Eco-tourism
Principles and Concepts
a brief review

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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.
5. Recognition of the importance of tourism within the field of sustainable development.
6. 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

SEGMENTS – MASS TOURISM AND HOW IT DIFFERS FROM ECOTOURISM

Nature & Cultural Tourism
Wild Life Tourism
Adventure Tourism

which are defined solely by the recreational activities of the tourist is NOT eco-tourism

Eco-tourism are these activities incorporating conservation & benefit to local communities
DEFINITION OF ECOTOURISM

In 1991 The 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 to 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.
ECO-TOURISM MARKET SEGMENT

Tourism Market
- Cultural Tourism
- Rural Tourism
- Nature Tourism
- Sun & Beach Tourism
- Business Travel
- Fitness-wellness & Health Tourism

Eco-tourism
- Adventure Tourism

ECOTOURISM - TWO BROAD DIVISIONS

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

WTO, modified by Strasdas 2001
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 to - private 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 SUCCESSFUL DESTINATION:

- The community, Eg. Madu Ganga
- A set of travel attractions Attractive landscape and water 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
There are 3 categories of Ecotourism attractions:

• Focal
• Complementary
• Support

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

\[ EP = \sum (FA + CA + SA) \]
Focal Attractions

- They are the most distinctive and relevant elements of the natural and/or cultural heritage found in an ecotourism 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 operators, 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.
Like these tourists from Gemi's Camp, a safari lodge adjacent to the Mamir Wildlife Reserve in Bolivia, the Chavango Delta, a segment of the traveling public has become disillusioned with mass tourism, seeking instead less crowded, pristine natural areas.

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

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

The picture is obtained from the article "PROTECTING EDEN" by Martha Honey, Executive Director of the Center on Ecotourism and Sustainable Development and of the International Ecotourism 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 next trip : 1. Enjoy scenery / nature 2. New experiences / places

Source: Wight 1996 a & b
Eco-tourism Resource Base

Nature

- Formed by natural forces. Located in pristine fragile ecosystems

Culture

- Man made sites (cultural & historical sites)

Art & Heritage tourism Subset of cultural tourism

Tangible

Intangible

Indigenous/rural culture

Eco-tourism in Natural Areas

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Related Motivation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wildlife, Nature walks, Hiking</td>
<td>Authenticity, escape &amp; contact with nature, Uniqueness, social contact, education, and contact with nature.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biking</td>
<td>- do -</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Camping</td>
<td>- do -</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birding</td>
<td>Hobby, education and contact with nature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Photography</td>
<td>- do -</td>
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CULTURAL TOURISM

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<table>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Religious and cultural site</td>
<td>Atmosphere, authenticity, emotion, social contact &amp; education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious &amp; cultural festivals</td>
<td>- do -</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arts &amp; crafts villages/centre</td>
<td>- do -</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agro tourism</td>
<td>Contact with nature &amp; the rural community &amp; education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tea tourism</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health tourism / naturopathy</td>
<td>Improved physical &amp; mental well-being</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ayurveda, yoga &amp; meditation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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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.

Thank you for your courtesy of listening to me