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Global Report on the Transformative Power of Tourism

a paradigm shift towards a more responsible traveller

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Global Report on the Transformative Power of Tourism

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Foreword

Tourism is much more than a leisure activity; tourism holds an immense potential to set new paradigms of thinking, to encourage social and cultural changes and to inspire a more sustainable behavior.

With over one billion international tourists crossing borders every year, there are one billion opportunities for accelerating the shift towards a more sustainable future. Though small actions may seem inconsequential, just imagine the widespread impact of one responsible action multiplied one billion times. One billion tourists can indeed become one billion global stewards – one united, global force protecting the future of our planet and all people.

I trust this publication of the UNWTO Affiliate Members Programme and Institute for Tourism, Zagreb, Croatia would bring to the forefront of our sector some of the most updated research and case studies on the power that tourism can have in transforming our societies.

I would like to take this opportunity to express my deepest appreciation to all the Member States, Affiliate Members and Organizations that have contributed to this report, and particularly to Institute for Tourism, Zagreb, Croatia for leading this project.

As tourism leaders of today, we have a big responsibility and need to make every effort to lay down the foundations of a more sustainable future for the tourism sector of tomorrow.

Taleb Rifai
Secretary-General,
World Tourism Organization (UNWTO)

1 BILLION TOURISTS BILLION OPPORTUNITIES

Over one billion international tourists travelled the world in 2014, supporting jobs, generating income and boosting development.

International tourism currently accounts for 10% of global GDP, 30% of services exports and 1 in every 11 jobs.

At the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) we work to make this impact even greater.

Because every tourist counts.

World Tourism Organization (UNWTO)
A Specialized Agency of the United Nations
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A paradigm shift towards a more responsible traveller

Tourism has exhibited continued growth and deepening diversification over the recent years to become one of the fastest growing sectors in the world. Modern tourism, closely linked to sustainable development encompasses a growing number of new traveller profiles focused on social responsibility and the positive impacts of travel. These dynamics, when properly harnessed, have the ability to turn tourism into a key driver for socio-economic progress.

Against this backdrop, a new shift in traveller profiles is reflected in the emerging number of consumers that are conscious and aware of their social and environmental footprints and power to create positive change. Thus, these travellers demand more sustainable and ethical offers, making responsible choices whereby diversifying the supply. As this trend gains momentum, it will offer a variety of new opportunities for both the public and private sectors in the future.

The Affiliate Members Programme, in collaboration with Institute for Tourism, Zagreb, Croatia has produced this report in order to highlight and give insight on this new focus on travel. The report includes case studies from fifteen different countries representing tourism's potential as an instrument of opportunity and social inclusion. Collectively, with our esteemed Affiliate Members, we are committed to maximizing the benefits of the sector and ensuring its sustainable development.

In this regard, I would like to extend my gratitude to all the participating Affiliate Members namely Amadeus, Wesgro, ICTE, IUBH School of Business and Management, MDP Consulting, MODUL University Vienna, NHTV Breda University of Applied Sciences, Universidad Autonoma de Chiapas, Universidad de Occidente, Universidad San Ignacio de Loyola, University of Brighton, University of Queensland, and University of Technology Sydney Leisure, Sport and Tourism; as well as all other organizations that have contributed to it.

I trust this publication will be beneficial to stakeholders and practitioners alike, serving as a useful tool to inspire responsible, sustainable tourism for the benefit of all.

Yolanda Perdomo
Director of the Affiliate Members Programme,
World Tourism Organization (UNWTO)

Executive summary

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In the current state of the world's system and its environmental challenges, tourism can play an important role in ensuring the prospect of new generations. A growing number of academic and industry-based research points to an encouraging trend of socially and environmentally conscientious hosts and travellers, who employ tourism as a transformative medium to promote sustainable practices and more conscious living on our planet. In other words, increasingly, transformative travellers use their trips to re-invent themselves and the world they live in. This report provides the most recent academic and industry-based research on these market trends.

The report begins with an overview of the changing paradigm of the 21st century underpinned by the so-called 'silent revolution' of 'cultural creatives' and the emergence of 'new consumers', followed by the analysis of an empirical survey on 'transformative travellers' and visitors to the township of Auroville, located in the south of India. Lastly, a set of examples and case studies on these new tourism trends in destinations and businesses around the world is provided.

1.

The new paradigm of the 21st century: silent revolution of cultural creatives and transformative travel of and for the future

By: Irena Ateljevic, Pauline Sheldon and Renata Tomljenovic

About this chapter

The first part of this chapter provides an overview of the emerging 'new conscious consumers' who show significant behavioural changes in their lifestyle choices towards health, sustainability and greater responsibility towards society and the environment. The chapter gives an insight into these trends and how they form new demands for the shifted paradigm on new tourism perspectives. The second part of the chapter is to present the empirical results of the Auroville visitor survey in order to close the key research gap in the current knowledge on the travel characteristics of cultural creatives and their demand for transformative tourism. The research was conducted with three-fold aims: to ascertain the extent to which Auroville visitors fit a description of culture creatives in terms of their social and environmental values; to obtain travel profile of culture creatives travel and, finally, to gain insights into the characteristics of their stay in Auroville.

Key message

– Global climate change seriously questions our dominant socio-economic model of limitless growth and the continuous mindless consumption that has characterised ´the 20th century era of indulgence´.

– The 2008 Wall Street crash has triggered further crises which have resulted in a Great Reset of fundamental changes in our economy and society, giving rise to what is now called ´the 21st century era of consequences and responsibility´.

– The paradigm shift is carried by the growing population of so-called transformative ´cultural creatives´ acquiring new ways of looking at, and new ways of being in the world — ways that are consistent with a sustainable global future and in doing so forming and shaping new cultures of conscious consumption and production.

– New conscious consumers demand products and services that are based on their new worldviews and values of social and environmental justice.

– Travel appears to be a powerful medium through which transformative travellers re-invent themselves and the world they live in.

– In the line with the trends of conscious consumers, transformative tourists found in Auroville confirm the trend by demonstrating their high commitment to environmental and social justice as well as cherishing self-direction, benevolence and universalism.

– They are mostly young (50%) to middle age (42%), most of them single (59%) or married/in partnership (35%), and highly educated: 47% university graduates; 27% with master degree; 3% with PhD degree.

– Transformative tourists are a well-travelled population and like to travel independently (82%).

– Their motivation is compatible with the meaning of transformative tourism – travelling to re-invent themselves and the world. Hence, motives related to personal enhancements are the most important for vast majority – pursuing life-dreams (79%), stimulation of personal growth (78%) and exploring life's purpose (75%).

– They are generally long-term stayers as the average number of visitor overnights in Auroville was 35.

– The learning aspect of travel is extremely important for many – learning new skills (62%), get knowledgeable about various aspects of sustainability (60%), deepening knowledge of body awareness (57%) and pursuing hobby or special interest (50%). For majority (54%) a desire to connect with local people is important as well as the engagement in volunteering (39%).

1.1 Climate change and the new paradigm of the 21st century

"Climate change is the greatest market failure the world has ever seen."[1]

Nicolas Stern,
Former World Bank Chief Economist

When talking about future tourism trends nowadays, the current alarming state of the world and its unsustainable practices cannot be overlooked. The planet's ecosystems have changed more rapidly in the second half of the 20th century than any other time in recorded human history.[2] In 1962, the human demand for resources was 70% of the earth's ability to regenerate. By the 1980s, it was equal to the annual supply of resources and since the 1990s, it has exceeded the earth's capacity by 20%.[3] The rapidly growing world population and consequent industrialisation is putting increasing pressure on global natural resources, leading to environmental disasters which cause inhabitable land and water. This unsustainable economic system based on fossil fuels and limitless growth is ultimately increasing CO_2 emissions, which are causing unprecedented global climate change.[4] In 2007, Paul Crutzen and other natural scientists scientifically proved that climate change and other 'earth-shaking' geological forces are directly caused by human activity dating back to the industrial revolution circa 1800.[5] In geological terms, scientists claim that human industrial practices have caused the end of the life-thriving Holocene period as we enter the 21st century Anthropocene in which humans are imposing upon themselves the possibility of self-extinction.[6]

The 2008 economic collapse of Wall Street, which affected the world economy, as well as the broadened gap between the rich and poor are evidence of the planet's economic and social fragility.[7] A recent Credit Suisse report provides clear evidence of this claim by confirming that 1% of the global population 'owns half of global wealth'.[8] In the same vein, Thomas Friedman, until recently a supporter of globalisation and the ideology of limitless growth, asked this question:

"Let's today step out of the normal boundaries of analysis of our economic crisis and ask a radical question – What if the crisis of 2008 represents something much more fundamental than a deep recession? What is it telling us, that the whole growth model we created over the last fifty years is simply unsustainable, economically and ecologically, and that 2008 was when we hit the wall – when Mother Nature and the market both said "no more"?"[9]

Moreover, longitudinal studies in rich countries of the west hemisphere demonstrate that increasing wealth is not directly proportioned to happiness levels.[10] Figure 1.1, based on the longitudinal study of happiness in the United States of America, clearly shows the case in point.

Figure 1.1 Relationship between wealth and happiness

Real income per head
(1947 = 100)
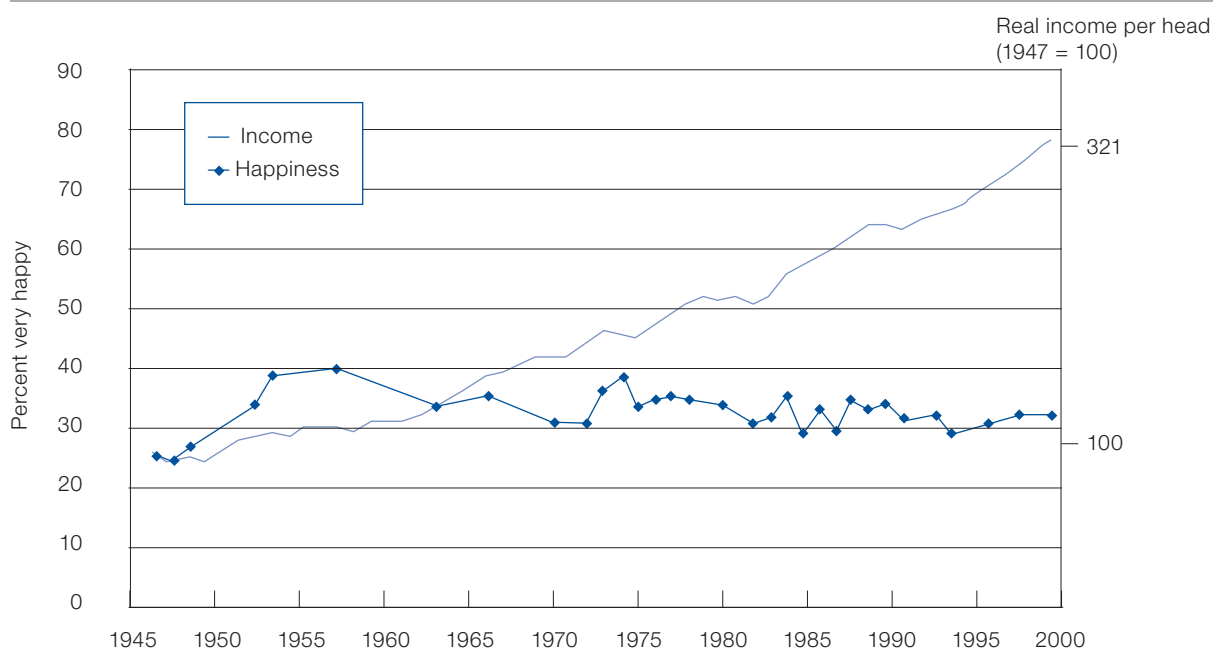
Source: Layard, R. (2005), *Happiness: Lessons From a New Science,* New York: Penguin.

Further to this, the evidence which will be presented in this chapter illustrates a growing dissatisfaction with the current ways of living, which can also be partially related to the fact that the consumption of antidepressants in rich countries is growing exponentially.[11] Consequently, and based on numerous references and market research, this chapter will show how the current unsustainable, materialistic paradigm increasingly influences people (worldwide, although predominantly in the west) to search for a new worldview with more non-material values. Reflectively, social scientists, economists, political activists, writers, spiritual leaders and many successful entrepreneurs claim that humanity is going through a 21st century paradigm shift.[12] Willis Harman, former Stanford professor, leader behind the World Business Academy and the President of the Institute of Noetic Sciences (1975–1997) was a great visionary of this shift. During the 1990s, he announced the emergence of this major global mind change in the west:

"We are living through one of the most fundamental shifts in history: a change in the actual belief structure of Western Society. No economics, political or military power can compare to the power of a change of mind. By deliberately changing their perception of reality, people are changing the world."[13]

The paradigm shift is associated with the phenomenon of what is known as the 'silent revolution' led by a growing number of alleged 'cultural creatives'.[14] This concept was brought forward in the year 2000, by Sociologist Paul H. Ray and Psychologist Sherry Ruth Anderson, on the basis of their market cluster research of politics in North America. Drawing upon 13 years of research studies on over 100,000 people surveyed over 22 years, about 500 focus groups and 60 in-depth interviews, they estimated that approximately 24% Americans were transitioning from traditional or modern cultures to weave new 'transmodern' ways of living. A variable set of values form the foundation of cultural creatives lifestyles. They highly value the planet, human relationships, co-operation, peace, social justice self-fulfillment, spirituality and self-expression. They are both inner-directed and socially concerned. A pragmatic summary of the values embodied by cultural creatives can be found below[15]:

- Ecological sustainability, which ranges from the need to rebuild communities to the need to cease global warming;

- Globalism, which ranges from the love of travelling and exotic places, to the concern over global population problems;

- Positive human values, which range from the empathy for others, to wanting to improve caring relationships in public and private life;

© Catwoman10 - Yoga And Meditation. Silhouette Of Man On The Mountain | Dreamstime.com.

- Authenticity, which refers to having consistent actions in line with values;

- Altruism, which refers to personal growth, self-fulfillment and spirituality;

- Social activism, which includes full commitment to build a sustainable future.

The lifestyles that cultural creatives consciously adopt are a reflection of these values. Ray and Anderson categorise the lifestyles of cultural creatives as 'experiential, authentic and holistic'.[16] Furthermore, they have the ability to think outside the box, which gives them the capacity to innovate and turn their values into new ways of life. Rethinking environmental, social, psychological and political issues and the role of the self in the big picture provide them with options for change. The statistical evidence of Ray and Anderson's survey went beyond North America, as the Statistics Office of the European Commission (Eurostat) conducted a similar inquiry in 1997, confirming similar trends to the studies conducted in the North America, with approximately 20% of the European population exhibiting a similar set of values.[17] The results were presented at the State of the World Forum in San Francisco by the EU Forward Studies Unit in November of the same year.[18]

In 2002, the Club of Budapest and Ervin László decided to initiate a vast inquiry with Paul Ray's survey instrument, adapted to each country, in order to investigate the segment of the population that belongs to the new culture. In order to ascertain the extent to which the new values and the new consciousness affect development in the contemporary world, the Club of Budapest survey of cultural creatives was carried out in Hungary, France, Italy and Japan. Some of those results are published on the cultural creatives website, evidencing that cultural creatives are now about 35% of each country's population, plus or minus 2%.[19] In addition, the well-known World Values Survey (running from 1981 to date) which consists of nationally representative surveys conducted in almost 100 countries (that contain roughly 90% of the world's population), found that a growing proportion of the population in both rich and poor countries spend time thinking about the meaning and purpose of life, moving from the materialist to the post-materialist paradigm.[20]

1.2   The great reset and post-recession 'conscious consumer'

The shift of the paradigm has been particularly accelerated by the latest economic recession which seems to be serving as a key tipping point. A great deal of research carried out by market specialised agencies confirm this trend. A representative example would be Richard Florida's popular book, *The Great Reset (2010)*[21] and how new ways of living and working drive post-crash prosperity.[22] Moreover, the Futures Company published *A Darwinian Gale and the Era of Consequences (2010),* announcing the current shift towards a 'new era of consequences' with value focused on responsibility as opposed to the 20th century 'era of indulgence' when values were based in trading and consuming whilst both the 18th and 19th century were viewed as the 'era of readiness' when value was found in new frontiers.[23] Similarly, Euro RSCG Worldwide[24] published a major global study including an in-depth survey of 5,700 adults in 7 countries including Brazil, China, France, Japan, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, and the United States, showing that people in mature markets have grown tired of the constant push to accumulate more. They claim that even well before the recession there were signs of discontent being played out in positive ways. Once fringe movements such as organic foods and recycling become mainstream ones in mature markets, it is a sign of growing consciousness about how personal consumption choices have an impact on one's own personal health, other people, and eventually, the planet's ecosystems. The Euro RSCG study continues to explain that as the global economic downturn intensified, people were given the opportunity or necessity to reflect more deeply about their lives and lifestyle choices. Across the markets surveyed, respondents have shown great discontent with a culture centered on consumerism and spending much of their time in front of televisions and computer screens.[25] This study has also shown other compelling information: overall, 69% worry that society has become too shallow and rather focused on superficial aspects of life. In the United States, France, and the United Kingdom that figure rises to 79%, 77%, and 75%, respectively; 60% believe that society has grown intellectually lazy, while 67% believe we have grown physically lazy. In both cases, the highest percentages are in the United States and the United Kingdom, both saturated by the increase of consumerism.

'New consumers' still want more, but they are defining that differently, as they are no longer interested in large quantities of material goods but, rather, more meaning and deep social connections, more substance and a greater sense of purpose. Similarly, market study of marketing agency, Ogilvy and Mather[26] refers to the emerging post-recession consumer consciousness, in which 75% of those surveyed said that they would rather quit the competitive career ladder and, instead, 76% confirmed that they would rather spend more time with family than make more money.

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1.3   New conscious consumer and travel

"The future is not some place we are going to, but one we are creating. The paths to it are not found, but made; and the activity of making them, changes both the maker and the destination."[27]

Peter Ellyard

It is in this context that we see the increasing need for conscious and transformative holidays as a trend where responsible travelling can provide the means to change both lifestyles, as well as increase the positive and caring impact made on destinations. Academic- and sector-based research increasingly confirms this trend, albeit using different terms to communicate the shift towards the new travelling mindset. Some frame it as the trans-modern tourism of the future[28], others call it transformative tourism[29], while renowned Destination Management Consultant, Practitioner and Change Agent, Anna Pollock calls it conscious travel.[30] We will be employing the term 'transformative traveller' but regardless of the terminology employed, all research points to the same direction of responsible tourism that has been widely promoted by the sector. According to the sources cited above, transformative travellers are perceived by the following characteristics: they travel to re-invent themselves and the world; they travel in order to volunteer and make a difference; they value what is slow, small and simple and aim for self-reliance; they are

connected and communicative; they seek meaningful experiences which help them develop personally and collectively. In sum, they use travel to reflect upon their lives and get the courage to make crucial life changes upon their return back home, not only in terms of their lifestyle but also the type of work they do.[31] Various types of tourism have been identified, allowing to develop new experiences and transforming personalities and world-view, such as educational, volunteer, survival, community-based, eco, farm, adventure, cultural, wellness, faith, and yoga tourism.[32]

Nevertheless, limited research[33] on transformative tourism has shown that it is not sufficient to merely provide 'alternative and special interest tourism' experiences only, which are solemnly based on the market segmentation principle. The seismic changes in consumers' lifestyles, values and consumption patterns described above must be met by an equally seismic shift in the firms producing goods, services and experiences for the 'silent revolution' to come to fruition. The primarily-profit driven motivation that has underpinned business activity for centuries is now getting seriously challenged by many respected economists and political analysts because of detrimental effects on the environment and society. For example, Naomi Klein addresses the urgency of transforming the broken economic system while also addressing climate change. She eloquently points out the need to drop the addiction to pure free-market ideologies, put an end to greed and corporate power and restructure local economies and strengthen democracies.[34]

This requires tourism firms to re-examine how they fit into the emerging society described above and to reflect on a new *raison d'être,* one which addresses the needs of the planet and the fundamental changes affecting tourists' consumption patterns and lifestyles. This paradigm shift espouses the idea that the profit-making goal must now also integrate goals for societal and environmental well-being. For example, widely cited American economist Otto Sharmer describes this shift as moving from ego-centric behaviour (maximising self-interest) to eco-centric behaviour (contributing to the social, cultural and environmental eco-systems within which the firm operates).[35] Many business gurus[36] endorse this shared value approach to corporate activity and call for firms to wake up to the impact on the eco-systems in which they operate. Collaboration, sharing, and common values will lead the new economic behaviour if to create sustainable life on the planet.[37]

All avenues of business activity are facing these challenges, and the tourism sector is not being spared. In fact, because it is so vast, so global and (in its traditional form) so consumptive of resources, it must be one of the leading sectors ushering in the new economy. Whether tourism will step up to this moral challenge is yet to be seen. Hence, the rationale behind this report is to provide an insight into the motivations and behaviours of the new, conscious traveller as well as the emerging best practices of transformative travel businesses and destinations.

Forward-looking, responsible firms have responded to the wake-up call and are strategically integrating social responsibility into their missions and their core activities.[38] Michael Porter, Professor at Harvard Business School and one of the world's most influential thinkers on management and competitiveness, claims that firms first need to examine the societal needs in the communities/destinations where they operate and respond by designing products and services to meet those needs. He defines this as the business process of 'creating shared value'. Researchers claim that the sincere adoption of this approach creates more successful companies in all aspects[39], although the tourism industry rarely features this phenomenon in their research reports.

While this shift is happening in corporate activity, the urgent desire by cultural creatives to address the world's problems is giving rise to what has now been recognised as a form of growing social entrepreneurship and social innovation.[40]

1.4 New and growing (social) entrepreneurship

The rapidly growing social entrepreneurship sector is recognised to be fired by creative individuals who are resourceful, opportunity-oriented, and innovative.[41] They intentionally pursue the public good to create value in society while making a reasonable profit. They seek meaning and a sense of contribution in their work-lives and act as change agents of social and economic progress. Some seek to address local social needs, some to build alternative structures addressing social needs that government or business cannot, and others seek to create newer, more effective social systems that replace old ones.[42] Both, David Bornstein's book "How to change the World: Social Entrepreneurs and the Power of New Ideas"[43] and Elkington and Hartigan's publication "The Power of Unreasonable People"[44] highlight the significant global impacts of social entrepreneurs and their contributions to the UN Millennium Development Goals and other pressing world problems. Every year the Skoll World Forum[45] honours the most successful social entrepreneurs in all parts of the world and all sectors such as health, education or agriculture. The Ashoka Foundation[46], one of the first international agencies supporting social entrepreneurs and matching them with funding sources, shows some encouraging examples in the field of tourism and currently has 184 projects underway which relate to tourism.

Similarly, UNWTO Awards for Excellence and Innovation in Tourism, created by the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), celebrate excellence and innovation every year in the tourism sector. They recognise some of the best examples of tourism leaders from around the world that through their exceptional initiatives have placed themselves at the forefront of the sector. In doing so, the UNWTO Awards seek to recognise and stimulate entrepreneurship, knowledge creation, dissemination and innovative applications in tourism and bring to light the latest advances in the area, positively influencing governance and society at large. The contribution of the awardees is in line with UNWTO's policies, priorities and programme of work, including the UNWTO Global Code of Ethics for Tourism and the United Nations Millennium Development Goals.

Other economic evidence demonstrates the increasing concern for investments in companies with a social conscience. In the United States for example, Sustainable, Responsible and Impact Investing (SRI) grew from USD 3.74 trillion in 2012 to USD 6.57 trillion in 2014, an increase of 76%. According to the Forum for Sustainable and Responsible Investment (2014), these assets account for one out of every six investment dollars under professional management, adding pressure on firms to be socially responsible.[47] To the other extreme, Klein stresses the need for conscious investors to pull out of extractive industry investments such as oil and coal to help mitigate climate change.[48] The tourism sector, both as a contributor and an affected sector of climate change, will be affected

by this[49]. Yet, the good news and prospects come from Jeremy Rifkin (2011),[50] renowned political scientist and advisor to many governments, who describes how new technologies will help us in the necessary paradigm shift. He describes how the five pillars of the 'Third Industrial Revolution' will create thousands of businesses and millions of jobs, and usher in a fundamental reordering of human relationships, from hierarchical to lateral power, which will impact the way we conduct business, govern society, educate our children and engage in civic life. The five pillars of the Third Industrial Revolution are (1) shifting to renewable energies; (2) transforming the building stock of every continent into green micro-power plants to collect renewable energies on-site; (3) deploying hydrogen and other storage technologies in every building and throughout the infrastructure to store intermittent energies; (4) using the Internet technology to transform the power grid of every continent into an energy internet that acts just like the Internet (when millions of buildings are generating a small amount of renewable energy locally, on-site, they can sell surplus green electricity back to the grid and share it with their continental neighbours); and (5) transitioning the transport fleet to electric plug-in and fuel cell vehicles that can buy and sell green electricity on a smart, continental, interactive power grid.

The economic growth paradigm, based on the extraction of planetary resources, has been the gold standard of success for centuries, but our planet cannot survive more growth and remain unaffected. Given the state of its strained resources, green economies are gaining more traction with governments, destinations and communities. The tourism sector is also seeking more holistic measures of success than simply growth in arrivals and expenditures. Since mass tourism is driven by the overconsumption of the natural environmental and cultural resources, it is urgently required to reconsider the matter.[51] The vacation experiences that transformative travellers seek are rarely found in crowded and congested mass tourism destinations. They too want to move from ego-centric to eco-centric behaviour. This requires new systemic design of tourism experiences to provide innovative and meaningful experiences that meet the needs of cultural creatives as well as residents. Experiences, which harness the energy and vision of conscious travellers to create social and environmental good, will also nourish the destinations.

This shift can be particularly helped through the collaboration of governments, the private sector and civil society.[52] The collaborative approach can transform destinations into ones that nourish their precious resources and cultures and survive into the future. Tourism companies and stakeholders have a responsibility not only to respond to this societal paradigm shift, but also to step forward and lead it. Firms can still make a fair profit and join hands with government and civil society to disrupt irresponsible tourism and turn it around for the better. Embracing the ideas of creating shared value, the shared economy, the search for meaning and social good can replenish the society's spirits and create the transformation that destinations and the planet need to survive. This report gives a glimpse of what is already happening in the new conscious travel and tourism sector, its emergencies, challenges and exciting opportunities.

The main thrust of transformative tourism is that it is not an isolated phenomenon because it is a symptom of broader social transformation and affects many other aspects of societies. Transformative tourism can be seen as a catalyst for broader social change and as part of a larger paradigm shift towards a decentralised, socially-conscious, and ecologically sound economy. The following section will be assessing the ways in which transformative tourism functions in an eco-village in the south of India.

Auroville empirical survey of transformative tourists

By: Renata Tomljenovic, Irena Ateljevic,
Zrinka Marusic, Sanda Corak and Ivan Sever

Introduction

The first section of this report has clearly illustrated that the emergence of the cultural creatives and new conscious consumers has been increasingly evidenced through a wide-ranging empirical research by academics and marketing agencies alike. Yet, any effort to conduct larger quantitative research on the characteristics of conscious, transformative travellers and enterprises is almost non-existent. Their patterns and travel characteristics are either inferred from the analysis of generic conscious consumption trends or drawn from the qualitative insights on transformative tourism, found across the whole range of special interest travel (such as yoga and spirituality, backpacking, study travel, worldwide opportunities on organic farms or, ecotourism, etc.).[53]

To bridge the gap, primary research on transformative tourists was conducted in Auroville, 'the City of Dawn' which was founded in 1968 in Tamil Nadu, South-East India, with a vision of an ideal international township devoted to an experiment in human unity through cultural diversity. As such, the township has been affirmed and encouraged by the UNESCO as a project of importance to the future of humanity.[54]

Today, Auroville is recognised as the first and only internationally endorsed ongoing experiment in human unity and transformation of consciousness, also concerned with – and practically researching into – sustainable living and the future cultural, environmental, social and spiritual needs of humankind. In the words of its vision: "Auroville wants to be a universal town where men and women of all countries are able to live in peace and progressive harmony above all creeds, all politics and all nationalities."[55]

Being a pioneer in many emerging fields such as reforestation, green technology, alternative architecture, organic farming and integral education, Auroville also designated an eco-village status in 1995.[56] Although founded with a vision to ultimately become a city of 50,000 citizens, Auroville currently numbers only around 2,000 residents. Yet, with its increasing world reputation to be a unique place for both learning and contemplation and its inherent nature on future thinking – this international township attracts many international visitors, guests and volunteers. Attracting about 3.5 thousands overnight visitors in 2013 and 4.7 thousand in 2014, the main season is in the period of Auroville's very pleasant winter (from January to March), although many volunteers come and stay throughout the whole year.[57]

In terms of the terminology used for visitors, two important notes need to be highlighted here. First, this study will use the term *transformative tourists* in order to capture the meaning of transformative and conscious travellers, as emanating from the trend of cultural creatives and new conscious consumers discussed in the first chapter. Secondly, however, in the qualitative preliminary research of this study it has been encountered that Auroville residents and hosts have a great resistance to the concept of tourists. In other words, perceiving tourism as a mass, mindless phenomenon associated around big buses and sightseeing only, Aurovillians do not like to use the term but rather see Auroville visitors as their community guests. Thus, at this point of introductory explanation into the nature of Auroville tourism the report will respect the community sentiment and keep the term of visitors and guests. After that initial section, however, the term of transformative tourists will be continually and intentionally used in order to provide the broadest umbrella term that aims to bridge these unnecessary and misleading perceptual gaps. In other words, our goal is to communicate an integrated message of a new travel mindset that is ultimately concerned with building a sustainable future through personal and social transformation enabled by conscious travel and hosting, to which tourism industry needs to (and already does) respond.

The arrival of tourists and travellers into Auroville is considered a mixed blessing, as it stimulates a rise in prices and the busy visitor season is seen by some as a distraction from their 'inner work' that is central

© Omur12 - Tourist and Monk in Mountains | Dreamstime.com.

to the ideals of Auroville.[58] Aurovillians are especially sensitive to its central landmark and the heart of the city, called Matrimandir, which has been designed solely for meditation and contemplation; yet its impressive 'golden globe' architecture has been recently attracting many Indian daily visitors who primarily see it as an impressive tourist attraction (Visitors Information Center, pers. comm., 2014)[a].

Figure 1.2   Matrimandir, Auroville

Source: Fieldwork, photo taken by Irena Ateljevic, PhD (28/02/2014).

On the other hand, longer-term visitors benefit the community by contributing to its rising population and the international support it enjoys. Moreover, by attracting many conscious travellers and guests from all around the world, Auroville community benefits greatly from the exchange of ideas and shared knowledge. Furthermore, the larger Auroville's income, the more money can be allocated to the many projects that provide services to Aurovillians and Tamil villagers and the various initiatives that address sustainability concerns.[59]

In the light of 'mixed blessing attitude to tourism', our preliminary qualitative research has shown that no systematic data has been collected on motivations and travel characteristics of Auroville visitors. While there has been some qualitative research conducted on volunteers[60] no comprehensive quantitative data collection has been carried out across the whole range of visitor population, further enforcing the need to fill the gap.

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a   Thus, the whole special visitor system has been set in place by requesting all visitors to watch a short video about the aspiration and purpose of Auroville before they are allowed to visit Matrimandir. Also given that Matrimandir serves as meditation space for Aurovillians, visits for guests are only allowed for a meditation and concentration and are limited to the morning hours between 9 and 11 for which a very strict booking system applies.

Research design

In light of the perceived gaps, both, in terms of Auroville visitor profile and more broadly the travel characteristics of transformative tourists, our empirical research was conducted from February to March 2014, the peak visitor season in Auroville, on a sample of 300 Auroville guests.

Due to the not well-developed system of tourism statistics at the time the research was conducted (even data on visitors arrivals by country of visitor's permanent residence had not been completed), official data on size and characteristics of population of interests had not been available. Therefore, a non-probability, convenient sample had been used. In order to minimise non-sampling errors and biases, a particular attention was paid to the process of data collection. Data was collected at all days of the week and different times of day in 26 guest houses and 2 workshop areas. These places were selected because respondents had a sufficient time to complete the questionnaire. Data was collected by one of the leaders of transformative tourism research project, together with two research assistants, one student and one volunteer, both trained by the principal researcher and well acquainted with the purpose of the research. The research team was also familiarised with the nature of Auroville due to their extended stay. Furthermore, the research was approved by the Auroville office.

The personal interview was used as a method of data collection. In several cases respondents were filling out the questionnaires by themselves under supervision of the interviewers. No respondents refused their participation but some did not have enough time to fully finish it. Hence, 32 questionnaires have been considered invalid, leaving 268 usable responses or 5.7% of total number of Auroville guests in 2014.[b]

The questionnaire was divided into three sections:

- One section tapped into the values of respondents in order to ascertain the extent to which they respond to the cultural creative's value set or, in other words, to test the assumption that Auroville's visitors are, in fact, the culture creatives. The instruments used to that end were selected from the World Value Survey[61]:

  - Alcock's Commitment to Environmental Sustainability – 4 items dealing with environmental issues (a scale from 1=strongly disagree to 5=strongly agree) and 3 items addressing pro-environmental behaviour;
  - Schwartz Value Inventory (10 item version from Portrait Value Questions used in World Value Survey[c] where a person is described and respondents are required to tell how much this person is similar to them, with responses ranging from 'not at all like me' to 'very much like me);
  - Inglehart materialism/post-materialism – asking for a preference in terms of country development options on 12 statements.

- In line with the main aim of the study – to obtain travel portrait of transformative tourists in general – a section was devoted to the past travel behaviour. It solicited information on:

  - A number of private and business trips taken over the last two years;
  - Travel motivation (17 items scale with 10 statements deriving from interviews with visitors and corresponding to theoretically derived dimension of culture creative travel style while the additional seven statements taped into the classical push motives of rest, relaxation, escape, socialising, sightseeing, romance and shopping);
  - Characteristics of the most memorable trip in terms of trip purpose, destination type, accommodation and travel organisation. A decision to focus on a most memorable trip was made since it was impractical to ask details about every trip taken in a certain time span and under assumption that details of the most memorable trip would be more reliable.

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b   Since this is the first time that a survey of Auroville visitors was conducted, data on the size of variances necessary to calculate the appropriate sample size and data on population characteristics necessary for the probability sample were not available. Therefore, additional steps had been undertaken in sampling procedures to reduce bias and to achieve as representative sample as possible given the overall lack of proper tourism statistics on tourist population of interest on which to base a probability sample. For these reasons, it has stated that a non-probability, convenient sample was used. To maximise the representativeness, data collection measures such as surveying in peak season, equal spread of interviewing points spatially and temporary (all times of day, all days of week) were undertaken.

c   Schwartz identified ten universal values of self-direction, stimulation, hedonism, achievement, power, security, conformity, tradition, benevolence and universalism. The original scale has 57 items. As it is often impractical to use such long scales, it has been shortened to 10-item scale, with each item representing one value.

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- The battery of close-ended questions related to the characteristic of Auroville trip (frequency of visit, length of stay, accommodation, information source, travel party, and motivation solicited through an open-ended question) and socio-demographic characteristics (age, education, income and country of permanent residence).

Values of transformative tourists

In the line with the movement of conscious consumers, transformative tourists found in Auroville clearly confirm the trend by demonstrating their high commitment to environmental sustainability, as measured by Alcock's Commitment to Environmental Sustainability scale (see Table 1.1). They show preference for doing environmentally friendly things (90%), they are skeptical about prospects for science rather than lifestyle change as a solution for global warming (92%), they are prioritising environment over other things (93%) and act daily in environmentally friendly ways (63%).

The transformative tourists show high awareness of the need for people to change their ways of life so that future generations can continue to enjoy a good quality of life and environment (97% agree or strongly agree). This is followed by the awareness of the need for personal change with 85% supporting the notion that for high quality of life of future generations they need to change their way

of life and, finally, 88% have already adopted practices to address the problem of carbon emissions (i.e. driving less or turning lights off whenever possible).

As Table 1.2 illustrates, the most important values that the transformative tourists cherish are self-direction (74%), benevolence (73%) and universalism (67%). In other words, they are independent in deciding what they want to do and how they want to act, they are independent, creative thinkers and like to explore new things and ideas. They are also altruistic, promoting supportive and cooperative social relations. The embracement of value of universalism refers to understanding, appreciation, tolerance, protection of welfare of all people and protection of nature.

The values of power, hedonism, tradition and security are the least important values. That is, they do not value much prestige, status or control over other people or resources. As free and independent thinkers, they do not subordinate themselves to social or religious norms or customs. With the preference for exploring new things and ideas, security, safety and stability are not important to them.

Table 1.1   Respondents' attitudes to environmental sustainability

Statement	Average[1]	Agree (%)[2]
It takes too much time and effort to do things that are environmentally friendly	1.9	10.3
Scientists will find a solution to global warming without people having to make big changes to their lifestyle	1.8	8.4
The environment is a low priority for me compared with a lot of other things in my life	1.8	6.8
I am environmentally friendly in most things that I do	3.7	62.5

1) On a scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). 2) The share of respondents with ratings of 4 or 5.

Table 1.2   Responses to Schwartz Portrait Questions

Value	Statement	Ratings of 1 or 2 (%)[1]	Average rating	Mean deviation from average on all 10 items
Self Direction	Thinking up new ideas and be creative is important to this person: doing things one's own way.	73.7	2.0	-1.30
Benevolence	Helping the people nearby is important to this person: caring for their well-being.	73.0	2.1	-1.21
Universalism	Looking after the environment is important to this person: caring for nature.	66.7	2.2	-1.11
Stimulation	Adventure and taking risks are important to this person: having an exciting life.	36.5	3.0	-0.33
Achievement	Being very successful is important to this person: having people recognise one's achievements.	23.4	3.5	0.26
Conformity	Behaving properly at all times is important to this person: avoiding doing anything people would say is wrong.	22.6	3.8	0.47
Security	Living in secure surroundings is important to this person: avoiding anything that might be dangerous.	17.4	3.8	0.55
Tradition	Tradition is important to this person: following the customs handed by one's religion or family.	15.1	4.0	0.67
Hedonism	Having a good time is important to this person: enjoying oneself.	13.2	4.0	0.68
Power	Being rich and to have a lot of money and expensive things are important to this person.	4.5	4.6	1.36

1) On a scale from 1 (very much like me) to 6 (not at all like me).

The transformative tourists show a strong inclination towards postmodern values. They give preference to giving people more say at work or in communities, trying to make cities and country-side more beautiful over the strong economic growth and defense force (Figure 1.3). They think that giving people more say in government affairs and protecting freedom of speech are more important than fighting rising prices or maintaining national order. They also think it is more important to build a more humane society and embrace the kind of progress where ideas count, although stable economy is still relatively important to them. However, the fighting crime was not considered an important goal for the majority of them.

Figure 1.3 Priorities of countries' development (Ingelhart materialism/post-materialism values)
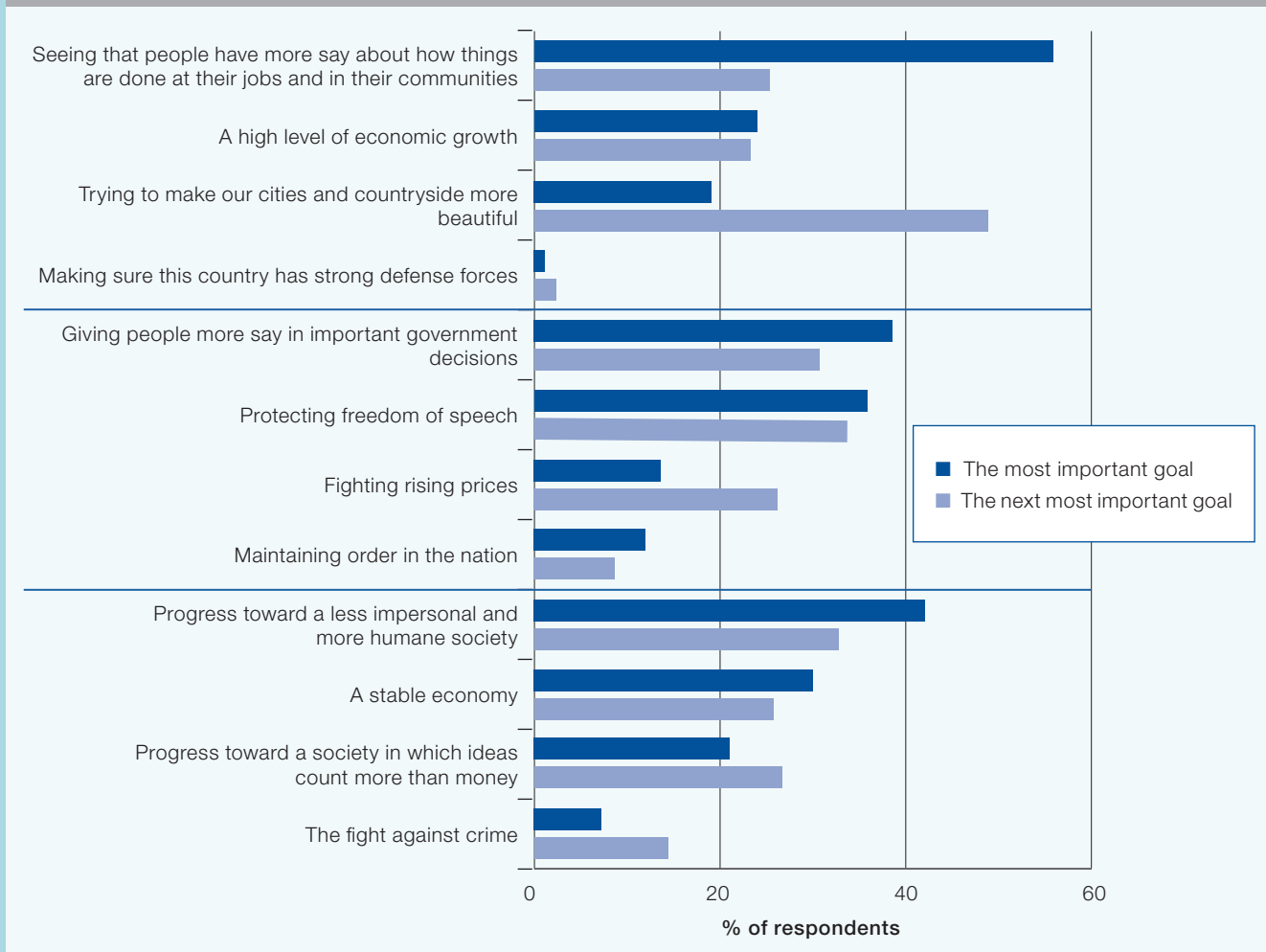
Source: Institute for Tourism.

A profile of transformative tourists

Socio-demographics

They are young (50% up to 29 years of age) to middle age (42% between 30 and 49 years of age), with only 9% over 50. Most of them are single (59%) or married/in partnership (35%). Likewise, most are without children (77%) and further 7% with children that have left home. A majority is highly educated - 3% with PhD, 27% with master degree and 47% with university degree (Figure 1.4). Slightly over half (53%) are females.

Having in mind their level of education, it is not surprising that most are well off with 37% reporting higher than the average national income and 34% about the average.

Most of them are from Europe (61%), Asia (24%) including 18% from India, followed by North America (11%). The rest (Africa, Australia/New Zealand, and South America) accounted for the remaining 6%.

Figure 1.4 Education of respondents (%)
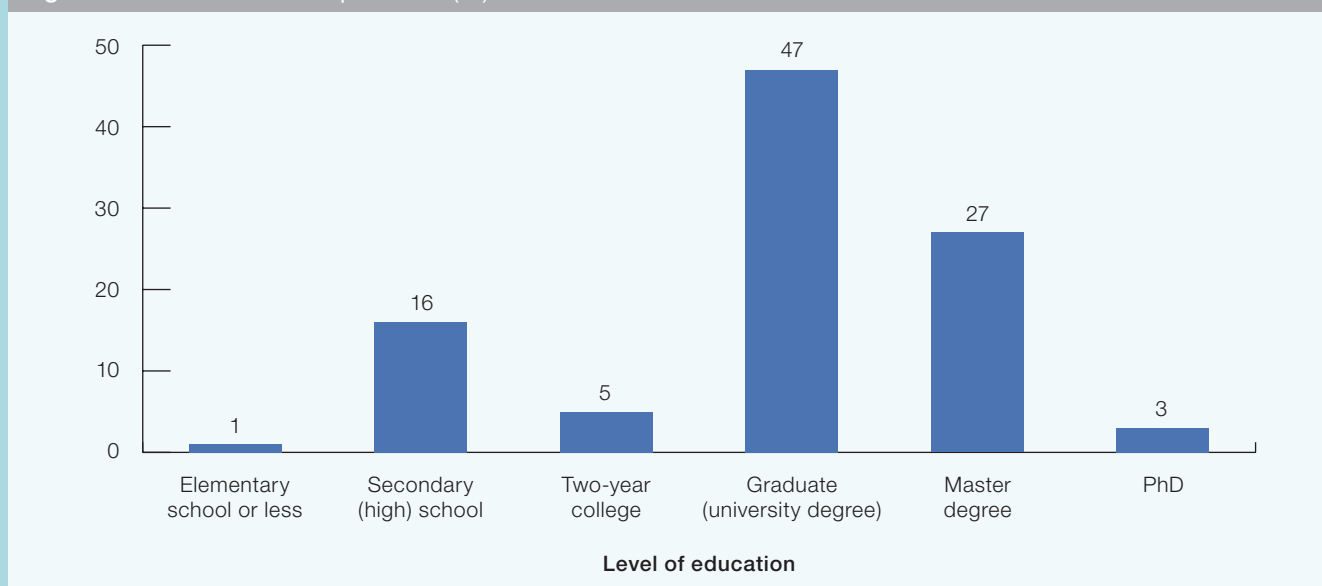
Source: Institute for Tourism.

Travel style/characteristics

In general, this is a well-travelled population (Table 1.3). A majority, around 80%, travel abroad privately at least once in the last two years. Moreover, about one in five (21%) travel a lot, taking six or more private trips over a two-year period. About the same proportion takes four or five trips over 24 months. They travel on business trips less frequently, with the majority (41%) travelling only once in that period and 22% two or three times. Nevertheless, about 10% take four to five and 27% more than five business trips in a two-year period.

Table 1.3 Number of private and business trips over last 2 years (%)

Number of trips	Private	Business
1	19.0	41.3
2	19.8	17.5
3	21.6	4.8
4	10.3	3.2
5	8.6	6.3
6 to 9	11.2	11.1
10 and over	9.5	15.9
Total	**100**	**100**
Number or trips (arithmetic mean)	4	5

In terms of the characteristics of the most memorable trip, there was an array of countries where the most memorable trip took place (Figure 1.5). It seems that Asia is the most frequent backdrop of the memorable travels for 51%, with India alone accounting for 34% (although the percentage of Indians in the sample was much lower 18%). This was followed by Europe (26%).

Similar diversity is found with the accommodation (Table 1.4). While about a third (31%) stayed in hotels, resorts or motels, there is a tendency to use a wide range of accommodation – from hostels (16%), self-catering apartments/houses (11%), friend's home (9%) and camp-sites (9%) to bed and breakfast, paid homestays, dormitories, free stay with locals, couch surfing, ashrams and retreats.

Figure 1.5 Destination of the most memorable trip by regions (%)
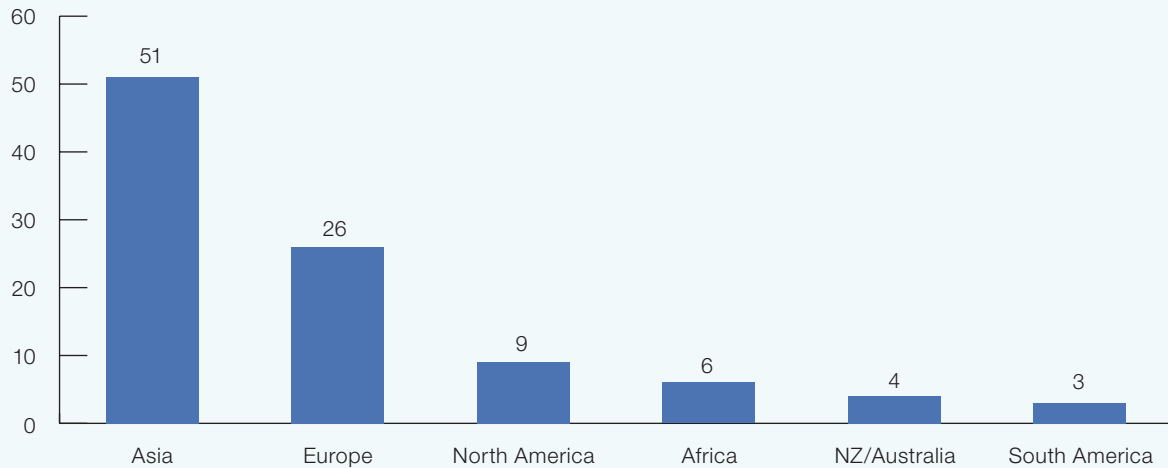
Source: Institute for Tourism.

They are independent travellers – 82% organised their most memorable trip by themselves while 9% travelled in organisation of an association, university or similar.

The purposes of their most memorable trip are, to a certain extent, similar to those of travellers in general (Table 1.5) – rest and recuperation (45%), nature-based activities or city breaks (27% each) and visiting friends and relatives (18%). However, they travel for a wider range of purpose with relatively large proportion travelling for religion/spirituality (22%), wellness/health retreats (17%), for education (14%) and events/festivals (10%). Yet, from the interviews with our respondents we have come to understand that 'the rest and recuperation' purpose (traditionally attributed to the motivation behind mass-travel) is just a backdrop to deeper, more meaningful travel experiences taken in a variety of forms. Consequently, we would argue that 'rest and recuperation', which is solicited in most surveys as one of the main purposes of travel, has become rather redundant when we speak of transformative travel. In other words, it is not about key travel motivations but rather experiences, encounters and activities that conscious travellers seek and often create themselves in their inherent need for spontaneity, authenticity and humanness.

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Table 1.4	Main type of accommodation on the most memorable trip

Type of accommodations	% of respondents
Hotel, resort, motel	31.2
Hostels/backpacker places	15.8
Self-catering apartment/holiday (guest) house	10.7
Friends home	9.0
Camping	8.5
Bed and breakfast	5.1
Paid homestay	4.7
Dormitory	3.0
Free local stay	3.0
Couchsurfing	2.6
Own house/apartment	2.1
Sea or river cruise ship	0.4
Other things	3.8
Total	100

Table 1.5	Main purpose of the most memorable trip

Main purpose	% of respondents
Rest and recuperation	44.8
Nature based activities	26.5
City break, culture, entertainment	26.5
Religion/spirituality	22.4
Visiting friends or relatives	18.3
Wellness/health - retreats	16.8
Educations, seminars, workshops not related to work	13.8
Events, festivals	10.1
Wine and food	8.2
Other business reasons	5.6
Shopping	4.5
Conference, congress, exhibition for business reasons	3.7
Volunteering	2.6
Work and travel	1.1
Other things	2.6

Note: Multiple responses.

Motivation

Their motivation to travel is compatible with their values and world-views (Figure 1.6). Motives related to personal enhancements are the most important for vast majority – pursuing life-dreams (79%), stimulation of personal growth (78%) and exploring life's purpose (75%).

The learning aspect of travel is also important for many – learning new skills (62%), get knowledgeable about various aspects of sustainability (60%), deepening knowledge of body awareness (57%) and pursuing hobby or special interest (50%). For the majority (54%), a desire to connect with local people is important. For relatively large proportion (39%), volunteering is an important motive.

The more traditional push motives of rest and relaxation, entertainment, sightseeing or shopping are not important for majority with, possibly, exception of fun and entertainment that is an important motivation for 44% and the need to forget personal worries (38%) as a need that can be satisfied through, both, 'mindless' and a more 'meaningful' travel.

Figure 1.6 Travel motivation
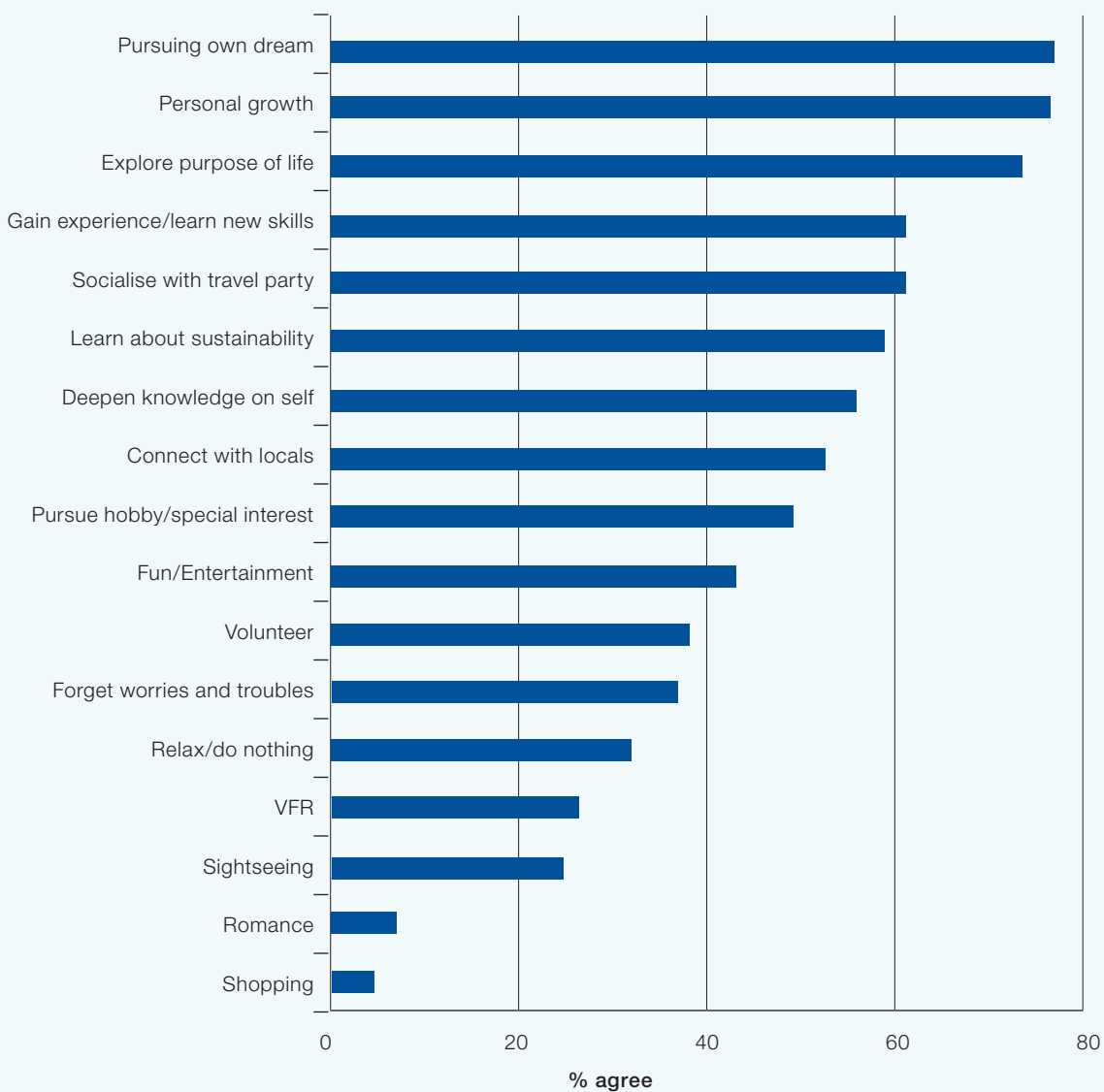
Note: The share of respondents with ratings of 4 or 5 on a scale from 1 (does not apply) to 5 (applies completely).

© Yarchyk - Nature Tourist Destination | Dreamstime.com.

Sense of fulfillment

The sense of fulfillment, expressed as the reasons for the trip being most memorable, is derived from social experience with friends, family members, hosts or other travellers encountered on the way (30%); appreciation for nature that caused a feeling of awe, sense of wonder or challenging ones physical endurance (23%) and from encountering different way of life and life-styles of hosts (22%) (Table 1.6).

Importantly, with 11% stating that the most memorable trip was life-transforming in a sense of provoking deep existential questions, challenging or changing ideas and way of thinking, provoking personal enquiry and search for self-knowledge this result lends some support for the proposition that travel experience trigger some deeper personal transformation.[62]

In general, learning expressed through gaining new knowledge or skills, or participating is specific activities is source of satisfaction for 10% and for further 8% it was spirituality.

Table 1.6 Source of fulfillment	
Main purpose	**% of respondents**
Social experience with other people (family, friends, hosts, other travellers)	29.5
Landscape (natural & man-made), atmosphere, sense of wonder and active involvement	23.1
Different ways of living and being of other cultures/communities	21.6
Life transforming and deep existential questions; change of ideas and ways of thinking, personal enquiry and self-knowledge	10.8
Gaining new knowledge/skills/engaging in specific activities/new forms of experiences/research	9.3
Spirituality	7.8
Others	4.9

Note: Multiple responses.

Transformative tourists in Auroville

The response to value statements have clearly shown that the respondents' mindset is that of the cultural creatives and, furthermore, in their travel they show general propensity to travel frequently, to a wider range of destination, often for religion/spirituality, wellness/health retreats or education, motivated mostly for the need for self-reflection, learning and spirituality. It is not surprising, therefore, that they were all attracted to Auroville given its vision and mission.

A high proportion of Auroville visitors travel by themselves (44%), reflecting the socio-demographic characteristics with majority been single. About a quarter (24%) visit Auroville with friends or relatives and 14% with a spouse/partner.

It seems that Auroville is the place most its visitors have only discovered as for the majority (72%) this was their first trip to Auroville, while further 19% visited it once or twice before.

Given its relatively remote location as well as the nature of visitor activities provided and promoted by Auroville, the length of stay was relatively long. The majority (59%) stayed 8 days or more while 21% stayed two to three days (Figure 1.7). The average number of overnights was 35.

Figure 1.7 Number of overnights in Auroville (%)

1 overnight 3%

2 to 3 overnights
21%

8 and more
overnights 59%

4 to 7 overnights
17%
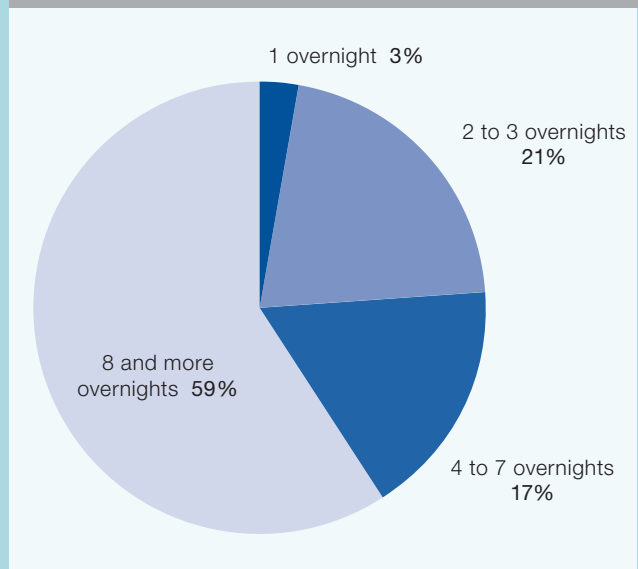
Source: Institute for Tourism.

© Mazzzur - Matrimandir - Golden Temple in Auroville, Tamil Nadu | Dreamstime.com.

Guest house was the most preferred type of accommodation (59%), followed by the volunteer's accommodation (9%), project/community accommodation (8%), and surrounding hotels (7%). The rest was in homestays, rented apartments, with friends or relatives either in Auroville or the surrounding villages (Table 1.7). This range and preference of accommodation is directly correlated to the nature of available accommodation in Auroville, as guesthouses, homestays and volunteer hostels are perceived to be the most 'acceptable' form of stay by both Aurovillians and its visitors. Namely, in the line with the issue of 'unwanted tourism' in Auroville, hotels are fully discouraged as a possibility for visitor accommodation, hence why hotels exist only in surrounding villages and where only domestic Indian visitors stay (fieldwork observation, January – March, 2014).

The positive word of mouth is the most powerful promotional channel for Auroville. Visitors learn about Auroville from friends and relatives (60%), over the Internet (19%) and fellow travellers met on the way (15%). Some are informed through social media, university, teachers, tour-operators or Auroville's office abroad.

The reasons for visiting Auroville are very place-specific. About 32% visit Auroville to learn about this alternative community in terms of lifestyle and sustainable practice, with further 19% to study spirituality and 9% to attend specific workshops or learn new skills. Further 8% visit to get insight into a particular sustainability practice. Other reasons include study/internship/research (8%), personal development and volunteering (5% each), finding peace and teach (2% and 1%, respectively).

Table 1.7	Main type of accommodation used
Type of accommodations	**% of respondents**
Guest house	58.8
Volunteer's accommodation	9.2
Project/community accommodation	7.9
Hotel[1]	6.7
Homestay	5.8
Rented apartment	3.8
With friends and relatives	3.8
Village stay	2.9
Others	1.3
Total	**100**

1) In surroundings.

© Cvialpando - Mt Tamalpais to the Coast | Dreamstime.com.

Conclusion

In line with the trends of conscious consumers and transformative tourists described in the first chapter, our research conducted on guests and visitors to Auroville in winter of 2014, confirms the trend by demonstrating respondents' high commitment to environmental and social justice, as well as cherishing self-direction, benevolence and universalism. Being mostly young to middle age and highly educated transformative tourists are a well-travelled population and like to travel independently. Their motivation is compatible with the meaning of transformative tourism – travelling to re-invent themselves and the world. Hence, motives related to personal enhancements are the most important for the vast majority. Some of these are pursuing life-dreams, stimulation of personal growth and exploring life's purpose. They are generally long-term stayers and the learning aspect of travel is extremely important for many – learning new skills, get knowledgeable about various aspects of sustainability, deepening knowledge of body awareness and pursuing hobby or special interest. For the majority, a desire to connect with local people is important as well as the engagement in volunteering.

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2.
Case studies

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To highlight some of the best practices showcasing these new tourism perspectives, a series of case studies have been selected. Presented below are the case studies grouped according to their region.

	Table 2.1	Overview of the 23 case studies		
Number	**Case study**		**Region**	**Main partners**
2.1	Transformative tourism for our sustainable future		Africa	Rolf Carelse, WESGRO
2.2	The Long Run: lending a purpose to travel for pleasure		Africa	Anne-Kathrin Zschiegner, The Long Run
2.3	Transformation towards a more sustainable hospitality industry		Asia and the Pacific	Arnfinn Oines, Soneva
2.4	Freeedom		Asia and the Pacific	Annie Beaulieu, Freeedom (2015 UNWTO Award Finalist), World Tourism Forum Lucerne, G20 Research Group
2.5	Volunteer tourism: transforming youth for a sustainable future		Asia and the Pacific	Stephen L. Wearing, Jennie Small & Simone Grabowski, University of Technology Sydney
2.6	Educating for transformative tourism: developing critical and reflective tourism professionals		Asia and the Pacific	Lisa Ruhanen, UQ Business School, The University of Queensland
2.7	The restorative power of tree house hotels: a German case study		Europe	Philip Sloan, Willy Legrand, Sonja Kinski, IUBH School of Business and Management Bad Honnef-Bonn
2.8	Ski resorts and transformative tourism		Europe	Pascal Roux, MDP Consulting

Number	Case study	Region	Main partners
	Table 2.1 Overview of the 23 case studies		
2.9	AltoBrembo: discovering the culture of the mountain	Europe	Andrea Paleni, AltoBrembo and Marta Soligo, University of Nevada Las Vegas
2.10	Village tourism project: Living Jacurso, a learning experience (Jacurso da Vivere e Imparare)	Europe	Rosamaria Limardi, Jacurso da Vivere e Imparare and Marcello Notarianni, International Tourism Expert
2.11	The experience of V4A® on accessible tourism	Europe	Roberto Vitali, Village for All
2.12	From profit to benefit? Social enterprises as a concept to build transformative leadership in tourism research and education	Europe	Jos van der Sterren and Harald Buijtendijk, NHTV Breda University of Applied Sciences, Academy for Tourism
2.13	Information technology at the service of a sustainable tourism industry	Europe	Lucas Bobes, Amadeus IT Group, S.A
2.14	Sustainable tourism	Europe	Miguel Mirones, Institute for Spanish Tourism Quality (ICTE)
2.15	How tourism leaders in public entities can change the daily life of a local community: a true story	Europe	Alfonso Vargas Sánchez, Universidad de Huelva
2.16	Transformative tourism education: the holistic approach at MODUL University Vienna	Europe	Dagmar Lund-Durlacher, MODUL University Vienna
2.17	Peer2Peer (P2P) International: a transformative educational travel experience	Europe	Marina Novelli and Adam Jones, Centre of Sport, Tourism and Leisure Studies (CoSTaLS) School of Sport and Service Management, University of Brighton
2.18	Lapa Rios Ecolodge	The Americas	Karen Lewis, Lapa Rios Ecolodge
2.19	Translating policy into action for sustainable tourism	The Americas	Deanna Newsom, Rainforest Alliance
2.20	Transformative travel in the Amazon	The Americas	Jeff Cremer, Rainforest Expeditions
2.21	Travelers´ philanthropy: a new transformative trend in Mazatlán, México	The Americas	Mónica Velarde Valdez and M.C. Kennedy Obombo Magio, Universidad de Occidente
2.22	Transformative tourism for our sustainable future: the case of Finca Argovia in Chiapas, Mexico	The Americas	Norma Juan Vázquez, Universidad Autónoma de Chiapas
2.23	Unique travel experiences for future professionals in tourism management	The Americas	Diana Guerra and Sandra Sotomayor, Tourism Management Program, Universidad San Ignacio de Loyola

2.1 Transformative tourism for our sustainable future

Rolf Carelse,
WESGRO

UNWTO
AFFILIATE MEMBER

WESGRO
cape town & western cape
tourism, trade & investment

When considering the theme, 'Transformative Tourism for Our Sustainable future', two projects within the Cape Overberg region of the Western Cape in South Africa immediately stand out. With mere 20 kilometres separating the two, you will find Grootbos Nature Reserve and Marine Dynamics Shark Cage Diving, both perfect examples of how putting sustainable tourism at the forefront can positively impact the experience of the tourist and local communities.

The common denominator for sustainably implementing transformative tourism within both business models must be attributed to the passion and backing of its respective owners. It is evident that in both owners, there is a distinct appreciation for the resource which they rely on to make a living and make a positive change to the surrounding communities.

© WESGRO - Grootbos Engage Africa Lifeskills Programme.

Product Making a Difference

Grootbos Nature Reserve, which started as a self-catering facility in the 90s, now offers guests exquisite 5-star accommodation offerings. The Nature Reserve is home to 765 plant species, 100 of which are endangered and 6 of which are completely new to science. This, however, is not the only allure for tourists.

This area is also blessed with marine life, and tourists regularly enjoy trips educating them on marine conservation through the partnership between Grootbos and Marine Dynamics. Its core philosophy of conservation linked with social development is what has made Grootbos an award-winning world leader in responsible tourism, a draw card for guests from all corners of the globe.

The Grootbos foundation formed in 2003 is a true example of how a tourism product can make a difference to both guests and visitors alike. The foundation currently employs 35 full time staff, 80% of whom are from the local community. The Grootbos Lodges employ a further 127 employees, sourced from surrounding communities.

The foundation runs a successful football academy which provides the youth in surrounding communities with access to facilities, life skills training, HIV education, female empowerment and more. Another pillar of the foundation is its Green Futures project which, among other things, offers Horticulture and Life Skills College established

in 2003. Since its inception, 118 young people have graduated and 90% of graduates have found employment.

The foundation also manages a successful alien clearing project, employing 61 previously unemployed people from the surrounding community. The Siyakhula Organic Farm which was established in 2009 now employs a full time staff of six and runs as a commercial enterprise to make an income for foundation projects. Guests are often seen immersing themselves into the local culture by joining the youth for a game of football or assisting in clearing alien vegetation, or getting their hands dirty on the organic farm.

Guests are constantly reminded about how their actions contribute to the greater good of the community, which is achieved by using many channels of communication. For example, Guests to Grootbos Private Nature Reserve have information in their rooms in the form of postcards, information packs and a book published about the reserve.

During the welcome briefing, guests are told about the Grootbos Foundation and their development and conservation work and invited on a 'Living the Future' social responsibility tour to visit various community programmes. Awards and pictures are on display in both lodges, the Foundation has an active website and social media channels are regularly updated. In menu inserts, guests are informed about the organic products grown by community members, on site.

© WESGRO - Grootbos Engage Africa Lifeskills Programme.

Through the experience of an authentic engagement with a member of the local community, sharing stories, exchanging an experience, making friends and broadening horizons beyond what they would experience in their day-to-day life. Guests also get an insight into development and conservation activities, from hands on perspective, which they might not otherwise have a chance to do.

The Grootbos Private Nature Reserve Lodges and associated non-profit programmes of the Grootbos Foundation now employ in excess of 150 full time staff, more than 80% of whom are from locally disadvantaged communities.

Volunteer Tourism

In 2006, the Dyer Island Conservation Trust was founded by owner of Fair Trade certified businesses Marine Dynamics and Dyer Island Cruises in order to raise money for marine conservation and research. Since then huge efforts have been made by this non-profit in terms of African penguin and great white shark conservation with the logistical and financial support of the operation.

Every year, more and more, volunteers from around the world travel to Gansbaai in the Western Cape to participate in this paying programme offered by Marine Dynamics. Volunteers appreciate the unique opportunity to work with the great white shark in what is known as the best place in the world to see and dive with these iconic creatures.

During their visit, volunteers work closely with a team of shark-specialist marine biologists; experience a wide range of South African marine wildlife; study shark behaviour, biology and ocean conservation and even gain work experience on a shark cage diving tourist boat or take part in exciting community projects.

Volunteers typically form part of the team and many have gone on to become marine biologist guides on the boats or helped in the running of the volunteer programme. Amazingly, their very first volunteer became a student who completed his Masters with Marine Dynamics.

Transformative tourism is becoming increasingly attractive as tourists are becoming more conscious about the impacts they have on the sustainability of the industry. Through this form of tourism, communities are empowered; natural resources are protected and developed; and tourists interact with local culture.

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© Wanas (Sweden) | GER.

2.2 The Long Run: lending a purpose to travel for pleasure

Anne-Kathrin Zschiegner,
The Long Run

THE LONG RUN

ZEITZ foundation
for Intercultural Ecosphere Safety

Apart from business travel, people travel mostly for pleasure. Can there be a purpose to pleasure? This is perhaps asking the wrong question because pleasure is, after all, about relaxing body, soul and spirit and is better not strained by the thought of a purpose. Let us, therefore, rephrase the question: Can pleasure be combined with a purpose? The answer is easy, yes. More difficult is defining the purpose. Combining education, health, enterprise development, environment protection and many others would be legitimate purposes and have in fact been tried before. Many efforts have, indeed, succeeded in having a visible impact and created a pleasure for visitors but few have lasted long and few have looked into the host environments in a holistic way.

In fact, the notion of responsible tourism finding greater popularity is on the basis of adding a purpose to travel for pleasure. The advent of many sustainable tourism standards is also rooted in promoting a sense of responsibility to the planet and people among the travel and tourism businesses. Unfortunately, started with good intentions, many of the standards have ended up as labels to attract clients in the market place. It is absolutely legitimate that the pursuit of a credible standard would bring market benefits. Concerning is when market considerations override rigour and integrity of the system which is difficult to sustain in the first place, because small-scale tourism businesses often find it hard to pay for the costs associated with credible standard systems in sustainable tourism.

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Even if the costs were not an issue, most sustainability efforts in tourism are limited in their impact by design. Even the most progressive of businesses and systems would be content with doing well in their areas of responsibility: A hotel conserving water, sourcing cleaner energy, reducing plastic waste, paying adequate wages, providing good working conditions, for example. These are all good actions that any enterprise would be legitimately proud of. However, proud as they may be, few ever ask the question, then what? There is seldom a broader compelling vision that drives change and good practice that often has to be followed by law anyway.

It is in this background that The Long Run was conceived as an international programme of the Zeitz Foundation created by Jochen Zeitz, the renowned businessman at the helm of a large multinational company for many years. Built around the two pillars of membership and Global Ecosphere Retreats® Standard (GER) that has been called "one of the world's best standards for privately protected areas" (Dr. Jeff A. Langholz). The Long Run is as transformative today as it started. It is different from all the contemporary efforts in that compliance with the standard is not a purpose but, instead, represents a milestone in a continuous journey on the path of excellence in sustainability.

"The Long Run is not for those who want to green wash their credentials. It is not for those who think that this is a one-off exercise. From being a Long Run Fellow to being in reach of GER® to going beyond

the GER® standard – this process is a journey of continuous improvement on the path of excellence in sustainability. "It is a process – whether we get the GER® rating or not - that Cottar's 1920s Camp has found incredibly constructive and beneficial in our journey and in our approach toward long-term sustainability."

Louise Cottar, Director, Cottar's 1920s Camp, Kenya.

Doing 'good' on the properties is not enough. Instead, it is meant to serve a broader purpose of sustaining landscapes and seascapes for posterity through profitable enterprise that looks after the environment hosting it and that seeks to improve the livelihoods of the people that are custodians of the environments in the first place. The Long Run also unpacks the abstract notion of sustainability into Conservation, Community, Culture and Commerce, together called the 4Cs, and seeks their pursuit in a holistic balance.

"The support of the like-minded Long Run community has helped us mobilise a wider Community who had been acting as embattled individual enterprises. The ethical framework of the 4Cs is such a powerful way forward and it can deliver assistance from places that we never suspected. Tahi is proud to be a member of The Long Run."

John Craig, Tahi Beach, New Zealand.

© Grootbos Private Nature Reserve (South Africa) | GER.

Unlike other market lead initiatives, the appeal of The Long Run is not in getting rich over night to the deprivation of the broader society. It neither promises a label nor direct sales benefits. The members of The Long Run members are recognised brands themselves ably selling their products. Instead, members of The Long Run are differentiated in the market place by being exceptional sustainability leaders running highly successful nature-based tourism businesses, demonstrating that nature and business can not only coexist but also thrive together. They are keen on pooling their success and collective influence to inspire others around the world. They are distinguished by asking more often what they can do for the society than what the environment can do for them.

Today, The Long Run is made up of 38 core members and 60 support organisations from around the world. Together, in 2014, they help conserve and support:

- over 18,085 species;

- over 670 endangered or endemic species;

- over 4,947,000 acres land directly;

- over 7,600,000 acres land additionally influenced by Long Run Supporter Wilderness Safaris;

- over 58 towns and villages;

- over 76,000 in-boundary inhabitants;

- over 2,600 jobs;

- over 477,000 community members: 41,000 directly and 436,000 indirectly;

- over 53 cultures; and

- with over USD 5 million invested in the 4Cs in 2014

This information is aggregated from Long Run members' reports; there may be some overlap in the numbers related to species.

Transformative and successful as The Long Run is, it has its limitations. It does not cover the entire hospitality or travel industry but is rather focused on nature-based tourism. Its membership criteria require the member businesses to own or influence significant areas of landscapes and seascapes of conservation value that exclude others from membership. However, the leadership and innovation demonstrated by The Long Run in nature-based tourism can be used to inform and augment other efforts in the tourism industry to spread the message and good practice of profits, planet and people thriving together in harmony.

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2.3 Transformation towards a more sustainable hospitality industry

Arnfinn Oines,
Soneva

At Soneva, we strive to provide a blueprint for the hospitality industry. We believe that a business must exist for a greater purpose than shareholder returns. We work hand in hand with the environment to craft beautiful, beyond bespoke experiences where discovery is a way of life.

Reducing our environmental impact is central to our company's philosophy and we know this is most effective when delivered alongside our social responsibilities. We have implemented specific initiatives that we can practice in our own business, and programmes which have impacted the wider world.

Soneva Fushi has always protected its own 50 ha island and 119 ha of house reef, and worked with five other resorts to secure recognition for the Baa Atoll as a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve. Although the status was achieved in 2011, ongoing management of the area is required. Our marine biologist serves on the Baa Atoll Advisory Board and we have been engaging the Maldivian Minister of the Environment to increase support of the area. Slowly but surely we see progress but there is still more to be done.

© Soneva Fushi Kunfunadhoo | Sandro Bruecklmeier.

For instance, Soneva Fushi is the only Baa Atoll resort that has banned night fishing due to its destructive attributes.

Soneva's (2015) total carbon footprint is roughly 33,000 tonnes CO_2 per year. Over 80% of our carbon footprint is derived from indirect activities, predominantly guest air travel. In 2008, to compensate for unavoidable emissions like guest air travel, Soneva introduced a 2% environmental levy on the room rate. We have raised USD 5.8 million for the Soneva Foundation, which has been invested into projects that will mitigate around 1 million tonnes CO_2 over the next seven years – far more than Soneva's total carbon footprint.

The Soneva Forest Restoration Project has planted 511,920 trees of 90 different local species in Northern Thailand, which will mitigate 255,000 tonnes of CO_2. The Myanmar Stoves Campaign and the Darfur Stoves Project will mitigate around 700,000 tonnes of CO_2 and at the same time improve the lives of families trapped in energy poverty. So far the projects have improved the lives of more than 160,000 people.

Than Than Win, a cook stove user in Thit Hla Kyin village in Myanmar is very happy with the new cook stove: "I think this cook stove is amazing! Buying it was a big investment for us, but I made the right choice buying it. It uses about 60% less wood than our old stove and it cooks much faster. But it more than just saving wood and money. It is also the simple, most unexpected things. I have peace of mind. My kitchen is not going to catch fire and I don't need to worry if I need to step away for a moment. I can leave it cooking while I get water or feed the animals."

We are able to support these initiatives because we believe the skills and resources within our company should be at the service of our local and wider communities, as well as our guests and shareholders. There is no conflict of interest. Corporations should look back to the history books and remember that having a purpose should be central to their mandate - and that this contribution should be measured and valued as robustly as any financial returns.

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Freeedom.

2.4   Freeedom

Annie Beaulieu,
Freeedom
(2015 UNWTO Award Finalist),
World Tourism Forum Lucerne,
G20 Research Group

Freeedom
Explore Experience Empower

Freeedom is an exciting new responsible tourism initiative promoting and facilitating travellers' access to book experiences with a positive social, cultural or environmental impact. Freeedom's purpose is to leverage tourism to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) while supporting the Sustainable Tourism Programme 10YFP Sustainable Consumption and Production Patterns. It is officially recognised that global engagement around multi-stakeholder partnerships and voluntary commitments is necessary to achieve the SDGs and public-private partnerships (PPP) are integral for tourism, particularly when resources are limited and competition is strong. Freeedom's PPP and collective impact approach has been recognised as the future of tourism by some of the UNWTO Ulysses Prize Laureates such as Dr. Eduardo Fayos-Sola, Dr. Don Hawkins and Dr. David Airey during the 2015 UNWTO Award Symposium, as Freeedom was one of the finalist for the UNWTO Awards for Excellence and Innovation in Research and Technology. Freeedom was also subsequently a finalist of the 2015 World Tourism Forum Lucerne's Start-up Innovation Award and 2015 Australia Davos Connection Startup Innovation Exchange.

UNWTO Secretary-General, Taleb Rifai, encourages the industry to support the finalists and opened the Award Ceremony, saying: "If innovation is the spark, then knowledge is the fuel that drives tourism. The finalists honored tonight are outstanding examples of forward-thinking initiatives in sustainability, social inclusion and technology in the tourism sector, and are as such key contributors in turning tourism into a force for good across the globe, a goal we must all be deeply committed to."

Freeedom is all about transformative tourism for a sustainable future by creating a passionate community, which inspire and empower individuals

and organisations to contribute to a bigger collective impact. Sharing an ambitious vision, Freeedom brings together entrepreneurs, SMEs and communities with partners from the public, private and non-profit sectors on a common trusted platform to collectively raise awareness about experiences with a positive social, cultural and environmental impact and promote the benefit of following the UNWTO Global Code of Ethics for Responsible Tourism.

There is currently a major disconnect in the responsible tourism sector as identified by Freeedom's primary research and supported by the International Trade Centre findings in their SME Competitiveness Outlook and other industry publications

Conscious travellers find it time-consuming and difficult to find authentic experiences with a positive impact and have concerns about the credibility of information they find and the impact and safety of experiences. Local entrepreneurs, SMEs and communities find it challenging to effectively reach the international audience necessary to grow a viable and sustainable business. Freeedom is the solution to connect effectively these two groups. It enables entrepreneurs and SMEs to promote their unique experiences directly to Freeedom's community of conscious travellers, who are passionate about contributing to a positive impact and rewarded for their responsible travel behaviours.

Freeedom is building a community where people not only explore, but also experience and empower one another to contribute to drive sustainable socio-economic development. The challenges Freeedom and its community are facing are also documented with academic partners to be in a better position to influence favourable local or global policies and monitor impact. With her aim of amplifying social change, Freeedom's CEO, Annie Beaulieu, is also a Global Advisory Board member of the World Tourism Forum Lucerne and the Australian Director of the G20 Research Group.

Freeedom is a new global initiative and everyone can be involved to contribute to a bigger collective impact and leverage tourism to achieve the SDGs by:

- Joining or helping to grow Freeedom's community of entrepreneurs, SMEs and community providing experiences with a positive social, cultural or environmental impact;

- Joining or helping to grow Freeedom's community of conscious travelers passionate about travelling and discovering authentic experiences and making a positive impact in the process; and

- Reaching out if you want to strategically be involved as a partner or have ideas on how to collaborate to make an even bigger collective impact.

It's only the beginning of a long and rewarding journey – be part of it. Get in touch via Freeedom's website: www.freeedom.is (second version is currently being developed) or Facebook: www.facebook.com/Freeedom. is or by email at: hello@freeedom.is.

You can also follow Freeedom's Founder, Annie Beaulieu on twitter: @Annie_Freeedom or Linkedin: au.linkedin. com/in/anniebeaulieu.

2.5 Volunteer tourism: transforming youth for a sustainable future

*Stephen L. Wearing, Jennie Small and
Simone Grabowski,
University of Technology Sydney*

Over the centuries, young people have comprised a large percentage of those travelling for pleasure. In 2012 UNWTO estimated that youth travel accounted for 20% of the more than one billion international tourist arrivals a year (WYSE Travel Confederation, 2013). In Australia, today, young people (aged 15-29) account for just over 25% of international short term arrivals (Tourism Australia, 2013). In their report on youth tourism, UNWTO (2008) stated that "over 80% of young travellers report that their trip has changed their overall lifestyle in some way, and the majority said that they were travelling in a more responsible manner and thinking more about issues such as social justice and poverty". They claimed that more than any other market segment, youth travellers can "pave the way to responsible tourism". In this paper, we examine one form of contemporary youth tourism, volunteer tourism which can be a vehicle for transforming youth for a sustainable future. As Wearing (2001, pp. 1) says, volunteer tourists are those who "volunteer in an organized way to undertake holidays that might involve aiding or alleviating the material poverty of some groups in society, the restoration of certain environments or research into aspects of society or environment".

© Softlightaa - Lady Tourist with Backpack | Dreamstime.com.

Implied in Wearing's definition of volunteer tourists is an altruistic motive to assist others. The hope of volunteer tourism is that communities will benefit from the experience and that volunteer tourism contributes to a sustainable future; economically, physically and socially (see for example Laythorpe, 2009). Research on the volunteers themselves indicates that volunteer tourist motivations are not homogenous; they can be egoistic, altruistic or a combination of both. Many young volunteer tourists have self-development as a goal for travel (Coghlan & Fennell, 2009; Grabowski, 2013; Rehberg, 2005). Some scholars who have examined the effect of volunteer tourism on the development of self (Lepp, 2008; Matthews, 2008; Sin, 2009; Wearing, 2002; Wearing, Deville & Lyons, 2008) have found, for example, that volunteer tourism can be a self-serving endeavour where volunteers are mainly interested in experiencing a change in self-perception (Sin, 2009). Some claim that where there is a focus on self, there is the potential of volunteer tourism to foster cross-cultural misunderstanding (Griffin, 2004; Raymond & Hall, 2008; Simpson, 2004). However, others argue that in the process, there is the opportunity for cultural exchange (Devereux, 2008; Wearing & Grabowski, 2011). For instance, Matthews' (2008, pp. 108) argues that volunteer tourism is now a discourse of mutual benefit which involves a two-way process of knowledge sharing to "reinstate a sense of equality between self and other".

Although motives might appear to be self-serving on the surface, as young people, they are impressionable and ready to be transformed. Researchers studying Australian youth volunteer tourists in New Zealand found that they were open to diverse cultural beliefs and the potential to change their values and beliefs (Zahra, 2011; Zahra & McIntosh, 2007). Zahra and McIntosh's (2007) work showed that after their return, the volunteer tourists saw things in a "completely different light". They reported having a change in values for family, material possessions and the life of a human being. Other research shows that youth volunteer tourists may use their transformation to volunteer upon return home (Esslinger, 2005; Grabowski, 2014). In addition, Crossley (2012), taking a psychosocial approach to examine the role of affect in volunteer tourists' self-transformation, found that the change experienced by volunteer tourists (in Kenya) was a "moral" self-transformation which meant that in order to experience this change, the volunteers needed to be exposed to negative experiences to gain a new perspective on life. These negative experiences included encountering poverty and the difference in materialistic nature of home and host cultures.

Youth Challenge Australia.

In conclusion, the results from the studies presented above support the proposition that volunteer tourism can be viewed as a de facto form of civic education that promulgates an acceptance and tolerance of cultural diversity and engenders the development of global citizenship (cf. Georgiou, 2008; Netanyahu, 1998). We recommend that in order to disseminate this message, it is essential that volunteer sending organisations act responsibly in their efforts to both market their product to prospective youth volunteer tourists, and develop reciprocal relationships with the communities involved. This should help to ensure that volunteers are welcomed in communities and that they receive a learning experience, which positively transforms their knowledge and sense of civic responsibility. Certainly this points to a sustainable form of youth tourism.

Youth Challenge Australia.

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Educating for transformative tourism: developing critical and reflective tourism professionals

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As one of the leading tourism programs globally, University of Queensland, Australia recognises the importance of preparing graduates from its tourism degrees to enter the world of work with the capacity to understand, respond to, and manage for, a tourism sector that is clearly in transformation. Within the University's undergraduate *Bachelor of International Hotel and Tourism Management* degree, final year tourism students undertake a course in *Responsible Tourism & Ethics.* The course is a critical and contemporary approach to the study of tourism development, demand and management underpinned by a post-sustainability paradigm that aims to critically debate the dominant neo-liberal approach to tourism studies by recognising that we are entering a phase of post-environmentalism driven by complex issues such as climate change, environment and habitat destruction, loss of flora and fauna species, erosion of cultures and lifestyles, and millions of people still living in poverty. These macro challenges are coupled with changing personal ethics – environmental and humanitarian – as well as changing business ethics and notions of corporate responsibility; all requiring deeper transformations of the economy, the culture and political life. If tourism is to contribute to legitimate change, it is imperative our tourism graduates are equipped to harness the opportunities offered by the billion plus travellers annually moving around the world to harness genuine benefits for people and the environment.

The course challenges students to extend their understanding of sustainable tourism beyond triple or quadruple bottom line conceptualisations of sustainable development, to include broader considerations of consumer ethics, green consumerism and eco-ethics, social and communitarianism, corporate social responsibility, and destination stewardship before focusing on notions of ethical and responsible tourism, and derivative experiences such as slow tourism and humanitarianism (volunteer tourism). The course considers these issues from various perspectives including the individual (tourist), business and destination management and governance.

The course learning objectives are to:

- Evaluate and reflect upon the post-sustainability paradigm (and inter-related concepts) from both theoretical and practical viewpoints;

- Experiment with ethics scales, case studies and hypotheses to critically examine a range of developmental, environmental and societal contexts;

- Critique and debate issues of environmental and social concern in varying environmental, social and cultural contexts;

- Evaluate demand for, and supply of, products, services and experiences underpinned by environmental ethics, social responsibility and destination stewardship; and

- Design business strategies that are underpinned by the principles of environmental ethics, social responsibility and destination stewardship.

Students are exposed to a variety of viewpoints, commentaries and research, and challenged to critically reflect on these. They apply the course concepts to real world case studies with students required to draw conclusions on how such ideals translate to the realities of the global tourism sector; that is, developing strategies and outcomes that incorporate sustainability, responsible and ethical concerns yet are still commercially viable. Students are also encouraged to critically examine 'sustainable' product types such as ecotourism and volunteer tourism and reflect on how these operate in practice. They also explore critical perspectives of 'mass tourism' activities such as cruising to consider how such product types could be harnessed to make more meaningful socio-economic impacts to host communities. Students are also exposed to the ethical and moral considerations of travel, questioning the ethical consumption of tourism or what has been described as the 'moralization of tourism' that aim to address many of the negative associations with tourism activity and promote the various socio-economic opportunities that a billion international travelers can generate.

2.7   The restorative power of tree house hotels: a German case study

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The role of vacations in our lives has shifted over the last couple of generations. No longer seen as an opportunity to simply 'get away from it all', 'get a sun tan' and 'get happy' the values of society are evolving. Away breaks are seen by many now as a means of enhancing health, well-being and seeking inner harmony (Schulze, 2005). City dwellers yearn for green spaces as natural surroundings vanish under concrete. According to Kirig et al. (2011), many are turning to the wilderness experience instead of a beach holiday. The findings of this research suggest that tree house hotels respond to the human urban dweller's need to reconnect with nature and allow its restorative power to reinvigorate our bodies and refresh our minds.

Founded in the 1960s, the multidisciplinary field of environmental psychology has closely examined the effects of humans on the environment and vice versa. Wilson (1984, p.1) developed the *biophilia theory* defined as "the innate tendency [of humans] to focus on life and lifelike processes". In a similar way, psychologist Gordon Orian drew on previously developed theories from the field of anthropology to develop the *savannah theory* where he argued that people are genetically and evolutionary programmed to connect with all living things and cannot function properly otherwise. Recent studies have shown that nature deprivation has negative repercussions (Maller et al., 2005). Louv (2011)

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defined disengagement from nature and some people's inability "to find meaning in the life that surrounds [them]" as nature-deficit disorder (p. 11). Louv further outlined the possibilities of improving personal wellbeing and health through contact with nature in the discipline he named eco-therapy (2011). Similarly, the so-called *restoration theory* of Kaplan (1995) is another approach to explaining why certain types of natural environments are effective in stress reduction and restoration from fatigue. People recover best from the stresses of daily life in environments where their minds are drawn by involuntary interest which the natural environment supplies in abundance. Evidence shows that people suffering from mental fatigue are soothed by natural elements such as trees, plants, flowers, animals and birds. Mental energy restoration time is accelerated compared to a vacation where only built elements are visible.

In a Japanese study, the effect of a walk in the forest showed that such environments can promote lower levels of cortisol, lower pulse rate, lower blood pressure, greater parasympathetic nerve activity and lower sympathetic nerve activity when compared to city environments (Lee et al., 2011). Likewise, Ulrich et al. (1991) showed that wooded environments reduce the physiological evidence of stress including blood pressure, heart rate, and muscle tension. Children suffering from hyperactivity disorder particularly benefit from wooded environments and the physical contact activity of climbing trees (Roe and Aspinall, 2011a). Indeed, children's literature is full

of references to the attraction of trees and tree houses e.g. Winnie the Pooh, Swiss Family Robinson and The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn.

Trees impart their ability to provide shelter and even a home through their reliability, their constancy, their imperturbable presence and the strength that emanates from them. All the tree house hotels in this survey were built to the highest sustainable standards, using local wood and building materials but offer all the comforts of modern life. The authors of this study counted a total of 17 tree house hotels in Germany in the spring of 2014 and interviewed three owner/managers. The main challenges they encountered were in construction and getting started in hotel businesses, none had any prior experience; all were following personal ambitions of sharing their love of forests with other people. The findings of the study confirmed the principle points of the literature review. The majority of guests come away from their tree house hotel experience feeling spiritually and bodily refreshed. Tree house hotels in Germany, which have a higher than average occupancy, are not only recreational resources but they also perform a valuable educational and stewardship role for a great natural resource.

Figure 2.1 Unique construction: at the Baumhaushotel Seemühle, the 250-year-old oaks are holding some of the treehouse in 14 m height.
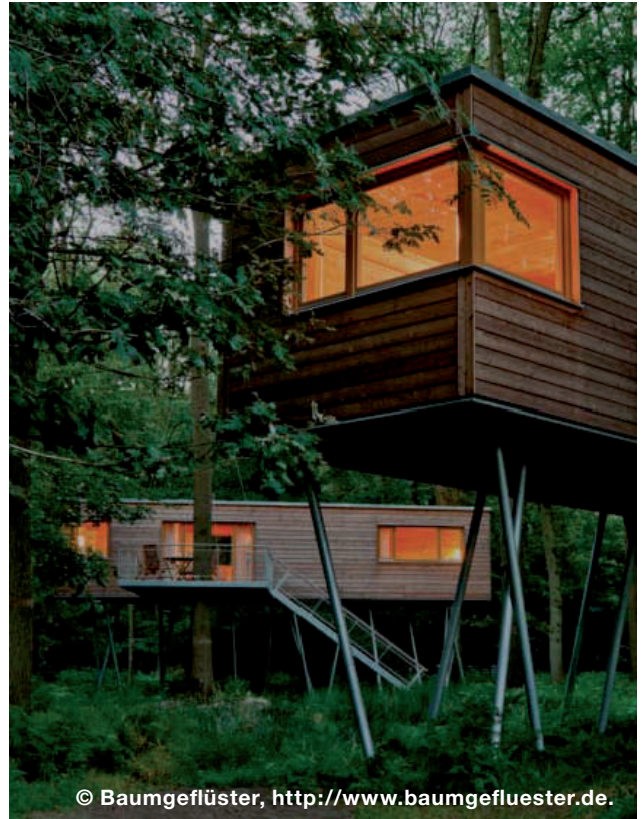
Figure 2.2 Outdoor construction in the middle of the forest, Resort Baumgefluester located in Bad Zwischenah, Germany close to the border with the Netherlands.

Figure 2.3 Fire place in a tree hotel at the Hofgut Hafnerleiten.

© Baumgeflüster, http://www.baumgefluester.de.

Figure 2.4 In the morning, one enjoys breakfast with the birds and other forest residents.

© Stephan Schulze, das-baumhaushotel.de.

Figure 2.5 Luxury cabins with cosy atmosphere – equipped with a heating system, WiFi and a complete bathroom, incl. shower, toilette.

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2.8 Ski resorts and transformative tourism

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Positive Change

The past century has seen an ongoing increase in leisure activities in mountain resorts. Following World War II, the French government began promoting economic growth in mountain regions by rolling out a specific plan. As a result, ski resorts enjoyed extraordinary levels of both urban and regional growth, resulting in the vast ski complexes that France now boasts. Although the original political stimulus has since been eclipsed by the powerful, almost industrial momentum of the ski economy, this area of mass continues to evolve. The fundamental impacts of winter tourism on the land (social, economic, environmental) continue to be studied and evaluated.

At first glance, it's easy to think that these resorts do not generally pay much attention to the impact they have. However, under pressure from a new awareness among their customers, as well as an emphasis on sustainable development by the authorities, the latest trends in ski resort design and development are driven by a need for more 'transformative tourism', that gives a sense of meaning and direction to the tourist's stay.

The amount of time devoted to actual skiing has reduced considerably, at around 4 hours a day. Ski is no more the only activity but a product available in the destination: side products count for the new experience. The resort's atmosphere,

landscape, local products, and social gatherings now form an integral part of the vacation, along with various societal and environmental concerns. This tendency is evident across all types of tourism, but is particularly strong with regard to mountain activities: a study conducted in France shows that tourists on mountain holidays display, to a greater degree than other tourists, an 'aspiration toward individual enrichment' (87% vs 84% to a national level); an 'aptitude for change' (54% vs 47%); and a desire to 'find meaning', particularly among those that find the mountains more appealing in the summer (68% vs 65%). In this environment of change, up to 70% of the economy in the Alpine region depends on tourism. How can we integrate the notion of 'transformation' to ensure that these non-relocatable activities and economies continue?

A contemporary response

Brezovica resort in Kosovo[1] is a case in point. The destination has just launched a huge project to develop its tourist economy, as a driving force to create jobs and equality, and as a means of raising its 'brand awareness'. Right from the call for tenders, sustainable development has been the chief criterion for the selection of candidates. The Brezovica project, developed by MDP Consulting, aims to make this tourist destination a spearhead in a destination that wants to rise anew from the Balkan conflict and focus on its youth, which accounts for almost half of its population.

This new destination has to be innovative and modern and fully incorporate all of the territory that supports its development. The project must, among other things, also foster admiration and preservation of natural assets, promote integration and access to training and jobs for the inhabitants of this multi-ethnic country, and focus on the value and use of the agricultural resources and the services that the region has to offer.

Tourists will not just visit a ski resort but also contribute to the development of the destination by spending money that could help settle a national park and encourage local people to come back to the mountains by using the new labelled Sharr Mountains products

All of the regional authorities and the operators involved in the project have set about transforming experiential learning into an opportunity for emotional, cultural and social enrichment. The project will test just how much of an impact transformative tourism can have on an economy, as well as on a destination's image, with the new resort a key asset in Kosovo's[2] attempts to forge new relations with the world.

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1   References to Kosovo shall be understood in the context of Security Council Resolution 1244 (1999).

2   Ibid.

Reference:

 Carnet de route de la montagne – Editions Atout France - 2012.

Figure 2.6 With skiing covering 6,305 acres of the northern slopes of the Šar Mountains National Park, Brezovica enjoys an excellent vertical range from November until May.

Figure 2.7 Chamrousse ski resort in southeastern France has benefited from the country's post-World War II plan for economic growth in France's mountain regions, with an urbanized ski area.

Figure 2.8 Après-ski activites: emotion and nature.

Figure 2.9 Tasting local products directly from the producer is part of the adventure.

© AltoBrembo.

2.9 AltoBrembo: discovering the culture of the mountain

Andrea Paleni,
AltoBrembo and Marta Soligo,
University of Nevada Las Vegas

Alta Val Brembana is the highest part of Brembana Valley located in the Bergamo Alps (Northern Italy), 85 kilometers from Milan. Between the 60s and the 90s, this region was mainly known for its winter sport attractions, such as skiing. Meanwhile, during the summer, tourists used to spend long-term holidays enjoying fresh air and rest, far from the pollution of the city. Although these kinds of activities brought certain benefits to the destination, they did not have links with the host community, its culture and territory. In the 90s, however, the traveller's behaviour started to change, and Alta Val Brembana's attractions began to experience a stage of decline. Aware of this situation, in 2010, eleven municipalities led a specific analysis that highlighted three aspects in the tourism market's trend:

- Travellers keep looking for new experiences that go beyond the traditional 'tourist cliché' as they want to taste something they can perceive as authentic;

- Travellers prefer to live deeper experiences but in a smaller amount of time such as short break and outdoor excursions; and

- The importance of the concept of sustainability keeps growing, as a basic element in the choice of a destination.

Taking as a starting point three key-words: sustainability, slow and small; these eleven subjects gave life to AltoBrembo, a non-profit organisation and a network of public institutions, tourism operators, small handicraft businesses and agricultural firms with the purpose of develop local projects and promote the area and its peculiarities. AltoBrembo finds its roots in a new tourist offer that connects travellers to the local communities, their traditions and typical products, with the goal to make them rediscover Alta Val Brembana's heritage. Following this concept, AltoBrembo's municipalities focused their activities on three main sectors (an example for each sector has been selected):

1. **Hospitality, Ornica's Albergo Diffuso** (literally: widespread hotel). A new hosting reality run by a group of women that live in the ancient village of Ornica, hosting tourists in rooms and apartments distributed in the area, making them live an authentic experience, strongly associated with the local community and its culture;

2. **Food, Erbe del Casaro.** Among the several food-related projects organised by AltoBrembo, Erbe del Casaro is the most connected to the food traditions. During this six-day event, tourists can taste traditional dishes that blend herbs and cheeses (produced by Alta Val Brembana's cheese factories) and explore the so-called intangible heritage, discovering ancient receipts and stories; and

3. **Production activities, the Alpeggio** (seasonal Alpine farming). In recent years, the traditional activity of Alpine farming has been upgraded thanks also to the EU contribution that helped in developing its multi-functionality, giving new value to the mountains' products. This process was followed by the opening of Alpine pastures' cheese tasting centers, as well as agri-campings, food shops and other initiatives, increasing the relation between agricultural practices and tourism activities.

In 2016, AltoBrembo is ready to affirm itself as a real tool for its territory, conscious of the fact that the tourism system it generated widely helped the local stakeholders in the expansion of the three sectors mentioned above. First of all, AltoBrembo's founders observed a rising number of tourists that stay overnight in Alta Valle Brembana's hospitality facilities, a sort of no-boundaries host/guest relation strongly connected with the developed territorial projects. Secondarily, restaurants are taking advantage of food events like Erbe del Casaro, that are stimulating interest in Alta Valle Brembana's recipes. Finally, local businesses are noticing a growth in the sales of local products, giving tourists a little piece of the 'Alta Val Brembana experience' to take home. In the last years, Altobrembo's founders focused on the way the benefits generated by the tourism industry can be communicated to the visitors.

© **AltoBrembo.**

From the moment of the creation of Altobrembo's network, the operators tried to build strong customer loyalty by creating a model where the tourist is not only a spectator in this development project, but also a part of the process itself. Especially the visitors that participated in AltoBrembo's initiatives from the very beginning are the ones who better understand the value generated year by year by these activities, observing the improvement of the structures and the increase in the production of local goods. Keeping in mind the causes that made Alta Val Brembana's destinations 'die' in the 90s, Altobrembo's institutions decided to avoid those exogenous factors that contributed to that decline, often dictated by private initiative or top-down approaches and that ignored the identity of its cultures and territory. Opting for bottom-up models, the subjects that are part of the association are aware of the fact that these kinds of dynamics may take longer than other immediate profit-enhancing strategies (such as the ones launched after the economic boom in the 60s) but they agree that this path will bring more long-lasting benefits and a higher quality of the tourism supply. This concept is also confirmed by the presence in the system of two eco-museums, Valtorta and Ornica, which have been created mainly for the community. Since the eco-museums' target audience are the local residents that can find a representation of their identity and culture in it,

the tourists that visit the area have the understanding that they find themselves in a destination that wants to preserve and takes care of its roots; an attention toward the future that can also be found in AltoBrembo's communications activities. From the labels on the local products to social media strategies, the association aims to transmit and keep the tourists informed about the sustainability and the quality of their bottom-up driven supply. At the moment, AltoBrembo is organizing several courses for the operators, like English for tourism and tourism economics, with the intention of giving them updated and innovative tools that are needed to work in a sector that is constantly changing and transforming itself, like the tourism one.

For more information please visit: www.altobrembo.it.

2.10 Village tourism project: Living Jacurso, a learning experience
(Jacurso da Vivere e Imparare)

*Rosamaria Limardi, Jacurso da Vivere
e Imparareand Marcello Notarianni,
International Tourism Expert*

"When the identity of a place is revealed and it is no longer a mystery, people come forth in order to save what is still alive."

Marco Cestari

Jacurso is a village with 600 inhabitants, located in the Calabria southern of Italy. The village is situated on the hills (about 450m above sea level) at the heart of Marcellinara Isthmus, the strip of land that divides the Tyrrhenian Sea to the Ionian Sea. The project presented in this case study is the 'Living Jacurso: a learning experience' (Jacurso da Vievere e Imparare), which is based on the preservation of local ancient oral traditions and traditional lifestyles, making it a 'living experience' for tourists.

Historically, the agriculture calendar marked the time: soil preparation, seeding and finally harvesting the fruits were set by the seasons. Daily life was organised according to the product seasonality as a result of farmer work. Festivities and rituals were celebrated to thank Mother Earth's fertility. The agricultural calendar gradually merged with the liturgical year; from then on, the society makes its time correspond to the days and seasons running on, in a natural and harmonious way.

The time relationship with nature and solar cycle still remains strong; and lifestyle unconsciously takes place in harmony with the surrounding environment. The 'Living Jacurso: a learning experience' – a project idea emerged from the importance of keeping 'record' of the past and,

© Jacurso da Vivere e Imparare.

therefore, preserves some aspects of the village lifestyle and traditional knowledge, using tourism as a means to release and revamp this heritage. Transferring this important intangible cultural heritage to future generations is the main purpose of this project. Its philosophy is rooted in the desire to rescue 'ancient knowledge' and 'traditional lifestyle' simplicity, framed by a sustainable development approach.

The project aims at identifying and developing such knowledge through some experiences and activities' showcased to tourists, such as: workshops on and storytelling about local knowledge and traditions (including traditional loom), excursions and guided tours for destination discovery, interaction with the local community, Italian language courses, cultural tours guided by an anthropologist. During these experiences, the activities create a 'friendly' environment, facilitating communication and allowing the spontaneous flow of the information exchange between visitor and host. Using the 'learning by doing' methodology the living experience triggers positive mechanisms. Tourists therefore actively participate to the community life, learning new 'transferable' skills that contribute to positively transform their life.

The project is based on a participatory methodology: local community organises weekly meetings (with an attendance of 20–30 people); during these meeting, the participants take decisions on the development and management of the project. In addition, local community participates actively in the traditional workshops interacting with visitors.

The project started in November 2013 and is in the process of reaching its goals, bringing together the local community, recovering knowledge almost lost and providing access to a locality nearly isolated and affected by outmigration. Visitors have reported to enjoy the journey and discovery of the traditional values, such as the daily life natural rhythm.

About 200 overnight presences were registered during the 2014 summer season, which is promising based on a relatively small bed capacity of 20 bed spaces. The average stay was tree nights with some visitors spending up to fifteen nights.

The main marketing tool is word of mouth and the use of social media, target web platforms and web booking (i.e. Facebook, airbnb.com, destinazioneumana.it, ecobnb.it) and participation in networking events. The project uses a responsible communication message to attract a typology of visitors, which would be better placed to appreciate the type of activities offered.

The main lessons learned are that the project has so far provided ways to revive the cultural identity of the village and reactivate local traditions. This has also proved to be a form of responsible tourism that creates opportunities to rescue local heritage from being lost through outmigration and institutions' disinterest.

Figure 2.10 Home-made castile soap.

Figure 2.11 Home pasta making.

Figure 2.12 Landscape Jacurso panorama.

Figure 2.13 Local product basket.

Figure 2.14 Promotion of traditional loom.

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2.11 The experience of V4A® on accessible tourism

Roberto Vitali,
Village for All

Marchio Qualità Internazionale Ospitalità Accessibile
International Quality Brand Hospitality for All

Village for all - V4A® (10th UNWTO Award for Innovation in Research and Technology Finalist)

Our Philosophy

V4A®'s Vision: People with disabilities who travel are tourists as well

V4A®'s Mission: Vacation 4 All a new philosophy transforming one destination's perspective

Accessibility is a highly innovative element, which should belong to the whole Tourism value chain, as a transformative solution that could allow at least one billion of visitors – regardless their special needs or disabilities – to travel all over the world.

First of all, a destination should be easy to enjoy and accessible to ensure all tourists the travel experience they expected. During their holidays, tourists with special needs constantly compare what is available with what is really accessible according to their needs. Once back home, they reflect on the experience they had on holiday and could make strong decision about their private life: any pleasant situation they enjoyed could be replicated in their home or cities. If things are possible elsewhere, a good experience could become a "good practice" to share with associations, friends, family and within the public context as with Public Administration, Municipalities etc.

For the reasons mentioned above, ´Village for all – V4A®´'s goal is improving accessibility for everyone, by creating public and private partnerships in order to train tourism professionals, entrepreneurs and politicians. It is a worldwide objective approach that overturns the concept of accessibility which is often interpreted as a mandatory obligation imposed by law.

Actually V4A®'s main goal is guaranteeing a free access to information accessibility,, about structural features of the places they are going to travel to, in order to allow them to choose the best solution for their specific needs.

By describing either a door inch or a ramp gradient thorough photos and measurement and by putting this information at every traveller disposal we allow tourists to evaluate if that place is accessible or not. They can directly valuate the quality of the services compared to their needs.

Moreover, thanks to the new innovative technological methodology known as ´V4AInside´, V4A® underlines that all people have a specific need, a disability. The system "V4AInside" promotes transparent accessibility also proposing solutions without compromising the environment and the heritage: in this sense, it is "transformative" because it changes the accessibility perspective, it's innovative because it is unique in the world. It is also sustainable over the time and could be used in every country because it has no regulations codes or standards to be followed. Furthermore, ´V4AInside´ system is created to help the entrepreneurs to welcome a higher number of guests within their facilities suggesting solutions to improve accessibility and usability by respecting the hospitality landscape, which remains pleasant from the aesthetic point of view. Those solutions are not mandatory but voluntary.

A key element is the Universal Design: our innovation is in making facilities accessible to all without giving a hospital design to the contest. This is what we called "Accessibilità Trasparente": a transformative and sustainable result by putting our visitors at the heart of their decisions.

The following are two projects on Accessible Tourism managed by V4A®:

1) ´San Marino For All´: the goal is to open the San Marino Republic to the Accessible Tourism Market. For this specific reason, San Marino was chosen as the destination for the 1st UNWTO European Conference on Accessible Tourism in San Marino on 19 November 2014.

2) The Veneto Region Project of Excellence ´Social and Accessible Tourism Development´: the goal is planning a regional strategy for accessibility by using "V4AInside system" by creating a strong public and private partnership.

The Brand V4A® is already present in Italy, the Republic of San Marino and Croatia with more than sixty tourist facilities (villages and campsites, hotels, residences, agritourism, B&B, residences). Accessibility information of V4A®'s facilities are available for free and with no registration to end users (tourists) and Tour Operator/ Travel Agencies on www.V4A.it.

V4A® operates in full accordance with the "UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities", specially referred to the Art. 30, which recognize the right of every person to a cultural life and to enjoy the access to places for cultural performances or services."

V4A® is Patronised by the Ministry of Tourism, ENIT (National Tourist Board), FAITA – Federcamping, FISH (Italian Federation for Overcoming Handicaps) and SìPuò (National laboratory of Accessible Tourism). V4A® is Member of ENAT (European Network for Accessible Tourism), Affiliate Member of World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) SKAL International (of which V4A®'s CEO and Founder Roberto Vitali is the National Delegate for Accessible Tourism) and CCIV (Istro-Venetian Chamber of Commerce).

Roberto Vitali V4A®; Teodoro Lonfernini Republic of San Marino; Taleb Rifai UNWTO at the Ist Conference of UNWTO on Accessible Tourism in San Marino (19/20–11–2014).

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2.12 From profit to benefit? Social enterprises as a concept to build transformative leadership in tourism research and education

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Increasingly, hosts and guests 'use' tourism as a transformative medium to push for a sustainable world (UNWTO, 2015). They form part of a global movement of new progressives who pursue long-term quality of life within the planet's environmental limits (Pritchard et al, 2011). This movement totals at least a quarter of Americans and a fifth or Europeans (Ghisi in ibid). Future tourism managers and leaders require courage and knowledge to break away from taken-for-granted ways of thinking (Pritchard et al, 2011), and move towards new modes of organising both society and tourism.

In this article I would like to focus on one specific example of how information that was simply unavailable in the recent past, can now be easily accessed and communicated. At the same time, we still face significant challenges regarding standardisation and global implementation.

The Academy for Tourism of NHTV Breda University of Applied Sciences, exposes tourism undergraduate students to transformative experiences by focusing on the cultural complexity of tourism interaction at destination level. Through a four-week field research project, students analyse local tourism destination dynamics, power relations and practices, contexts and stakeholder involvement.

Since the cultural feature of the area (tourism destinations in Southeast Asia) is new and culturally strange to them, they are confronted with the transformative power of tourism. They have to take a local, insider perspective in tourism destination management. In a complete new cultural complex (tourism) environment they need to understand the local stakeholders and their perspectives.

This approach is no blue-print. To the contrary, in a contextual approach, there is always room to adapt to up to date information that comes from the contexts in which tourism develops. In the educational vision of NHTV Breda University, understanding these dynamics exposes students to the transformative power of tourism as a social change agent. This is relevant to future tourism professionals that operate in cross cultural settings.

In this light, the social enterprise concept is treated as an exponent of economic transformation. A social enterprise is a business that puts social or environmental benefit before profit. Income consists of revenue for goods and services provided instead of donations or grants (Social Enterprise UK, 2015; Social Enterprise NL, 2015).

Social entrepreneurship is gaining momentum in policy and practice. Many EU countries have specific policies to stimulate social enterprise development (Van Riel, 2015). Advocacy platform Social Enterprise NL currently has 251 members across 16 sectors including 9 tourism enterprises (Social Enterprise NL, 2015). All these enterprises reflect the new tourism trend; Dutch start-up doozze (www.doozze.com) for example offers guests unique homestays in Latin America and Asia for a fair price. Guests pay directly to local hosts and all profits are reinvested in community development projects initiated by host communities.

While including social entrepreneurship in the context of dominant tourism business structures, two observations are worth noting. First, the world of tourism is usually portrayed as a mechanical business system that takes growth, productivity, efficiency and shareholder value as measures of success (Tribe, 2005). Its mechanical features are reflected in the majority of tourism management studies that reduce tourism to business activities in an industry with (global) supply chains. This system is dominated by a traditional ownership-production divide between capital/ production means and labour/productivity which dates back to the Industrial Age. Such a divide still largely ignores the inclusion of consumers as co-producers of services (consider the success of Airbnb), as well as social business models built on collective rather than individual ownership of assets.

Second, although this system is considered out-dated by many (Van Riel, 2015), its reproduction through research and higher education continues (Tribe, 2005; Yarime et al, 2012). Tourism and business management studies are mostly dominated by quests for industry-oriented solutions that tend to perpetuate rather than transform conventional business structures (Pritchard et al, 2011). At the same time, traditional tourism businesses are increasingly challenged by disruptive, online new players, which address the need for mainly young consumers that communicate, shop and interact online.

Tourism – as powerful world-shaping phenomenon – offers enormous potential for the development of transformatory experiences and social enterprises. Such an approach to tourism management studies would enhance the effectiveness of future professionals, as change-makers towards a sustainable society.

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2.13 Information technology at the service of a sustainable tourism industry

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aMaDEUS

The exponential technological growth we are going through opens revolutionary opportunities in the travel experience, from the planning to the end of the trip. Interaction is enriched, information easily available, communication facilitated. This technological growth is at the heart of major trends in the industry and facilitates key processes like traveller decision making and contribution to sustainability.

I would like to focus on one specific example of how information that was simply unavailable in the recent past, can now be easily accessed and communicated. At the same time, we still face significant challenges regarding standardisation and global implementation.

Obviously, climate change is one of the major challenges the travel industry and the whole world is facing. It is of vital importance to measure, manage and reduce carbon emissions.

Today, a broad range of carbon calculators are available to estimate emissions from aircraft, trains, boats, cars, buses, etc. These calculators are developed by travel providers, NGOs, carbon market traders, industry associations; and technical carbon estimation methodologies are recommended by government bodies or international organisations. All in all, huge amounts of estimated emissions data are available from different sources.

© **Beautiful View in the aircraft s porthole** - Sazori | Dreamstime.com.

The challenge we face at this moment focuses on coping with the very different carbon emissions estimations that various carbon calculators offer, even for exactly the same trip and same mode of transportation. At Amadeus, we are addressing this issue through our agreement with the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO), by which we can use ICAO aircraft carbon calculator in all our distribution and IT platforms.

ICAO & Amadeus partnership

ICAO carbon calculator provides the legitimacy, commercial neutrality and global reach which are needed for establishing an international standard. Thanks to the agreement with the ICAO and our technology and reach, we increasingly offer solutions that allow the display, post-trip reporting, carbon offsetting options and comparability for any trip. The objective is that the traveller receives seamlessly the same carbon emissions information regardless of the reservation platform or travel provider.

The airline industry in particular enjoys, mainly due to its international nature, a common framework for standards of communication, safety, regulation, etc. Unfortunately, this is not the case for other tourism industry sectors, which have a much more local scope. Therefore, it is of utmost importance to bring all tourism players together in the global effort towards a sustainable tourism future.

Amadeus is in touch, one way or another, with more than one million travellers per day and we acknowledge our responsibility to contribute to bring the industry together towards our common sustainability objective and to help raise sustainability awareness among tourists.

2.14 Sustainable tourism

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CALIDAD TURISTICA

For 15 years, the Institute for Spanish Tourism Quality (ICTE) works from the public-private partnership, sustainability and responsible tourism with accessibility for people with disabilities, new technologies and training are four pillars on which our lines of work are based.

In the ICTE, we strongly believe that by working on these four pillars, having quality tourism excellence in the 21st century will not be associated with luxury but the unique experiences that contribute to personal development, which demands profile new tourist.

- Although it is difficult to assess to what extent the criteria of sustainability using the destination influence a traveller's decision, all indicators allow us to conclude that more and more tourists choose a product or destination considering the added value if not priority – the effort made by it, in order to get greater sustainability in its three economic, environmental and social-cultural aspect;

- Similar reasons serve to consider ensuring that the tourist, as a consumer, gets the advantages that a quality system entails. At the industry sector, generic type certifications ISO 9000 or ISO 14000 are much more consolidated and, even if the consumer does

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not know all the requirements of these rules, he values as 'almost essential' that the producer has that certification. In the tourism sector, this has not achieved much progress but the data at our disposal indicates that over 40% of tourists know and appreciate, as an additional criterion of selection, quality certification Q; and

- Serving an example that every certified company must have measurable targets in each of the indicated sections and get a continuous improvement process for annual reviews. In Spain, there are over three million people with disabilities and over 40 in the EU, of course, have every right to enjoy a tourist product or service in the best conditions. This challenge is transferred to tour entrepreneurs and operators with measurable indicators aimed at continuous improvement.

Sustainable tourism is based on responsible practices. A sustainable activity is one where economic, social and environmental impacts meet the needs of the present without limiting the ability to satisfy them with the same degree of fulfillment and enjoyment in the future. Working on these pillars, we believe that we work on all three counts most importantly for the future of our planet:

1. **Economic:** ICTE promotes that tourism is developed on sound business-based practices, ensuring growth and maintenance and benefiting owners, employees and neighbors in the community where there is business development. The wealth generated can and should be used by the environment that benefits from the improvements in the tourism sector. It can provide training and encourage the widespread use of new information technologies in an increasingly interconnected world: enjoying new job opportunities and sharing opinions and knowledge;

2. **Environmental:** tourist services are provided considering how natural resources, contributing to their conservation and care are used. From ICTE, we contribute to sustainability and environmental care through a firm commitment to reducing emissions, waste and landfills, and providing incentives for the use of renewable energy; and

3. **Socio-Cultural:** work for a world without barriers in which any disabled person enjoys the same benefits as any other tourist and has respect for local culture by preserving and revitalising.

© Kotangens - Young Tourist Couple Sitting on Stone Near | Dreamstime.com.

In ICTE, we are convinced that sustainability is achieved through the balance of these three basics. Therefore, our tourism quality standards take into account principles such as good environmental practices (saving energy or water, using mild detergents, minimising waste generation, noise emission, etc.), environmental management (reducing consumption, waste and pollution) and the accessibility requirements.

ICTE, through its standards, ensures that organisations, certified with the Q Quality Tourism, follow basic sustainability criteria; standards include requirements specific to customer service delivery and management in which a third of the content is identified with several basic aspects of sustainability.

Referred to the economic, Quality Management System bound by the rule, collects the organisation must continuously improve their management so that continuously profitable; regard to social issues, the rule requests that have a recruitment plan and training of staff as well as an assessment of suppliers and reality shows that companies hire local staff, suppliers also follow the same line in some cases and that the property provides local service in many cases. Finally, the environment is, undoubtedly, an important chapter in the rule expressly referring to the reduction of pollution, the use of renewable energies, selective collection or use of recycled materials.

© Greater flamingos on Donana - Garc°a Juan | Dreamstime.com.

2.15 How tourism leaders in public entities can change the daily life of a local community: a true story

Alfonso Vargas Sánchez, Huelva University

Huelva is a Spanish province situated in the south west of Spain bordering the Portuguese Algarve. It has only recently joined in with the booming Spanish tourism, but this fact allows it to still have some enviable natural resources (one-third of its area is protected, and 60% is woodland, with marshes, virgin dunes, meadows, row forests, and iconic fauna such as the Iberian lynx in Doñana National park, among others), which it is trying to protect and give great value to tourism, besides all the authenticity that has been preserved in its material and immaterial cultural patrimony (for example, it is the cradle of the discovery of America, which shows its historical importance). All this makes tourism in Huelva different from others especially because of its unspoiled and diverse nature, history and sandy beaches without overcrowding.

Its tourist brand called "Huelva, the Light" was launched in 2005. The University of Huelva together with the Provincial Tourism Board, the organisation in charge of its promotion, had initiated a process to develop it as a brand suitable to move everyone´s feelings through the unique experience in Viganella and its mirror. This is a brand which is susceptible to being filled with high intangible value for the tourist destination which makes it into a powerful communication tool, as the overall idea of light helps transmit sensations, experiences and attractive values of the destination.

Within this framework, in 2006, an event called "Meeting of Light" took place at the small alpine village of Viganella, in the Italian region of Piamonte. In that village of 185 inhabitants, located in the Antrona valley, the high mountains block out the sunlight during the harsh winter months (November to February). In this event, Huelva gave Viganella the light by constructing a big mirror strategically placing it on the mountains above the village. The mirror revolved slowly to reflect the sunlight on 250m^2 of the town main square from 11 November to 2 February 2006 (El Mundo.es, 2006). The authorities of the Provincial Tourism Board strongly supported the initiative, emphasising the importance of national and international media coverage.

Its Manager, Javier Blanco, comments that everything began in the air. He was flying to London in the spring of 2006. While reading a newspaper, a small column caught his attention, the story of a mayor of a small Italian village who wanted to install a great mirror on a nearby mountain peak with the aim of transporting light to its inhabitants during the long darkness of winter because it was impossible for the sun – (covered by the high mountains) to reach the squares and streets of his village. He saw an extraordinary opportunity to move from the rhetoric of many international declarations on tourism in favour of coexistence and friendship among peoples, to their implementation in practice.

When he arrived home, he thought about contacting Viganella and its mayor, Pierfranco Midali, who was having problems with the installation of the mirror. At first, he was very surprised by this call, but after a while he accepted Mr. Blanco´s collaboration. The light was really the thread that enabled us to walk together and try to make a dream come true. This is in fact, the story of a dream that was possible with the will and strength of people who believe in noble projects and who can improve the living conditions of their citizens, said Mr. Blanco.

The main event happened on a cold Sunday morning, around to Christmas (December 17th), when the mirror was installed, on the peak of the mountain. The sun also shone on that day and a lot of people from all over the world heard about this unique event happening because, when the mirror was turned on, the party began to flow through the streets of Viganella. The square was full of people, remember its mayor. Children and adults smiled and expressed their happiness while being the principal characters in this incomparable story.

So Huelva, somehow took part of its light through this giant mirror strategically installed on the mountains. The media coverage, both nationally and internationally was especially noteworthy. Also, José Prieto, the President of the Huelva Tourism Board, spoke, not without reason, of an unprecedented initiative, "which from a touristic point of view, is an expression of solidarity and cultural exchange".

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At the event, as a symbol of future prosperity, two children, one from Huelva and another from Viganella, were responsible for pressing the button that triggered the mirror for the first time. "We needed it (the sun); without it would be sicker", somebody said. In addition, as part of the celebration, tasting delicacies, cured ham and wine from Huelva were served, as well as a flamenco show, were offered to locals. This initiative had a wide media impact, valued at, approximately, one million euros. (Please see the website - www.andaluciaturismodigital.com/noticia.asp?idcontenido=3755.

To sum up, this 40 m2 mirror (8 meters wide and 5 meters high), which is located about 870 meters above the village, has turned this place into a tourist attraction after the worldwide notoriety of the event presented here, since many onlookers want to see it in person. But perhaps the most important conclusion is how tourism can transform and improve people's life, creating at the same time a more socially sustainable future. With regard to Huelva, it is hard to isolate the impact of this event in its tourism industry, but what is evident is that, in the following years, the numbers of overnights were up from 3,531,282 (2006) to 3,658,863 (2008).
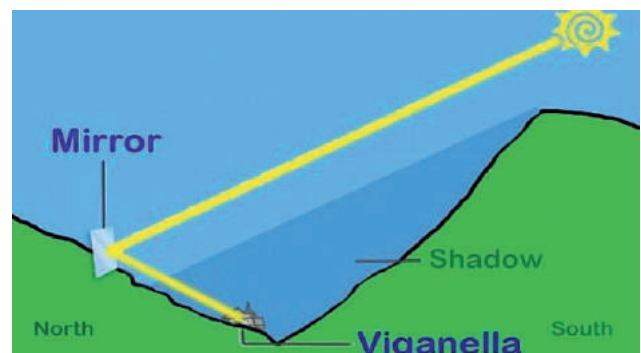
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2.16   Transformative tourism education: the holistic approach at MODUL University Vienna

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Integrating sustainability into tourism education became one of the core issues in tertiary tourism education, and educators around the globe focus their discussion on how to change or adapt teaching strategies to be able to teach sustainable tourism at universities and other educational institutions.

Learning for sustainable tourism development is not only a "process of gaining knowledge, values and theories related to sustainable tourism but it also calls for a changing of mindsets and active engagement of the student in matters relating to more sustainable tourism futures" (Tilbury, 2011). The current curricula and learning environments provided by universities generally do not implement this transformative approach toward education.

From its inception in 2007, MODUL University adopted sustainability as a core value of its mission and implemented a sustainability strategy for its undergraduate and (post) graduate tourism and hospitality programs as well as for the other university programs and the university as a whole. This holistic approach means that sustainable tourism education is not only a matter for the curricula or educational programs but also an issue to be implemented within the organisation which facilitates these learning processes. This engages the whole university system and fosters processes of collaboration and dialogues among all stakeholders. This also reflects the notion that educational institutions and teachers are leading by example. In order to teach sustainability, institutions have to consider and reflect

© A Gorgeous Texas Meadow Full of Bluebonnets and Indian Paintbrush Wildflowers - Richard Mcmillin | Dreamstime.com.

on their own practices in the context of sustainability as these indirectly inform teaching and learning.

Besides adopting sustainability as a core value, the university decided for a values-based education approach. Based on TEFI's five value sets ethics, stewardship, knowledge, professionalism and mutuality (TEFI, 2010) MODUL University formulated through a long participatory process the four MU educational values of 'Knowledge, Creativity & Innovation' (Challenge what we take for granted and embrace change), 'Personal Integrity' (Support the principles of equity and justice), 'Mutual Respect' (Value diversity and humanity), and 'Responsibility and Stewardship' (Serve as ambassador of sustainable and responsible living). The values of education are communicated on the university website, and displayed in the 12 worldwide most commonly spoken languages in front of the entrance of MODUL University Vienna (see Figure 2.16). All incoming students are informed of TEFI values in the orientation week through interactive sessions, and are encouraged to reflect on these values throughout their studies. During the graduation ceremony, students make a sign of commitment to these values either by signing the MODUL University Academic Oath (based on the values), or by leaving their own personal statement written on a small card when they come on stage. The MODUL University Vienna Academic Oath is rooted in the University's strong belief in the importance of global citizenship and its belief that global managers must contribute to the creation of sustainable economic and social value. All statements are compiled on a chart which

is displayed in a public area within the University. The presence of the oath reminds students, staff and alumni to fulfill their duties in a responsible way and to having a positive impact to their communities.

MODUL University Academic Oath

As a MODUL University graduate and a global citizen, I promise:

I will strive to act with honesty and integrity, oppose all forms of corruption and exploitation, and respect the rights and dignity of all people,

I will strive to be an ambassador of sustainable and responsible living,

I will embrace change and creativity to foster progress and innovation,

I will recognize the knowledge of others, but always challenge what people take for granted.

As I hold true to these principles, it is my hope that I may enjoy an honorable reputation and peace of conscience. This pledge I make freely and upon my honor.

Figure 2.16 Main entrance of MODUL University Vienna – The university values of education are presented in the 12 most commonly spoken languages.

Figure 2.17 MODUL University Vienna academic oath procedure at graduation ceremonies.

Regarding the curriculum of the tourism and hospitality programs the educational values as well as the concept of sustainability are included in all courses, at all levels, with linkages between courses. Offering specific sustainability courses equates to treating sustainability as an isolated issue. On the other hand, following an integrated approach, where aspects of sustainability are incorporated in all courses, takes sustainability as an omnipresent topic which permeates all other teaching areas and can be further discussed in different contexts as an underlying philosophy. The teaching approach is strongly aligned with active and participatory learning processes, because "they encourage learners to ask critical reflective questions, clarify values, envision more positive futures, think systemically, respond through applied learning and explore the dialectic between tradition and innovation" (Tilbury 2011). Content-wise, the underlying trio of sustainability – economic, environmental and socio-cultural issues – and their inter-relationship are addressed. Among the tools which have been successfully used in sustainable tourism education are group discussions, which encourage listening and self-reflection, debates for developing arguments, stimulus activities such as watching films or reading a newspaper article in order to stimulate discussion or the use of critical incidents allowing students to reflect their actions on the basis of their moral or ethical attitude.

Case Studies as a research strategy and fieldwork are other popular choices of pedagogy for teaching sustainable tourism. They provide the opportunity for students to investigate local issues and work collaboratively with local stakeholders in order to find solutions. Both serve as catalysts for developing students' critical thinking skills in order to understand the complexity of sustainable tourism. Furthermore, they can help to influence students' emotions towards a more sustainable development. One example of fieldwork is the involvement of students in a community project with the aim of finding a way to focus on community stakeholders in improving CSR practices in a hotel. Through their investigations the students learned about the different perspectives of tourism stakeholders in a particular location, how they were interconnected and what the challenges for sustainable tourism development were. They also developed strong opinions about the necessity of collaboration and this collaboration was seen as the crucial success factor in the sustainable development of the location and the hotel.

Learning also takes place implicitly through the 'hidden' curriculum. In addition to the integration of sustainability aspects in the curricula courses, the university has introduced a series of measures to stimulate action-taking and sustainable behaviour among their students, faculty and staff, such as the Scholarship of Hope, which is awarded to students who propose innovative ideas which contribute to the University's sustainable development, the Sustainability Award for faculty members or the MU Cares program which engages students in social learning. Among the awarded Scholarship of Hope projects was the proposal for an organic garden where students and staff plant organic and locally grown groceries which at the same time strengthen the community of students and staff through shared work and food. The first step in realising this project was creating a flowery meadow and setting up a bee hive, which attracts students, faculty and visitors alike. Another awarded proposal was an Android and iPhone University Application, which provides mobile access to university services, as well as offering sharing opportunities such as car sharing. This project is partly realised. Through the MU Cares program students are stimulated to take responsibility for their student community and beyond, to initiate and engage in charity projects, etc. And many students engage in such community and charity projects to expand their horizons end gain life experiences. This engagement in social activities contributes to changing their behaviour and changing their mindsets.

The university has also taken diverse operational sustainability measures. These include investments in infrastructure such as installing solar panels (Figure 2.18), a wood pellet heating system and a waste recycling system. Additional efforts entail offsetting the carbon emissions for all business travels of faculty and staff, providing fair trade products, engaging in social projects and charities, as well as keeping sustainable development a core topic in the discussions with stakeholders and in the daily routines.

Figure 2.18 Solar panels on the University's roof.

This holistic approach in education for sustainable development shows that learning for sustainable tourism is not only a matter of introducing the concept of sustainable tourism into the curriculum, but also about the institutions' and lecturers' commitment towards sustainability, about using teaching approaches which not only create a knowledge base but also enable social learning toward a sustainable tourism future.

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2.17 Peer2Peer (P2P) International: A transformative educational travel experience

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This contribution evaluates the benefits accrued to staff, students and hosts community members participating in a transformative educational travel experience within the framing model of the University of Brighton's *Peer2Peer (P2P) International - Capacity Building through Tourism.* Currently in its 9th edition, P2P-International is based primarily on a co-created learning environment at destination level, forged collaboratively between hosts (local tourism stakeholders and wider community members) and visitors (staff and students visiting the destination).

The majority of educational travel is consumptive in nature and, as a result of the desire of educationalist to provide alternative and impactful learning environments to classroom-based teaching and of destinations' stakeholders trying to attract new markets through product differentiation, is experiencing significant growth. In addition, National Governments, Tourism Boards and private sector operators have recognised the benefits of educational travel and tourism and have become increasingly actively involved in both promoting and, at times even, subsidising this growing niche tourism segment. Historically, however, the broadly consumptive nature of educational tourism has resulted in the 'visitors' engaging in a unilateral learning experience and, notwithstanding its economic value for the destination, has had limited socio-economic benefits for the 'host' community.

P2P-International is an educational initiative providing a deeper and context-based learning experience. The co-creation of knowledge between 'visitor' and 'host' learners enables the development of transformative travel and

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tourism that impacts positively not only the 'visitors' and their immediate 'hosts', but also the wider destination, by providing additional ways that benefit local businesses and communities at large. P2P-International was born out of the collaboration between the University of Brighton, private sectors' operators, such as Sandele Eco-retreat and Learning Centre and the Association of Small-scale Enterprises in Tourism (ASSET) with support from other organisations such as the Gambia Tourism Board and the Gambia Hotel Association. It was created in such a way that the essential and transformative element of the experience, facilitated through a fieldtrip, is the engagement between the visiting students/staff and local tourism stakeholders, who thus too become local learners. While visiting participants are generally equipped with broad theoretical knowledge about tourism, local participants have considerable first-hand experience about the sector at destination level.

The programme involves the formation of working groups composed of a mix of visiting students and the local learners, leading to an equal study setting and peer-to-peer learning exchange. To facilitate this, an extensive itinerary of events is provided to ensure that the core areas of what tourism encapsulates are covered. The one week schedule includes class activities to explore tourism from a theoretical perspective, combined with site visits and talks by local experts. The overall objective is to evaluate sustainable tourism practices and opportunities and assess the commercial feasibility of alternative niche products, aimed at diversifying the Gambian tourism portfolio.

To ensure an inclusive and creative learning experience, all participants are required to evaluate what they learn academically and practically and are required to reflect on the information and guidance provided by local experts. This is used to design a niche tourism product that is both socially and environmentally sustainable as well as commercially viable. University Staff and local experts support participants' teams, through their idea creation, project feasibility assessment and the presentation outline for their product. Presenting their ideas to both academics and local experts provide instantaneous feedback on their ideas and a feel of what it is like to operate in a live consultancy style scenario.

The P2P-International model has equity as one of its core value and provides an innovative and transformative learning experience, as both sets of participants benefit from cocreating new tourism product ideas for a sustainable future. In fact, many of these ideas have been implemented into tourism products in their own right (see: www.youtube.com/watch?v=qrGs-e4v56c).

RiverExursion © Makasutu.

2.18 Lapa rios Ecolodge

Karen Lewis,
Lapa Rios Ecolodge

Lapa Rios, Costa Rica's acclaimed ecolodge, was founded in December 1990 when Karen and John Lewis purchased 1,000 acres of rainforest on the Osa Peninsula. Lapa Rios helps buffer nearby Corcovado, the country's largest national park; protected lands account for more than one-third of the Peninsula's landmass, 4% of the world's tropical biodiversity.

In the early 1990s, neighboring farmers and loggers threatened further deforestation. Rather than environmental extraction, the Lewises envisioned a different response: What socio-economic tool could not only preserve their pristine natural resource, but also improve the surrounding wilderness communities and provide a long term future?

With minimal guidance, offset by 1960s Peace Corps engrained confidence and optimism, the Lewises and local builders constructed the 17-bungalow ecolodge. *Respect Nature First* was the guiding principle, fundamental to the challenge, and critical in how they and their local employees would learn and improve their hospitality skills.

© Southern tamandua (Tamandua tetradactyla) - Bos11 | Dreamstime.com.

"In the end, we will only conserve what we love, we will love only what we understand, and we will understand only what we are taught."

Baba Dioum, 1968, Senegal

Education underpins the Lapa Rios operations. The program is an ever-changing process, focused to provide Lapa Rios and those involved in its operation with regularly updated skills and practices. Yet leading that lifestyle requires more than the founders' personal ambitions: Employees, neighbors and travelers must also become active stewards. Lapa Rios cites: "No matter how you cut it, a rainforest left standing is worth more." Placing biodiversity protection at the heart of decision-making, sustainable practices became a part of everyone's Lapa Rios experience.

Pitfalls and successes define most ecolodges, yet with patience and time the local staff and owners' skills did improve, as did the Lapa Rios tourism experience. Success follows *'do well by doing good'.* To continue championing the sustainable-social-conservation ethic, the Lewises joined with Cayuga Sustainable Hospitality Management in 2003 to improve the staff development process, overall lodging operations and guests' experience.

Now 25 years after founding Lapa Rios, area residents better understand land stewardship. The nearby communities accept that sustainable practices are essential to their future, a necessary component to preserve people and their environment.

Lapa Rios helps steer the Osa's sustainable transformation. Examples include:

- The 900-acre Lapa Rios Reserve is preserved in perpetuity, guided by a conservation easement with the Center for Environmental Law and Natural Resources (CEDARENA) and The Nature Conservancy (TNC);

- Area residents have replaced their subsistent living economy, a slash-and-burn mindset, to long-term careers;

- Some local farmers have switched to organic practices.

- Area children attend the lodge's Travellers' Philanthropy-built primary school, and fund ongoing building projects at 17 schools;

- Local artisans design with natural objects found regionally rather than imported trinkets;

© Dreamstime.com.

- Local staff naturalists, following skills training, interpret nature for guests using both science and local folklore;

- The region's seasonal fruits and vegetables are treasured, and locally inspired recipes expand the guest experience; and

- Travellers expect wildlife at Lapa Rios; they depart with memories of many employees and community members. While guests experience the surrounding nature, Lapa Rios seizes the opportunity to immerse guests with the local culture and people. It is through these unexpected new relationships, tastes and local stories that the real 'extras' get added to the expected nature photos. And once home, guests report they enrolled in socio-environmental programs, and insist future holiday plans include not only wildlife and conservation but also social involvement.

Combining improved work and personal best practices with a concern for their future, communities and travellers can transform their societal responses and help insure natural resources protection.

© **Turtles in amazon rainforest, Yasuni National Park - Pablo Hidalgo | Dreamstime.com.**

2.19 Translating policy into action for sustainable tourism

Deanna Newsom,
Rainforest Alliance

We know that conventional tourism can have a negative impact on the environment and local communities: irresponsible hotels have captured wild animals to entertain guests; lodges have released polluting wastewater into neighboring streams; and careless visitors have damaged sensitive protected areas. Many national and sub-national governments are aware of these threats and have put regulations in place to mitigate them. A pioneer in sustainable tourism, the Rainforest Alliance has worked on this issue in a dozen Latin American countries, developing tools to successfully link government policy and on-the-ground practices. Our approach begins with an assessment of a destination's needs and then rolls out a series of actions ranging from participatory decision-making and the development of visitor management plans, to training, technical assistance and certification.

This approach is illustrated by the current Rainforest Alliance project 'Initiative for the Conservation of the Andean Amazon', funded by the U.S. Agency for International Development. The project aims to improve tourism practices in protected areas within Ecuador, where the government had prioritized tourism development in more than half of its 50 protected areas and welcomed support from Rainforest Alliance in developing instruments

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and actions for sustainable tourism in these areas. The need for this support was underscored by the rapid growth in the country's tourism industry, which drew more than 1.2 million visitors in 2013, an increase of 20% over the previous year.

Together with the Ecuadorian Ministries of the Environment and Tourism, as well as partner NGOs, the Rainforest Alliance used a participatory methodology that brought together representatives of host communities, local tourism entrepreneurs, and the managers of protected areas in the Amazon and some parts of the Andes and the coast. These stakeholders discussed visitor expectations, zoning, resource availability and sustainable tourism best practices. For each of the protected areas, the information that was gathered was used to create a customized visitor management plan, to be implemented by the country's Ministry of the Environment. Each of the plans seeks to reduce pressure on sensitive natural and cultural resources by identifying alternative attractions, requiring visitors to comply with rules of good behavior, integrating indigenous and non-indigenous stakeholders, and establishing regulations for tour operators, food providers and lodging services. Plans also include a set of indicators to measure progress in implementation and impacts.

There were challenges to developing these plans. First, Ecuador is a culturally and environmentally diverse country, and creating a group of standardised indicators that applied to all regions required extensive discussion and coordination. We also learned that special measures were needed to ensure that park rangers participated in plan development and then felt empowered to use the plans. Finally, developing the plans required an alignment of the policies and the priorities of two Ecuadorian ministries – the Ministry of the Environment, which regulates and controls protected areas, and the Ministry of Tourism, which promotes tourism by highlighting the country's biodiversity attractions. The solutions to each of the above challenges relied on the same principle: from the outset, stay true to a highly participatory process that involves all stakeholders, incorporates all relevant information, and empowers the responsible authority to use the results. We also learned that the success of visitor management plans and other tools depends in large part on our ability to provide effective training on the principles of sustainable tourism to the managers of these protected areas, host communities and tourism operations. The Rainforest Alliance has a long track record in this area, having trained more than 20,000 tourism entrepreneurs across Latin America over the past 15 years. Feedback from lodge owners who have been trained on sustainable tourism practices in Ecuador suggests that our training has been effective and, in some cases, lead to a market advantage. According to Guillermo Gómez of the Jamu Lodge, "We began working with Rainforest Alliance in

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2008. In the beginning, it was a learning process and we gained a lot of experience. Meeting all the requirements to operate in a protected area has helped us access new market. By participating in the Rainforest Alliance technical assistance program we improved our level of service and consequently improved the quality of our visitors' experience". Statements like these are bolstered by the results of a recent study conducted by Rainforest Alliance staff and university partners that examined the environmental performance of 106 hotels in six Latin American countries, evaluating them before and roughly two years after they received training (Milder et al. in press). The study showed that, on average, hotels increased their performance by 14% after training, with the highest rates of improvement seen in criteria related to wildlife protection, waste management and the environmental awareness of visitors and employees (Figure 2.19).

Interestingly, the study also found that the suite of best practices that hotels perceive as practical and economically beneficial appeared to vary from place to place, depending on the hotel's specific biophysical and economic context. For example, hotels located in dry regions of Mexico tended to invest in water conservation, whereas in parts of Central America that are characterised by costly or unreliable grid electricity, energy conservation criteria were more frequently addressed.

Whether we are developing visitor management plans with governments or training hotel owners on best practices, the Rainforest Alliance's work in sustainable tourism focuses on those actions that are most relevant and cost-effective within a particular context. As part of the United Nations' 10-Year Framework Programme on sustainable consumption and production, we are developing opportunities to apply our approach elsewhere, helping committed governments to link their policies with on-the-ground practices at tourism destinations across Latin America and beyond.

Reference:

Milder, J.; Newsom, D.; Sierra, C. and Bahn, V. (in press), Reducing tourism's threats to biodiversity: Effects of a voluntary sustainability standard and training program on 106 Latin American hotels, lodges and guesthouses. Accepted for publication at *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*.

Figure 2.19 Average conformance score of tourism operations before and after training, for criteria in seven biodiversity threat categories
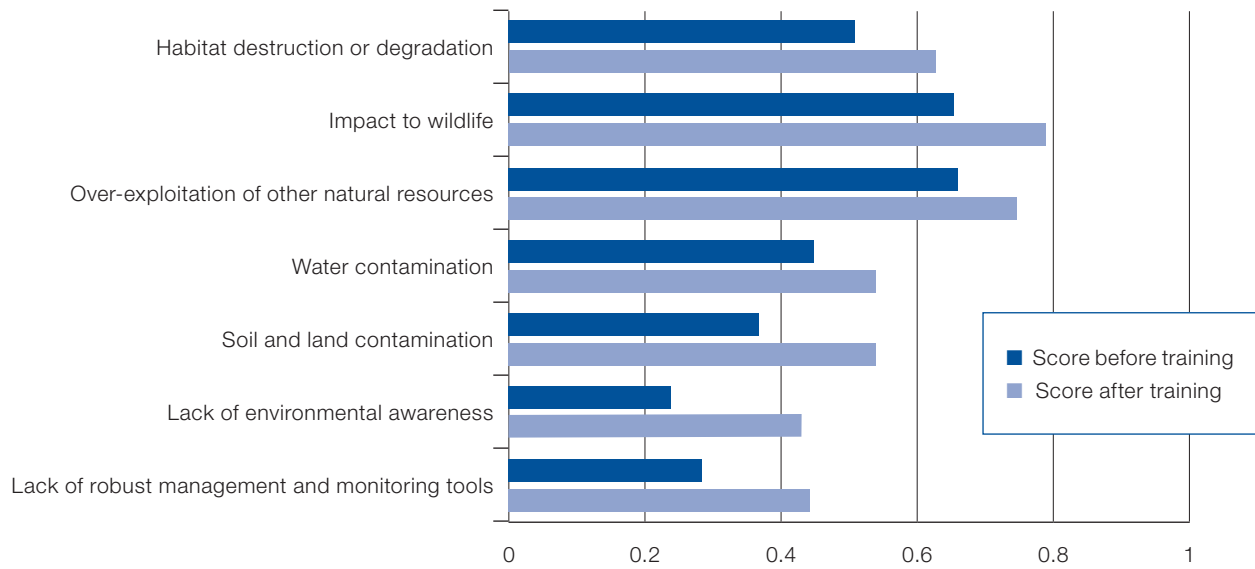
All before-after comparisons are significant at p ≤ 0.01. Conformance scores are calculated on a scale from 0 to 1, with 0 indicating non-conformance by all operations and 1 indicating full conformance by all operations. Error bars show standard error of the mean. We corrected p-values for multiple tests following Benjamini and Yekutieli (2001).

Figure 2.20 Sustainable tourism best management practices workshop for the indigenous communities of the Orellana province.

Figure 2.22 Participants in a training course for naturalists at the Limoncocha Biological Reserve. Ecuador's ministry of the environment requires that all guides working within the reserve take this course.

Figure 2.21 Training session for Limoncocha Biological Reserve naturalists. Here, the guide is taking her final exam.

© Peanutroaster - Green Travel or Eco Tourism | Dreamstime.com.

Figure 2.23 Guillermo Gómez (on right) of Jamu Lodge speaks with a buyer from a travel agency about tour options in the Cuyabeno Wildlife Reserve.

Figure 2.24 After receiving technical assistance from the Rainforest Alliance, the managers of this lodge in the Cuyabeno Wildlife Reserve built receptacles for the separation and recycling of solid waste.

© **Tambopata Province - Eugene Feygin** | **Dreamstime.com.**

2.20   Transformative travel in the Amazon

Jeff Cremer,
Rainforest Expeditions

Travel to remote and wild areas has increased as such places have become more accessible along with a surge in 'adventure travel'. While millions of vacationers continue to stick with predictable destinations such as beach resorts and cruise ships, a large number of people also take trips to Costa Rica, Ecuador, and Peru to experience rainforest, rappel down waterfalls, and hike in the high Andes. The Amazon, in particular, has become one of the top destinations for visitors to Ecuador and Peru. This is facilitated by the presence of several lodges that put the focus on biodiversity and unique, adventure travel.

However, some 'adventure' and 'eco' lodges stand out because they put a higher emphasis on transformative travel than others. At Rainforest Expeditions (RFE) transformative travel has been part of our core strategy from the start. We do not just aim to provide guests with the trip of a lifetime. We also strive to ensure that when they leave the Peruvian Amazon, our guests depart with a better understanding of local Ese-Eja culture, and how our lodges benefit the local community. We also work to give our guests a deeper understanding of rainforest ecology by learning about the animals and plants of the forest instead of limiting the experience to mere observation. We have helped make this happen in the following ways:

A community-owned lodge

RFE runs three different lodges in Tambopata, Peru, one of which is Posada Amazonas. Co-managed by RFE, this award-winning accommodation is owned by a local community composed of Ese-Eja people and colonists from other parts of Peru. The lodge has helped the local community by providing stable employment and a direct market for hand-crafted souvenirs.[1] The community also enjoys 60% of the profits generated by the lodge and has used these funds to improve life in the community by building a river port and potable water systems.[1]

Hands-on travel

While these benefits to the community help guests of the lodge transform local people in positive ways, guests are, in turn, likewise transformed by their experience at the lodge. Mutual transformation happens as locals teach and interact with guests during story-telling sessions, and arts and craft and Brazil-nut workshops, as well as partaking in other aspects of local Ese-Eja culture. Jocelyn of Kenmore, New York, and recent guest of Posada Amazonas, mentioned that "she found her stay to be much more of a learning experience about local culture than she expected". This sentiment is often shared by other guests including the Burke family of Seattle who stated that they felt they had "become more connected to the people who lived and worked at the lodge after learning first-hand about working with Brazil Nuts, listening to Ese-Eja stories, and seeing how produce for the lodge was grown at a local farm". Guests can also take a guided tour of a local ethno-botanical healing center, and partake in other activities that directly involve exchanges with the local community. New interactive activities are also introduced by the local community on a regular basis.

Trained, personal guides

All of our guides are trained in an extensive guide course which involves learning sessions, talks given by experts, and field work. We do this because we want our guides to help guests learn about rainforest ecology and local culture. In keeping with a goal of transformative tourism, our guides also work with guests to create a schedule that will enrich and transform their experience shortly after arrival at the lodge. According to Oscar Mishaja, one of the local residents working as a guide at the lodge, becoming a guide ended up giving him "a spectacular opportunity to learn about birds that changed his life"[2]. Two other Amazonian organizations that also deserve a mention because of their focus on transformative travel that benefits local communities and guests are:

© Capybara in morning light - Richard Lindie I Dreamstime.com.

The Huaorani Ecolodge

This Ecuadorian ecolodge helps guests experience one of the most remote and least accessible areas in the Ecuadorian Amazon while interacting with the Huaorani people. As opposed to ecolodges that may show guests animals in comfortable settings but leave out direct interaction with local cultures, visitors of the Huaorani Ecolodge learn jungle survival tips from people who put such skills into practice on a regular basis. The tangible benefits of this community-based ecolodge were recognised in 2015 with a National Geographic World Legacy Award given to Tropic, the company that started this project.[3]

ManuLodges

Like the Huaorani, the Matsigenka people live in direct contact with and depend upon their rainforest surroundings. Their home is the Manu Biosphere Reserve and they help transform tourists with three different lodges, each of which offers opportunities to experience rare rainforest wildlife. Matsigenka cultural activities are also part of the experience and include lessons on making cassava beer, weaving mats out of palm leaves, and archery practice.

At RFE, we believe that the rich biodiversity and cultures of Amazonian rainforests are especially suited for transformative tourism. We look forward to discovering more ways of enriching the lives of our guests and the people we work with, and implementing those strategies into our lodges.

Reference:

1.   www.perunature.com/info.html.

2.   Collyns, D. (2013), 'Eco-tourism in Peru: community engagement and preserving biodiversity', *Guardian Sustainable Business,* 08-07-2013 (online), available at: www.theguardian.com/sustainable-business/eco-tourism-peru-amazon-engaging-communities (8-7-2013).

3.   http://fair-travel.se/blog/news/tropic-receives-national-geographic-world-legacy-award/.

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2.21 Travellers' philanthropy: a new transformative trend in Mazatlán, México

Mónica Velarde Valdez and Kennedy Obombo Magio, Universidad de Occidente

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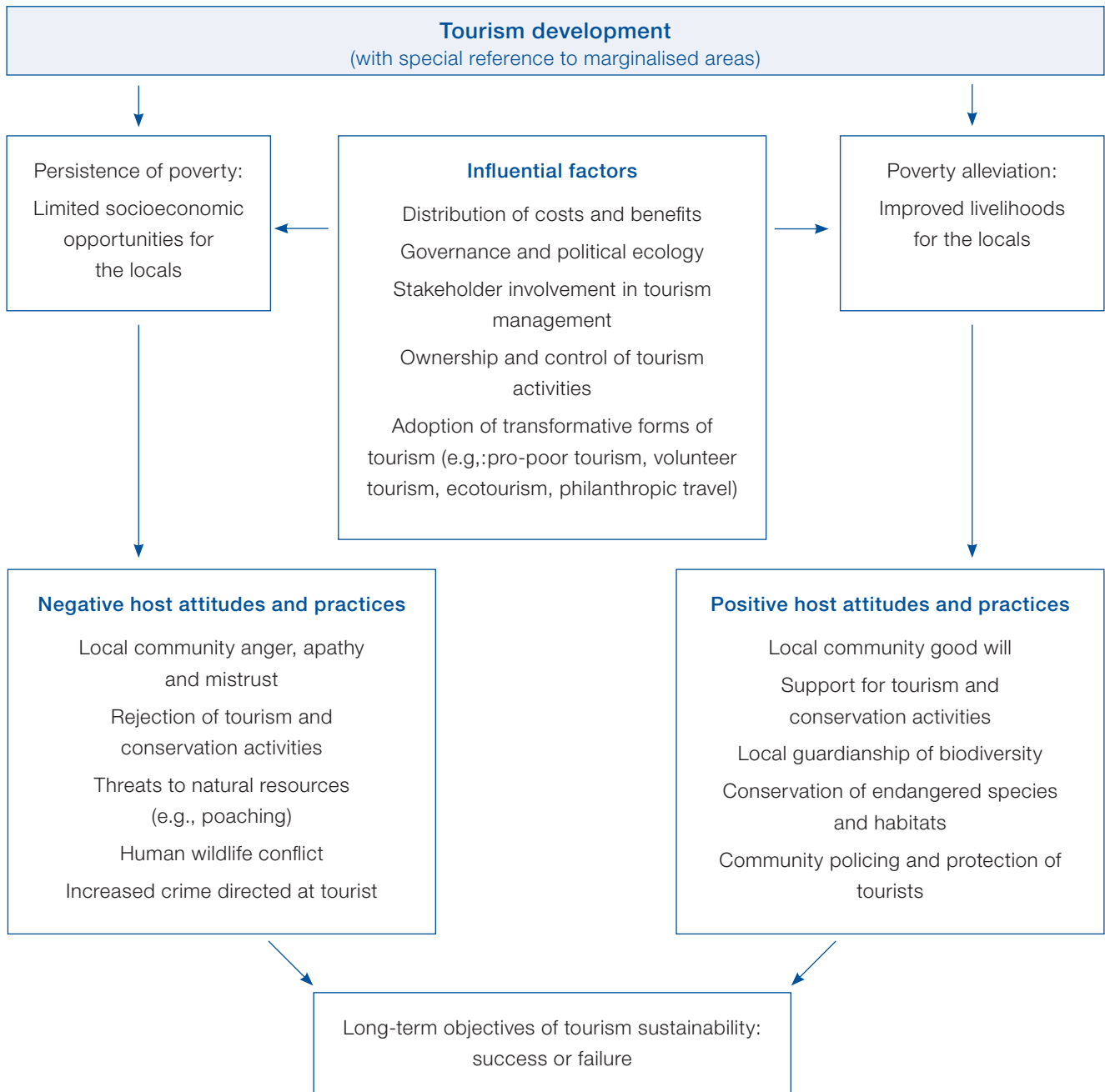
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An overview of travellers' philanthropy

Travellers' Philanthropy is a growing international trend that illustrates how conscious travellers and businesses use tourism as a transformative medium to improve the livelihoods of communities they visit. The present article uses empirical insights from Mazatlan, Mexico to demonstrate the above phenomenon while showcasing a wide range of ways in which companies in the travel industry, as well as individual travellers are increasingly making concrete contributions of time, talent, and treasure to support local projects, beyond what is generated through the normal tourism business. Travellers' philanthropy arose out of a general recognition that tourism will not happen until local welfare needs are satisfied; when members of the local community are happy, they will be more willing to welcome tourists and support tourism activities (refer to the conceptual framework below (Figure 2.25) which illustrates the determinants of local support for tourism development). In reference to the guidelines developed by the Center for Responsible Travel (CREST, 2011), travellers' philanthropy is not about collecting handouts in form of loose change for charities; rather, it is about integrating tourism company and visitor support for local communities into the core definition of responsible travel. If carried out well (avoiding common

pitfalls like overdependence on donations), the approach brings benefits to individual travellers, tourism businesses and the entire destination; successful execution of travellers' philanthropy helps tourism businesses become actively involved as 'good citizens' in their travel destinations, supports local projects to promote social empowerment, education, and entrepreneurship leading to sustainable, long-term development and natural resource use. At the level of an individual tourist, the approach may enrich travel experiences through meaningful, culturally sensitive, and productive interactions with people in host communities (CREST, 2011).

Figure 2.25 Determinants of local community support for tourism development

Tourism development
(with special reference to marginalised areas)

Persistence of poverty:
Limited socioeconomic opportunities for the locals

Influential factors

Distribution of costs and benefits

Governance and political ecology

Stakeholder involvement in tourism management

Ownership and control of tourism activities

Adoption of transformative forms of tourism (e.g,:pro-poor tourism, volunteer tourism, ecotourism, philanthropic travel)

Poverty alleviation:
Improved livelihoods for the locals

Negative host attitudes and practices

Local community anger, apathy and mistrust

Rejection of tourism and conservation activities

Threats to natural resources (e.g., poaching)

Human wildlife conflict

Increased crime directed at tourist

Positive host attitudes and practices

Local community good will

Support for tourism and conservation activities

Local guardianship of biodiversity

Conservation of endangered species and habitats

Community policing and protection of tourists

Long-term objectives of tourism sustainability: success or failure

Source: Researchers, 2015.

© Mazatlan city - Tom Dowd | Dreamstime.com.

The ideology behind travellers' philanthropy is consistent with theoretical underpinnings of the Social Exchange Theory - SET Skidmore (1975) and the 'Irridex' model developed by Doxey (1975) that there is a positive relationship between the perceived benefits and costs of tourism and the local community's support, attitudes and reactions towards the industry. The Social Exchange Theory (SET) for example posits a matrix system of measuring outcomes, taking into account the actions of others, rewards and costs, comparing results, dependence and control (Skidmore, 1975). In essence, it suggests that an individual is most probably willing to select exchanges if the outcome is rewarding and valuable and the negative results do not outweigh the benefits (Skidmore, 1975). In the present context, local community's attitudes and practices towards tourism are seen as a trade-off between the perceived benefits and costs of tourism. In rejecting tourism, the communities may engage in practices that are not compromise the well-being of natural resource for example poaching.

The case of travellers' philanthropy in Mazatlan, Mexico

The examples of travellers' philanthropy initiatives in Mazatlan cover tourism establishments (specifically hotel operators) and individual tourists. Support comes in form of donations – both financial and material contributions provided by tourism operators and travellers to local pro-poor initiatives. A good example of local level travellers' philanthropy initiative is a foundation owned by El Cid Resorts in Mazatlán. It is a non-profit initiative aiming at strengthening and improving the well-being and quality of life for all those working at the resort as well as their families and the local community in general; areas addressed include health, education and housing. The foundation offers financial support to non-profit institutions and non-governmental organisations that are committed to social wellbeing; it promotes, advises and supports the development of small family businesses among the local community. Specific activities include: Payment of school fees and supplies (books, uniforms, pens etc.) for a selected number of employees' children, these scholarships are not related in any way to the salaries earned by the employees and are purely based on merit. The foundation offers a 50% discount on medical analysis for employees' families and relatives, in 2001, the resort donated approximately USD 2,000 to cover medical charges incurred by a former employee who had his leg amputated. Additionally, the resort sells old equipment (furniture and utensils) at affordable prices to the local community. Through their housing program, the foundation identifies locals whose houses are in bad conditions and repairs them for free.

© Polarbearstudio - Blue Window on Green Wall with Cactus | Dreamstime.com.

Another individual business philanthropy initiative is the Letty Coppel Foundation by Pueblo Bonito Resorts. The establishment has a philanthropic policy focused on the welfare of its employees and the community in general. It seeks to improve the living standards of marginalised communities, the community support actions cover ecology, welfare, community development, job growth and cultural exchange with tourists. For example, the foundation facilitates training of five women groups (majority of them are single mothers) to acquire basic skills in hairdressing, handcraft making and beauty therapy. Over 1,200 people with disabilities have benefited from monetary donations and equipment, the foundation maintains about 700 scholarships for children with disabilities. While responding to the challenges of health services especially among the women, the foundation conducts campaigns to sensitise women on breast cancer, more than 200 women participate in funded public lectures where issues like, self-care, self-breast examination and prevention are discussed by accomplished medical specialists invited and paid by the organisation.

The Vineyard feeding initiative is probably one of the best examples of how tourists can be involved in charitable endeavors at destinations, collaborating with a local Christian church in Mazatlán, tourists offer their time and money to support the well-being of the poor families who spend all day scrounging/ working at a nearby dumping site. The church organises weekly tours to the dump site mainly during the high season (approximately November to April); the tour begins with a meeting at the church premises where tourists congregate to prepare sandwiches and package water for consumption by the families at the dumping site. Any tourist is invited to participate and donate whatever is considered necessary for the said families. To enhance interaction between tourists and locals, the sandwiches, fruits and water are handed personally by them (tourists). The visitors are then taken to other feeding centers in the local neighborhood giving out more sandwiches. Additionally, the church gives the tourists a platform to donate not just food, but any other items to support outreach activities. Through monetary donations from tourists, the church has managed to build community centres providing the much needed medical and dental services for the locals. Other initiatives of the Vineyard church supported by tourists include: shoe purchase and distribution program to over 3,000 children, feeding and learning programs for school going children.

There are several other service organisations in Mazatlán whose aim is to involve individual tourists in travellers' philanthropy:

- **Hands Across the Borders (HAB)** is one of such organisations: it is a group of tourists, mainly of American and Canadian origin, meeting on the second Friday of every month at a local hotel for breakfast. There is always an invited speaker to talk about life in Mexico. The breakfast which costs USD 8 aims to raise funds for charitable activities. The group organises a special dinner every year where participants, as well as business operators are encouraged to make generous donations which are auctioned off during the dinner. All the money generated from the meetings every month and the special annual dinner is used to support poverty eradication programs in Mazatlán, there is no specific project supported by the group, however, the organisers hold a meeting involving all participants to propose needy causes around the city and decide on a suitable one for support; and

- **Friends of Mexico** is another service organisation that brings together tourists from different countries to support charitable initiatives in Mazatlán. The group raises funds through donations, bingo, seminars, classes and raffles during their social meetings every month. The group purchased school uniforms to 64 school children, a necessity that would not otherwise be available to them. They also identify talented art students and pay bus fare to attend art classes. Another similar initiative involving individual tourists is the *Pro Mexico* group; a private non-profitable volunteer organisation that focuses exclusively on health and education programs. They organise free medical camps where locals can undergo medical checkup and advise at no cost.

Important considerations in achieving long sustainability of travellers' philanthropy

While we agree that travellers' philanthropy is good for the local communities, good outcomes are never guaranteed, there are common pitfalls that may actually lead to failure. CREST in their handbook believes that travellers' philanthropy programs should emphasise the quality not the quantity of partnerships between tourism businesses, travelers, and local community projects. They agree that people contribute more if they actually see a project and meet with local people (rather than simply reading about a project on a website). However, they suggest that these interactions need to be carefully planned. Travellers' philanthropy, if not done correctly, may terribly fail and lead to negative outcomes like overdependence, corruption, unfulfilled promises, conflict among members of the local community and failed projects.

Crucial questions arise from the execution of travellers' philanthropy, for example: how does business or individual tourists select beneficiaries for charitable giving? Is there a strategic plan or policy to guide their giving or they proactively seek out worthy community projects? How is the impact of donations measured? Overall, strategic planning is critical to achievement of the objectives of travellers' philanthropy, especially for single business contributors, an organisation's policy on philanthropy should, therefore, take the community's needs and interests into consideration as necessary steps that need to be taken in order to ensure the long-term sustainability. Additionally, steps should be put in place to measure the longitudinal impact of donations and compare this impact across projects and organisations.

Reference:

CREST (2011), Travelers' Philanthropy Handbook, Available at: www.responsibletravel.org/resources/documents/reports/Travelers'_Philanthropy_Handbook_by_CREST.pdf. Accessed on 18 March 2015.

Vineyard (2014), Dump Feeding Tour, Available at: www.vineyardmcm.org/locations/mazatlan/weekly-dump-feeding-tour/, Accessed on 16 March 2015.

© Denisik11 - Doors in Different Seasons | Dreamstime.com.

2.22 Transformative tourism for our sustainable future: the case of Finca Argovia in Chiapas, Mexico[1]

Norma Juan Vázquez,
Universidad Autónoma de Chiapas

UNWTO
AFFILIATE MEMBER

From the Universidad Autónoma de Chiapas, tourism scholars were given the task of analysing how a tourism company promotes sustainability, thanks to the culture of social responsibility.[2]

It is the case of Finca Argovia[3] which is a first level resort in Mexico. It teaches us in their paths, tours and familiar activities with tourists, that it is possible to use techniques to preserve the ecosystem: produces its own light and food for consumption for workers, family and tourists; it recycles waste they generate; elaborates compost from residues from the restaurant and housing, for the nutrition of all crops. It also cleans wastewater in its water treatment plant to return to rivers as clean as possible and promotes talks about conservation of resources; runs campaigns and generates income for community improvement.

Their philosophy for over 100 years is the direct relationship between man and nature and the importance of between each other. In the words of its owner, Bruno Giesemann:

"The community is, without a doubt, the soul and engine of the farm and our activities, therefore we are constantly on the move in the social and cultural development in favour of the community, encouraging every day the importance of preserving our origins,

which already are a peculiar characteristic that tourists admire during the trip to Finca Argovia. We pursue to nest in our visitors the spirit for the care of the natural environment and point out the many years the Giesemann family has historically aimed for the development of the community, the environment, and most important today is reflected in its fourth generation... the family ties".

His challenge is to multiply this for a way of living[4]

"...I try for my kids to get hooked with the land, to understand the respect for the soil, water and out people (Roots), because without these three elements we dont get anywhere, gain councoisness in our customers that if they buy our products, its for the benefit of their kids, in a world with a better and cleaner future, through a different view of hadling agriculture ".

Ms. Ana Laura de Giesemann said they want to: "Make a small town in Finca Argovia, which is sustainable enough to produce their own needs and providing the same communities... transform a weakness into fortress, because one business turned into four". As a result of his work in social responsibility and sustainability, Finca Argovia has quality certifications.[5]

© Argovia Finca resort.

© Argovia Finca resort.

Figure 2.26 Images of Finca Argovia and surroundings.

1   Juan Vázquez Norma Patricia et al. (2013), "Aargau: an example of sustainability tourist farm organization family: with responsibility Social" work presented at the Congress of tourism research applied 2013, in Morelia, Michoacán, in November 2013. (Extract) Juan Vázquez Norma Patricia (2013), "Aargau: an example of sustainability tourist farm organization family: with responsibility Social" work presented at the Congress of tourism research applied 2013, in Morelia, Michoacán, in November 2013. (Extract). Through a field research, qualitative type, using the technique of the interview, discussed the social responsibility of Finca Argovia as part of their culture.

2   Different research in Mexico, have put in the analysis that: the Organization must change its corporate culture and relate it to modify behaviors, Huete (1997). Lozano (1999) for its part, says that social responsibility must be an internal element of the ethics of organizations. Moreover, when comes to implement measures of sustainability in the destinations and tourism businesses to permanently promote the care of natural resources and its attractions.

3   Coffee farm with 187 hectares dedicated to the cultivation of coffee and various organic products, is located in the municipality of Tapachula, Chiapas. Mexico. Which is structural part of tourism called "Route of the coffee", offers travels of birds, flowers, coffee plantations, tour activities such as walking, hiking, mountain biking, gourmet regional cuisine, experience unique and unrepeatable in 1 day or more stays with the offer of accommodation through the 15 cabins nestled in the magnificent vegetation of Soconusco and the service of the restaurant with regional type gourmet dishes.

4   Four elements were identified in the research, derived from the information collected during the interview period: His conviction, social responsibility, its transmitter principle of sustainability through education and practice farming as part of their culture and way of life. This is forested by Bruno Giesemann, property. (2012).

     Giesemann Bruno, (2012), proprietary fourth generation of the Finca Argovia; in a summary of the information collected during the interviews.

5   Only in 2014 won the national award of diversification of tourist product in the category of nature tourism and in 2015 cruise tourism has succeeded in the category. The model of work implemented in Aargau, has allowed them to gain access to markets where the price of their products and their tourist activities are better paid. Has the seal of quality organic by the USDA NOP, Organic Farming, they practiced agriculture with respect towards nature; and the JAS and Bird Friendly, because organic coffee grows in shade, and provide sufficient habitat for migratory birds and local in tropical places which is crucial to maintain and preserve forest environments; the hallmark of agricultural enterprise free of the working child, in order to improve the quality of life and development of the families particularly of children. Aargau belongs to the Club of quality treasures of Mexico, which is intended to promote excellence in the hotels and restaurants whose high standards of service, architectural and culinary features, reflect and promote the richness of Mexican culture. It also belongs to Boutique Hotels of Mexico, as part of the special hotel category to which it belongs. Account with the "recognition of Argovia Finca Resort as the best tour of Puerto Chiapas" by the Holland American shipping company.

2.23 Unique travel experiences for future professionals in tourism administration

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Tourism's potential as one of the most important forces shaping our world (Cohen & Kennedy, 2000) and an awareness of its transformative capacities have been often overshadowed by the discourse of tourism as an ´industry´ (Higgins-Desbiolles, 2006). Furthermore, as suggested by Cole (2008), in many remote areas of less economically developed countries, tourism leaders diminish local people's participation by considering them as uneducated and too ignorant to be involved.

The Tourism Administration Program of Universidad San Ignacio de Loyola – USIL (Lima, Peru) advocates the development of a different tourism vision among its future professionals. This vision is known by some researchers as transformative tourism or hopeful tourism (Pritchard, Morgan, & Ateljevic, 2011) which is committed to co-transformative learning, social justice, and the universality of human rights.

For this reason, each academic semester, over the five-year period of this degree, the faculty team, leading the program, designs and organises trips for its students. Different destinations in the country are visited, framing each travel within the academic objectives of USIL's educational proposal.

The designed trips are not the traditional ones offered by the Peruvian tourism operators. The main objective of these trips is to familiarise students with sustainable and responsible tourism projects, aimed at providing experiences that reflect the need to build harmonious relations between the visitor and nature, as well as between the visitor and the culture of the host communities. In that sense, the university seeks to contribute to the training of new tourism management professionals who are able to create and manage businesses and sustainable tourism projects efficiently and profitably. But above all, professionals can generate transformative experiences between travellers and hosts. Students of the Tourism Administration Program at USIL have travelled to remote communities such as Cotahuasi in Arequipa, Patabamba in Cusco, Leymebamba in Amazonas, Chavin in Ancash, Huamachuco in La Libertad, and Llanchon in Puno. In all these communities, some of them extremely poor, students have shared with local populations, learned about rural projects and enterprises from their leaders, performed volunteer work during their stay, discussed with local authorities about tourism public policies developed in the area, among others.

One experience particularly worth mentioning is the visit to Punta Pejerrey, an area that is part of the Paracas National Reserve (Ica Region, south from the Peruvian capital). This reserve is one of the most representative marine-coastal ecosystems of Peru. It is home to significant biodiversity that helps to maintain the life cycles of the species found among its more than 335,000 hectares. 35% of these are on the mainland and islands while 65% are in the sea (SERNANP, n.d). In addition, it comprises important archaeological remains of the Paracas culture.

As part of the Environmental Interpretation course, students visited the Paracas Reserve Interpretation Center, managed by the Ministry of Environment. Then, they visited the Hotel IntiMar, a small and simple accommodation located in the buffer zone of the Reserve, born as an aquaculture project. The priority for its owner, Mr. Luis Zapata, is providing visitors with knowledge of the cultivation process of scallops through a small interpretive center designed by himself. In this endeavor, the emphasis is on the visitor's contact with nature, rest and disconnection from city life, knowledge and responsible consumption of marine species. All this is in an environment of extreme respect for nature in the area.

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IntiMar is a venture supported by Peruvian enterprises that share the vision of Mr. Zapata. USIL students stayed at the hotel, got first-hand knowledge of the project and participated in the process of collecting garbage that comes to this part of the Reserve by ocean currents that carry waste from the other side of the Bay where local people live and big hotel chains are located on. These trips not only bring future Peruvian tourism professionals closer to the reality of their country, they also allow them to know the issues and challenges faced by these young and innovative tourism enterprises that opt for a different look at the travel experience based on a commitment to the planet and new lifestyles for people.

Finally, field trips designed by USIL often generate intense information exchanges between students and local tourism managers. They have resulted in the development of new professional projects with similar characteristics, led by students and graduates.

Reference:

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The **World Tourism Organization,** a United Nations specialized agency, is the leading international organization with the decisive and central role in promoting the development of responsible, sustainable and universally accessible tourism. It serves as a global forum for tourism policy issues and a practical source of tourism know-how. Its membership includes 157 countries, 6 territories, 2 permanent observers and over 480 Affiliate Members.

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