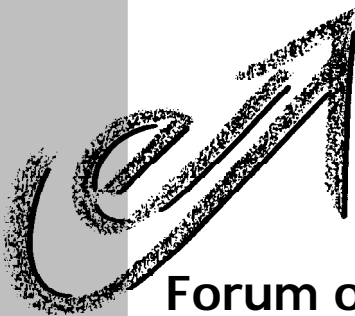


**German NGO Forum
on Environment & Development**

**Report to the 7th Meeting of the
Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD)**

Tourism and Sustainable Development



**Forum on
Environment & Development**

**Position paper
of the German NGO Forum on Environment & Development
on the environmental and social responsibility of tourism in the
context of sustainable development**

Published by: Forum on Environment & Development
Am Michaelshof 8-10
D - 53177 Bonn
Germany

Telephone: +49 - (0)228 - 35 97 04
Fax: +49 - (0)228 - 35 90 96

E-mail: forumue@csi.com
Internet: www.oneworld.web.de/forum

Responsible: Jürgen Maier

Editor: Heike Leitschuh-Fecht

Written by Christina Kamp (Tourism Watch) for the Working
Group Tourism of the Forum in cooperation with:

BUND, DNR, gruppe neues reisen, Institut für Entwicklung und
Frieden Duisburg, iz3w Freiburg, Ökologischer Tourismus in
Europa (ÖTE), Reisepavillon/Statt Reisen Hannover, Studienkreis
für Tourismus und Entwicklung, Tourism Watch.

This publication was sponsored by the German Federal Ministry for Economical Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and by the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Reactor Safety (BMU). It does not necessarily reflect the opinion of the Ministries.

Bonn, November 1998

1 BACKGROUND	3
2 THE IMPACTS OF TOURISM	3
2.1 Economic aspects: Jobs and foreign exchange - but often the money is drained away	3
2.2 Socio-cultural aspects: Codetermination and human rights are often not respected	4
2.3 Ecological consequences: Tourism is not a white industry	5
3 THE CHALLENGE: SUSTAINABLE TOURISM	7
4 OBJECTIVES, MEASURES AND ACTORS FOR SUSTAINABLE TOURISM	8
4.1 Focal themes for the CSD	8
4.2 Programme of Action for sustainable tourism	9
APPENDIX	16

1. BACKGROUND

Tourism is a worldwide phenomenon and currently one of the fastest growing sectors of the global economy. The number of international arrivals has more than trebled since 1971, from 179 million to 613 million in 1997. The World Tourism Organization (WTO) forecasts annual growth rates of 4.3 percent during the next two decades and expects the figure to rise to 1,600 million international arrivals by the year 2020. Domestic tourism is not included in these figures and has a volume that is several times larger than international tourism.

Despite the growth in long-haul tourism, tourism activities continue to mainly take place among and in the countries of the North. Europe (59 percent) and North America (14 percent) are the destinations for more than 70 percent of international journeys. The share of the 'Third World' in international tourism has risen from approx. 10 percent in the mid seventies to some 30 percent today. The East Asian and Pacific region has

experienced the largest growth rates. In 1975 its share in international journeys figured 3.9 percent, in 1997 this had reached 14.7 percent.

The impacts of tourism are extremely ambivalent. On the one hand, tourism plays an important and certainly also positive role in the socio-economic and political development of many countries. It can contribute to socio-economic development and cultural exchange and can further promote international relations and peace by creating an awareness that respects the diversity of cultures and ways of life.

On the other hand, many hopes that were placed on tourism as a motor of economic development have been disappointed. At the same time, in many tourism destinations partially massive negative impacts upon the environment, culture and society are becoming apparent that are calling into question whether tourism is a viable development pathway.

2 THE IMPACTS OF TOURISM

2.1 Economic aspects: Jobs and foreign exchange – but often the money is drained away

According to figures of the World Travel & Tourism Council (WTTC), tourism contributes 10.7 percent of the total GNP of the global economy, and, at 653 billion US dollars, is the most important source of tax revenue. Many countries, in particular in the South, are increasingly relying on tourism as a motor of economic development. They hope for foreign exchange revenues, income and jobs, multiplier effects in upstream sectors and a levelling of economic and social disparities between peripheral regions and the economic centres.

However, this has meant that more

and more countries are becoming dependent upon tourism, with all its risks. Tourism is usually a seasonal business. It reacts sensitively to political instability and environmental disasters in the destination regions, and is subject to economic fluctuations in the countries of origin of the tourists. Civil unrest, epidemics, natural disasters and criminality in combination with fierce competition among the individual destinations and their increasing interchangeability from the perspective of the tourists can lead to demand for a certain destination country collapsing from one day to the next.

In many countries, international tourism is now one of the most important sources of foreign exchange and offers an alternative or supplement to foreign exchange revenues from raw materials, agricultural produce or industrial exports. The income generated by international tourism has increased twenty-fold since

1971 (from 21 billion US\$ to 444 billion US\$ in 1997). The WTO expects further annual growth rates of 6.7 percent. In 1997 the five states earning the most from tourism were, in this order, the USA, Italy, France, Spain and Great Britain. China was number eight on the list, being the developing country with the largest revenues from tourism.

However, a considerable amount of these foreign exchange revenues leaks back out of the destination countries for tourism-related imports. These leakages vary greatly from country to country. They depend upon the size, structure and state of development of the national economy and upon the predominant types of tourism. The more goods, services, physical capital and human capital a country must import for its tourism services, the higher are the leakages; in remote, scarcely developed regions they can amount to 90 percent. This concerns particularly the small, poor and scarcely industrialized countries, such as many Caribbean and Pacific island states, where leakages are generally well above 50 percent. In luxury tourism the share of foreign exchange that leaks out of the country is particularly high, as here a particularly large amount of imported goods and a sophisticated infrastructure are demanded. The hotels are frequently foreign-owned, so that profits, interest and wages are being repatriated. The liberalization of global trade and services under the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS) is increasingly undermining the possibilities of individual countries and regions to control their tourism industries and the economic gains realizable from tourism.

The tourism branch provides many jobs. Worldwide, 255 million people are employed in tourism, i.e. every ninth employed person. For well-trained people, the service sector offers an opportunity for sustainable employment. However, jobs in tourism in fact are often poorly paid and unqualified. Creating a job in tourism costs significantly more than e.g. in agriculture or in small businesses. The

multiplier effects of tourism in e.g. agriculture and fisheries or in artisanal crafts are far less significant than is often assumed. Furthermore, tourism also destroys jobs by displacing traditional sources of income such as agriculture or fishing.

2.2 Socio-cultural aspects: Codetermination and human rights are often not respected

International tourism catalyses the transition from traditional ways of life to the modern, Western form of society. Within relatively short periods, the meeting of very different cultures triggers processes of change. While many members of host communities assess such changes quite positively – for instance in terms of more rapid modernization – these changes lead on the other hand to a loss of cultural identity and a collapse of traditional value systems. Thus, for instance, family and social cohesion breaks apart; activities in the primary sector (agriculture, fishing and cattle breeding) lose status vis-à-vis those in the service sector; criminality, prostitution and alcohol/drug abuse increase.

In many countries, tourism development is associated with violations of human rights. In order to realize (large-scale) tourism projects, local populations are expelled from their land – often without adequate compensation. Beaches are reserved for hotel guests while access is barred to residents. The possibilities of residents to make an income in the primary sector are curtailed. In many countries, child labour is commonplace in the tourism industry, particularly in the informal sector. According to estimates of the International Labour Organization (ILO), 13 to 19 million children and youths work in the tourism sector. A particularly abominable form of violation of children's rights is the veritable child slavery that is taking place in the booming sex industry of many countries, e.g. in Thailand and the Philippines. In these countries, tourism has led to great increase in prostitution and also in the sexual exploitation of children.

2.3 Ecological consequences: Tourism is not a 'white industry'

Tourism is ever more frequently praised as an important instrument of nature conservation. Income from tourism can help to finance protected areas and to safeguard ecologically sensitive regions against more environmentally damaging alternative uses. Nature-based tourism can contribute to promoting the environmental education of both tourists and the local population.

However, tourism is not the 'white industry' that it likes to call itself. Tourism is responsible for a considerable proportion of burgeoning global transport volumes and the associated environmentally damaging pollutant emissions. The arrival in a holiday destination is generally by car, bus, aircraft or railway. Tourists consume about 90 percent of the primary energy required during a holiday for transportation during their arrival and return journey. The emissions generated by this are one of the main environmental problems of tourism. Particularly the pollution caused by air transport – which is largely for tourism – is continuously rising, with an annual growth rate around 5 percent. Air traffic is expected to double over the next 15 years. Worldwide civilian air transport already consumed 176 million tons of kerosene in 1990, releasing 550 million tons of carbon dioxide and more than 3 million tons of nitrogen oxides. While it has been possible to halve energy consumption per aircraft over the past 20 years, the rapid growth in global air traffic has meant that absolute energy consumption has nonetheless risen by 50%.

As do other sectors, tourism consumes resources and generates wastes.

It is frequently in conflict with other forms of resource use, sometimes it is complementary. An intact balance of nature is one of the essential foundations of the tourism sector. However, the environmental damage caused by tourism can go so far that the region loses its attractiveness as a destination and is no longer visited by tourists – as has already happened in certain Mediterranean regions. The high water demand of tourists is a major problem, particularly in areas where water resources are scarce, as here the tourists are often supplied at the cost of the local population. In most tourism regions in developing countries, wastewater and solid waste disposal are not properly managed. Tourism centres with greatly increased solid waste and wastewater arisings are already sources of serious ecological damage and health risks.

The land requirement of tourism is enormous, as it often develops separately from autochthonous infrastructure and land use. Thus the construction of land-intensive hotels and camps, camping sites, golf courses and sports facilities or of tourism-oriented transport infrastructure (access roads, parking lots, funiculars and airports) only indirectly has a positive effect for the local population, while leading to massive environmental damage: Coastal areas are dammed in, wetlands are drained, dry areas are irrigated, forests are cut down and coral reefs are blasted. The great demand for building materials in the tourist centres leads to construction sand being extracted in large quantities from the beaches, limestone from the coral reefs and construction timber from the coastal mangrove forests, whereby the ecosystems involved suffer massive damage. Where tourists or dealers collect corals and shells, this impairs coral reefs and the species composition of ecosystems. The trade in products of endangered animal and plant species is frequently in violation of species conservation laws.

Many tourism activities such as skiing, skin diving, boating, mountain hiking and

trekking stress natural areas and their animal and plant life. In many cases it is precisely nature-based tourism, which opens up previously undeveloped natural areas to tourism activities, that causes or exacerbates ecological degradation. Thus for instance trekking tourism creates environmental stress in mountain regions through wastes and logging.

3. THE CHALLENGE: SUSTAINABLE TOURISM

With the intention of minimizing the negative impacts of tourism and enhancing its positive contribution to sustainable development, the "Earth Summit + 5" Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly held in June 1997 in New York requested the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD) to elaborate an action-oriented international programme of work on sustainable tourism.

Sustainable tourism is guided by the principles set out in the *Rio Declaration on Environment and Development* and the recommendations contained in *Agenda 21*. It must be structured so as to be in harmony with the relevant international agreements and declarations (see Appendix).

Sustainable tourism needs to meet social, cultural, environmental and economic criteria of viability and acceptability.

Sustainable tourism has a long-term perspective, relating to both present and future generations, and is

- ethically and socially just and culturally appropriate,
- environmentally/ecologically sustainable and
- economically profitable and feasible.

These dimensions of sustainability are closely related and interact with each other, and need to be considered and addressed in an integrative manner.

A vision of sustainable tourism

Only when the above conditions of sustainable tourism have been satisfied can it make a positive contribution to:

- international understanding and peace,
- preserving the natural preconditions of human life,
- safeguarding the cultural identity of host communities and
- economic and social development and justice.

Sustainable tourism requires universal recognition of "The right of everyone to rest and leisure, reasonable limitation of working hours, periodic leave with pay and freedom of movement without limitation, within the bounds of the law" (WTO Tourism Bill of Rights, Article 1, Sofia 1985).

4. OBJECTIVES, MEASURES AND ACTORS FOR SUSTAINABLE TOURISM

4.1 Focal themes for the CSD

To move towards this vision step by step, the German environment and development organizations joined together in the German NGO Forum on Environment & Development call upon the CSD to focus on the following issues of tourism:

Integrative aspects of sustainability

Establishment of sustainable tourism as the overarching concept

- Elaboration and adoption of guidelines / a protocol for sustainable tourism, preparation of programmes for implementation, monitoring of and reporting on the results, and initiation of a process of exchange of experiences, knowledge and best practices

Ethical/social/cultural sustainability

Respect for human rights

- Abolition of child prostitution, abolition of exploitative child labour

Political control and participation by host communities

- Observance of the subsidiarity principle (securing possibilities for political influence and control at the level closest to the individual citizen)
- Establishment of cooperative and participatory mechanisms and structures for participation of host communities, with an equal standing, in planning, implementation, monitoring and assessment processes relating to tourism policies, programmes and projects

Just and humane working conditions for persons employed in tourism

- Ensuring minimum social standards for persons employed in tourism

Ecological sustainability

Preservation of ecological carrying capacity, preservation of the ecological balance of particularly sensitive regions

- Accounting for tourism-induced environmental externalities in national tourism statistics through linking SICTA - Standard International Classification System of Tourism Activities with SEEA - UN System of Environmental and Economic Accounting

Sustainable transport development

- Ecologically appropriate pricing, taxation of aviation gasoline
- Promotion of environmentally sound modes of transport and transport concepts

Economic sustainability

Increasing the income of local populations, reducing foreign exchange

leakages

- Limiting foreign ownership/shareholdings in tourism facilities
- Integration of tourism development in local/regional economic activities

4.2 Programme of action for sustainable tourism

In the context of a comprehensive programme of action for achieving the objectives of sustainability in tourism, we propose the following measures and call upon the CSD to make efforts to ensure that the actors concerned implement these measures.

Objectives	Measures	Actors
<i>Integrative aspects of sustainability</i>		
<p>Establishment of sustainable tourism as the overarching concept</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of national and regional sustainability action plans for all countries, with due consideration to tourism issues • Integration of tourism planning, development planning and environmental planning, creation of integrated planning and management instruments within a national sustainability strategy • Creation of structures that facilitate cooperation among all parties involved (local, national and international) • Independent, strategic environmental and social assessments of tourism projects and tourism development plans • Targeted promotion of environmentally and socially acceptable tourism products with market based instruments and incentives, such as contests, awards, certificates, model projects, and a uniform quality label for sustainable tourism • Creation of open networks for information and research purposes, promotion of research on sustainable tourism, dissemination and implementation of results • Internationally coordinated development and application of criteria by which to register, assess and continuously monitor the impacts 	<p>National governments Intergovernmental organizations (EU and others) Tourism industry, WTTC Associations, NGOs CBD parties WTO-OMT Scientific community</p>

	<p>of tourism and of the progress made through measures taken for sustainable tourism</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consideration of environmental and social acceptability aspects in the world trade regime (GATS) • Elaboration and adoption of guidelines /a protocol for sustainable tourism, preparation of programmes for implementation, monitoring of and reporting on the results, and initiation of a process of exchange of experiences, knowledge and best practices • Adoption, observance and implementation of a WTO-OMT 'Global Code of Ethics for Tourism' by the principal actors in tourism, in particular the tourism industry • Measures for sensitization and information on the objectives and criteria of sustainable tourism, with the aim of changing the consumption patterns of tourists (towards rarer, longer and more aware travelling, and an appropriate, environmentally and socially acceptable behaviour in the destinations) 	
<i>Ethical/social/cultural sustainability</i>		
<p>Respect for human rights</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Abolition of child prostitution, strict controls, conclusion of bilateral judicial assistance agreements • Safeguarding the right of children to their childhood, abolition of exploitative child labour • Abolition of forced labour • Protection of local population groups against expulsion and forced resettlement 	<p>National governments Tourism industry Intergovernmental organizations ILO Rights of the Child Convention parties</p>
<p>Improvement of the quality of life of all people</p> <p>Equitable distribution of the economic gains of tourism</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creation of avenues for greater and improved participation in the income possibilities arising from tourism for broad segments of the local population, in particular for women and youths • Promotion of small, private, locally owned accommodation, promotion of small and medium-sized tourism enterprises 	<p>National governments Tourism industry International investors/donors</p>

Objectives, measures and actors
for sustainable tourism

<p>Political control and participation by host communities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Observance of the subsidiarity principle in political processes of relevance to tourism, through securing possibilities for political influence and control at the level closest to the individual citizen • Establishment of cooperative and participatory mechanisms and structures for participation of host communities, with an equal standing, in planning, implementation, monitoring and assessment processes relating to tourism policies, programmes and projects • Empowerment of the local population involved in or affected by tourism in order to permit and promote informed participation • Consultation processes in tourism planning, with the involvement of NGOs and local communities • Safeguarding the opportunities of minorities and marginalized groups of the population to influence and participate in decision-making processes, protection of these groups against exploitation and dependence • Protection and preservation of the economic, social and cultural interests of indigenous groups 	<p>National governments WTO-OMC (GATS) NGO Labour unions International investors/donors</p>
<p>Just and humane working conditions for persons employed in tourism</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring minimum social standards for persons employed in tourism • Observance of worker rights in tourism • Fair payment of local tourism workers 	<p>National governments Tourism industry Labour unions Intergovernmental organizations ILO International investors/donors</p>
<p>Equitable access to natural resources</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safeguarding local control over local resources, e.g. water and land 	<p>National governments</p>

<p>Preservation of the cultural heritage and integrity of tourism destinations in all parts of the world, no destruction of traditional social structures</p> <p>Priority for the protection of the cultural identity of the population (traditions and ways of life), in particular of indigenous communities, over the interests of tourism</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exertion of control over the growth of the tourism sector where it endangers local communities and social values • Stipulation of social carrying capacity limits (e.g. maximum number of beds for tourists) • Provision of information to tourists on appropriate behaviour (sensitivity, restraint, respect for and adaptation to the local culture) • Inclusion of the traditional elements and activities of every community and support for their identity, culture and interests in the formulation and implementation of tourism strategies • Provision of information to the local population on the opportunities for and risks to local culture presented by tourism 	<p>National governments Tourism industry Intergovernmental organizations Associations, NGOs</p>
<p>Free access to information, training and technology transfer for tourism authorities, managers and employees and for interested segments of the population</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inclusion of the concepts and criteria of sustainable tourism in tourism training programmes • Promoting the qualification of local tourism workers through long-term programmes • Establishment of information centres in tourism destinations 	<p>National governments Tourism industry Labour unions Intergovernmental organizations International investors/donors Scientific community</p>
<p>No discrimination</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to tourism facilities for all (inland and foreign guests and local residents) 	<p>National governments Tourism industry</p>
<p><i>Ecological sustainability</i></p>		
<p>Preservation of ecological carrying capacity</p> <p>Preservation of the ecological balance of particularly sensitive regions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accounting for tourism-induced environmental externalities in national tourism statistics through linking SICTA - Standard International Classification System of Tourism Activities with SEEA - UN System of Environmental and Economic Accounting • Strict application of the polluter pays principle and internalization of external costs • Identification and particular consideration of 	<p>National governments Intergovernmental organizations WTO-OMT UNESCO Tourism industry International investors/donors Scientific</p>

Objectives, measures and actors for sustainable tourism

	<p>all ecologically important areas (protected areas and others)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determination of ecological carrying capacity limits in tourism regions • Abstaining from the further expansion of tourism in areas in which the natural environment is already under great stress • Removal of intrusive structures and performance of clean-up measures in order to restore the degraded environment in regions where carrying capacity limits have already been overstepped • Stipulation of permissible sites and activities, reduction of tourism intensity in space and time (e.g. through channelling and restrictions upon the number of visitors, nature conservation oriented zoning with closed areas in ecologically sensitive core zones) 	<p>community</p>
<p>Sustainable resource use, e.g. no exhaustive extraction of wild animals and plants</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safeguarding sustainable resource use through internationally coordinated economic instruments • Further development of the Washington Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) through integration of the precautionary principle, e.g. only permitting the taking of specimens from the wild in exceptional cases • Measures to minimize the consumption of water, energy and other resources, utilization of environmentally sound water and energy conservation technologies • Promotion of renewable sources of energy, reduction of the use of non-renewable energy • Pollution prevention, wastewater treatment, solid waste source reduction and recycling 	<p>National governments Intergovernmental organizations CITES parties Tourism industry</p>

<p>Sustainable transport development</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduction of tourism-related traffic, particularly in countries with high levels of resource-consuming holiday mobility • Shifting demand to less environmentally damaging modes of transport through promoting regional/national tourism products instead of long-haul tourism • Ecologically appropriate pricing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Removal of subsidies and other economic incentives that lead to negative environmental impacts - Taxation of aviation gasoline, mineral oil • Promotion of environmentally sound modes of transport and transport concepts • International harmonization of legal and economic framework conditions 	<p>National governments Intergovernmental organizations Tourism industry Multilateral organizations FCCC parties Associations, NGOs</p>
<p><i>Economic sustainability</i></p>		
<p>Increasing the benefit derived from tourism by developing countries</p> <p>Increasing the income of local populations</p> <p>Reducing foreign exchange leakages</p> <p>Increasing multiplier effects</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limiting foreign ownership/shareholdings in tourism facilities • Integration of tourism development in local/regional economic activities, inter alia through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Preparation of sustainable regional development plans - Strengthening traditional economic structures - Employment of resident labour - Preference of local investments - Promotion of local small and medium-sized enterprises - Use of local materials, products and services - Use of traditional (e.g. craft) abilities • Ensuring that other sectors of the local economy interlock with tourism, protecting those sectors (e.g. agriculture) that are important for sustainable development against being displaced by tourism 	<p>National governments Tourism industry Intergovernmental organizations WTO-OMC (GATS) International investors/donors</p>
<p>Creating and securing jobs, above all for the regional population</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ecological tax reform (revenue-neutral, making labour cheaper, energy more expensive) • Preferential employment of resident/local population • Qualification programmes for the local 	<p>National governments Intergovernmental organizations Tourism industry Labour unions</p>

**Objectives, measures and actors
for sustainable tourism**

	<p>population</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protection of the informal sector with its advantages 	
Avoidance of economic dependence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotion of diversification within the national economy, avoidance of one-sided, monostructural tourism development 	National governments

APPENDIX

Sustainable tourism needs to be implemented in harmony with the following relevant international agreements and declarations:

- the Universal Declaration of Human Rights adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations
- the International Convention on the Rights of the Child
- the various United Nations declarations on tourism, environment and protection of cultural heritage,
 - including the 1963 United Nations Conference on International Travel and Tourism
- the international agreements impacting upon tourism, including the
 - Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)
 - UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (FCCC)
 - World Heritage Convention
 - Ramsar Convention
 - Washington Convention (CITES), and
 - various regional agreements;
- declarations in the field of tourism, such as the
 - Manila Declaration on World Tourism
 - The Hague Declaration
 - Tourism Bill of Rights and Tourist Code
 - Charter for Sustainable Tourism (Lanzarote 1995)
 - WTO Manila Declaration on the Social Impact of Tourism
 - Berlin Declaration of the International Conference on Biological Diversity and Tourism (March 1997)
 - WTO/WTTC Agenda 21 on Environmentally Sustainable Tourism
 - Global Code of Ethics for Tourism currently to be developed by the WTO
 - Agenda for Action adopted at the World Congress Against the Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children (Stockholm 1996).