



Department of Economic and Social Affairs

Commission on Sustainable Development

Seventh Session

19-30 April 1999, New York

TOURISM AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

**SUSTAINABLE TOURISM: A NON-GOVERNMENTAL
ORGANIZATION PERSPECTIVE**

Background Paper # 4

Prepared by the UNCSD NGO Steering Committee

Sustainable Tourism: A Non-Governmental Organization Perspective

prepared by the UNCSO NGO Steering Committee

A. Introduction

1. Tourism is a rapidly growing phenomenon and has become one of the largest industries in the world. The impact of tourism is extremely varied. On one hand, it plays an important and certainly positive role in the socio-economic and political development in destination countries by, for instance, offering new employment opportunities. Also, in certain instances, it may contribute to a broader cultural understanding by creating awareness, respecting the diversity of cultures and ways of life. On the other hand, as a tool to create jobs, it has not fulfilled its expectations. At the same time, complaints from tourist destinations concerning massive negative impacts upon environment, culture and residents' ways of life have given rise to a demand for a more sustainable development in tourism. Different parties will have to be involved in the process of developing sustainable tourism. This section focuses on what the tourism industry itself can do in order to increase its sustainability, defines three major problems, and suggests possible tourism initiatives to help solve these problems. Other problems should also be included in the discussion for it to become exhaustive.

B. Industry Initiatives for Sustainable Tourism Problems

Decreased access to natural resources for the local communities and environmental degradation

4. Tourism is not, as many people assert, a clean and non-polluting industry. A major problem is the lack of a common understanding of what sustainable tourism or "ecotourism" means. This ambiguity leads to violations of environmental regulations and standards. Hence, the environmental problems evolving from tourism are manifold. First of all, the tourism industry is very resource and land intensive. Consequently, the interest of the tourism sector will often be in conflict with local resource and land use practices. The introduction of tourism will imply an increased stress on resources available. An influx of tourists into the area will lead to a competition for resources. Employees working at the tourist sites compound this competition. Almost as a rule, tourists are supplied at the expense of the local population.

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

Increasing cultural erosion and disrespect for human rights

6. Tourism is a powerful agent of change. International tourism acts as a catalyst for the transition from traditional ways of life to so-called modern, Western forms of society. Accordingly, tourism often brings with it the introduction of new behaviour trends and norms. Very often, these are contrary to traditional norms existing in the host community, and can come into conflict with its cultural identity and threaten the traditional value systems there. The problem is that the investors seem to have a lack of cultural understanding of the invested society. There is a need for an increased awareness that establishment of new hotels etc. will have its consequences on the society and the people who live in it.

7. Tourism has become associated with violation of human rights. Many destination countries have experienced an increase in criminality, prostitution, alcohol and drug abuse as a consequence of tourism. Furthermore, child labour is commonplace in the tourism industry (particularly in the informal sector). According to estimates made by ILO (International Labour Organisation), between 3 and 19 million children and teenagers work in the tourism sector. A particularly abominable form of violation of human rights is child slavery and despicable abuse of children taking place in the booming sex industry in many countries. In these countries, tourism has led to an incredible increase in prostitution and also in the exploitation of children. The tourism industry has not yet come up with a general condemnation of these violations of human rights.

Unqualified jobs and foreign exchange leakage

8. The tourism industry is characterised by a high degree of monopoly, which implies a concentration of services and profits into very few big transnational corporations. In many countries, tourism facilities mostly belong to foreigners. Furthermore, in local host communities in many countries a relatively small number of people are involved in the tourism industry in host communities in many developing countries. Very often, there is a lack of qualified manpower in the locality. Hence, most employees are recruited from the big cities, neighbouring countries or even from the country of origin of the investors.

9. Multiplier effects from tourism are less significant than is often assumed. One reason is that tourism industries purchase most of their inputs (materials, products or services) in their country of origin. As a result, a considerable amount of foreign exchange revenues leaks from the destination countries. The more goods, services, physical capital and human capital a country must import for its tourism services, the higher the leakage. Very often the investors are not approaching the local community to see what it actually can provide. In addition to this, the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS), with its liberalisation of global trade and services, is increasingly undermining the possibilities of individual countries and regions to control their tourism industries and the possible economic gains from tourism.

Solutions

Decreased access to natural resources for the local communities and environmental degradation

10. In general, the tourism industry should engage in promoting sustainability as a hallmark for investors. More specifically, investors in tourism should strive to adopt environmentally sound technologies or other measures to minimise the consumption of local ground water. In the case of water utilisation, such measures might be water saving equipment, desalination systems and collecting and utilising rainwater. Using other types of resources in a sustainable manner is, of course, also crucial. There is a need to use ecological materials and installation of renewable sources of energy systems (solar energy) in all new buildings and new construction. Furthermore there should be an acceleration of installation of solar/wind power in all public work projects of communities where tourism will be introduced. To prevent or minimise the impact of chemical inputs in soil, water and health, one should start utilising sound ecological methods, including IPM (Integrated Pest Management). Ecological methods need to be applied in all areas utilised for tourism, including in the maintenance of golf courses, gardens and recreational facilities.

11. Pollution of ground and coastal waters must be prevented, and recommendations must be made (perhaps even legislation) for tourism investors to invest in proper sewage treatment facilities. Appropriate waste disposal systems and ways to separate garbage into organic and non-organic waste should be developed. Organic waste can be composted and possibly reused on hotel gardens or even for local farming. This could be done through collaboration with local residents. Residents could organise themselves and manage the allocated dumping sites, and hence benefit from the system in receiving payment from the hotel for services rendered. A system to separate the different materials, and recycle some should be in place at the landfill site, thus reducing the waste even further.

12. To avoid degradation of the natural environment, tourism projects can help finance protected areas and safeguard ecologically sensitive regions against further environmental deterioration. By empowering local populations and have them participating in the entire process, sustainability will be ensured as it becomes accepted by and adjusted to the local communities. Also, a protected area might certainly be a suitable tourist-attraction, where tourists can experience amazing nature and learn about conservation and traditional uses of natural resources in the area.

13. Investors in tourism should always respect the traditional land tenure system in the area and the traditional user-right systems of resources. In regard to this, the communication and consultation with the local communities about resource-use is important. Tourism investors should not exclude local people from using local resources, and thus take away what they depend on for maintaining their well being. The tourism industry can and must take initiatives to implement that polluter(s) pay a principle (or other forms of internalisation of externalities) for pollution related to tourism operations. This may be organised and carried out through local tax systems or through funds established by the tourism industry for local community development. However, the paid principle should be applied for minor pollution only and should not be developed into a possibility for investors to pay a symbolic fine for imposed irreversible negative impacts on the local environment.

14. Inaccurate and/or mild environmental legislation in destination countries may possibly attract more foreign investors contributing to fast economic growth and development, but with environmental damage as a consequence. To avoid the dilemma, destination countries will have to choose between economic development and environmental protection international. Multinational enterprises must be committed to follow the environmental standards of their home country should these be stricter than those at the destinations.

Increasing cultural erosion and disrespect for human rights

15. The tourism industry should promote projects, which are compatible with the cultural identity of the local population's way of life. Furthermore, the tourism sector should always make sure it acts in accordance with the cultural heritage, and respect the cultural integrity of tourism destinations. This might be accomplished by defining codes of conduct for the industry and hence providing investors with a checklist for sustainable tourism projects.

16. Establishing and developing tourist training programmes could be one way of managing codes of conducts for the tourists. Here, tourists can be informed and educated about the destination for their travel both before and after their arrival at the site. At the site, tourist information centres can be established through funding from the investor. The information given to tourists should include codes of conduct regarding appropriate behaviour and clothing. It is reasonable to assume that people's offending behaviour is largely a consequence of ignorance rather than intention. Consequently, information and facts about the destination, ways of life, history, cultural heritage is crucial to help tourists get along.

17. It is an absolute must that tourism investors do not engage in or promote child labour and prostitution. Moreover, it is appropriate that the industry commit themselves to a global campaign against such and any other violation of human rights. Evaluating the sustainability of the tourism development, in regards to cultural and human rights aspects, is highly recommended for those responsible for the tourism projects. As with the case mentioned earlier of preventing environmental degradation, this must be carried out through communication and consultation with the local communities.

Unqualified jobs and foreign exchange leakage

18. By devising local training programmes and establishing educational projects, the tourism industry can ensure that qualified local people are employed in their projects. One should train the local people instead of foreigners to become guides due to their knowledge of the area and resources. The investors should be responsive to the kind of knowledge, abilities and skills found in the local communities. Very often such knowledge and skills are well fitted to be used in tourist activities be it fishing trips, nature trails, souvenir sales or dancing courses for tourists etc.

19. To constrain foreign exchange leakage, those responsible for the tourism projects should ensure that local inputs are purchased for their projects. A proper examination of local resources available will be beneficial for both the industry and the local residents. Usually, there is considerable local willingness to start producing new products if a market for these products exists. The tourism sector should also adopt measures to prevent foreign exchange leakage by a commitment to re-investment of a fair share of the locally accrued profit. We have already mentioned protected areas, training programmes on codes of conduct for tourists, or possible training of local employees, as projects in need of funds. Initiatives towards more local community development projects should also be appropriate.

20. The tourism industry should promote the establishment of small and medium-sized tourism enterprises which, compared to large-scale hotels etc., have far more moderate impacts on the environment. It is the industry's responsibility to act as a model for communities to show that it is possible to do business whilst protecting natural resources. The industry should also promote and support local communities to start tourism-related businesses and grant access to low interest loans. It is the responsibility of the tourism sector to ensure total transparency in all transactions, and to prevent tourism projects from being used as projects for laundering illicit money, as well as to refuse using bribes as a means to obfuscate or avoid government rules and regulations. There should be a global boycott against those investors involved in such or other types of illegal activities.

General recommendations and possible solutions which concern all three problem areas

21. Empowerment of residents at tourist destinations, through local participation, may be facilitated by providing written and legally binding contracts between local people and tourism investors. The contracts will help to avoid broken promises, which too many examples and previous experience prove to be a huge problem. In addition to the mentioned examples (providing proper information for tourists and establishing training programmes for residents), the tourism industry, through for instance the WTTC or the WTO with NGOs in the selection panels, could issue awards especially for sustainable tourism projects as an encouragement for investors.

Agents and Partnerships for change

22. In this section, the focus has been on what the tourism industry itself can do in order to augment and improve its environmental, cultural, social and economic profile and make sure this is sustainable. However, the industry's effort cannot be successful without a profound collaboration with all stakeholders.

23. Within the industry, it is important that both small and large-scale tourism operators are included in the collaboration and that they participate in solving problems related to tourism development. As mentioned, a sustainable development of the tourism industry can only be ensured through participation of all local residents in the destination countries. There is a need for a willingness and ability for the partners to work with this kind of bottom-up approach. In this context, both environment and social NGOs have an important role to play, putting pressure on the industry and facilitating contracts and local participation for community development. Governments in both destination and countries of

origin of tourists and investors are responsible for providing appropriate legislation for sustainable tourism development, and to follow up the tourism projects with sufficient monitoring and appropriate sanctioning. Exchange of successful experiences of sustainable tourism projects is an important factor in this connection. Lastly, an interdisciplinary approach to the problem is necessary: using local, regional and/or international consultative forums.

C. Influencing Consumer Behaviour to Promote Sustainable Tourism

Problems

24. International tourism plays an ambivalent role in contributing to cultural exchange and sustainable development. On the one hand, it involves a highly buffered, short-term consumer experience of other locales. Tourists can pay and leave, remaining isolated from negative impacts at the local level. On the other hand, tourism may increase recognition of the importance of respecting cultural diversity and developing an identity as a world citizen. It offers opportunities to educate consumers regarding responsible tourism and sustainable development. Consumers can play a major role in the transformation of societies towards sustainability. While mass tourism in the past was rather producer-driven, the industry today is becoming increasingly consumer-driven. In highly competitive tourism markets, well informed, responsible consumers can put increasing pressure on the industry to behave more responsibly.

25. A number of official proclamations have affirmed every individual's right to rest and leisure including tourism. However, tourism remains an unobtainable luxury for the majority of the world's population. Tourists primarily originate from affluent industrialised societies where tourism has become a mass phenomenon. Tourists' values, attitudes and behaviour are determined by their social environment, cultural identity and way of life which may be in conflict with local customs. Tourism is heterogeneous in nature, made up of many different types of traveller, seeking a wide range of tourism products. Demand is influenced by irrational factors, e.g. fashion and trends. Demand depends on the availability of time and money, on images, perceptions and attitudes. Tourists have various needs, desires and motivations, both of a 'push' and 'pull' nature. While household incomes in major tourist-sending countries are declining, industry sales projections continue to grow, indicating increasing competition. The consumer mind is set on discount prices and "buy now/pay later" options. This poses serious threats, as prices already lag far behind any realistic accounting of tourism costs and impacts.

26. Many of the demand patterns in tourism reflect the unsustainable lifestyles of industrialised consumer societies. Tourism acts as an agent in exporting these life-styles and consumerist attitudes to less industrialised societies via demonstration effects and modelling. Tourism increases demand for imported consumer goods in the destinations, with detrimental effects on the environment, due to the ecological costs of transport and the high amount of waste generated. Increasing imports also reduce local/national economic gains, due to foreign exchange leakage.

27. The over-consumption of resources by tourists and tourism infrastructure (e.g. the excessive use of water, firewood or food) is incompatible with sustainable development. The carrying capacity of natural environments is often exceeded with the addition of tourism demands. Tourist demand for resources (land, water, energy, food) may also compete with the needs of local people and may increase social inequality, gender inequality and injustice. Tourist transport, especially air travel, is highly energy intensive and causes pollutant emissions. Many tourism activities such as skiing, boating, mountain hiking, motorised water-sports (e.g. jet skies), and trekking represent stress for fragile ecosystems. Tourists often lack information and awareness about their impact in a different culture and environment, about their impacts on socio-economic and socio-cultural development, and about the environmental costs of tourism. While tourists may be open to learning, they are often unaware of inappropriate behaviour and have little guidance on how to improve them. Others may refuse to adapt

to local life-styles (even when informed) insisting on their freedom to behave as they want.

28. While the tourism industry may be willing to improve their products and services, there is a conflict between the industry's pursuit of economic gains and social and environmental responsibility. The industry lacks information on the requirements of sustainable tourism and on how to integrate economic forces with environmental and social requirements. Tourists shopping for escapism generally abide by one fundamental consumer ethic: receipt upon payment. Consumer advocates may intervene where inferior customer service is delivered. However, the sustainability of corporate practices is self-regulated. This conflict of interest within the industry, and consumers' low awareness of tourism impacts, have led to a widespread abuse of 'green' labeling.

29. The mass media, especially television through films and reports about events, sights, etc. in other parts of the world, are increasingly influential on travel decisions and consumer behaviour in the destinations. However, these programmes often serve primarily as advertisements, painting images of destinations, rather than providing relevant information for potential travellers.

30. There is a lack of reliable and appropriate (e.g. age and gender segregated) research data on the determinants of tourist demand, motivation and behaviour. Few countries, whether tourist-sending or tourist-receiving, collect such data that are helpful under sustainable development criteria. Most studies of tourist behaviour focus on mainstream markets or market segments, rather than assessing or modelling sustainable alternatives. Governments in many tourist destinations and local communities have little or no information on what to expect from tourism and the incoming tourists, and how to influence and control tourism and guide tourist behaviour; They are controlled by international/global institutions, the industry and the consumers. Governments of the affluent countries are only beginning to look at the issues of outgoing tourism. They are not yet sufficiently aware of their responsibility and methods to influence tourist behaviour by political and legal guidelines/criteria and appropriate planning and policies. Trade unions have fought successfully for shorter working hours and more vacation. However, they need to take more responsibility for helping to create a leisure industry that is more sustainable.

Solutions

31. Consumer behaviour can and must be influenced by:

- Fighting unsustainable forms and aspects of tourism, at the various levels, by sanctioning unacceptable behaviour and discouraging inappropriate consumer behaviour.
- Promoting responsible and sustainable patterns of behaviour, at the various levels, by promoting best practises and encouraging responsible consumer behaviour. There are different types of instruments and remedial measures available:
 - Legal measures (rules, regulations, sanctions);
 - Market based instruments, such as taxes to influence market prices;
 - Promotion of and (financial) support for best practice;
 - Industry self-monitoring/codes of conduct;
 - Information, education and research.

Agents and Partnerships for Changes

Institutional Action & Possible Partnerships

32. Consumer behaviour in tourism is both a product and cause of policies by government and industry. Therefore, a comprehensive approach is required to solve the problems associated with market-driven tourism. Tourism should be viewed as a major development issue that all stakeholders need to be actively engaged with. To develop effective partnerships, the imbalance of power between the different stakeholders needs to be addressed.

33. UN Action

- Establish an NGO tourism advisory group for UN to provide technical support, analysis, and strategic advice;
- Create a 'best practices' information clearing-house, in order to collect consumer information useful to understanding and positively influencing consumer behaviour and to make documentation accessible on an equitable basis;
- Initiate a broad information and awareness campaign to highlight damaging forms of tourism and impacts, providing tools for informed decision-making. Initially, target participants in the CSD and CBD processes to clarify roles and responsibilities;
- Research and develop effective certification schemes, form a technical group under the CSD to assess how certification can be improved, e.g. through the review of voluntary codes set up by CSD1998;
- Designate an 'ombuds' office jointly between the CSD, CBD, and UN-CHR to encourage diligent self-regulation and compliance with international standards for sustainable tourism;
- Develop guidance on tourism as an issue within Local Agenda 21 processes.

34. Governmental Action

- Introduce and enforce legislation to abolish child prostitution, implement effective control mechanisms, conclude judicial assistance agreements;
- Regulate tourist access to ecologically fragile or stressed natural areas;
- Tourist-sending countries: develop policies on outgoing tourism from a development perspective;
- Provide frameworks for ecologically appropriate pricing by strictly applying the polluter-pays-principle to internalise external costs. This includes ecological tax reforms including the taxation of aviation gasoline and oil, removal of subsidies/other economic incentives with negative environmental impacts.
- Improve conditions for sustainable consumer behaviour by providing/promoting sustainable tourism facilities;
- Promote environmentally friendly modes of transport and transport concepts, reduce tourism-related traffic, shift demand to less environmentally damaging modes of transport;
- Promote renewable sources of energy (such as solar power), reduce the use of non-renewable energy and of limited local resources, through more sustainable practices/consumption patterns.
- Develop information and education programmes in co-operation with local stakeholders ensuring all stakeholders' involvement (e.g. women's); provide information to tourists on appropriate behaviour (sensitivity, respect for/adaptation to local culture), e.g. by establishing information centres in destinations, or by including briefing material for package tours;
- Take into account the specific information needs of various market segments, provide information to the local population on the opportunities and risks from tourism and on how to influence tourist behaviour;
- Adopt, observe, implement and promote codes of conduct, e.g. the planned WTO-OMT 'Global Code of Ethics for Tourism';
- Integrate sustainable development education including tourism in the curricula of schools at all levels, universities and training institutions, involving all stakeholder groups, create and promote open networks for information and research on sustainable tourism, disseminate and implement results;

35. Tourism Industry Action

- Promote sustainable tourism products, using market related instruments and incentives,

such as contests, awards, certification, model projects, culturally sensitive quality labels covering both environmental and social sustainability;

- Reduce inappropriate consumption, use local resources in preference to imports in a sustainable manner; reduce and recycle waste, ensure safe waste disposal, develop and implement sustainable transport policies and systems, e.g. efficient public transport, walking, cycling in destinations;
- Provide tourists with authentic information, enabling them to understand all environmental and related aspects (e.g. human rights situation) of tourism when selecting any destination or holiday package; educate visitors in advance of arrival and give guidance on 'dos' and 'don'ts'; make tourists aware of their potential impact on and their responsibilities towards host societies;
- Provide information on respecting the cultural and natural heritage of destination areas; employ tour guides who portray societies honestly and dispel stereotypes;
- Ensure that the marketing of 'green' tourism reflects sound environmental policy and practice; use non-exploitative marketing strategies that respect people, communities and environments of destinations, dismantle stereotyping, integrate sustainable tourism principles when creating new marketing strategies;
- Train staff to foster tourist responsibility towards the destinations, encourage multi-cultural education and exchange;
- Actively discourage exploitative sex tourism, particularly sexual exploitation of children, and tourism which causes or contributes to social problems;
- Adopt, observe, implement and promote codes of conduct.

36. NGO Action

- Disseminate information to a wide public about the complexity of tourism and about the objectives and criteria of sustainable tourism;
- Educate tourists to change consumption patterns and promote appropriate, environmentally and socially acceptable behaviour in the destinations;
- Launch broad awareness campaigns on the worst impacts of tourism, to be funded by international governmental and non-governmental agencies;
- Promote relevant research on tourism impacts, criteria for sustainable tourism and possibilities for implementation;
- Monitor tourism development, policy, industry initiatives, and local people's reaction to tourism development and policy, and implementation of stakeholder action.

D. Promoting Broad-based Sustainable Development through Tourism whilst Safeguarding the Integrity of Local Cultures and Protecting the Environment - Community Development

Problems

37. Early tourism development has given little consideration to natural resource limitations, impacts on wildlife and indigenous cultures. The human environment and development has been largely ignored. Within the process of globalisation local communities' participation and nature conservation are threatened and often overlooked.

38. If tourism is to be sustainable, it must improve the lives of local people, protect their environment and health, and offer them a better future. In many instances, tourism can be seen as a vehicle to empower local communities and protect the environment through the development of new employment opportunities, the enhancement of local economies, preservation of indigenous knowledge and practices, public awareness and education. Sustainable tourism can create positive opportunities for community development in remote areas. The business sector can choose sustainable tourism over other more polluting ventures. Long and short-term development plans should be developed so that

tourism and its benefits are spread within the area. To develop tourism in a sustainable manner, it is necessary to define optimal tourism destinations in local areas and regions, ensuring enjoyment for the tourist and minimum impact or disruption for the environment and local communities.

39. Complex and broad-based local communities' involvement in tourism development requires targeted investment strategies implemented by local decision-makers. Those strategies do not exist in many areas and the development of tourism is not planned. Often, tourism investments are imposed from the outside, and the potential for sustainable forms of tourism is weakened. Alternatives to mass tourism (e.g. cultural and "ecotourism") can be influential in changing the nature of tourism. Tourism can benefit both tourists and local communities and allow for two-way interaction and education.

Solutions

40. In order for tourism to become a sustainable industry, countries, states, regions, and individuals must work with new technology, natural resource management and marketing concepts. Ideally, participatory planning and implementation will be a part of Local Agenda 21 processes. To ensure community involvement and to safeguard local cultures, sustainable tourism development should therefore involve all stakeholders in tourism development at all appropriate levels, facilitate the development of tourism services that are planned, managed and reviewed by the host community in Local Agenda 21 processes. This will also ensure that tourism revenue stays in the host communities to enhance livelihoods and generate a profitable source of income, empower and motivate local groups to direct cross-cultural exchange in the way they wish and adopt practices which conserve, protect and preserve the environment.

41. Local and regional Tourism Boards should be created, involving all stakeholders. These Boards should:

- promote sustainable tourism concepts in co-operation with local governments and all stakeholders, in line with Local Agenda 21 priorities;
- work systematically to attract investment in sustainable tourism;
- help other institutions in developing marketing strategies and training programmes and developing educational materials;
- work together with different public institutions to involve all stakeholder groups in tourism activities, and bring greater benefits to the entire community; and
- co-operate with grass-roots organisations to develop employment strategies through sustainable tourism.

Agents and Partnerships for Change

Institutional Action

42. The UN-CSD should:

- invite countries to integrate tourism into their sustainable development strategies for the 2002 review;
- ask the review progress in local communities involvement in tourism development in their country profiles to the preparatory meetings for Earth Summit III in 2002 as part of the review process;
- instruct DESA in co-operation with relevant UN agencies and convention secretariats, major groups and all stakeholders to develop indicators of sustainable tourism;
- invite convention secretariats and the Committee on the Environment of the WTO-OMC to report annually to the CSD;
- establish an international "ombuds" office to deal with human rights abuses and environmental destruction in tourism;
- ask UNEP, through their Technology Industry and Economics Division, to work with industry associations at all levels, trade unions, local authorities and NGOs to develop a

framework for 'good practice' and to develop a database on good practice, criteria, examples and analysis which should be accessible to governments and stakeholders alike;

- ask UNEP together with UNCHS, the Sustainable Cities Programme and relevant stakeholders to develop guidance notes on tourism within Local Agenda 21.
- ask the UN Regional Commissions to prepare a report for the preparatory meetings for Earth Summit III in 2002 on sustainable and community-based tourism activities within their region and to work with UNEP/WTO to develop regional agreements to address sustainable tourism.
- invite UNDP to share its work on guidelines for "good practice" and to involve indigenous peoples and local communities in this work;
- ask the UNDP country offices to bring together UN agencies, bilateral donors and other stakeholders to work together on sustainable tourism, as well as involve the gender development programme in this process;
- ask UNDP to include sustainable tourism into its poverty alleviation strategies and programmes.
- ask the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development to integrate tourism into their development strategies and include a progress review on the role of indigenous and local communities' involvement in tourism for the Earth Summit III (year 2002) review, and to support community-owned and controlled initiatives in tourism and bio-diversity through its BIOTRADE initiative.
- invite environmental conventions and treaties secretariats to include community-based tourism in their action plans and programmes, and to promote it as an incentive for the conservation and sustainable use of bio-diversity.

43. Multilateral financing and assistance agencies should:

- provide funds for applied research through pilot projects to determine optimal mechanisms for tourism development in a range of differing circumstances;
- create small-scale credit lines to assist small enterprises to invest in tourism without excessive risk on personal property;
- support community controlled tourism initiatives that are directed to poverty alleviation, bio-diversity conservation and promotion of human rights;
- assess their projects' effectiveness on local, sub-national and national levels involving all stakeholders, and publish the results by the Earth Summit III in 2002;
- take part in a discussion forum on minimising leakage, with findings to be brought back to the finance discussion at CSD-8 in 2000. Possible outcomes include the development of a purchasing/procurement strategy for the tourism industry, local/ national investment strategies, improved mechanisms for informed choice by consumers, and a linking of aid with capacity building in tourism-dependent areas.

44. Governments should, at national level

- establish/clarify institutional and departmental responsibility for developing outgoing tourism and harmonise institutional interventions;
- initiate the use of tourism for local economic development by involving all sectors alongside the tourist ministry; to build the capacity to work at the destination level, including product development and effective management of existing destinations;
- facilitate research grants on sustainable tourism, methodologies, impacts and analysis of good practice; finance pilot schemes to develop 'good practice' and establish systems for ongoing evaluation and monitoring;
- establish sustainable tourism policies and regulations, ensuring responsibly zoned development; natural and cultural heritage and resource conservation and protection;

- review land ownership in potential tourism areas and where possible transfer ownership to local communities and provide the necessary training for them;
- include the perspective of local and indigenous communities into local and national sustainable development strategies;
- increase funding for local NGOs to enable them to engage in a dialogue on tourism;
- support public education programmes which encourage responsible consumption, natural resource use, environmental protection and local culture conservation;
- give priority to the following investment suggestions: create funds to help tour operators improve their technical capacity for sustainable tourism development; create funds to develop recreational facilities for the public;
- encourage local banks and other lending institutions to set up regional investment funding programmes, including micro-credit programmes;
- create Regional Tourism Boards, fully staffed, to help in planning, promoting, regulating, and expanding sustainable tourism;
- initiate special marketing programmes by local governments and Tourism Boards, in which local tourism programmes will be advertised in the media;
- initiate programmes to improve the management of eco-tourism in protected areas;
- set up training programmes for guides, tour operators, marketers, etc.

45. Governments should, at local level

- harmonise laws on tourism including regulations, fee standards, licensing, etc. so that they will be more favourable to sustainable tourism in the region;
- ensure that tourism development is in line with Local Agenda 21 priorities and land-use plans and that the public can participate in local and regional decision making;
- regulate tourism to ensure that profits benefit local people and conservation efforts;
- Develop and support programmes to revitalise the diverse aspects of local cultures.

46. The tourism industry should

- reduce financial leakage and support local economies by buying food and resources locally, develop long-term partnerships with local operators, businesses and suppliers;
- train and hire local staff and contract with local businesses, promote management opportunities for women;
- prefer accommodations owned, built and staffed by local people, promote locally made handicrafts and traditional products;
- encourage clients to study and understand their destinations, respect local cultures and co-ordinate visits with local communities, authorities and women's organisations, being aware of and being sensitive to local customary laws, regulations and traditions, whilst respecting historical heritage and scientific sites;
- educate staff to avoid negative environmental and cultural impacts and create incentive schemes to promote sustainable behaviour.

47. NGOs should:

- initiate stakeholder dialogue on community involvement in tourism development, recognising social and gender divisions in communities;
- promote consultation processes in tourism planning, involving local communities;
- launch educational and awareness programmes on tourism for local communities, support and promote history research and museums;
- promote the respect for indigenous peoples and local communities' self-determination, autonomy and social and cultural integrity;
- strengthen their efforts to empower disenfranchised groups (in particular women) to

- become involved in local tourism planning and management;
- develop participatory programmes to support the integrity of local cultures and economies;
- support the sustainable resource use and initiate environmental actions on different levels to conserve the environment while the tourism is developing;
- analyse the experience with sustainable tourism in different parts of the world, in order to disseminate methodology/positive examples of community involvement in tourism;
- support the use of traditional knowledge, practices and innovation systems relevant for the conservation and sustainable use of biological resources and promote actions on different levels to eradicate poverty, protect human rights and conserve the environment while working in tourism.

Possible Partnerships

48. There is an urgency to constructively shape tourism in order to support local development and conservation goals. UN bodies and institutions, governments, industry and civil society should co-operate to launch a dialogue process on sustainable tourism. This must be planned within the framework provided by the various UN treaties and declarations. All the stakeholders involved in and affected by tourism should be involved in the development of action plans for sustainable tourism. Identifying mechanisms to achieve sustainable development goals in tourism must be a priority for co-operation. 'Good practices' in conserving culture and nature while developing sustainable tourism should be collected worldwide, involving all stakeholders. This process should lead to a multi-stakeholder round-table on strategic planning of local community involvement in tourism to be organised by UNEP as a side event at the Preparatory meetings for Earth Summit III in 2002.

49. There is an urgent need to assess the impacts of globalisation and the role of multilateral and bilateral development organisations in unsustainable tourism practices. An independent international assessment commission should be created under the CSD. NGOs, indigenous peoples, women's organisations and local communities should be involved in this assessment process together with all other stakeholders. The UN Working Group on Indigenous Peoples should be invited to monitor impacts of tourism on indigenous peoples and local communities. The assessment is to be completed and published by the year 2002.

E. Coastal Impact of Tourism

Problems

50. The United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development in 1999 will address both Oceans and Seas and the review of SIDS. Therefore, it is recognising that: "The survival of small island developing States is firmly rooted in their human resources and cultural heritage, which are their most significant assets; those assets are under severe stress and all efforts must be taken to ensure the central position of people in the process of sustainable development." With these words, the Report of the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States identifies the single most important issue to be borne in mind as we address the challenge of survival and development for our islands.

51. Article 25 of the Programme of Action from the United Nations Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States (SIDS) focuses our attention on another significant consideration: "Sustainable development in small island developing States depends largely on coastal and marine resources, because their small land area means that those States are effectively COASTAL ENTITIES"

52. Tourism is one of many anthropogenic activities with a special focus on coastal areas. The two most popular locations for holidaymakers are the mountains and the coast. The coastal area or zone (as

it is often called) is hard to define as the area where fresh and salt waters mix, containing many complex, diverse and productive ecosystems on and offshore interacting with each other. New concepts including the whole watershed area seem to be the best approach, especially when aquatic pollution problems are considered. Most problems are related to conflicts between different uses and access restrictions. Tourism leads to increased traffic flow and overcrowding in already densely populated areas. Up to 130 tourists has been calculated per inhabitant in the most popular coastal regions. Therefore, tourism adds substantially to the following pressures:

- Pollution by waste water, garbage, heating, noise and traffic emissions;
- Encroachment of buildings, facilities and roads close to the coastline;
- Beach erosion due to building, dune removal and dredging;
- Excessive use of natural areas;
- Destruction of natural areas to accommodate tourism or other needs;
- Inter-sectorial competition and conflict over (marine and terrestrial) space;
- Exclusion of local communities from any role of significance in decision-making;
- The loss of natural and architectural heritage in the face of rapid expansion;
- Strain on public utilities and facilities;
- displacement of local population;
- Creation of restricted exclusive zones that are off-limits to the local people;
- Loss of business by local enterprises as all-inclusive resorts supplies all the needs of their guests.

53. Additional typical tourism impacts are socio-economic conflicts as property and general costs of living increases, and social structure can be changed significantly, when summer guests overrun small communities. Foreign customs and expectations can create conflicts and a deterioration of cultural and regional values.

Solutions

54. A major focus should be on the integration of tourism planning and operation of tourist facilities into local planning instruments. Local agenda 21 can play a key role here in ensuring the involvement of all stakeholders. Ideally, this would be done in the context of integrated coastal area management (ICAM). This instrument bridges sectorial approaches in order to avoid or mitigate user conflicts, and it ideally takes into account ecosystem features and physical, not man-made borders. New tourism developments should be planned together with municipal, industrial, agri- / aqua-cultural and nature protection activities, to allow for multiple complementary uses and to segregate conflicting activities. Area development plans should inform sector plans which should then be incorporated into a co-ordinated national development plan. All planning should be accompanied by widespread public information dissemination and provide opportunity for discussion leading to integrated coastal zone management. The tourism development strategy should protect local culture, respect local traditions and promote local ownership and management of programs and projects, so as to foster community stewardship of the natural resource base. Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) on a strategic level as well as for projects is an invaluable tool for this stage. Criteria for planning and EIA should be:

- Strict environmental standards for solid, liquid and gaseous waste emissions;
- Taking the integrity of coastal values and resources into account;
- Enhancement of public transport infrastructure (train, boat, bike, bus);
- Locally adapted styles and maximum height/size limit for facilities;
- Setting of local/regional carrying capacities on a case-by-case basis;
- Limits to sale of property to foreigners;
- Maintenance of public access to the coastal strip;
- Safeguarding cultural values and customary uses.

55. During the operation of tourism facilities, several instruments can be applied to enable sustainable development. The details have to be developed according to the use, and together with the local community, the facility operator and local NGOs. Local Agenda 21 could play an important role here (They will be different for a diving site than for a big hotel complex). Modern instruments, which should be, and partly are, already applied in the tourism industry are:

- Introducing environmental management, (according to ISO 14.000 or the European EMAS Initiative);
- Increasing cultural and nature awareness of guests through interactions with local initiatives, guided nature walks, museums, etc.;
- Integrating the local economy by giving priority to local produce (e.g. fish, fruit, vegetables, furniture, and building materials).

56. However, all these efforts will be in vain, unless carrying capacity limits can be agreed upon in a dialogue and on a case-by-case basis. These limits have to follow sustainability criteria and have to come out of discussions on the development objectives and the natural and cultural values to be protected. They can be tiered in respect to nature used, number of beds and other facilities for guests, and amount of property to be sold to foreigners. (But management efforts for sustainable development cannot allow an ever increasing growth, which will destroy and, in fact already has, the resources the guests have come to see and experience.) To diminish conflicts a better use of facilities over the year, instead of only in a short season of two to three months should be aimed at. These limits probably have to be stricter for "nature use". Here the introduction and implementation of ranger and guide systems together with limits, regarding the number of visitors, can lead to increased awareness and control at the same time. A simple example is the different approaches to beach litter: Instead of excessive beach cleaning of all organic matter, a plastic litter clean-up by volunteers plus hands-on teaching on the biota originally inhabiting the beach and its natural detritus (like algae and wood) could reinstate an appreciation of nature.

57. We also believe that the recommendations for action at the national, regional and international levels have been detailed in the SIDS Program of Action (1994), at the CTO Conference on Eco-tourism in Dominica (1997) and more recently in the CEP Technical Report No. 38(1997) need to be implemented.

Agents and Partnership for Change

Institutional Actions

58. Actions on several levels are necessary. First and foremost, the historically grown sectorial approach to managing coastal issues, relating to tourism and other uses, has to be changed substantially. Under the lead of one coastal agency, all stakeholders, especially local people and NGOs, and also sectorial agencies, small and medium enterprises and industry representatives should meet regularly to promote sustainable development of their coastal area. The planning process and the operation of tourism developments should reflect the country's commitment to the guidelines set out in international accords such as Agenda 21 and the SIDS Program of Action. Depending on the region, this could mean enhancing human resource development including public awareness building and training; institutional strengthening and networking. Lessons learned in one community should be accessible to others. This will start the ICAM process, which is a goal-directed planning and decision-making process. ICAM leads to inter-agency and inter-sectorial collaboration, resulting in operational decision-making with strong public participation and feedback mechanisms. ICAM could mean in practice:

- To start an environmental management initiative through an award scheme;
- To raise an environmental tax from visitors for small projects, e.g. for funding ranger;
- Training or environmental training for tourism staff;
- To start joint actions with local fishermen, farmers, hotels, or other local initiatives;
- To develop a tourism master plan for the region.

59. In the long term, a development plan should be devised and discussed thoroughly in order to achieve a common understanding on the objectives and necessary restrictions. As all coastal areas contain particularly sensitive sites, environmental protection has to feature strongly in this planning process, with representatives from government nature protection agencies and NGOs having an equal standing with all other participants. Depending on the nature of the coastline, regional and intergovernmental collaboration may be necessary in addition to local initiatives. For some issues, such as the reduction of pollution and especially “eutrophication”, co-operation on a larger regional scale is necessary. Maybe the Baltic Sea States, consisting of very poor and rich states (can serve as example) are co-ordinating their fight against pollution under the Helsinki Convention, funding projects in neighbouring countries according to a list of hot spots. They have just finished the development of a joint Agenda 21 for the development of the Baltic region, including tourism. Generally, national plans should be converted into area development plans, which would provide the local context within which enterprise-level proposals can be evaluated. All these plans should inform and be incorporated into wider regional plans.

60. As integrated processes take time, tourism umbrella organisations should start with voluntary self-restraint, until locally adapted objectives have been reached. In the north, which bears the brunt of world-wide tourism, a development of quality tourism should be the focus for the future instead of an increase in quantity. The term quality should include ecological and social carrying capacities at the same time as being economically sustainable. In the south, tourism development objectives should be developed according to the local needs. A specially developed Code of Conduct, taking into account inter-area, the Coastal Code of Conduct by EUCC and the Berlin Declaration on Biological Diversity and Sustainable Tourism, could lead the way. Environmental management should become a standard of operation as well as social accountability thus leading to sustainable development.

Possible Partnerships

61. Additional to those partners mentioned above, there is a major role for environmental and social NGOs to play. The involvement of local initiatives, heritage and nature protection organisations and agencies can lead to a balanced ICAM process in the spirit of the Agenda 21.

62. Umbrella organisations, such as scuba diving, boating, and yachting associations should develop and promote the application of codes of conduct focussing on environmental and sustainability issues in their respective fields.

63. The Convention on Biological Diversity contains an ecosystem approach, which is consistent with the ICAM logic. Its experts could sensibly focus on questions of nature use and ecological carrying capacities for sensitive sites in order to obtain harmonised world-wide standards with legal standing.

64. The instruments and strategies are all already developed, now is the time to utilise and combine them in local dialogue processes.