

LESSON 1

SUSTAINABLE TOURISM



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Definition:

“ Environmentally responsible travel and visitation to natural areas, in order to enjoy and appreciate nature (and any accompanying cultural features, both past and present) in a way that promotes conservation, has a low visitor impact, and provides for beneficially active socio-economic involvement of local people”
(World Conservation Union,1996)

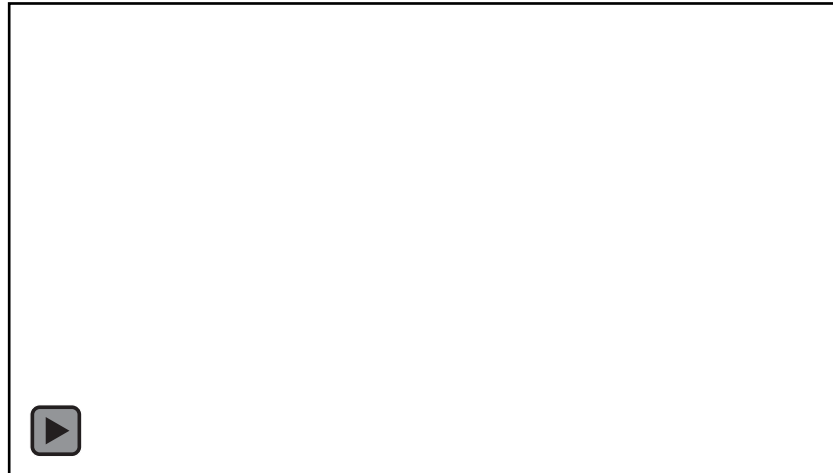


Tourism has become an important economic activity in and around protected areas around the world. Well-planned sustainable tourism programs provide opportunities for the visitor to experience natural areas and human communities, and learn about the importance of conservation and local culture.



Sustainable tourism is particularly promising as a key mechanism for local communities to benefit from the environmental and biodiversity resources.

Sustainable tourism is deliberately planned from the beginning to benefit local residents, respect local culture, conserve natural resources, and educate both tourists and local residents.



Sustainable tourism deliberately seeks to minimize the negative impacts of tourism, while contributing to conservation and the well-being of the community, both economically and socially.



CONVENTIONAL TOURISM

1. Has one goal: profit
2. Often not planned in advance; “it just happens”
3. Tourist oriented
4. Controlled by outside parties
5. Focus on entertainment for tourists
6. Conservation not a priority
7. Communities not a priority
8. Much revenue goes to outside operators & investors

- SUSTAINABLE TOURISM

- 1. Planned with three goals: profit, environment, and community (triple bottom line)
- 2. Usually planned in advance with involvement of all stakeholders
- 3. Locally oriented
- 4. Locally controlled, at least in part
- 5. Focus on educational experiences
- 6. Conservation of natural resources a priority
- 7. Appreciation for local culture a priority
- 8. More revenue stays with local community

The triple bottom line of sustainable tourism

Sustainable tourism has three key components, sometimes referred to as the “triple bottom line”: (International Ecotourism Society, 2004):

1. Environmentally, sustainable tourism has a low impact on natural resources, particularly in protected areas. It minimizes damage to the environment (flora, fauna, habitats, water, living marine resources, energy use, contamination, etc.) and ideally tries to benefit the environment.



2. Socially and culturally, it does not harm the social structure or culture of the community where it is located. Instead, it respects local cultures and traditions. It involves stakeholders (individuals, communities, tour operators, government institutions) in all phases of planning, development, and monitoring, and educates stakeholders about their roles.



3. Economically, it contributes to the economic well being of the community, generating sustainable and equitable income for local communities and as many other stakeholders as possible. It benefits owners, employees and neighbors. It does not simply begin and then rapidly die because of poor business practices.



A tourism enterprise that meets these three principles will “do well by doing good”. This means running a tourism business in such a way that it doesn’t destroy natural, cultural, or economic resources, but rather encourages an appreciation of the very resources that tourism is dependent on. A business that is run on these three principles can enhance conservation of natural resources, bring appreciation to cultural values, bring revenue into the community, and be profitable.



Case study: Unplanned conventional tourism in Cancun, Mexico

Prior to its development as a tourist resort in the 1970s, only 12 families lived on the barrier island of Cancun. The entire area that now comprises the state of Quintana Roo was made up of relatively untouched rain forests and pristine beaches and was inhabited by an indigenous Maya population of about 45,000. Today, Cancun has more than 2.6 million visitors a year and has more than 20,000 hotel rooms, with a permanent population of more than 300,000.





Environmental and social impacts were given secondary importance in the development plan for Cancun. For instance, no provisions were made to house low-income migrants who now work and live in the area. As a result, a shantytown developed, in which the sewage of 75 percent of the population is untreated. The mangrove and inland forests were cut down, swamps and lagoons were filled, and dunes were removed. Many bird, marine, and other animal species vanished. (Sweeting et al. 1999)



Exercise: What attributes of sustainable tourism are important to the nation?



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How much of tourism demand is for sustainable tourism?

Sustainable tourism appeals to many of the same tourists who enjoy “nature tourism”, “adventure travel”, or “ecotourism” - i.e., tourism that focuses on appreciation of wild areas, wildlife, and local cultures. The WTO estimates that nature tourism generates 7% of all international travel expenditure. If all nature-related travel is included (not just specialty nature tourism tours), the fraction of total tourists who are interested in nature tourism may be as high as 40-60%.



- Those countries whose tourism industry is predominantly "ecotourism" have experienced very high tourism growth. Examples are Costa Rica, with a 400% increase in tourism from 1986 to 1991, and Belize, with a 600% visitor increase from 1986 to 1996.
- A survey of US-based outbound ecotourism operators shows that the number of ecotourism operators grew by 820% between 1970 and 1994, or an average of 34% a year

Where do tourists interested in sustainable tourism come from?

Tourists who express high interest in sustainability and nature-based travel come predominantly from these 12 countries:

- 1. United States
- 2. United Kingdom
- 3. Germany
- 4. Australia
- 5. France
- 6. Sweden
- 7. Netherlands
- 8. Denmark 9. Norway 10. Austria 11. Canada 12. New Zealand





Why do travelers want sustainable tourism?

The World Tourism Organization surveyed tourists from the United States, United Kingdom, Canada and France to better understand their motivations for travel. The results indicated a clear preference for wildlife viewing in a wilderness environment. Other priorities included: viewing rare species, visiting indigenous people, archeology, and bird-watching. preferred education and interpretation with high-quality guides, as well as the opportunity to visit remote, uncrowded areas.

Travelers are also seeking more remote destinations. They are looking for experiences off the beaten path, seeking wild and unspoiled areas. Culturally, many travelers want to escape the sameness of familiar tourism environments and instead want to experience the diversity and richness of local cultures. Many travelers then become activists. As they experience a threatened wilderness or local culture and learn about its plight, they want to help. International and national travelers are looking for environmental education, are willing to pay entrance fees, and are eager to buy local products and services that strengthen the local economy.





Discussion: Your experience with tourism.

- 1. What are the ways tourism has benefited your nation or your business?**
- 2. What are the ways tourism has had negative impacts?**
- 3. Has tourism overall been a positive or negative experience for you?**



Thank You

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- **BENEFITS FROM TOURISM**

- 1. Revenue for Protected Areas**

Funding protected areas is a major concern , governmental funding is often not sufficient for conservation needs, and many important natural areas will not survive without new and additional sources of revenue. Tourism offers opportunities to generate income in diverse ways, allowing people better protect sensitive areas.





2. Employment

Tourism can bring new jobs to an area, considered one of the greatest benefits to local communities. To meet the demands of tourism, residents may find employment driving taxis, as lodge owners, concession stand owners or tour guides. An increase in visitation to an area also increases the need for rangers, enforcement personnel, researchers and educators. Local residents are in a good position for tourism and related jobs because they are familiar with the natural and cultural resources of the area. However, they may need training in skills such as language and interpretation, handling of groups, food preparation, first aid, and motorboat maintenance. Tourism also increases the demand for indirectly related employment including service sector jobs, construction jobs and purveyors of goods such as food supplies.





Career Guide for Tourism Management



- Flight Attendant
- Cabin Crew
- Front Desk Officer



- Customer Relations
- Event Manager
- Food and Beverage Manager



- Concierge
- Hotel Manager
- Cruise Ship Officer



- Tour Group Operator
- Tourism Marketing
- Travel Agency

3. Political justification for the area

The potential of sustainable tourism may sway government officials to provide protected status to an area or to strengthen the protective status of an existing protected area or reserve, particularly if it can generate income and provide other national benefits. And, as government officials begin to think more about the importance of managing natural areas, visitors are more likely to visit and support a natural area if it is protected, which in turn adds justification to the existence of protected areas.



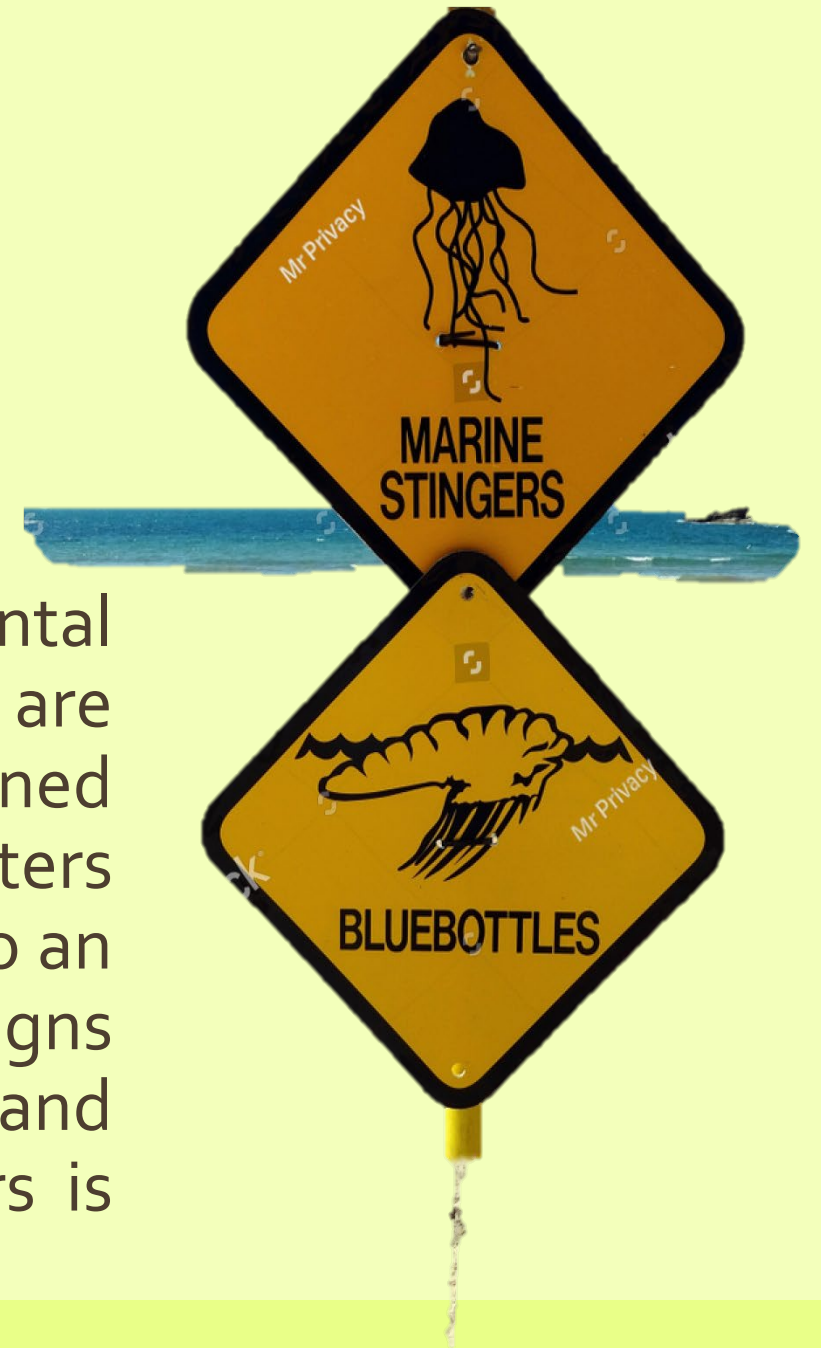


4. Environmental Education

Sustainable tourism provides an ideal audience for environmental education. Once visitors have seen coral reefs and marine mammals, they want to learn about animal behavior and coral reef ecology, as well as the challenges of conserving these resources. Many also will want to know the economic, political and social issues that surround conservation.



Nature guides are a critical source of environmental education. Visitor surveys show that good guides are a key factor in a trip's success. The lack of well-trained nature guides are in their concerns. Visitor centers with displays, printed materials and videos are also an excellent means of environmental education. Signs can convey important biological information and conservation messages. Interpretation for visitors is becoming increasingly creative and interactive.



Environmental education for visitors is most effective when pre and post-trip information is made available. Preparation encourages visitors to think about appropriate behavior, thereby minimizing negative impacts, and the use of follow-up materials continues the environmental education process



In-class activity >>Total score 20.

Choose one specific destination and design a trip that visitors are encouraged to study wildlife, natural conservation, and local community.

The trip can last more than a day.

Then tell me

1. How does your trip support the community?
2. Which job positions the trip can create?
3. What visitors can learn after the trip?





Thank you 😊