housing and land rights, security and safety, and population and migration. Also included are indicators such as water treatment and supply, sanitation, and air and atmosphere quality, because of their expected direct impact on the health and well-being of the population.

The indicators placed into the Economic Development Dimension include such items as local enterprises and economic activity (e.g. economic multipliers and economic leakages), income and employment generation, financial investment, foreign currency, and trade. Also included were indicators such as physical infrastructure (e.g. road, bridge, railroad, and airport) and energy supply due to their contribution to economic activity.

The indicators placed into the Environmental Dimension include such items as the impact on the natural environment, ecosystems, biodiversity, and nature resources, as well as the availability of solid waste disposal and recycling, and renewable energy sources.

The indicators placed into the Culture Dimension include cultural heritage (both animate, e.g. rituals, festivals, and inanimate, e.g. traditional arts and crafts, buildings), and such indicators that impact cultural values, identity, and lifestyles.

The indicators placed into the Institutional and Process Dimension include such items as cooperation and collaboration among stakeholders, local participation and empowerment in decision-making, information access and communication, institutional capacity building, planning and management, and policies, laws, regulations, incentives, and enforcement in such areas as formal planning, environmental or natural habitat protection, regulation of building and land-use, and tax concessions.

6.2. The Sample-Case Studies

Sample-case studies are used extensively in the study of international tourism development (Burr, 1995; Hardi and Zdan, 1997). Of the many sample-case studies investigated for this study, most related to tourism development at a specific destination rather than comparisons between destinations, an observation compatible with what Kline (2001) found in his review of the literature. In an attempt to avoid a bias towards a geographic concentration, destinations were selected to cover a variety of regions of the world, such as the Mediterranean, the Caribbean, Africa, Latin America and Asia. The twenty-eight destinations that were selected include: Aruba, Belize, Mexico (Cancun), Costa Rica (two destinations), Crete, Cyprus, Honduras, Jamaica, Goa, Malta (two destinations), Mallorca, Greece (Mykonos), Namibia (two destinations), Nepal (two destinations), Dominican

Republic (Punta Cana Beach Resort), Brazil (Sauípe Resort), Seychelles, St. Lucia, St. Maarten/St. Martin, Tanzania (two destinations), Vietnam, and Zimbabwe (two destinations).

Once sample destinations were chosen, then published sample-case studies written about those destinations were sought. A wide variety of sample-case studies was found and those included in this study were chosen from numerous different sources, including books, journals and the Internet. Although almost one hundred sample-case studies were read, only 60 were selected. Only those written about events of tourism development after the 1987 Brundtland Report, the most widely accepted point for the beginning of 'sustainable development', were included.

Following the distinctions discussed previously, the sample-case studies were initially grouped into two sets. The first set of sample-case studies were examples of destinations catering to mass tourism, while the second set were clustered into the niche market form of tourism.

Within mass tourism, the sample-case studies were grouped further as 'sun-and-sand' destinations (Briguglio, Butler, Harrison, & Filho, 1996; Smith & Eadington, 1992) or as tourist resort destinations. Although sun-and-sand destinations include tourism typically directed to islands and coastal areas, this study emphasizes islands because mass tourism had become, by the end of the twentieth century, the main option chosen by many small islands for modernizing their economies (McElroy and De Albuquerque citing Wilkinson, 1989 in Briguglio, Archer, Jafari, J., & Wall, 1996).

Tourist resorts are typically designed to attract massive numbers of tourists to their pre-conceived, fully planned, and integrated facilities that provide all the amenities and services needed to keep the tourists on location. Tourist resorts have been and continue to be heavily promoted by governments and international aid agencies because of their potential for economic development benefits, such as improved balance-of-payment, foreign investment, employment, and foreign currency generation (Cattarinich, 2001; Haley & Haley, 1997; Briguglio, Archer, et al., 1996).

The niche market destinations were divided into two groupings: nature-based tourism and rural tourism. Nature-based tourism typically refers to people's use and guardianship of nature and often includes such purposes as conservation of natural resources, the environment, and biodiversity (Cattarinich, 2001; Tisdell & Roy, 1998; CEC, 1999); for example, nature or wildlife reserves and national parks. Ecotourism is a specific category of nature-based tourism, which, along with the emphasis on protecting the environment and ecosystem, also focuses on respecting and preserving indigenous cultural identities while attempting to empower the local community and provide them with the economic benefits (Honey, 1999; Pearce & Butler, 1999; Castilho, 1994) to improve their well-being (Honey, 1999; Tenenbaum, 2000). Overall, nature-based tourism has become increasingly popular and by 1991 it was the theme of trips promoted by almost 500 tour enterprises in the USA alone (Pleumarom, 1994). Most of these trips were directed to developing countries, which contain abundant examples of unspoiled wilderness and traditional societies (Tisdell & Roy, 1998).

Rural-based tourism is expected to conserve indigenous cultural and social identities and protect existing physical assets such as historic buildings and monuments. With its particular emphasis on poverty alleviation (Bennett, et al., 1999) and its attempts to increase the participation of and maximize the benefits to local community stakeholders including their local enterprises (Ioannides, Apostolopoulos, & Somnez, 2001), rural-based tourism has the potential to reverse the development projects of the past that ignored the great majority of the rural poor (Oakley, 1991). This is a consideration easily justified by the fact that the rural poor make up about 75% of the people living below the poverty line (UN, 2001b).

In summary, sample-case studies were divided into four groupings of destinations ('sun-and-sand', tourist resort, nature-based, rural) of high ratio international tourism for developing nations with the indicators categorized within the five dimensions as positive or negative impacts of human activities, processes, and patterns on the destinations.

The secondary sample-case studies in each grouping were studied to identify indicators of tourism development, which were then classified within a particular dimension of sustainable development and designated as either a positive or negative impact on the destination. These impacts were analyzed to address the objective of this study, that is, to determine the extent to which the development of tourism has successfully attained key dimensions of sustainable development. This study did not analyze sample-case studies across the four groupings. For example, tourist resorts were not compared to 'sun-and-sand' or to rural tourism, nor were destinations themselves compared, nor were different types of tourism development compared.

7. Assessing the sustainable development of tourism – findings and discussion

Investigation of 60 sample-case studies indicated that the only indicators mentioned in all of the 28 destinations studied were those classified as Economic Dimensions. Indicators classified as Social and Human Dimensions were mentioned in 26 of the destinations. Indicators classified as Environment or Processes and Institutions Dimensions were mentioned in 25 destinations. In 12 destinations no indicators were mentioned that could be classified as Cultural Dimensions. In more than half (15) of the destinations less than the five dimensions of sustainable development were mentioned.

A summary of the findings is presented in the table below and subsequently discussed in more detail.

Table 2: Summary of the Findings

	Islands & Sea Coast		Tourist Resorts		Rural Tourism		Nature-Based	
	No.+	No. -	No. +	No. -	No. +	No. -	No. +	No. -
Social & Human	22	64	14	24	15	41	32	36
Economic	64	71	26	24	41	23	70	27
Cultural	5	6	7	7	8	6	7	4
Environment	16	71	4	26	2	5	26	42
Processes & Institutions	30	51	2	12	25	19	52	42
TOTAL	137	263	53	93	91	94	187	151

7.1. Islands and Sea Coast

Thirty-three sample-case studies were investigated covering 12 mass tourism destinations for visitors searching for sun-and-sand on islands and sea coasts: Cyprus, Crete, Mykonos, Seychelles, Jamaica, Zanzibar's islands of Unguja and Pemba, St. Lucia, St. Maarten/St. Martin, Aruba, Malta, Mallorca, and Goa.

Recognizing that tourism development on many islands and sea coasts was typically designed to address the needs for modernizing their economies (McElroy and De Albuquerque citing Wilkinson, 1989 in Briguglio, Archer, et, al., 1996), it is not surprising that most (over a third) of the indicators found in the sample-case studies were Economic Dimensions. What is surprising is that of the 135 economic indicators identified, over half (71) described negative economic impacts. It is also interesting to note that in four out of the 12 destinations there were no indicators reported that could be classified as reflecting a positive aspect of the Social and Human Dimension.

In each dimension there were many more indicators classified as negative than positive and the total number of negative indicators (263) far exceeded the positive ones (137). These findings are congruent with other studies of tourism development on islands. In St. Lucia, numerous efforts to increase the sustainability of tourism development were tried, but they failed to overcome the prevailing historical patterns of tourism development and to have any positive impacts on the destination or its inhabitants (Renard, 2001). An observation was similarly noted by Loukissas (1982) in his study of tourism development on Greek islands.

7.2. Tourist resorts

Eight sample-case studies were investigated covering three destinations for mass tourism to resorts: the Tourist Megaproject Coast of Saúpe, Brazil; Punta Cana Beach Resort, Dominican Republic; and Cancun, Mexico.

Acknowledging that development of tourist resorts is usually based on their economic benefit potential, the most often cited indicators found in the sample-case studies were in the Economic Dimension. This time, contrary to the islands and sea coasts destinations,

slightly more of the total 50 economic indicators were positive (26). This confirms that tourist resorts do provide economic development benefits, such as foreign investment, employment, and foreign currency generation as observed by Cattarinich, (2001), Haley & Haley (1997), Briguglio, Archer, et al. (1996). With the exception the Economic Dimension and the Cultural Dimension, all other dimensions contained significantly more negative indicators than positive ones. The environment suffered the most, as evidenced by the Environmental Dimension having the highest ratio of negative to positive indicators (0.87) and the highest number of negative indicators (26) compared to the other dimensions in this tourism category.

7.3. Rural Tourism

The first niche-market tourism group that was examined comprised of five rural destinations, one each in Namibia, Malta, Nepal, Vietnam, and Costa Rica. As in all the previous discussions, the most often cited indicators found in the five sample-case studies were classified in the Economic Dimension. Many more of the 64 economic indicators were positive than negative (41 to 23). This is evidence that, as predicted by Ioannides, et al. (2001), jobs and small and micro-enterprises were created and income was generated leading to increased economic benefits to the local community. Both the Cultural and Processes and Institutions Dimensions contained relatively more positive than negative indicators although by only a very small margin. As anticipated for rural tourism, the analysis showed increased community participation leading to improved community management and better collective resource management. Also as expected, the analysis revealed that rural tourism conserved or stimulated indigenous cultural activities, such as restoring dying indigenous arts and crafts and helping reestablish folk events; and motivated the protection or restoration of existing physical assets, such as historical buildings and religious centers.

Although rural tourism's particular emphasis on poverty alleviation (Bennett, et al., 1999) was supported by the data in these sample-case studies, environmental and societal indicators were mostly negative. There was ample evidence of social degradation (e.g. begging by small children, prostitution, alcoholism, sexual abuse) and ecological degradation and destruction or damage to natural resources and biodiversity.

7.4. Nature-based Tourism

The second alternative tourism group that was examined included 8 nature or wildlife reserves and national park destinations, one each in Costa Rica, Honduras: Rio Platano Watershed, Tanzania: Selous Game Reserve, Nepal: Baghmara Community Forest, Belize, and Namibia, and two in Zimbabwe: Sunungukai Camp (SC) and Hwange National Park (HNP). Even though nature-based tourist destinations are typically promoted for their protection of nature and the environment (Cattarinich, 2001; Tisdell & Roy, 1998; CEC, 1999), investigation of 14 sample-case studies revealed that in the Environment Dimension there were many more indicators classified as negative (42) than positive (26). Some negative indicators included, besides water pollution, extremes such as the destruction of natural resources and biodiversity.

This category of tourism is expected to preserve indigenous cultural identities while attempting to empower the local community and provide them with the economic benefits (Honey, 1999; Pearce and Butler, 1999; Castilho, 1994) to improve their well-being (Honey, 1999; Tenenbaum, 2000). The data supports most of these expectations as the Economic, Cultural and Processes and Institutions Dimensions contained more positive than negative indicators. Once again, the Economic Dimension was the most prominent and contained the largest number of positive indicators (70) including new jobs, foreign revenues, foreign direct investment, and economic multiplier effects. Indicators show that the communities enjoyed the preservation of their indigenous culture; that women, the poor, and local communities were empowered; that local stakeholders participated in decision-making; and that development institutions strengthened community organization.

The improvement in overall well-being of the community may be questionable as most of the indicators contained in the Social and Human Dimension were negative and included dominance of a few key powerful families in the public and private sectors, lack of land ownership, reducing availability of affordable housing, and increasing social tension. It is also important to note that of the total 32 positive indicators, 27 came from the sample-case studies in Namibia. No positive indicators in the Social and Human Dimension were mentioned in any of the sample-case studies of Honduras, Zimbabwe: HNP, Nepal, and Belize.

8. Conclusion

The objective of the research was to evaluate the extent to which international tourism in developing countries meets key dimensions of sustainable development. The key dimensions consist of groups of indicators designed to offer a set of harmonized assessments of positive and negative impacts of human activities, processes, and patterns on sustainable development.

More than one thousand indicators from 60 sample-case studies covering 28 destinations were analyzed within a framework of five key dimensions which included cultural, economic, environmental, process and institutional, and social and human. This examination of the development of international tourism in developing countries suggests that there are no occasions where all five dimensions of sustainable development were successfully addressed as measured by positive indicators taken from the 60 sample case-studies.

The findings in this study relate to the unique circumstances at the destinations studied and should not in any way suggest that the development of tourism at other destinations presents evidence to the contrary. Additionally, other destinations, similarly to those studied here, may contain evidence that, if not all, some of the sustainable development dimensions showed a net positive number of indicators. This observation is congruent with that reached by Lindberg, Enriquez, & Sproule (1996) in their study of Belize.

Of the more than one thousand indicators less than 45% were considered positive. The Economic Dimension contained a third of all the indicators mentioned and included a noteworthy number of more positive indicators than negative ones, 201 out of a total of

346. The emphasis on economic dimensions found in this study supports observations made by Haley and Haley (1997) and Kline (2001) citing Hjalager (1996) and Backman, Wright & Backman (1994). The Cultural Dimension was the only other dimension that also had more indicators that were classified as positive, but a comparatively smaller number 27 out of 50. All the other three dimensions had more indicators classified as negative than positive, with the Environment Dimension containing the most negative indicators (75%).

Despite a large variation in the indicators, there was a common theme among some of the destinations. All the destinations, but one, that had a net positive number of indicators across the sum of the sustainable dimensions, also contained a net positive number of indicators for the Processes and Institutions Dimension. The emphasis of these positive indicators was on participation, collaboration, and communication between stakeholders; a finding compatible with that from Ashley and Roe (2002). Government institutions appear to be the most able to enhance collective actions through public policy to build and strengthen private, civic, and public networks that could earnestly and equitably represent the indigenous population's desires and ambitions (Stoesz, Guzzetta, & Lusk, 1999).

One can conclude that there is a need for policies to enhance processes for appropriate functioning of the networks of stakeholders and their institutions. Such processes should be proactive and flexible and facilitate the collaboration and participation of the many stakeholders who are impacted by the development of tourism (Clayton, 2003). Policies are also needed to facilitate collaboration and participation among stakeholders who are impacted by the development of tourism (Clayton, 2003) and to enhance the functioning of networks of stakeholders and their institutions. The policies must ensure that the processes are responsive to the culture and physical environment of the host destinations for both the short-term and intergenerationally. It becomes worthwhile to develop and implement strategic models to facilitate these processes of collaborative organizing that define the requirements of sustainability that will drive tourism development.

It is important to note some of potential limitations of this research, analysis, and results. Potential for error should be acknowledged as the sample-case studies cover distinct destinations, at different time periods, and have no common reporting scheme. The accuracy of the findings depends on the quality of the research and reporting presented in the sample-case studies investigated. Comparisons, especially across international sample-case studies, are potentially laden with difficulties because of the different ways and contexts indicators are recorded and presented (Williams & Shaw, 1998). This study suggests that even when many indicators are compiled, determining the movement towards sustainability remains a challenge, because recognizing and classifying indicators can offer contradictions as different interpretations may lead to different conclusions. Additionally, making specific categorization of the indicators is occasionally difficult as specific indicators within each dimension are interrelated and often overlap.

The indicators from these studies are not typically measured with complete precision or in a uniform, consistent, and systematic way. It is expected that by aggregating both subjective and objective indicators within the five dimensions, rather than using any

individual indicator, the potential for error in the evaluation of sustainable development was reduced.

Assessment indicators are still being identified, debated, and tested by the many private, public and non-governmental organizations. Indicators will need to continue to be evaluated and discarded or made available to more accurately measure progress along the path to sustainable development of tourism. Although indicators have been useful in providing a general picture of tourism destinations around the world in regards to various key dimensions of sustainable development of tourism, they still remain fairly rough tools for policy advice at the country level.

Regardless of how tourism is labeled, it actually continues to respond to economic market forces, industry provider orientation, and trendy demands by tourists for environmentally sensitive destinations and not to any commitments to any other sustainable development dimensions. The analysis demonstrates that traditional mass tourism development (e.g. islands and sea coast and resorts) is prone to exhibit the most number of negative impacts – out of the 546 indicators, 356 were negative. Similarly, alternate forms of tourism (e.g. rural and nature-based) do not necessarily offer considerably greater optimistic options – out of 523 indicators as many as 245 were negative. This suggests that the tourism industry may be merely performing a labeling exercise or creating new classifications for tourism marketing rather than experiencing any meaningful progress towards the sustainable development of tourism or even the provision of important economic or tangible benefits to the poor. These observations are similar to ones supported by Cattarinich (2001) and Honey (2003).

Although there ostensibly are successes in the sustainable development of international tourism, a sense of caution if not pessimism persists. The application of sustainable development to tourism is a relatively recent activity and at present it might be more of an ideal than a reality. There are expectations that this may change as tourism development continues to mature and progress.

Attempts to accomplish the five key dimensions for sustainable development of tourism are in need of constant renewal and improvement. This offers continuous and motivating prospects for research, debate, formulation, implementation, and continued investigation of sustainable development to the continually growing tourism industry (Buckley, 2000; Burr, 1995).

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