Eco-tourism Principles and Concepts a brief review

1st Living Lakes Asia Conference in Sri Lanka
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Chandra de Silva, Fellow of the Royal Geographical Society
Founder President
Ecotourism Society of Sri Lanka (ESSL)
Board Member of the International Ecotourism Society (TIES) –
Washington DC
Founder Director / CEO Ranweli Holiday Village

OVERVIEW of tourism industry

- tourism has become the world's most important civil industry, representing annually a US\$3.5 trillion activity.
- The travel and tourism industry employs 127 million workers (1 in 15 workers worldwide)
- In 2005 there were 815 million international tourists (an all-time record) and it is estimated that domestic tourism may be ten times this figure.

Sources: WTO (2006), WTTC (2005)

- As deleterious in it's impacts and environmental risks to any other major industry.
- Producing significant impacts on : Resource consumption, Pollution and Social systems.

NOTABLE CHARACTERISTICS OF MASS TOURISM

- Based on volume and high play component
- Pleasure travel is the dominant component.
- Travel in an "Environmental Bubble".
- Cultural Commodization
- Attractions Trivialized and contrived.
- Experiences pre packaged
- MASS TOURISM IS THEREFORE REFERRED TO AS THE PLEASURE PERIPHERY

"ALTERNATIVE TOURISM"

- · A catch-all phrase for:
 - Soft path, people to people, small scale
 - Green tourism and integrated tourism among others
- Ecotourism the most prevalent name
- Based on small groups focused on acquiring knowledge: THUS REFERED TO AS THE EDUCATIONAL PERIPHERY
- Lekage minimized
- Money in peripheral areas

ROOTS OF ALTERNATIVE TOURISM

- Rooted in three contemporary ideological views.
- · Reactions to:
 - Modern Consumerism
 - Exploitation of third world's land base and host societies as pleasure colonies.
 - Adverse environmental and socio-economic impacts

COHEN 1987

TRENDS LEADING TO ECOTOURISM

- 1. Increases in the overall travel market.
- 2. Growth in popularity of vacations to natural areas particularly dramatic growth rates to parks in developing countries.
- 3. Massive dissatisfaction with the simplistic travel packages offered by travel firms and a desire for more educative and challenging vacations
- 4. Urgent need to generate funding and human resources for the management of protected areas in ways that meet the needs of local rural populations.
- Recognition of the importance of tourism within the field of sustainable development.
- Provide employment and other avenues of income to rural communities where ecotourism resources are often located.

The Ecotourism Society 1995

INTRODUCTION TO A NEWFORM OF VACATION

"TO AMERICANS OF TASTE AND INTELLIGENCE, THE STANDARD HOLIDAY TRIP HAS FREQUENTLY BECOME, AT BEST, A CRUSHING BORE, AT WORST A HORROR, A NIGHTMARE"

- Because tour buses charter flights and crowds of frantic camera toting visitors are spilling over from celebrated plazas, beaches in popular cities and islands.
- Towering hotels serve to separate their guests from the life and atmosphere Surrounding them.
- The answer lies in a new approach, to new destinations, using new modes of travel and lodging, IN SEARCH OF LEARNING
- The key objective is to experience events, lifestyles, attitudes, cultures, political
 outlooks and theological views different from what you encounter at home.
- First by , utilizing lodgings indigenous to their surroundings operated by the local people

Introduction to a New Form of Vacation", New World of Travel, Prentice Hall, New York, Arthur Frommer (1990)

World bank and International Development Bank:

- □ Stopped lending for mass market beach tourism in late 1970, they concluded that tourism was not a sound development strategy due to;
 - 1. Collateral damage caused by tourism
 - 2. High leakage
- In 1990's they start providing loans under the rubric of **Eco tourism**

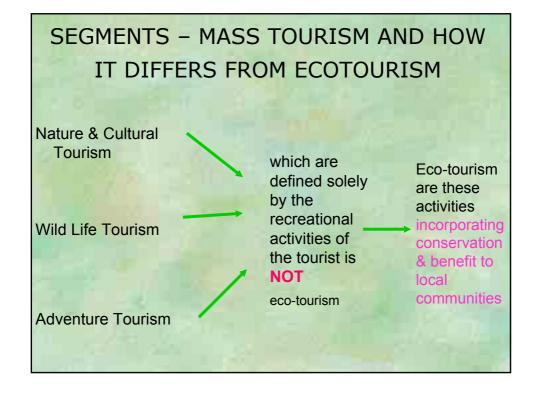
[Extract from an article Protecting Eden by Martha Honey (Published in the "Environment" July/ August 2003)]

WTO, "GLOBAL FORECASTS AND PROFILES OF MARKET SEGMENTS"

- Experiential tourism is the fastest growing segment of the tourism market worldwide
- Eco tourism, nature tourism and cultural tourism are the fastest growing to the year 2020

WTO vision to the 2020; Resort tourism is matured

WTO, Vol 7, Tourism 2020 vision





DEFINITION OF ECOTOURISM

In 1991The Ecotourism Society board of directors defined ecotourism as:

"Responsible travel to natural and cultural areas that conserves the environment and sustains the well being of local people."

A definition must clarify the descriptive and the prescriptive components of the ecotourism concept. The nature component is descriptive.

The sustainable component is prescriptive.

Lindberg and Mckercher

The descriptive and prescriptive components of ecotourism

- □ Nature and culture component is descriptive or positive in the sense that it simply describes the activity, location and the associated consumers Motivations.
- ☐ The sustainable component is prescriptive or normative in the sense that it reflects what people want the activity be.

Dimensions of sustainability:

Environmental - impacts on the natural & cultural environment

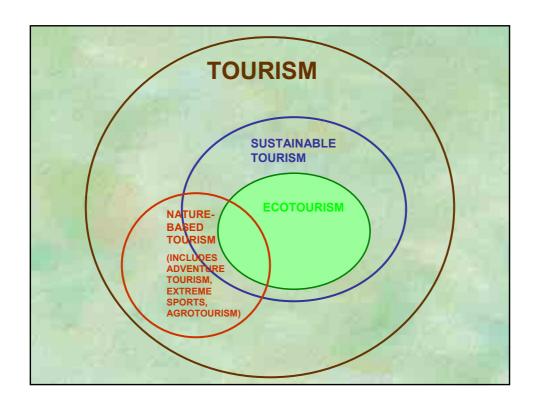
Experiential – crowding, conflict & environmental

degradation

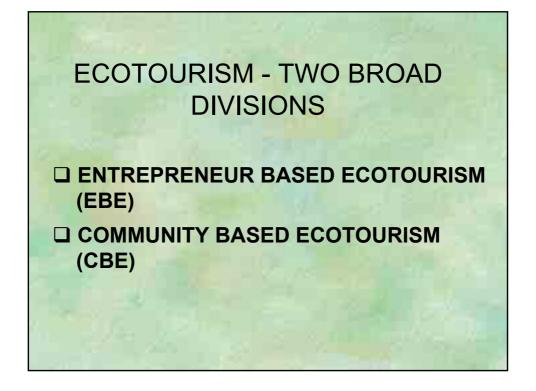
Socio - cultural - effect of visitors on local residents

Economic – stimulates economic activity and growth in isolated rural areas.

Sustainability is postulated to result from a positive overall balance of the above Dimensions







COMMUNITY – BASED ECOTOURISM (CBE) AND ENTREPRENEUR - BASED ECOTOURISM(EBE)

- Community based Ecotourism are enterprises that are owned and managed by the community.
- It involves conservation, business enterprise and community development.
- In Contrast Entrepreneur based Ecotourism refers toprivate sector initiatives where the stakeholders are the entrepreneurs or their appointees, shareholders, employees and the community where the project is located.
- A distinct difference is that in entrepreneur based ecotourism the community does not manage or own the enterprise and is a beneficiary (stake holder).

Community attraction complex

THE MAIN ELEMENTS IN A SUCESSFUL DESTINATION:

The community,

Eg. Madu Ganga

Attractive landscape and water

A set of travel attractions

front setting and the community

A market,

- 1. Attraction complex may be located near the community which could provide services to the visitors
- 2. Community may not own/control the attraction(s) & may develop its own set of attractions to complement the main attraction. e.g Turtle conservation project (TCP), Rekava providing ethnic food by the community etc
- 3. Sometimes community itself could be the attraction. Eg Fishing village, indigenous community etc









RESOURCE ANALYSIS Ecotourism Attraction Inventories

There are 3 categories of Ecotourism attractions:

- Focal
- Complementary
- Support



DETERMINING ECOTOURISM POTENTIAL

To determine the ecotourism potential of a locality or region it is indispensable to work out a systematic inventory of its ecoturism attractions.

 $EP = \Sigma (FA + CA + SA)$

Focal Attractions

- They are the most distinctive and relevant elements of the natural and/or cultural heritage found in an ecoturism destination or region.
- They constitute the main reason for an ecotourist to travel to that specific destination.



Complementary Attractions

They also correspond to elements of natural and/or cultural heritage which are found in a specific area, but which do not possess the same importance or singularity of the focal attractions.

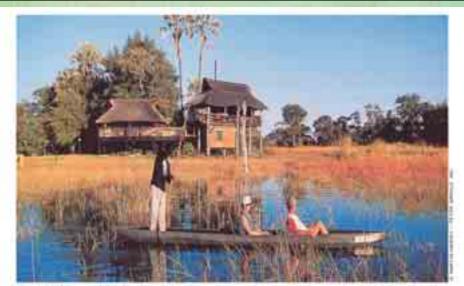
They provide added value to the ecotourism destination, contributing to a richer and more diverse tourism experience.

They entice the ecotourist to remain a longer period of time in the region, generating more substantial economic revenues to the local inhabitants.



Support Attractions

- They are those artificial elements (facilities and services) that provide satisfaction to the visitor, facilitating his visit.
- They include: ecolodges, restaurants, interpretive centre, nature trails, docks, look-out points, horse riding and boat riding services, ecotour oprators, etc.
- They are never the main reason for an ecotourist visiting a specific destination or region, but they constitute an indispensable element.
- They are added a posteriori, to provide support to the focal and complementary attractions, which are the main ecotourism draw.



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The process obtained from the article TRETTICTING ECRN*
By Martia Storag
Securities Description of the Center on Ecotomum and Sectionaline Descriptions and of the Securitional Ecotomum Society in Manhagian, III C



Accommodations that participate in ecotourism are located in or near protected areas and/or indigenous communities, such as the Matsiguenka Lodge on the Manii Reserve in Peru.

The picture is obtained from the article "PROTECTING EDEN" by Martha Honey Executive Director of the Center on Ecotownian and Sustainable Development and of The International Ecotourom Society in Washington, D. C.

TYPOLOGY OF AN ECOTOURIST

- **CASUAL**: People who partake of nature incidentally, such as through a day trip during a broader vacation.
- MAINSTREAM: People who visit the Amazon, the Rwandan gorilla park, or other such destinations, primarily to take an unusual trip.
- DEDICATED : People who takes trips specially to see protected areas and who want to understand local natural and cultural history.
- HARD CORE: Scientific researchers or members of tours specifically designed for education, environmental restoration, or similar purposes.

Average Eco-tourist Profile

• Age : 35-54

• Gender : Generally 50-50

Education : Highly Educated, a majority (82%)

college graduates

Party Composition : The majority(60%) travel as a couple,

15% with families and 13% prefer to

travel alone

Trip Duration : A majority (50%) preferred trips

lasting 8-14 days

Expenditure : Generally higher than main-stream tourism.

Motivation for taking : 1. Enjoy scenery / nature

next trip 2. New experiences / places

Source: Wight 1996 a & b



TOURISM IN NATURAL AREAS

	RELATED MOTIVATION:
Wildlife, Nature walks , Hiking	Authenticity, escape & contact with nature, Uniqueness, social contact, education, and contact with nature.
Biking	- do -
Camping	- do -
Birding	Hobby, education and contact with nature
Photography	- do -

CULTURAL TOURISM

Religious and cultural site	Atmosphere, authenticity, emotion, social contact & education
Religious & cultural festivals	- do -
Arts & crafts villages/centre	- do -
Ag <mark>ro tourism</mark> Tea tourism	Contact with nature & the rural community & education
Health tourism / naturopathy Ayurveda, yoga & meditation	Improved physical & mental well-being

There are many categories of ecotourists according to their field of interest



Ecotourism Activities

These are some of the most important ecotourism activities:

- Bird watching (birding)
- Wildlife spotting
- Botanical excursions
- Trekking
- Camping
- Speleology
- Archaeology
- Adventure tourism (several options, but they all have to be sustainable)
- Nature photography tours
- Nature painting workshops
- Agrotourism (rural tourism)

BIRD WATCHING

- Bird watchers (birders) form the largest single group of ecotourists around the World.
- According to official figures, in the U.S. there are over 60 million birders.
- 24 million of these birders take at least one trip per year to go specifically birding.
- Birding-related expenses in the U.S. are over \$23 billion per year, contributing to the employment of almost 800,000 people.
- In the U.K. there are over 1 million "serious" bird watchers.

Source: C.H.Sekercioglu. 2003. Conservation through Commodification. Birding Vol. 35 N° 4 August 2003: 394-402



