BUSINESS IN THE PACIFIC:
Promoting a Sustainable Experience

PROCEEDINGS OF ECOTOURISM CONFERENCE
AUCKLAND, NEW ZEALAND
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ECOTOURISM BUSINESS IN THE PACIFIC:

PROMOTING A SUSTAINABLE EXPERIENCE

Conference Proceedings

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PREFACE

Low impact tourism has considerable appeal for it must be in a symbiotic relationship with both environment and culture and at the same time provide an opportunity for both education and enjoyment. It reinforces the main reason that tourists visit the Pacific - to experience at first hand the wide range and beauty of the region's natural environment and to experience the diversity and richness of its cultures.

Ecotourism also has as its dominant theme participating in natural and cultural experiences "without leaving footprints".

Ecotourism is a term which has captured the attention of the tourism industry, policy makers, natural resource planners and managers, academics and educators. Much of the ensuing discussion has related to defining the concept and considering whether sustainable environmental management, sustainable tourism development and sustainable commercial performance are mutually compatible and achievable - and if so, how?

The Auckland Conference was deliberately focused on ecotourism business in the Pacific. It was planned and implemented in a manner to bring out the main issues associated with the development and sustained operation of ecotourism business and to identify the interactions between cultures, communities, policy makers, resource managers and scale of business.

The Conference was the outcome of innovative institutional collaboration - between the East-West Center Association, the Environmental Science programme at Auckland University and the Pacific Asia Travel Association, with significant input also coming from the New Zealand Ministry for the Environment.

Conference attendees reflected the diversity of parties with an interest in ecotourism, ranging from indigenous representatives of small communities wishing to develop ecotourism businesses to executives from major international airlines. Regional and central government agencies were also well represented as were experienced ecotourism operators. Of the over 250 attendees, approximately half came from New Zealand and half from fifteen countries of the Pacific and Asia.

While there has been much talk and debate about the great future for ecotourism, there are still few business ventures that fall within the definition of ecotourism adopted for the Conference. Some delegates clearly thought that the promise has been much greater than the reality. For this reason it was appropriate that the Conference focused on case studies and hands on experience. By in-depth studies of both successes and failures the move from business opportunity to successful operation may be made somewhat easier and with greater certainty.

The various case studies proved to be a very valuable and popular means of bringing out the critical issues, the real concerns and the practical solutions. The process also identified those areas where more progress needs to be made.
To ensure that the findings of the Conference were appropriately identified and recorded a team of some twenty people (the Guidelines Development Group) worked during the Conference to note the relevant details of the significant issues, observations and advice contributed by some 40 speakers and 250 delegates.

The formal outputs of the Conference are in two forms - this Proceedings and a booklet containing goals, principles and guidelines for developing ecotourism business in the Pacific. The objective of the latter is to identify the procedures considered to be mandatory or helpful in developing, fostering and assisting individuals to success in their ecotourism businesses. It is not a "cookbook" on how to develop a successful business, but rather a distillation of requirements, current experience and ideas related to such topics as business development, policy and planning, educational research and training and environmental and cultural protection - all in the context of ecotourism in the Pacific.

We have enjoyed collaborating in this venture; we hope that you and the environments and cultures of the Pacific will be the beneficiaries.

John Gilbert, New Zealand Ministry for the Environment

Gordon Ring, East-West Center Association, Hawaii

John Hay, Environmental Science, University of Auckland

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The following significant contributions should also be acknowledged:

- Sue Harroway, for programme development
- Ria Boeinghoff, for administrative services and preparation of the Proceedings
- Norman Thom, for Conference management
- Peter Keen, for technical services
- Members of the Guidelines Group, for drafting the Conference summary
- Peter Valentine and Trevor Sofield, for editing the Conference summary
EDITORIAL

The bountiful energy, significant ideas and contagious enthusiasm generated over the three days of the conference could not be left to dissipate, with no permanent record remaining. Most contributors responded positively and promptly to the request that their papers be made available for publication in this Proceedings.

Many authors took the opportunity to make revisions to the manuscripts following presentation at the Conference - thus this Proceedings reflects both the conference contributions and the result of limited reflection in the light of the experience and the overall findings of the Conference.

Authors were requested to submit their papers on computer disc. Many did so, but the revising, reformatting and in some cases the retyping of the documents was nevertheless a substantial task. In this and other respects it is appropriate to acknowledge the commitment of Ria Boeinghoff to achieving a professional result.

The first two contributions in the Proceedings are the opening speeches, by Governor John Waihee of Hawaii and Her Excellency Dame Catherine Tizard, Governor General of New Zealand. These are followed by the paper "Critical Issues for Ecotourism Business" authored by Professor Peter Valentine. This paper was distributed at registration in order to help focus the Conference on the substantive issues facing the development and maintenance of commercial ecotourism activities in the Pacific. The formal presentations, and the published papers that form the bulk of this Proceedings provide elaborations, additions and, in some cases, exceptions to the points made by Prof. Valentine. A consensus of these diverse views and the resulting goals, principles and guidelines for developing sustainable ecotourism businesses in the Pacific was compiled by the Guidelines Development Group and edited post Conference by Peter Valentine and Trevor Sofield. The resulting draft paper commences at page 172.

The Proceedings concludes with details of the programme for the Conference and with a listing of the participants.

As Editor of these Proceedings it is my hope that this volume proves to be a worthwhile practical contribution towards the development of sustainable ecotourism businesses in the Pacific.

John E. Hay
December, 1992
ECOTOURISM AWARDS

In August 1992 several leading New Zealand environmentalists and tourism leaders gathered to discuss ways in which tourism in New Zealand could be directed and managed with as little environmental impact as possible. An annual New Zealand ecotourism award was initiated by Dr Joachim Fischer and awarded for the first time at the Conference - Ecotourism Business in the Pacific. The awards were presented by the Hon. Rob Storey, New Zealand’s Minister for the Environment.

Award winners for 1992 were:

Southern Heritage Expeditions - owned and operated by Rodney and Shirley Russ

Doug Johanson’s Adventure Treks and Scenic Tours, Coromandel Peninsula - owned and operated by Doug and Shirley Johanson

Moeraki Wilderness Lodge - owned and operated by Gerry McSweeney and Anne Saunders

A Special Mention for 1992 was awared to Catlins Wildlife Trackers and to Tiritiri Matangi Island Project.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

- PREFACE iii
- ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS iv
- EDITORIAL v
- THE 1992 NEW ZEALAND ECOTOURISM AWARDS vi
- TABLE OF CONTENTS vii
- OPENING ADDRESS xi
  Her Excellency The Governor-General of New Zealand
  Dame Catherine Tizard
- MESSAGE xii
  His Excellency The Governor of the State of Hawaii
  John Waihee
- OBSERVING NATURE IN ACTION IN THE PACIFIC 1
  Gerry McSweeney, Lake Moeraki Wilderness Lodge
d/- Private Bag, Hokitika, South Westland, New Zealand
- PROTECTING THE GOOSE AND HER GOLDEN EGGS 6
  Barry Manley, Managing Director, Saatchi & Saatchi,
  Wellington, New Zealand
- CRITICAL ISSUES IN DEVELOPING ECOTOURISM IN THE PACIFIC 8
  Peter S. Valentine, East-West Center, USA
  James Cook University, Australia
- ENDEMIC TOURISM: 14
  A PROFITABLE INDUSTRY IN A SUSTAINABLE ENVIRONMENT
  Ian Oelrichs, Director, Vaux Oelrichs Partners
  Ballina, NSW, Australia
- ECOCULTURAL TOURISM: A PERSONAL VIEW 24
  FOR MAINTAINING CULTURAL INTEGRITY IN
  ECOTOURISM DEVELOPMENT
  Konai Helu-Thaman, The University of the South Pacific
  Suva, Fiji
- TOURISM - KEEPER OF THE CULTURE 30
  George Kanahele, Waiaha Foundation, Honolulu, Hawaii
- RESOURCE MANAGERS: 35
  CULTURAL PERSPECTIVE ON ECOTOURISM
  John Marsh, New Zealand Maori Arts & Crafts Institute
  Rotorua, New Zealand
- RESOURCE MANAGEMENT IN ACTION
  MEETING ECOTOURISM DEMANDS CLOSE TO URBAN POPULATIONS
  Phil Jew, Regional Parks Service
LARGE TOUR OPERATOR'S PERSPECTIVE ON ECOTOURISM
Glenys Coughlan, Air New Zealand
Auckland, New Zealand 45

ECOTOURISM IN THE SOUTH PACIFIC
AND THE CENTRAL EUROPEAN CLIENT
Joachim Fischer, Travel Writer, Germany 49

ECOTOURISM - PROFITABLE CONSERVATION
Marguerite Young, World Wildlife Fund for Nature
Sydney, Australia 55

ECOTOURISM - RESTRAINING THE BIG PROMISE
Annette Lees, Maruia Society
Auckland, New Zealand 61

ECOTOURISM AND HERITAGE CONSERVATION:
A GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE
Bing Lucas, Commission on National Parks and
Protected Areas of IUCN -
The World Conservation Union 65

ECOTOURISM - EDUCATIONAL TRAVEL:
A GROWTH BUSINESS - THE VICTORIAN EXPERIENCE
Roger Grant, Department of Conservation & Environment
Terry O'Brian, Australis Pty. Ltd. Australia 71

ADVENTURE CRUISING: THE OPERATION IN THE
GULF HAURAKI MARITIME PARK
Dee Pigneguy, Adventure and Nature Cruises
Auckland, New Zealand 75

ASSESSMENT OF COASTAL RESOURCE FOR NATURE CONSERVATION
AND NATURE TOURISM, KOSRAE ISLAND STATE, F.S.M.
Lawrence S. Hamilton, East-West Center, Honolulu, Hawaii
Madison Nena, Department of Conservation and Development
Kosrae State, F.S.M. 79

THE ROLE OF THE COMMUNITY COLLEGES IN BRIDGING CULTURAL CHANGES
Jane M. Yamashiro, University of Hawaii
Community Colleges, Hawaii 86

THE GUADALCANAL TRACK ECOTOURISM PROJECT
IN THE SOLOMON ISLANDS
Trevor Sofield, James Cook University
Townsville, Australia 89

ECOTOURISM - A SOLUTION TO PART OF THE PROBLEM
Frank King, King Tours, Vanuatu 101

EARTH FIRST CAN BE GOOD BUSINESS
John Gray, Sea Canoe International, Phuket, Thailand 107

ENCOURAGING ENVIRONMENTALLY SOUND TOURISM DEVELOPMENT IN THE PACIFIC
David Rapaport, Clean Development/Pollution Prevention Specialist
Greenpeace Pacific Campaign, San Francisco, USA 111

CULTURAL AND ECOTOURISM - BUILDING A SENSE OF PLACE
Francis Oda, Group 70 International Architects, Hawaii 118
OPENING ADDRESS

Her Excellency
The Governor-General of New Zealand
Dame Catherine Tizard

Back in 1962, an American historian - Daniel Boorstin - had a comment about modern-day travel. He thought that, "The traveller was active; he went strenuously in search of people, of adventure, of experience. The tourist is passive; he expects interesting things to happen to him. He goes 'sightseeing'."

(Actually it's interesting how English Mr Boorstin sounds - you can almost hear the stiffness of his upper lip.) Of course, Boorstin is not the only writer to have had an opinion on the subject. The old Testament, for example, is much more positive about all types of travel - as the Book of Daniel puts it: "Many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased."

But Boorstin has a point nevertheless, and the distinction he made between travellers and tourists is probably useful. If he got it right, it means that the term "ecotourism" is perhaps a little more industry-oriented than is healthy for such a new enterprise.

Certainly, "passive" visitors - tourists - are easier to deal with. Guiding them to just a few destinations makes planning and investment decisions simpler. Yet projections show that this concentration cannot be the future of the industry, in New Zealand or anywhere else in the Pacific - the saturation of the most popular destinations will upset even the most passive of visitors, if only because they will soon feel they are receiving poor value for money.

So for this conference, you could argue that it is more customer-aware to start thinking of "eco-travel", instead of "eco-tourism", given that "eco-travellers" are the ones more likely to make the extra effort to seek out the novel - and to pay active, rather than passive, attention to their surroundings - people who want "unwrapped" experience as opposed to those which come pre-packed. Customer-awareness then, is even more important for travellers than it is for tourists. By definition, their expectations are higher.

With this parting thought, I now declare this conference on eco-tourism, and I hope, eco-travel, officially open.
MESSAGE FROM GOVERNOR JOHN WAIHEE

It is an honor to convey my greetings to everyone attending this conference in New Zealand on "Ecotourism Business in the Pacific: Promoting a Sustainable Experience."

I am pleased that the State of Hawaii, through our Office of International Relations, is a primary sponsor of this conference. In April, the Office of International Relations sponsored a regional conference on the ocean environment that helped governmental and non-governmental organizations identify and amplify the Pacific's positions on oceanic issues prior to the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development. Ecotourism is another dimension of the Pacific's interest and concern regarding the island's physical and cultural environment.

Tourism is Hawaii's leading economic activity. It is thus essential that we examine ways to make tourism sustainable and to mitigate tourism's possible negative effects on our land, seas, skies, and people. We cannot forget that the primary reason for developing tourism is to create economic benefits that improve the quality of life for our islands' residents. The concept of ecotourism, and the work of this conference, will help ensure our achievement of these goals.

It is very gratifying that so many of our experts in this field are attending to share their knowledge and ideas with their Pacific colleagues. The Hawaii participants include academics from the East-West Center and the University of Hawaii and its community colleges, business advisors from the Pacific Business Center Program, and professional ecotourism consultants from our private sector tourism industry.

I congratulate the East-West Center Association for its role in developing this conference, along with the University of Auckland. The alumni of the East-West Center, many of whom received degrees from the University of Hawaii, are among Hawaii's greatest ambassadors of aloha in the Asian/Pacific region. I commend you on this endeavor and extend my best wishes for a productive and successful conference.

JOHN WAIHEE
Observing Nature in Action in the Pacific

Gerry McSweeney
Lake Moeraki Wilderness Lodge
c/- Private Bag, Hokotika
South Westland, New Zealand

Where Young Meets Old

The Pacific region is an extraordinary place to observe nature in action. At this moment in time, near Curtis Island in the Southern Kermadec group, halfway between New Zealand and Tonga, a new island is taking shape, born through volcanic activity in the middle of the open ocean. Jets of steam that erupt as the red hot lava meets seawater signal yet another chapter in the massive tectonic activity around the "Pacific Rim of Fire". As the lava cools, a process of colonization by plants and animals begins. The volcanic landmass of nearby Curtis and more distant Raoul Island, like so many Pacific islands, has been colonized predominantly by chance.

Living organisms come by floating on the ocean, by wind or by birds. There are few native species. Many of the forest plants such as Kermadec nikau and Kermadec pohutukawa appear little different from their New Zealand relatives. The Kermadec parakeet on Macauley Island is an endemic race of the New Zealand red-crowned parakeet. The commonest bird on Raoul Island is the New Zealand tui, apparently unchanged from its land of origin.

The Kermadec Islands are an example of the recent origins of so much of the Pacific. Colonization of these young landmasses, the speciation of a handful of colonists into an array of new life forms, and the mixing of plants and animals of a variety of tropical, temperate, old and new world origins, all add to the excitement of the natural world of the Pacific.

The ancient elements of the Pacific are of just as much interest. On isolated Stephens Island, off New Zealand's South Island, a friend of mine unearthed a tuatara from a drainage ditch where it had been accidentally buried more than a year earlier. This "living fossil" had survived without food in the dark for all this period.

Survival of the Fittest

At the end of the Tertiary period, about 60 million years ago when a veil of iridium-rich meteorite clouds enveloped the earth, the warm loving dinosaurs that ruled the earth soon died in the darkness. However, the tuatara survived because of an ability to go into suspended animation.

On a remote South Westland New Zealand coastline right now, Fiordland Crested Penguin are swimming from a clear blue sea, parading across a white sand beach and entering the green twilight world of pandarus (Freycinetia) smothering supplejack vine (Rhipogonum) and glossy leaved Coprosma.

For millions of years, this penguin, whose giant ancestor colonized the shore of ancient Gondwanaland, has come ashore to breed in an almost sub-tropical landscape completely different from the icy Antarctic wastes where we would normally expect to find penguins. Deep within the temperate rainforest, the penguin mate is caring for the two chicks that this species normally hatches. By October one chick is nearly as large as its parent. The second chick, raised as an insurance against the early death of the first chick, has hardly been fed since hatching. This tiny chick will soon die. In the world of the crested penguin, only the fittest survive.

The human colonists of the Pacific are also
survivors. These descendants of Polynesian, Melanesian and European explorers have had to struggle in new lands, adapt to new foods and develop new lifestyles away from their ancestral cultural homelands.

Where Nature Reigns Supreme

On the great landmasses of Europe, Asia and Africa the historic rivalries of warring tribes still simmer and occasionally surface, as in Yugoslavia and Somalia. However, the greatest struggles of Pacific people have been with the forces of nature. Many of us are painfully aware that this remains just as true today as it has been in the past.

In the last year Hawaii and Western Samoa have been devastated by hurricanes; Western New South Wales remains in the grip of widespread drought. New Zealand’s South Island has been blanketed in the heaviest snowfalls for 50 years and in the Philippines, Mt Pinatubo’s eruption has brought death and destruction to thousands and significantly affected the world’s climate.

In the Pacific, despite the best efforts of General Electric, Daikyo Corporation, Toyota and Sheraton, nature still reigns supreme. These natural challenges have meant that Pacific cultures have had to develop a resourcefulness and adaptability which in itself provides a significant attraction to visitors. In the Pacific, we live close to the edge. Nature in the raw with its earthquakes, snowfalls, floods and rains can be a time when the resourcefulness and hospitality of Pacific people to visitors stands out.

Every cloud has a silver lining and even the tragic shark attacks of recent months in Vanuatu, Fiji, Campbell Island and Moreton Island illustrate that wild nature still exists in the Pacific. Not all this ocean’s sharks have ended up as shark fin soup or poisoned by mercury and other toxic effluent, as in so many other parts of the globe.

The Beauty of Smallness and Diversity

By observing nature, you can also gain an appreciation of how best to minimise the impact of ecotourism development on both nature and culture in the Pacific. Small is beautiful because small ecotourism operations are far less likely to require substantial environmental modification for their development. For example, a series of small hotels, spread across different locations are likely to be less vulnerable to a hurricane than one large hotel. The impact of the hotels on local human communities are also likely to be less. Another lesson from nature is in the resilience of diversity. A monoculture of a single crop is far more vulnerable to disease than the diverse species mix of a tropical rainforest or coastal heathland. Small ecotourism operations that make use of a range of ecosystems - marine, coastal, forest and mountain are likely to be far less vulnerable to changes in market perceptions or in the weather than tourism businesses marketing perhaps solely sun, surf or golf.

Environmental and Cultural Challenges

Ecotourism must not further degrade the ecological or cultural systems within which it operates. Ultimately it must seek to reverse that degradation by developing a conservation conscience amongst its clients and through initiating programmes to protect and restore the natural environment.

The waves of human colonization of the Pacific have already massively disrupted both the ecosystems and human cultures of the region.

Despite this the Pacific remains a region of extraordinary natural beauty and ecological richness. It is a place where many people’s lifestyles and their surroundings appear almost idyllic to largely urbanized visitors from the heavy populated Asia, North America and Europe.

We do face daunting ecological problems. These include industrial pollution, predominately from the North, which has severely damaged the southern hemisphere protective ozone layer. We face rising sea levels from global warming, which threaten whole countries with inundation such as the Tokelau’s or Kiribati. We also face the rapacious appetite of the North, aided and abetted by our greed, in selling our forest, fisheries, minerals and planting agricultural cash crops which have eliminated many of our natural areas.

Ecotourism offers us an opportunity to save the best that remains of our natural and cultural heritage. We still have pristine beaches, rainforests stretching from mountaintops to seacoast, uninhabited reefs and islands and free flowing wild rivers. We still have strong, distinctive cultures determined that visitors
should only enter their countries on their terms. Because of our isolation and because we are almost half a world away from major tourist markets much of the Pacific has avoided being swamped by huge numbers of visitors.

**Low Volume - High Quality Tourism**

There are all sorts of advantages for our regions and environment if we aim for a low volume, high quality market. Our clients will be relatively affluent and they are likely to be well aware of the environmental challenges facing the planet. However, equally they will not want to be met by prophets of doom. They are on holiday and want to discover the richness of Pacific culture and nature without dwelling too much on the problems. Nevertheless, they will look for a quality of presentation and environmental awareness that will be a challenge for us to provide. Europeans in particular are sensitive to environment issues. A major German inbound tour operator I deal with is at present organising a petition amongst his clients to get the New Zealand government to stop logging all native forests. Many European visitors are appalled at New Zealand's primitive level of rubbish recycling, our widespread use of leaded petrol and our apparent failure to practice energy conservation.

These visitors will be equally discerning in their assessment of nature tourism operations. The decline in the popularity of zoos throughout the western world is not a chance occurrence. There is widespread public recognition that animals have rights too and do not exist simply to be paraded for our titillation.

As zoos have declined there has been a massive increase in watching animals in their natural habitat. A 1987 Canadian study (Butler, D., 1992) estimated that in 1987 18.3 million Canadians spent $C 1.2 billion on accommodation, transportation and equipment. Whale and dolphin watching, crocodile cruises, turtle spotting and bird watching are all major growth areas for tourism. The parade of fairy penguins on Victoria Australia's, Philip Island is that country's most popular tourist attraction. Discerning visitors will look closely at these wildlife watching operations to make sure they are not jeopardizing the future of the wildlife that they promote.

**Some Queensland, New Zealand and Polynesian Opportunities**

If these are the challenges, how well are we responding to them? I have never been to Hawaii but I sense that these islands illustrate some of the worst exercises of tourism and some of the best examples of sensitive operations. One day the pleasure awaits me. Meanwhile I make do with the excellent plasticised underwater reef fish identification chart produced by the Hawaiian National Park Service. It is in wide distribution throughout Polynesia where many of the same fish species occur. I am also aware of the tight controls that have been imposed on the humpback whale watch operations off Hawaii.

However, recently a friend walked for a day across the wilderness of the massive Kilauea volcanic crater in Hawaii. He had a marvellous natural experience marred only by a constant procession of noisy helicopters which the Hawaiian Park Service is apparently unable or reluctant to control.

New Zealand's mountains, fiords and glaciers have always meant that our tourism, particularly in the South Island, is strong on scenery and weak on nature interpretation. It is far easier to market adventure and thrills than it is to market understanding and awareness.

In a sense, visiting American fly fishers have actually helped us a lot. Many New Zealanders, even today, cannot understand why anyone would want to spend a fortune to get waist deep in water to cast a small feathered fly to hook a trout which you soon let go! The New Zealand way has traditionally been to catch trout to get food on the table. A bag limit of say 10 trout caught on a lead line trolled behind a high powered boat was the ultimate measure of success.

By contrast, the challenge to a fly fisher has been to start to think like a trout, to understand the natural world and its food availability, to knows what is hatching and at what time and temperature. New Zealanders have responded to that challenge, with growing numbers both taking up fly fishing and releasing their fish.

A similar level of skill is fast developing amongst New Zealand's ecotourism operators. Anyone, anytime, can jump off a bridge, ride in a jet boat or ski down a mountain. However, to see an albatross on its eggs, a penguin parade on a beach, a rare penwiper plant in flower or
black petrels fly in at dusk requires a good level of ecological understanding matched by an equal amount of patience. In the southern South Island, the 1989 Government agreement to establish a South West New Zealand World Heritage Area marked a turning point in emphasis towards nature-focused tourism. N.Z. $2 million has since been spent by the Department of Conservation in the development of a world class range of nature interpretation facilities. Private sector ecotourism operators have flourished around those nature activities provided by the Government in consultation with the local community and environmental groups (Sage, 1991).

**North Queensland, Australia**

In North Queensland, Australia, the absence of sky piercing snowy peaks, fiords and glaciers and the subtle complexity of tropical rainforests and coral reef has been of competitive advantage to that region's ecotourism industry. Outside zoos, the only way you are likely to see the extraordinary nocturnal mammals of the rainforest is by quietly spotting them on a guided night safari. A helicopter or jet boat is of no help at all! Equally, the complex world of the Great Barrier Reef is extraordinarily hard to perceive until you put on a snorkel and mask and venture underwater. Videos can prepare you for the experience but only by entering the water, on trips often led by marine ecologists, can you truly experience the reef.

There is a high level of ecological education input in many of the North Queensland tourist operations, within both the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park and the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area. Surprisingly too, the majority of the education initiatives in Queensland have originated in the private sector in partnership with environmental organisations. Unlike the major Conservation Department efforts in New Zealand, there has been little government involvement in interpretative visitor centres and displays in Queensland, although these are planned by the Wet Tropics Management Authority. Whereas tourism in New Zealand has predominantly marketed thrills and adventure, the central concept in the Queensland tourism promotion seems to be the concept of "Heritage". Queenslanders have actively embraced the promotional values of ecotourism and World Heritage so that today these words adorn virtually every tourist operation. By contrast, within New Zealand's South West, the words ecotourism and world heritage are whispered softly. The pioneering ethic still rules even in places such as the newly named World Heritage Hotel in Haast. Perhaps also there is a shyness amongst many of the inhabitants to openly admit that their area is truly world class.

**Polynesia**

I wanted to briefly touch on some ecotourism operations in the Cook Islands, marketed as a place like Hawaii used to be, until major tourist investment changed it forever. Despite this, the construction of the massive Sheraton Hotel on Rarotonga and existing major hotels with emphasis on sun and surf could ensure that Rarotonga at least fast catches up with Waikiki Beach if that is what the future tourists would like. Another approach is to spread tourism across a range of smaller operations and diversify the attractions. There are extraordinary opportunities for ecotourism in the Cook Islands. The choice of high and low islands offers the dramatic ecological contrasts between high mountain, lowland and coastal ecosystems. Each of the islands has its own distinctive features - inland freshwater and coral lagoons, inaccessible raised coral, rare bird species and vast coral reefs. Matching the Cook Islands natural attractions is a rich and diverse cultural heritage and a well educated entrepreneurial population. The Cook Islands Conservation Service is actively promoting a greater awareness of plants and animals and nature tourism opportunities such as the cross island track on Rarotonga.

Because many of the visitors to New Zealand and Australia from Europe and North America could also visit the Cook Islands, there is an opportunity for a partnership in ecotourism between Pacific nations.

In Western Samoa (W.S.) ecotourism is in its infancy despite major efforts by promoters such as Florence Sa'anga of the W.S. Visitors Bureau. She argues that W.S. greatest asset is its mountainous hinterland and rainforest complement the beaches and reefs which it shares in common with much of the rest of Polynesia and Melanesia. Ecotourism partnerships are being developed on the island of Savaii at Falealupo and on the Tafua Peninsula. The devastation of Cyclone Ofa in 1990 and more recently Cyclone Val in late 1991 has created an enormous challenge to the Western Samoan tourist industry to simply provide visitors with an adequate level of services and roads. A 1991 survey of ecotourism opportunities in Western Samoa (Tourism Resource Consultants, 1991)
concluded that the greatest opportunity for ecotourism in the country lay in initially offering a range of activities centred around the capital Apia with its existing tourist facilities.

Making it Happen

In my concluding comments I want to touch briefly on what is required to make ecotourism a reality. Unfortunately ecotourism isn't about academic theories. Obviously a small business operator will have a philosophy about what sort of ecotourism he or she wants to promote. That idea, that dream is crucial because it is which vision that is going to get you through the heartache required to make that dream a reality. To borrow a line from a current New Zealand television advert about the Watties food company: "The only time success comes before work is in the dictionary!"

If ecotourism is a new age for the tourist industry, the people best equipped to capitalise on the new age are the existing operators. Some of them will do their best to corrupt this new concept of sensitive tourism so it ultimately becomes indistinguishable from the product they originally marketed.

However, because these existing operators generally depend on a high volume - minimum interaction operation there will always be niche opportunities for people prepared to make a big personal commitment and offer small scale, high quality experiences.

Inevitably there are always others out in the marketplace keen to copy innovation. Ultimately you will have to either reach an accommodation with them, swallow them up or move on into a new field of tourism such as perhaps conservation holidays or trips to the moon!

Five Practical Considerations

I want to finish with some suggestions for budding ecotourism operators which apply to many other small business operations.

- Listen to your banker and accountant. Your bankers and financiers have strong memories of the silly years of the mid 80s and are likely to make up for it with extreme caution today. However, listen to their advice, because there is nothing like a sober financial analysis to temper your ecological enthusiasm.
- Watch out for top heavy management structures. Boards of directors, consultants and advisers are all very well, but someone is still going to put in an extraordinary amount of hard work to make your ecotourism business succeed.
- Be flexible enough to accommodate other people's philosophies and ideas into your operation. Every good idea can always be improved on.
- Avoid major expenditure on promotions until you are sure of your operation. Satisfied clients and word of mouth advertising will be your greatest sales tool.
- Watch your margins and don't succumb to all the agents and promoters who want a large percentage of your business. They can all be great allies, but ultimately you are on your own.

Through ecotourism I like to think people will move from awareness and appreciation of the environment to understanding knowledge and concern. From there they will progress to take personal actions to help protect the environment.

The Pacific is an exciting place. There are a huge number of exciting opportunities for ecotourism out there. I hope that all of us over the next 3 days can learn from each other how best to pursue them.

References


PROTECTING THE GOOSE
AND HER GOLDEN EGG

Barry Manley
Managing Director
Saatchi & Saatchi
Wellington

Four or five years ago we brought out to New Zealand one of Britain’s leading actors for a particular project. As he’d never been to New Zealand before, I decided to drive him from Auckland to Wellington, stopping at Taupo for a couple of days trout fishing.

I picked him up at his central Auckland hotel and we headed off down State Highway 1. After he’d been driving for about an hour he asked me whether it was a National Holiday. It wasn’t it was in the middle of the working week. He just couldn’t believe the lack of traffic, the lack of people around, and that this was State Highway 1 used to be spring, so there were even more sheep than usual for him to admire. Thankfully he managed to catch the first trout of his life at Taupo and two days later, as we left the lodge to drive to Wellington, he was so enthusiastic about what he felt was the unspoilt New Zealand scenery that he turned to me and said: "This country’s amazing. It’s like a giant manicured golf course." I drove on in silence, I didn’t disabuse him of the fact that we were driving past the Wairaki Golf Course at the time.

Now obviously, while the essence of ecotourism is virtually the opposite of sheep farms that look like golf courses; in his mind - in comparison to the northern hemisphere - New Zealand was a green, unspoilt and pleasant paradise.

The title of this address is 'Protecting the Goose and Her Golden Egg'. To put it more bluntly, we as a country and the Pacific as a region, simply cannot afford to kill the Goose that lays the Golden Egg. The Goose is our ecology, our natural environment and the Golden Egg is ecotourism. In fact, the Golden Egg for New Zealand is much more than ecotourism. It is also the substance and perception behind the marketing of our primary produce in world markets.

Despite the truly impressive developments and achievements of our industrial and manufacturing sectors let there be no doubt in anyone’s mind that commercially our most invaluable asset is our environment, our ecology. Ecotourism, in its various forms is the very future of New Zealand tourism.

The competitive advantage of ecotourism over virtually all other tourism appeals is that it is a unique ‘product’. Unique to a country or region and to all intents and purposes, your competitors simply cannot duplicate it. With enough money, you can build Disneyland anywhere. Of course, when it becomes rundown, or out-dated you can rebuild the new updated version. And that is ecotourism’s potentially fatal competitive disadvantage. By and large it’s an opportunity that doesn’t come twice. Once the ecology, the unique environment, is gone, once it’s run down, it’s almost impossible to rebuild it.

My purpose in this paper is to explain why marketing principles are essential to maximise and protect the unique competitive advantages of ecotourism.

Countries are brands and to compete globally, New Zealand, or any country must become a global brand. If we share the world’s biggest business - tourism - we must promote our differentiated ‘product’ to key global markets in a consistent recognisable way.

We and most of the Pacific are small marketers in comparison to the major international tourist...
destinations. Therefore, whatever we do must be more single-minded and professional than our competitors.

The two most important strategic marketing weapons we must employ are positioning and brand image.

Let me just define those two terms for you. Positioning is how we see a product or service or country in our mind in comparison to the competition. Brand image is the adjectives that we clothe a brand and it's positioning with, to give it personality. Those two fundamentals of marketing are what differentiates one brand from another in our minds.

For example, we readily identify the image of tradition with Great Britain, bigness and excitement with the United States of America, design and flair with Italy, friendly Ockers with Australia and precision and thoroughness with Germany.

In New Zealand we have failed to recognise and single-mindedly, communicate our natural position and brand image, based on our one competitive advantage - our ecology, our environment. These, we believe, are the essential ingredients of effective positioning and brand image that we as a country and the Pacific as a region must put into practice.

Firstly, play your strengths. You can't be all things to all people, so that means recognize your strengths. Within Australia, our client the Northern Territories, recognizes that they cannot offer the other Australians the glamour of Sydney, the sophistication of Melbourne, the surf and resort of Queensland. Their positioning is based on their ecology. And, it is not merely what they say, but how they say it which projects their unique positioning and brand image.

Secondly, be single-minded. Again, Australians are very good at it.

Thirdly, communicate your vision internally as well as externally, either within your company or within your country. There is no point in establishing a brand offer formulated on ecology if, even unwittingly, your own people - staff, the public at large or other tourist operators are working against you. Frankly, ecotourism on a country basis requires a massive commitment from Government, industry, the tourist sector, environmental groups and the general public.

Next, plan, plan, plan. It won't happen without a long term strategy. Particularly, when ecology is the basis of the tourism appeal. Actions now, particularly negative ones, will have consequences decades from now.

And finally, just do it. Plan but never make that the excuse for inaction. For too many years New Zealand has equivocated, researched and tested various tourist appeal options around the world. The result has been an uncertain, fragmented effort. We frankly don't have that luxury. But our natural positioning and brand image - based on our unique ecology and environment - is blatantly obvious.

If we and any country, are serious about it, it is and must be much more than merely an advertising campaign.

If we are not to kill the Goose that lays the Golden Egg - and once it's dead it will never be revived - we must all understand the vision, the opportunity and the part we can play in not only a viable, but an essential ecotourism industry.
CRITICAL ISSUES IN
DEVELOPING ECOTOURISM IN THE PACIFIC

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Abstract

This paper identifies a range of critical issues for the development of successful ecotourism business in the Pacific. It begins with the question of what distinguishes "ecotourism" from nature-based tourism and proposes a definition for discussion. It then identifies a series of business related issues including the identification of the entrepreneur, sources for technical support, money management issues and education and training issues. There are also a number of significant ecological issues concerning ecotourism in the Pacific including resource limitations and environmental impacts. Further critical aspects relate to social and cultural impacts, particularly potential impacts on traditional lifestyles and culture. The effects of tourism are not limited to host communities but may also spill over onto other tourists and communities. This is especially so in the case of ecotourism where there is often an expectation of wilderness involved in the experiences being sought. The fact that ecotourism seeks to develop a symbiotic relationship with nature - to support nature conservation - raises the critical issue of just how this can be achieved. This is even more complex when considering the mix of government and custom land so common in the Pacific. The incipient ecotourism industry in the Pacific lacks models of success and failure and this provides another issue for governments and researchers to address. Finally the question is raised of how ecotourism interacts with other styles of tourism.

The paper intentionally raises more questions than it answers. It invites participants to come to the conference prepared to help develop appropriate answers to these critical issues for ecotourism business in the Pacific.

Introduction

The Ecotourism Business in the Pacific conference has set a series of specific objectives which relate to developing sustainable ecotourism business in the Pacific. These objectives will be achieved through a hands-on workshop approach and plenary debate which will address the present and future limitations and prospects for successful ecotourism. To help guide the process this introductory paper on crucial issues will be pre-circulated. The intention of the paper is to raise questions and identify concerns which could form the starting points for conference deliberations.

What is "ecotourism"?

It is clear that there are many uses of the word and that these range from quite prescriptive and narrow definitions to its application as a broad marketing tool to capitalise on community interest in the environment (Valentine 1991a,1991b). Some of the debate which occurs about ecotourism is a consequence of such diverse definitions and the lack of a universal understanding or agreement over the term and its use. It seems reasonable to conclude that conservation interests favour a strict definition; one in sharp contrast with what might be deemed nature-based tourism. The distinction is usually drawn around the links between the tourism business and protection of nature. Budowski (1976) put this succinctly when he expressed the notion of a symbiotic relationship between tourism and the
environment. Thus an operation which takes people into forests to observe wildlife is clearly nature-based tourism and it is only ecotourism if there is support from the tourism activity for the protection of that natural area. At the other end of the spectrum of expressive uses for the term ecotourism is its application to almost all forms of tourism with a hint of environmental content. This use, sometimes called the "greenwash" approach, is so embracing that few examples of tourism activities do not fit! Clever marketing perhaps, but also very confusing and potentially damaging. Such use is common in the popular press and there is a risk therefore that people seeking a special ecotourism experience will become disenchanted by the term itself. There are examples of an emerging cynicism in some of the comments at recent conferences. These and other issues about the term itself should be clarified at the Auckland conference.

Another element which has been frequently included under the ecotourism umbrella is the link with indigenous people and/or cultural elements of the environment. For some this is a crucial aspect. There are a number of attributes which could be considered regarding the interaction with local people. These include investment, ownership, employment, management, location and scale of operation. Does the incorporation of cultural components within ecotourism debates simply increase the complexity of the issues? What are the benefits, costs, realities and necessities?

In the Pacific it is very difficult to separate people and nature as the two have to a large extent evolved together and the patterns of life reflect this. Of equal significance is the prospect that changing lifestyles and human situations in the Pacific are very likely to produce major disruptions to nature. In many places this has already happened. It is this nexus between people and place, common to most of the Pacific and elsewhere where tradition prevails, which has led to the inclusion and recognition of cultural heritage within ecotourism definitions.

The following proposed definition might be a useful discussion point for participants at the conference: "Ecotourism is restricted to that subset of nature based tourism which is:

  a) based upon relatively undisturbed natural areas,
  b) non-damaging, non-degrading, ecologically sustainable,
  c) a direct contributor to the continued protection and management of the natural areas used,
  d) subject to an adequate and appropriate management regime,
  e) of clear benefit to local people" (adapted from Valentine, 1992).

A useful way to come to grips with the issues involved with the meaning of this term ecotourism is to identify a range of actual nature based tourism activities or experiences with which you are familiar and decide which ones you might include and which exclude from ecotourism. To help things along here are a few examples:

natural history museum tour; botanical garden tour; visit to a traditional village on Samoa; boat trip down a river in Fiji; dive operation in Palau run by Japanese company; mangrove canoe trip in Pohnpei; hotel with landscaped gardens and traditional architecture in Vanuatu; any visit to any National Park; farm stay in New Zealand; 1200 bed resort in natural setting with emphasis on nature experiences. You could think of others. In your deliberations it will be useful to consider why you include or exclude particular examples or what additional information you might want about each.

Ecotourism Business Issues

If ecotourism is to succeed in the Pacific it is crucial to develop mechanisms whereby the indigenous communities of island nations are able to develop and manage such programs. In this regard there are many particular problems which should be addressed.

a) Identification of interest group and corporate body. It is apparent that in some instances different interests in a community or island may work against a successful ecotourism business. There are examples where economic benefits from the innovative entrepreneurial activities of one village have been undermined by subsequent copycat activities of another. This could occur when different villages fail to cooperate in developing a program or when State or National Government programs are in conflict with local needs or aspirations. The early identification of the full range of interest groups affected by any ecotourism venture is a key aspect. How can this be achieved and what policies should governments and other agencies adopt? This should be addressed at the conference.
b) Sources of technical support for ecotourism. There are many agencies and interest groups which are enthusiastic about supporting ecotourism developments in the Pacific but there is also, frequently, a lack of technical information locally. For example, information about the environment in a form suitable for ecotourism; identification of natural resources of particular interest to ecotourists; identification of fragile components of the natural environment related to ecotourism in general or a particular kind of ecotourism; development of appropriate programs for ecotourism activities and associated interpretation; development of necessary infrastructure and management skills, including visitor impact management. How can such needs be identified both at the local level and at the supporting agency levels? Should governments develop an infrastructure support policy to help in this or is it better left to the helping agencies? How can we avoid duplication and competitive waste while maximising regional benefits? Can the roles and resources of NGO groups such as The Nature Conservancy and WWF be valuably integrated with government programs or is it better to let each group follow its own goals? How can governments best support such groups and vice-versa?

c) Financial management issues. How can the returns from ecotourism be effectively distributed amongst the many people involved, particularly where custom land is involved? What are the reasonable expectations of members of the community who participate? How can expectations be kept at a realistic level? What are the most successful business management systems for village scale ecotourism? Financial management issues are crucial to the success of ecotourism projects, particularly the questions of who benefits and how. It is imperative that the issues are thoroughly discussed at the outset of a project and formal agreements struck between the partners (entrepreneurs, communities, local government, assisting NGOs etc). Failure to do so will result in serious problems during later project developments. The conference should identify good policies to adopt regarding business planning and management for ecotourism business in the Pacific.

d) Education and training issues. Apart from the initiation of ecotourism business, and associated technical and financial support, there is also the question of ongoing education. This might be no different from the basic skills in the wider tourism industry, at least for some individuals. But in addition there are special skills demanded of ecotourism operations and personnel. These include specialist knowledge of flora and fauna, capacity to deal with non-local people, especially foreign culture and foreign language issues. This includes the frequent low levels of understanding about local culture and behaviour as well as environments. The ecotourist business must provide support for their special clients and to do this will involve considerable specialist training. How can this be achieved when each ecotourism business is likely to be small? Should there be Pacific region training programs and a training network and if so who should provide them and how should they be funded? What sort of information is of greatest value in this process?

Ecological Issues of Ecotourism Business

Although ecotourism is ideally a practice which produces no ecological impacts it remains to be seen whether this ideal can ever be achieved. What is needed in this regard is identification of the principal problems which Pacific island nations should be particularly concerned about when planning for ecotourism business. Amongst the more obvious are the resource issues and the potential environmental impact issues.

a) Resource limitations. In village situations with limited environmental resources, is there a practical approach to the question of carrying capacity of ecotourism? What are the most likely limiting resources? What surveys should precede development of an ecotourism program? An example of potential supply problems is fresh water supplies on atolls. Another is the possible increased pressures on local food resources - for example coconut crabs or mangrove crabs.

b) Environmental Quality. A related question is the assessment of the environmental quality in regard to ecotourist interests. Is there an adequate base of high quality natural environment? What features might be attractive? Do we know the kinds of environmental qualities which will attract tourists sufficiently to pay the high costs of Pacific travel? Do packages combining natural and cultural features do better than more specialist offerings? Are there spectacular organisms to use as carrier or flagship species for an ecotourism business marketing program (Banded Iguanas of Fiji; Manta Rays of Yap). Given the relatively common biological base of much of the Pacific, how can ecotourism be
identifiably different for each country? Does it have to be?

c) Environmental impacts. Sometimes the limitation may be extra pressure on facilities such as accommodation or waste disposal issues. The engineering, architectural and construction processes of tourism are often insensitive to environmental impact. Significant impacts are often associated with inappropriate design, inappropriate building materials and extraction of raw construction materials near tourist sites. There are examples, however, of ecotourism developments which have set a new high standard in this field. The Mahoe Bay Resort of Stanley Selengut in the Caribbean is a fascinating example. Every step was carefully pre-planned to produce as close to zero impact as physically possible while providing an accommodation unit which attracted ecotourists and did nothing to detract from their experiences of nature. This was a challenge to engineers, to architects and most importantly to construction businesses and their staff.

Is there an appropriate scale of development which is able to supply adequate benefits without imposing additional environmental costs? Perhaps larger investments are better able to fully support the needed protective infrastructure? But some locations are strictly limited in their capacity to take people, either because of physical environments or because of the size of the local community. Additional cleaning of forests and foreshores risk alienating the environmental values which may attract ecotourists. How can this issue be tackled? In general, infrastructure needs should be met on already developed or degraded landscapes. This might be a valuable policy, but how could it be achieved? Perhaps taxation benefits or priority funding from agencies? Similarly the use of redevelopment rather than new development and retrofitting generally seems more in keeping with ecological sustainability.

When tourism is based on close encounters with wildlife, how can the potential impacts be measured and monitored? Who should be responsible when the resources may be common property? This issue may link with the question of who benefits. For example, ecotourism depends on natural environments which implies some kind of opportunity cost may be involved (refraining from logging or harvesting). How do the benefits from ecotourism reach those who bear the burden of the opportunity costs? If this is not addressed then what security is there for the natural resource on which ecotourism is based?

Social and Cultural Impacts of Ecotourism Business

One of the most obvious concerns, especially where ecotourism is meant to provide an income opportunity to village communities, is the extent and ways which tourists will impact on local values (Britton and Clarke, 1987). Are there good practices to minimise these potential effects? How can village people make informed choices about tourism when they have few or no reference points for potential impacts? Perhaps a clear and graphic program of information about tourism should be developed to deliver this information at the village level. Who should have responsibility for this?

The extensive literature about impacts of western tourists on village and traditional cultures demonstrates there are clear grounds for serious concern. But in many areas there seems no useful mechanism to ensure information sharing occurs soon enough to be of practical benefit to village people. Should each country develop its own program or are there common elements which could mean a more regional approach would work?

Given the inevitable prospect of real social and cultural impacts from ecotourism, what mechanisms are there to address this problem? How can such impacts be limited at the planning stage? Does segregation of tourists work better than integration? What are the experiences so far in the Pacific? All of these questions are on the agenda for the conference.

Another crucial issue for successful ecotourism business is the social elements of the experiences being offered. Many forms of ecotourism are "wilderness" related and imply low levels of encounters with other parties.

In ecotourism experiences visitors are very conscious of other people and usually have low levels of tolerance to perceived crowding. Similarly such ecotourists usually have strong expectations about appropriate behaviour or activities and will vote with their feet when conditions are substandard. There are a number of critical aspects. First is the interaction with other forms of tourism (see below). Clearly there will be much less tolerance of perceived undesirable activities in an ecotourism experience. Then there is the
question of traditional use sometimes in conflict with visitor expectations. When looking for birds in a forest an encounter with local hunters shooting the birds may be counter productive. This issue requires a great deal of sensitivity on the part of the operator to the subtle assessments made by such specialist tourists. Even simple things may offend. Traditional food containers and implements in the Pacific could be discarded where used because they were just a normal part of the local environment. They recycle very rapidly in nature. Introduced materials such as metal and plastic products create a different impact and are very visible environmental pollutants, especially to ecotourists who view them as litter. This distinction is not always clear to village people and yet the impact of such litter may detract very strongly from experiences of the ecotourists and consequently on the reputation of the business.

How might such issues be adequately addressed? Another related example is the concept of nature in the western ecotourist as being "undisturbed". This means that evidence of trees having been cut, such as stumps or logs, is unacceptable in the ecotourism destination. Cutting timber locally to build facilities is a common enough practice in the Pacific but this leads to site degradation in the view of ecotourists. These questions imply the need for both a code of conduct and for monitoring the environmental impacts of ecotourism. Who should be responsible for these?

Ecotourism Business and Nature Conservation

If ecotourism is about protecting nature, what kinds of arrangements are best to guarantee this outcome? Should there be levies against tourists to pay for the protection (additional management of the protected areas)? Should such fees be identified as a "conservation levy" and how will tourists respond to that? To whom should they be paid and how accounted for?

How much business revenue should be allocated to site management? Where common property resources are used should use fees be paid by the ecotourism business and to whom? How much nature must be protected and who might use it for tourism are other key issues. One clear concern is the tyranny of small decisions where numerous separate actions do not produce an ideal outcome either in terms of ecotourism business or for nature conservation. Should there be regional surveys of conservation needs such as the SPREP study of the Marshall Islands, which could then form the basis for supporting ecotourism developments (Thomas et al 1989)?

Given that central governments have some role in nature conservation, under what circumstances can traditional owners be involved in the development and management of ecotourism in protected areas? Should some types of tourism activities or operations be banned from protected areas because of the effects on either nature or other visitors? An example might be the vexed issue of motorised watersports in either freshwater or marine environments. In principle should mangrove ecotourism be by canoe or motorised boat? Is there a wider philosophy behind ecotourism which might suggest strict guidelines on the style of tourism deemed appropriate? Such a principle might need to consider the entire issue of ecological sustainability or broader issues regarding the social and cultural impacts on traditional conservation and management practices.

Another key area relates to the various laws which govern nature conservation and environmental management in the Pacific. How do these help or hinder a developing ecotourism business? Are there experiences from operations within the Pacific which will be valuable in guiding the development of a legal framework for ecotourism? How does custom land and custom law interact with international, national, state, or local law? Similarly the question of local rights to use ecotourism sites is frequently a concern, sometimes leading to resentment directed towards the tourists. How can this be avoided?

Models of Success and Failure

One of the best ways to promote a new industry is to give people an example of how it works. For ecotourism business in the Pacific there is an urgent need for carefully assessed examples of success. What approaches worked, what processes were followed and with what results? Equally it is instructive to have clear analysis of failures, to try and identify what went wrong and why. Success in other parts of the world can be imported but it is even more instructive to test our models at home, in this case in the Pacific. With different proposals currently underway, with some programs operating well and others facing difficulties, the idea of an inventory of success
and failure case studies is worth considering.

A difficulty to date has been the limited availability of written reviews or detailed accounts of ecotourism businesses. Perhaps the relative scarcity of such developments in the Pacific may explain this. The conference provides a good opportunity for some examples of success and failure to be reviewed and perhaps used to help other communities, individuals or countries to plan for their future.

An attempt to develop guidelines for ecotourism business presupposes that we can identify the causes of success and the reasons for failure. Out of the experiences of all the conference participants this may be possible. Such an assessment also assumes we know what we mean by success and failure. How do we measure success in ecotourism business? Survival of the business over a period of time may be an obvious criterion but is it adequate? In the exercise of trying to define ecotourism there may be additional clues for the evaluation of success - perhaps relating to the condition of nature, or the role of local people and land, or the employment or training of local people or even the experiences of the visitors.

Ecotourism Business and the Wider Tourism Industry

How does ecotourism fit in with existing systems of tourism developed for the Pacific? Is it simply another niche market for a modern environmental taste or does it offer a new philosophy with lessons for all tourism? In some instances it is unlikely that ecotourism could exist without the presence of established transport and other infrastructures. Is there likely to be competition over resources between, say, the recreation and indulgence tourism and an emerging ecotourism business? What might this mean to each sector?

Given the expanded concern about ecologically sustainable development in all forms of tourism, perhaps ecotourism will show the way for other kinds of tourism, especially when it comes to sensitivity to the environment in infrastructure provision and in concern for local people. One direct example of a pathfinder role is the need for high level training and education within successful ecotourism businesses. Another is the value of formal and informal communication networks.

Conclusions

This paper is intended to stimulate thinking and prompt participation in the workshops and deliberations of the conference. It attempts to identify a number of the critical issues which must be addressed if the conference is to advance our understanding and development of ecotourism business in the Pacific. It is now over to you, the participant, to carry these issues forward in a practical and constructive way.

References

ENDEMIC TOURISM:
A PROFITABLE INDUSTRY IN A SUSTAINABLE ENVIRONMENT

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Introduction

Pacific Asia Travel Association (PATA) has consistently regarded long-term survival and profitability as fundamentally linked issues facing the tourism industry.

The Pacific Division recently established a "Think Tank" to concentrate the attention of appropriately qualified and experienced professionals on the many thorny issues involved in "ecotourism". While the topic of "ecotourism" was the formal subject of the group's discussions, the range of concerns soon broadened into what may well constitute a significant new way of looking at tourism. We have coined the term "endemic tourism" to describe the process.

"Endemic tourism" was broadly defined by the Think Tank as tourism which recognises

a) that each individual locality or community has its special character, and

b) that particular character or identity may well constitute its major attractiveness to tourists.

The concept of "endemic tourism" therefore goes well beyond "ecotourism".

"Endemic tourism" also includes recognition that the cultural characteristics of communities have great value as tourism assets whether the culture is indigenous or introduced.

Consideration must be given to how the "endemic" tourism asset, can be best utilised. It is clear that, beyond a certain point, increasing the volume of tourists becomes counter-productive. Damage and pollution resulting from sheer numbers reduce the value of the tourism asset and the incremental costs arising from higher volume can more than offset the additional revenue generated.

At what point do diminishing returns set in? How can that point be recognised? What management strategies and tools are available to cope with these problems? Which tools and strategies are most appropriate in various conditions? It is important for the many areas and communities of the world to which tourism is, or will become, economically vital, that urgent, effective attention be given to finding answers.

This paper touches on (but reaches no formal conclusion about) a number of potentially contentious matters:

- The merits of mass tourism as compared with a more targeted cost-benefit-related "endemic tourism".

- The trap of "profitless volume".

- Environmental and social impacts of tourism.

- The need for a national tourism strategy which is industry-initiated, not imposed.

This tourism industry must take the initiative in planning its own future. It must reflect deeply and maturely in identifying its proper place in the complex of social and industrial factors that make up the tourism industry. All destinations and interests, public or private, local, regional
or national must become engaged in this process.

In most locations, tourism strategies are based on increasing the number of visitors to an area in the expectation that greater volumes will lead to greater benefits. Evidence to justify this assumption is difficult to find as it comes under closer and closer scrutiny from both supporters and critics of the tourism industry. Indeed, anecdotal evidence suggests that with greater volumes, profit margins are actually decreasing while the viability of natural and cultural attractions is threatened.

Is there an alternative tourism future, based on lowering rates of growth in visitor numbers but increasing the 'yield' of benefits per visitor? Could this alternative future protect our natural and cultural assets, and still deliver the economic and employment benefits we seek? Can we move away from 'mass tourism' and develop niche markets, such as ecotourism, which is widely promoted as a growth area in world tourism?

The problem is broader and more fundamental than merely identifying new sources of growth in tourism markets based on nature, culture, adventure or other special interest areas. This moves the focus from ecotourism to a new hypothesis: *that the tourism industry must be profitable and environmentally sustainable if it is to provide long term benefits, but this will not be achieved without a new and different approach to industry planning and development.*

"Endemic Tourism" is used to refer to tourism that recognises the inherent qualities of a locality and complements, rather than detracts from local environments, cultures and lifestyles. In this context, environment means the aggregate of all ecological and cultural conditions, values and influences. The term "sustainable environment" is used in the sense of maintaining and, as appropriate, enhancing attributes of the natural, social and cultural environment.

A New Perspective

There is a need to stimulate interest in, and discussion about, tourism that will:

- increase the social and economic benefits of tourism for local communities, and thus increase tourism's contribution to the nation.

More specifically, this recognises that we must:

1) highlight the significance of the environment for the future of the tourism industry;

2) promote the potential of niche markets in the development of profitable and environmentally sustainable tourism;

3) move towards a vision that provides a positive image for the future of the tourism industry; and

4) provide a stimulus for future action by PATA, its members and others involved in the industry.

A sustainable tourism industry must be profitable and must recognise the complex interdependence between visitors, attractions and host communities, as well as the role played by tourism operators who provide the links between these elements of the tourism system.

Are the Benefits and Costs of Tourism in Balance?

Despite its size and importance, tourism is a diverse and decentralised industry, closely integrated with other sectors of local economies. This sometimes makes its impact difficult to discern. Importantly, tourism is also a 24 hour a day, 7 day a week industry. It is labour intensive, creating employment opportunities across all skill levels. It is based on small businesses which can be readily established by people wanting to gain entry to the industry. It provides an important source of diversification for local and regional economies and it is a relatively clean industry with the potential to contribute to conservation of our natural and cultural heritage.

In spite of the economic, environmental and social benefits, tourism also has an impact. Destinations, attractions and host communities vary in their ability to accommodate tourists without diminishing the quality of natural and cultural assets which attract visitors in the first place.

It is unrealistic to focus exclusively on either the
positive or negative consequences of tourism. What is required is an approach that recognises the inter-dependence of tourism, culture and ecology, and seeks to enhance the positive benefits of tourism and eliminate or ameliorate the negative consequences.

Many commentators have identified a move away from mass tourism to more specialised niche markets such as ecotourism, adventure tourism, nature tourism and cultural tourism. These have been widely promoted as growing sectors in world tourism. Development of these niche markets will require a more selective approach to the development and marketing of tourism products. For example, Australia's unique flora and fauna and outstanding natural features make it an ideal destination for ecotourists. Development of products appropriate to those seeking ecotourism experiences will ensure that Australia shares in world growth along with a range of other countries, particularly in Asia and the Pacific.

Various estimates have been made of the size and value of this sector of the international tourism market. These estimates depend on the way ecotourism is defined. Unfortunately, "academic" definitions of ecotourism are often difficult to operationalise for the collection of data. In most instances, therefore, statistics collected for other purposes have to be adapted to make estimates of the ecotourism market. For example, in Queensland visits to national parks have been used as a surrogate measure of nature tourism activity. On that basis it has been estimated that by the year 2000 at least 8 billion dollars and 75,000 jobs will be generated for the State's economy by nature tourism.

Not all tourists have an equal propensity to participate in special interest activities. For example the International Visitor Survey conducted by the Bureau of Tourism Research demonstrates that participation rates in an activity such as bush walking range from 36% for German visitors to Australia, to a low of 4% for Japanese visitors. Overall, 13% of inbound visitors to Australia participate in bush walking some time during their trip.

Similarly wide variations can be seen in participation rates for activities such as scuba diving and snorkelling, which average 13% for all inbound visitors, compared with only 2% of visitors from Malaysia and Singapore. At the other end of the spectrum, 36% of Scandinavian visitors scuba dive or snorkel during their visit, and Germans (29%), Canadians (27%), Americans (22%), and visitors from elsewhere in Europe (24%) also have high participation rates.

Participation rates also vary in other forms of endemic tourism. For example, visits to museums and art galleries are an important form of activity for European visitors to Australia, but relatively unimportant for New Zealanders and Japanese visitors.

There are important variations in the destinations visited by people from different countries during their stay in Australia, and in their expenditure patterns as well as their activity and experience preferences. These differences underline the importance of targeted niche marketing campaigns to ensure that a country's product base is promoted in an appropriate form to those sectors of the international market who will be most responsive. On the other hand, some market niches transcend national boundaries and may require alternative marketing strategies.

The industry must integrate the twin objectives of profitability and environmental sustainability. Relentless pursuit of short term profits will not necessarily provide the best return on our national investment in the tourism industry. We might draw an analogy with over-cropping in agriculture. Exploiting our natural and cultural assets for mass tourism may provide a short term profit which will diminish with the quality of the attractions it exploits. In the same way that astute farmers have recognised the importance of identifying the capacity of their land and managing the resource carefully, so too the tourism industry is now recognising the importance of sustainable tourism.

It is usually not possible to identify biophysical thresholds which dictate inherent carrying capacities. However, it is reasonable to suggest that there is a point where the self-interest of tourism operators and the public interest intersect. Identifying this point requires qualitative judgements about the threshold level of tourism activity that is both profitable and sustainable.

Interaction between visitors, the places they visit and the host communities that receive them must be managed in a way which reinforces a positive and sustainable relationship between these elements of tourism systems.
Critical Issues

This section examines some of the consequences of uncontrolled and unplanned growth.

Tourism has the potential to be an 'environmentally friendly' industry. Yet, there are well documented examples of tourist destinations becoming polluted, degraded and congested by mass market travel.

Importantly, the tourism potential of local areas can also be compromised by the environmental impact of other industries. According to the Economist Intelligence Unit, the "entire tourism industry is under attack from other business interests which are virtually stealing its assets".

Whether the attacks come from inside or outside the tourism industry, the interdependence of tourism and the environment is fundamental to its future.

The socio-cultural impacts on indigenous peoples of tourism in developing countries have been well documented. Similar impacts can be experienced in developed countries such as Australia. Aboriginal images are used extensively to promote Australia in overseas markets, yet opportunities for visitors to gain access to authentic examples of Aboriginal culture and lifestyle are limited. Sometimes the opportunities that are provided trivialise or exploit those involved and the communities they represent. Certainly many Aboriginal people feel that the tourism industry has a poor track record and disregards their legitimate interests and rights.

It is not only indigenous people who may experience the socio-cultural impacts of mass tourism. Disruption to established activity patterns, anti-social behaviour, crime and over-crowding caused by tourism development can also have a negative impact on local lifestyles and the quality of life of non-indigenous communities.

Incremental development of tourist destinations can result in significant changes in the characteristics of both natural and cultural attractions. The 'life cycle' of tourist destination areas, and the changes that result in visitor experiences and characteristics have been thoroughly examined. This process displaces visitors as the quality of the experience offered by the destination declines, each successive wave of visitors being more tolerant of natural and cultural impacts.

To the extent that visitor experiences are dependent on attributes of local environments, impacts on that environment will have a negative effect on visitor satisfaction, and may ultimately result in the social and economic decline of the destination.

Ecological and cultural impacts and perceived social impacts may lead to diminished community and political support for the industry, particularly at local levels.

The development boom during the late 1980's has now created a difficult climate for responsible tourism developers. Many of the so-called 'tourism developments' of this period were nothing more than attempts to find a trendy cover for land speculation, or a means of making otherwise conventional residential developments acceptable to planning authorities. Extravagant talk about tourism development, which has led only to bankruptcies, speculative profits, overloaded infrastructure, residential sprawl and unwanted social and environmental impacts, has contributed to understandable suspicion among local communities about the benefits of the tourism industry.

Features of the natural and cultural environment and supportive host communities are the foundations of a successful industry. Neglect of conservation and quality of life issues threatens the very basis of a viable and sustainable tourism industry.

The commitment of the tourism industry to increased volumes has not resulted in commensurate increases in tourism industry profits. Indeed, for some sectors of the industry profits are clearly falling while in other areas, the return on investment offered by tourism enterprises offers no incentive for potential investors.

This phenomenon illustrates how inappropriate and misleading it is to measure the performance of an industry by focusing almost exclusively on 'bums on seats'. It is analogous with a business using gross turnover as the principal measure of its performance. The tourism industry must give more than token recognition to other measures such as length of stay, expenditure levels and quality of experience which provide more relevant and meaningful indicators of the industry's performance.

Financiers are disillusioned with tourism. They
view tourism as unreal, unstable, unprofitable and unwelcome.

The tourism industry does not control a major part of its assets, the natural and cultural resources that attract visitors. This situation has led the industry to develop a "selling" mentality to the resource as distinct from a sense of ownership and stewardship.

Inadequate data about natural and cultural resources, and the impacts of tourism, compounds the problem and generates among some in the community an impression of an uninformed, exploitative industry. This attitude is reinforced by glib statements from some industry leaders who believe that because they love beaches, rainforests, wildlife and scenic qualities they are somehow informed conservationists.

The industry and local communities are not powerless - communities have a role to play in determining their future involvement in tourism.

Tourism still provides an attractive alternative to other forms of economic development because of its potential for growth, employment generation, protection of natural and cultural assets and support for activities and facilities which make local areas more interesting and rewarding places to live.

We must learn from the successes (and failures) of tourism planning and development in other locations, and confront the issue of uncontrolled growth. Unless the industry and local communities are prepared to work together to address the issue, the goals of profitability and sustainability will not be achieved.

Possible solutions to these problems have been identified (such as Integrated Local Area Planning) but words must be matched with actions to implement the solutions.

**How Can We Tackle the Problem?**

It is obvious that ecologically sustainable development is essential for the long term profitability of the tourism industry. To achieve sustainability may necessitate reducing the number of inbound visitors to the country in order to (a) conserve important natural and cultural resources, (b) increase the quality of visitor experience, (c) increase the benefits of tourism to local communities, and (d) thereby, increase tourism's contribution to the country as a whole.

Endemic tourism is a way of thinking about national marketing, product development and packaging of the nations' tourism products. There is no such thing as an endemic tourist - only tourists seeking experiences and products that are unique to a people or locality.

Endemic tourism is an umbrella title for a range of tourism product groupings which could include visitor experiences which are oriented to natural, ecological, adventure, rural, indigenous, historic, educational, urban or cultural pursuits.

Marketing often features a country's endemic qualities, but little of it defines endemic experience or packages a range of products into a total endemic holiday.

Why is this? First - because it seems the industry does not appreciate the need to tightly define its competitive edge. Second - the industry does not appear to know enough about natural and ecological attributes and how to package them. Third - there are few endemic products in some sectors such as transport, urban accommodation, retail information and adventure. This makes it difficult to put together packages within a single locality. On the other hand, across a country or region there is often a diverse range, if not a large quantity, of quality products.

Yield is increasingly being recognised by both the private and public sector as a critical issue in our approach to tourism planning and management. The notion of yield is an attempt to go beyond simple measures of volume in measuring tourism activity to get a more accurate indication of the net benefits. There is general agreement about the importance of the concept but agreement about how it can best be measured is more difficult. Even where agreement is possible, finding appropriate data is problematic. For example, if we are interested in the net benefit of the Australian economy of each visitor to this country, we need to develop sophisticated measures of leakage from the Australian economy. How much money spent by visitors during their time in Australia actually goes off-shore to pay for goods and services not available in Australia, or is repatriated overseas as profits for foreign companies?

The Australian Tourist Commission (ATC) has started calculating yields from various
international markets, based on average expenditure per visitor, excluding money spent on the visitor by people or companies in Australia, money spent on international airfares not bought in Australia, and also excluding inclusive package tourists bought in the visitor’s country of residence. Bureau of Tourism Research data suggest a strong correlation between average expenditure and return to the Australian economy. Yet does it provide an adequate measure of net benefit? And are we most interested in expenditure per day or in total trip expenditure?

The relevant measure of yield varies with the interests of different individuals and organisations. The appropriate basis for determining yield also depends on the sector of the industry in question. For example, total volumes of visitors may provide an appropriate measure of activity for those involved in the transport sector. On the other hand, accommodation operators are more interested in length of stay and the number of nights spent in commercial accommodation as an indicator of tourist activity. Each of these measures is only indirectly related to expenditure which is the critical measure of the overall impact of visitors on the economy. It may be that an indexed figure is required, based on a range of different indicators. This would provide a more comprehensive overview of the dynamics and return on investment tourism provides in this country.

Another critical issue that tourism planning must deal with is the question of scale. For both tour operators and accommodation establishments there are economies of scale.

While I argue strongly for a move away from mass tourism, and away from an approach to tourism planning and management based simply on maximising volume, volume is not necessarily the most important factor determining the impact and acceptability of tourism development. Large developments may have relatively small impacts on local environments and communities if they are well designed and well implemented. Conversely, relatively small developments may have a high level of impact on both the natural and social environment if they lack a sensitive approach to design and implementation.

Identifying the size of tour group or establishment that balances the twin goals of profitability and sustainability is problematic. Consequently, concern with the issue of scale must be matched with a concern to ensure that development is appropriately designed, implemented, managed and evaluated. Tourism development must fit the physical and cultural landscape of which it is a part. It should not imitate tourism development from other locations, but reflect local values and environmental attributes. It should complement the character and sense of place of local communities.

There has been a lack of serious debate about some of the consequences of projected industry growth. Tourism is a dynamic, growing industry. In this environment of rapid change, many seek some certainty or at least an understanding of where that change might take us. This underlines the need for a vision, a strategy for the future of tourism, complemented by appropriate machinery for implementing that vision and strategy. The vision must be comprehensive. It must deal not only with the different sectors of the tourism industry, but with the natural and social issues associated with tourism development. A plan for the future should not be a static blueprint, but be capable of evolving with the industry in order to take advantage of new opportunities, and not constrain new ideas or fresh options.

Successful and sustainable tourism must be developed around a vision which is sympathetic to the attributes of local environments. It must be rooted in the provision of authentic experiences of the unique natural and cultural environments. It needs a vision that will provide a tourism product that is both distinctive and attractive to identified niches of the international tourism market. The vision must be clear, it must be differentiated from competitors and it must be attuned to the needs, interests and preferences of target markets.

The vision needs to be sold. We must market not just to prospective visitors. For example, surveys have discovered a widespread lack of understanding about tourism within the Australian community. Tourism awareness and education programmes should be an integral part of our future approach. Co-ordination of the activities of the three tiers of government and the private sector in tourism planning, management, and promotion, is an ongoing issue of concern to many in the tourism industry. Effective co-ordination between these sectors is essential if promotional budgets are to be expended efficiently and if planning mechanisms are to be effective.
Future Directions

A profitable industry and a sustainable environment will not be achieved without enlightened leadership and sound planning and management. Most resource based industries now acknowledge that profitability and sustainability are essential to business success, corporate image and government and community support. They are even more important to the tourism industry because tourism in Australia is not recognised as generally profitable and much of its product is dependent on a sustainable environment.

Determining how to achieve the twin goals and manage the process is complex and not well understood. The way forward for the tourism industry is to open up debate on the issues raised in this document, and to develop a new vision for tourism into the next century. Hopefully this debate will stimulate research and analysis that is free of the hype, myth and short term interests that characterised much of the industry during the 1980’s. There are many possible visions for the future. Whatever the vision might propose, it must contain as fundamental elements notions of optimism, intelligence, profit, environmental responsibility and a concern for the community’s quality of life.

Two things are clear:

1) The tourism industry does not have an agreed vision containing the elements outlined above;

2) An optimistic, all embracing vision can only be prepared and accomplished with the involvement and commitment of both the tourism industry and the community.

If there is a vision, there must be a strategic plan which embraces endemic tourism and initiates a ‘paradigm shift’ from mass tourism to a profitable and sustainable alternative.

Current industry strategies are derived from trends rather than a vision. If short term economic trends are allowed to drive long term planning, they will lock the industry into a direction based more on reaction to past events than pursuit of future goals. A short term reaction to current trends may stifle longer term opportunities. There is symbiosis between the character, quality of life and quality of experience of a nation, and the character and quality of its tourism can contribute to a plan for the nation itself, and vice versa.

A strategic plan must provide clear quantitative targets and mechanisms for implementation in terms of who is to do what, when and at what cost. Otherwise the effectiveness of the plan cannot be evaluated.

A multi-lateral industry such as tourism must have a national strategy. It is an industry where state boundaries are not relevant to the purchaser. It is an industry that is characterised by many small operators who are diverse in terms of their size of business, type of ownership, type of product and size of market. It is really a series of industries with a common interest, yet the difference between the sectors of the tourism industry and other multi-lateral industries is that tourism markets a national product to other national groups of consumers.

A national strategy must establish goals appropriate for the whole industry, even though there is also a need for complementary state, regional, sectoral and corporate strategies.

Actions

It is now that the industry needs a comprehensive, adventurous, accountable and profit oriented plan. In doing so, it must address a number of important industry issues, including:

1) Recognising real costs

The tourism industry makes extensive use of the nations' forests, reefs, beaches and parks, but what does it contribute to management of these assets?

Should the user pay? If so, how much, when and how? User pay charges can increase the revenue needed to manage sensitive attractions.

The issue of real costs goes further than this. The provision of tourism infrastructure, and the costs of managing the impact of tourism on host communities, are often borne by the community. Responsible tourism developers are now prepared to accept the environmental and social issues associated with tourism development as an integral part of the cost of doing business, rather than as a penalty tacked on the "real" cost of development.
2) Increasing capacity

Managers must identify and utilise appropriate opportunities to reduce the impact of visitors by hardening sites so as to protect the environment and enhance visitor experiences. This is a matter of understanding the range of experiences different tourists seek, and appropriate management responses.

3) Niche Marketing

Many in the industry believe they have gone well beyond the "shotgun" approach to marketing, but have they? The current approach still targets major segments of national markets and concentrates on attracting gross numbers.

An alternative is to target specific international niche markets (not necessarily national markets) to attract not only those tourists who spend the most but also those who are most interested in endemic products and sympathetic to the environment and lifestyle. Marketing needs to focus on the unique features that will provide competitive advantage in the market place. The objective should be to attract tourists who produce the highest yield (economic and social benefit) for the lowest expenditure (marketing and management cost).

4) Matching land use management to visitor experiences and the needs of niche markets

By placing marketing emphasis on carefully defined niche markets and by developing quality tourism products that are profitable, provide a quality experience and are ecologically sustainable, the tourism industry can prosper while the nation's ecology and culture are conserved and protected. It is also important to establish realistic expectations among prospective tourists, and then deliver. That is, match visitor expectations with visitor experiences.

5) Diversity of product development

Product development is often based more on promotional hype than matching the components of the product to the explicit requirements of the tourist. With more information about tourist needs and resource capabilities, a much more diverse range of products can be identified. In major growth areas, this is critical and urgent as there may not be sufficient attractions to sustain the projected increase in visitor numbers.

6) Packaging tourism products

We need to develop a range of 'branded' tourism products. For example, Australia's reputation for lifestyle products is developing internationally. Our seafood, cheeses, wines and other food products are not only of very high quality, they come from a nuclear free country with a clean image. These products should be marketed under a brand umbrella. We should also market under the same umbrella, products such as environmental management technology, medical and education services, and gems. The success of one product will assist another and they will all help tourism. If potential travellers believe that our products are the best, they will want to visit their country of origin.

The focus for such an approach should be Asia. This is not only because of its proximity, but Asia will have as many affluent consumers as the US or Europe by 2000. It is golden opportunity for Australia.

7) Endemic Design

The design professions believe the 1980's brought an Australian character to the design of our resorts. Generally, it brought design tokenism and cliches as excuses for endemic character. The more articulate building and landscape architects used "manufactured icons" to justify whims or to disguise an inability to understand what Australian character really is. The tourism industry and the community deserve more from the design professions.

8) Research and data

Developers need better information to help them understand the special design and financial requirements of successful tourism development. The industry requires more effective processes for the collection of information on the performance of tourism businesses, and better data on the market and infrastructure capacity. We can no longer afford the luxury of development 1980's style which was developer led rather than market led. The market must provide the ultimate measure of what is required and how it is to be implemented.

9) The role of Government

The respective roles of government and the
tourism industry are unclear and the debate is potentially divisive. Surveys show that many people feel government should control the industry. The industry staunchly advocates no government interference but still wants access to government funds for marketing.

Government and industry need to clearly define their roles and respective responsibilities, and review them regularly.

10) A new concept of service

Traditionally, good service is characterised by servitude. But good service can be provided to a guest without servility. Good service can be characterised by good humour, willingness to satisfy and egalitarianism.

The notion that "the guest is always right no matter what" is inappropriate to the educated visitor who seeks to understand a nation's cultural and ecological heritage.

11) Develop different approaches to providing tourism products

A focus on endemic tourism will require different approaches to cater for the need of tourists. An ability to cater for many small groups and the needs of the individual traveller should characterise product development.

Accommodation: More smaller properties are required.

Tours: The quality of information provided by operators, and its presentation, is becoming the key to successful tours.

Internal Travel: Forms of transport are required that suit the travel patterns of endemic tourists and provide a greater range of experiences en route.

Souvenirs: Considering the amount of money visitors spend on souvenirs, their quality and presentation is often poor. Souvenirs are an opportunity to market to a captive audience when the tourist returns home.

Conclusions

1) Tourism: Are the benefits and costs in balance?

...there is a risk that the economic, environmental and social benefits of tourism will be more than offset by impacts on our natural and cultural resources.

The very asset the industry promotes is being devalued.

2) What is the problem?

...industry growth does have negative consequences and does not necessarily lead to the positive outcomes sought by the industry or governments. The industry must confront the issue of growth - can it/should it be managed, and if so, how?

The 1980's was a period of consistent growth in the number of inbound tourists and foreign earnings that only created profitless volume. This era of profitless growth has left the industry, and the community, disillusioned.

3) How can we tackle the problem?

...by developing a positive vision that seeks to increase the net benefits from tourism through sound industry planning and management.

The vision should promote an area's competitive edge - its cultural and natural environment and way of life - more innovatively.

A successful tourism industry depends on cooperation between all levels of government, the community and the industry.

4) Future directions?

...a national strategy, industry driven, linking national, state, regional and local aspirations.

A national strategy that can deliver the key goals for tourism which centre on long term profit and protection of the asset.

A national strategy that helps the industry to improve its performance with respect to niche marketing, product development, enhancing visitor experiences, and protecting the resource.

5) What next?

...a series of activities to further stimulate discussion about endemic tourism and its potential.

It is hoped that these activities will result in a new vision, strategic plan and provide a basis for optimism for the entire tourism industry and the community.
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ECOCULTURAL TOURISM: A PERSONAL VIEW
FOR MAINTAINING CULTURAL INTEGRITY IN
ECOTOURISM DEVELOPMENT

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Introduction

This paper presents my personal view of how Ecotourism (ET) fits into and impacts upon the cultural and environmental realities of the small island states of the Pacific Ocean. It suggests that, given the critical economic and social importance of Pacific environments and their inherent resources and biodiversity to the land-based peoples that inhabit them (the tangata whenua, tangata'i fonua, i taukei ni vanua or man blong land), a more culturally sensitive and integrated ECOCULTURAL TOURISM rather than ECOTOURISM may provide a basis for a more sustainable model of tourism development. Such a model could optimise benefits and minimise the costs to both the ecotourist and host communities.

My association with Pacific tourism goes back to the 60s when my homeland, Tonga, opened herself up to overseas visitors who came for the day on cruise ships, or "mail steamers" as we referred to them. Some of my classmates and I acted as tour guides. Specially decorated buses took our guests to the the main historical sites around our island. Tour organisers believed that because we were learning English in high school we would be able to communicate with the tourists.

My friends and I also made shell leis and pandanus baskets which an aunt sold to tourists on boat days. Selling things to visitors was frowned upon in those days; we had no concept of such activities which were generally regarded as 'un-Tongan'. However, by the time I left Tonga for New Zealand (and incidently became an educational tourist) the notion of takameiti (lit. relating to mail boats/steamers) had become firmly established in the minds of some people, especially those who lived in Nuku'alofa.

Since then I have been both a tourist myself, in many countries, as well as host to many tourists. I have also written about and taught courses on tourism-related subjects, particularly its social and cultural impact on our societies. My longest published poem, Langakali (Thaman, 1987:24) was inspired by a plan to establish a hotel and casino in Tonga in the 70s. A few lines may help illustrate the point:

the old man in the boathouse
is growing weary
he told me that he knew
the origin of the sea and sky,
the moon, and even the sun
but he did not know
why men deceive
and women keep on
loving them

it was at halaliku
that I met him
he only had the rain and the surf
the land he gave away
they are building runways
hotels and warehouses on them
it was a stormy day
when he paddled away
in a borrowed canoe

In 1987, a colleague and I conducted a regional curriculum workshop in Port Vila, Vanuatu, on Education for Tourism, sponsored by the European Community-funded tourism Council of the South Pacific (TCSP). The Workshop aimed at producing curriculum materials on tourism for use in Pacific island
schools. It was the Council's way of ensuring that Pacific island people were made more aware of Tourism especially its economic potential. Our university also offers a major in Tourism Studies.

Last November, I participated in the Third Global Congress of Heritage International in Honolulu, Hawaii. In accordance with the conference theme Holding Hands for Quality Tourism, I presented a paper entitled "Beyond Hula, Hotels and Handicrafts", which focussed on the incompatibility of the ideology of modern development generally and of tourism development in particular with the ideologies and values of pre-capitalist Pacific island cultures, some of which, in my view, may have more relevance to considerations of sustainability in a highly unstable global economy.

For this conference, I was asked to identify some critical issues with regards to the need to maintain "cultural integrity" in relation to our conference theme - Ecotourism Business. I am not an "expert" on Pacific island cultures save that I was born and raised in Tonga and subsequently became exposed to several foreign cultures, including the dominant cultures of New Zealand and the United States of America. During the past few years, I have lived and worked in the multicultural environments of Fiji and the University of the South Pacific, a regional university established in 1968 to serve the twelve Pacific island nations which own it. What I have to say in this conference, therefore, will inevitably be influenced both by upbringing in a particular culture and experiences of many other cultures.

Pacific Perspectives

At a recent conference on the Science of Pacific peoples held at our university, one of the conference recommendations was: "that indigenous (Pacific) peoples be encouraged to tell their own stories about what they know and that non-indigenous peoples 'stop trying' to tell these stories." While I agreed with the first part of the recommendation, I disagreed with the second mainly because I know that although I have learned much about my own culture from my own people, a substantial part of it has come via non-indigenous sources, be they people or books. I wish to acknowledge the contribution of non-Tongans to my further understanding of Tongan culture as well as other Pacific island cultures.

Cognitive anthropologists claim that it is useful to see parts of a culture as they are conceptualised by members of that culture (Tyler, 1969:3). This seems to me to be common sense. Unfortunately, experience has shown that many studies and discussions about Pacific communities and peoples have not involved Pacific islanders. I am sure this phenomenon partly explained the sentiments expressed in the conference recommendation I mentioned earlier. As an attempt to bring a Pacific perspective to the tourism literature, our Institute of Pacific Studies, in 1980, published a book, Pacific Tourism (Rajotte, F. and Crocombe, R.) containing the viewpoints of 24 Pacific islanders. It makes interesting reading.

Tourism and Social Change

As most of you know, Pacific island societies and cultures have and are undergoing rapid change. Although many of these changes offer great prospects for a better way of life for many of us, at the same time they threaten to destroy some very important aspects of our cultures - those shared meanings and associations which, in our view, make each of our cultures unique and upon which Tourism (deliberately with a capital T) largely depends.

Some of us are in the process of trying to better understand the forces of our transformation because we believe that it is important for us to guide it: to participate in making decisions about what needs changing and what must be kept at all costs. It is not easy, especially since a lot of the decisions which affect our lives are made outside of the Pacific by people who hold power, particularly economic power, over us.

Many of you here may well understand the scope and intensity of the changes which I am alluding to. Beginning mainly with so-called "discoveries", followed by the advent of Christianity and European colonialism, and more recently with the post colonial commercial imperative that is "development", the process of cultural transformation rages, fueled by the mass media, advances in transport and telecommunications and modern education. Tourism development is an important aspect of this process.

The forces of change, have affected our individual as well as our collective views of the world, our religious beliefs, our view of ourselves and our environment. Almost all of our old religions had concern for our
environment - the water, oceans, land, soil fertility, plants and animals. We had symbols to express such views and the truths inherent in them. Some of this knowledge still exists in the heads of our old people. But in just over 100 years of contact with western European cultures, and more recently with Asian cultures, (much of it through tourism) our societies have altered much of their character. We are now societies in transition, 'compromised cultures' as it were.

What is amazing though, is the fact that despite years of contact with foreign cultures, and more particularly efforts to assimilate some of our cultures and societies by the dominant cultures of more recent (European) settlers, our cultures have survived and persisted as identifiable, viable entities. Of course we have not all faced the same problems nor did we experience or are experiencing equal success in addressing these problems. The biggest dilemma we are facing today is trying to keep the delicate balance between survival in a now modernised, monetised world on one hand, and the maintenance of traditional patterns of values that served as the bases of social cohesion and adaptation to new knowledge and value systems, on the other.

Ecotourism

Ecotourism is now being pursued as the desirable type of tourism development - development that is environment-friendly, and sensitive to the issues of conservation and sustainability. In this regard I need to remind us that a people's culture - their way of life, at least in the Pacific, is part of the environment in which they have developed and are developing. Conservation concerns therefore must include people - what they do, believe in and value. We cannot talk about conservation in the Pacific islands without reference to the cultures which have been associated with that environment for thousands of years. Tourism as I suggested earlier, is a relatively new concept, one which we know creates a conflict because it means both creating as well as destroying: compromising cultural values and relationships for the sake of creating what is assumed to be a better way of life.

What we have seen so far in terms of tourism development in the Pacific islands has made some of us rather pessimistic about the potential of Ecotourism and to ask whether it is really in our best long-term interest. As you know, the preservation of the global environment is the main rationale for Ecotourism. But for some of us in the islands, Ecotourism is fast becoming the modern marketing manager's source of inspiration for the new sell. It's got a lot going for it: it gives great pictures; it offers pretty much what people want when they wish to escape from pressured polluted urban living, and it offers a sort of moral expiation of guilt for our contribution to the degradation of our own planet. For tourist operators and investors in tourism projects, both in the Pacific and overseas, Ecotourism can become a bandwagon to climb on in the journey to greater riches. For some of them, the argument for Ecotourisms is that natural and cultural assets need protection, as long as they yield a competitive return on investment.

The very theme of this conference - ECOTOURISM BUSINESS - (and the associated ideas to be discussed) underlie something of a culture which places the concern with profitability before that of conservation. Questions need to be asked here. For example, when we talk about responsible development, who are we to be responsible for; or, when we consider cultural integrity, whose culture are we referring to? And, who are the Ecotourists? Are they interested in the culture of the people whose "wilderness" they have come to view before it disappears?

The identification of the VALUE underpinnings of this conference was a critical issue for me. This was important because values determine aims and outcomes, define our terms and structure our strategies. Values are an important part of one's culture.

For me, as a Pacific island educator, another critical issue relates to the question of how to deal with the mass media, politicians and others who have propagandised words such as development, ecotourism, sustainability, making them synonymous with "the good" and "desirable". Many of us sometimes overlook the fact that so-called development in general, and tourism development in particular, is a manifestation of a specific political system - the capitalist system - whether it is state or private is beside the point. Such development has a linear vision of change with the modern consumer society as its ultimate goal. I cannot say with confidence that this is the kind of society most of us wish for our grandchildren, if the examples of modern consumer societies are anything to go by.
Need For a New Perspective

In considering the question of maintaining cultural integrity in Ecotourism Business, one would normally see it in the context of island cultures' need to adapt to modern functions and development. However, if we are to consider cultural integrity from the host culture's point of view, then we would be talking about the need for modern development to adapt to PACIFIC CULTURES. In other words, we would begin to talk about ECOCULTURAL TOURISM - tourism development based on the culture of the host community and not on the culture of the tourists or developers or aid donors. This is particularly relevant given the fact that for the land-based semi-subsistence societies of the Pacific islands, people and their cultures are inextricably part of their ecosystems. A people's CULTURE, I suggest, is logically the most appropriate basis and the framework for development, not a mere variable within it.

What I am suggesting requires a change in paradigm; a change in the way most of us normally perceive the development process. By changing perspective, we would ensure more people's participation and sharing in the benefit of making their islands a marine or forest park. Furthermore, by switching paradigm, we are recognising the constraints of the foreign language, ideology and culture that we are using to discuss Ecotourism in Pacific island contexts.

Pacific Perceptions of Culture

A great majority of Pacific islanders who still live in the islands are village-based and lead semi-subsistence life styles based on the land or the sea or both. For them, their culture was and still is a way of life firmly rooted in their dependence on, beliefs about and knowledge of their environment and its biodiversity. Such relationships have been time tested over thousands of years, justified and explained through a complex interweaving of shared values linking them to the land, the skies and the sea.

Such a perception of culture, closely associated with ethnicity, is still strong in the Pacific, and is a view that is being reemphasised and celebrated through cultural education and other programs. Some of these are now being actively supported by UNESCO as part of the United Nations Decade for Culture, 1987-97 initiative.

Since it was not their tradition to critically analyse their situations, most people do not normally speak of or behave in a way that conforms to a particular notion of culture. Yet, if one understood their language and was able to communicate with them in more words than bula, kia orana or maloelielei, or talofa, one would begin to appreciate and perhaps understand a different perspective, perhaps a different world view.

For those of us who have been exposed to western intellectual traditions and have taken time to "study" our own cultures, we have been able to identify some of these binding elements of culture. For example, being Tongan means conforming to what I have called "valued contexts of Tongan thinking" manifested in different emphases such as, for example, concern for hierarchy (rank and authority); emphasis of the spiritual or supernatural; importance of kinship and interpersonal relationships; 'ofa (aroha); and restraint behaviour (Thaman, 1987). In view of this definition of culture, cultural integrity would necessarily mean ensuring that these values are brought to bear on discussions about development in that society.

However, there is another category of islanders, who, increasingly identify with what Hau'ofa (1987) calls a "regional" culture, one that is based not on ethnicity but on a common (material) lifestyle and language and who are integrated into the metropolitan cultures of past colonial masters. They are mainly urban-based, western-educated professionals, political and economic entrepreneurs. They belong to a small privileged class because of their ascribed or achieved status within their communities. Some of them are extremely influential both inside and outside of the Pacific.

Most people in this group appear to appreciate many elements of their traditional cultures, but pay lip service to their maintenance. Others see their culture as constraining their efforts to modernise and compete in a commercially-oriented world: or something to be exploited in order to further their own commercial effort. Where tourism is concerned, commercial profitability would probably take precedence over cultural considerations.

A Case For Ecocultural Tourism

There is no doubt in my mind that tourism is important for the Pacific Island countries. It is seen by most of our leaders as a way for many
people to realise some of the benefits of a cash economy. Furthermore, tourism, compared with other types of economic activities such as mining, can be less destructive and consumptive of scarce island resources. However, I believe tourism will have more negative impact if it is not pursued in a culturally sensitive way.

In western industrial societies, where large amounts of land are state or privately owned and where conservation, wildlife protection and resource degradation can be legislated, tourism and conservation can be said to be symbiotic. This idealised view of Ecotourism becomes problematic in the contexts of semi-subsistence societies where economic livelihood (20 to 80% of real income) and cultural integrity depend on the continued use, on a sustainable basis, of ecosystems, be these forests, seas, rivers, beaches, reefs, agricultural or village lands.

With its emphasis on wilderness and unique and/or endangered species, Ecotourism will create a CONFLICT in the Pacific where the emphasis is NOT on wilderness (there is no wilderness, as such, in the islands) but on the sustainable utilisation by human societies as integral components of potential ecotourism target sites. Furthermore, Ecotourism-related notions such as those relating to "parks" are part of the "cultural baggage" of the western world that has been imposed or imported since, in ex-colonial situations with varying degrees of local understanding and approval. In developing countries, parks are planned by foreign advisors, mainly from America, staffed in part by foreigners, developed with hotels, signs, brochures and personnel uniforms based on foreign examples and used by foreigners (Marsh, 1987:35). In the context of the Pacific islands, this is cultural imperialism at its worst and should be a concern for Pacific islanders.

For example, an entire group of islands in Tonga are currently being considered as a potential World Heritage Park. It apparently encompasses some of the remaining "undisturbed" reefs in the world. They are undisturbed because the tangata-whenua relationship worked for thousands of years, and my ancestors' were not out on the reefs to make a profit. Anyway, Ha'apai, according to both Tongan and overseas sources, is billed to be the next big deal in tourism development in Tonga and a potential target for investment in Ecotourism business. Besides the development of a Marine Tourism Centre, there are already plans to develop two resorts, with 100 rooms each (Matangi Tonga July-Aug. 1992:5).

It is obvious in this case that there will be a call for careful planning for Ha'apai. This would be, ostensibly, to ensure the balance between development for profit and protection of the islands. Whether this will include a consideration of the people who inhabit them or make their livelihood from them, I don't know even though planners will include Tongans.

I fear for the majority of my relations, who would, if examples from other parts of the world are anything to go by, end up in the bottom of someone's priority pile, especially Tongan planners and entrepreneurs, who would normally wish to respond positively to foreign investors and donors who offer conservation aid money, conferences, or trips overseas to view analogous areas such as, for example, the Great Barrier Reef parks of Australia. Foremost in the planners' mind would undoubtedly be the commercial profitability without which there would be no returns or prestige derived by the investor and/or donor.

In such a situation, the critical issue would be INTEGRATING LOCAL COMMUNITIES AND THEIR LAND USE AND CONSERVATION PATTERNS INTO ECOTOURISM PLANNING. This is important because there will be a need to consider the opportunity costs which may get locked up in land and/or fishing grounds and other places normally available for the islanders' livelihood.

In Ha'apai the extent to which this integration will happen will depend both on the Tongan leadership and foreign donors and/or investors who are going to be involved. My guess is that the major decisions will be made by a small group sitting not in Lufuka, Ha'apai but in Auckland, Tokyo, Washington D.C. or Nairobi. And because Ecotourism is more often capital-intensive, it usually attracts profit-oriented individuals and/or groups, both foreign and local who are trying to maximise returns for mainly short-term profit. Although conservation oriented, many see aspects of the environment as an external entity (separate from people) to be viewed, preserved and enjoyed because of its aesthetic, scientific, humanitarian, recreational or wilderness importance.

The capital-intensive nature of Ecotourism development will also limit the number of communities who might benefit if there were to be any benefits to be realised. Take for
example, the highly regarded Bouma community-based forest park, recently established on the island on Taveuni, Fiji. Thousands of New Zealand aid dollars have been injected to foster this development which encompasses one of Fiji's most unique forests and most famous endemic flowers the *tagimoucia*. Whether the park is really economic is debatable given the small number of ecotourists. But more importantly, the project benefits only a couple of villages. Not all of the 1000 or more forest communities in Fiji have access to aid to establish such areas, so the benefits are restricted both geographically and socially.

In the contexts of the Pacific islands, ECOCULTURAL tourism development would ensure community participation to thereby help foster the notion of sustainability. Communities will be targeted for development because of the way they are, not because of the special things they have. It is development based on a holistic understanding of a community and its living, functioning culture (or cultures). Both visitors and locals who may be interested in learning about them would visit and learn in ways that are culturally acceptable to their hosts. In such a model, the 'conservation' aspects (be they forests, reefs, art or craft) will be seen as an integral part of a total cultural process, NOT as an outcome of some external global concern.

**Conclusion**

In my view, in order to provide for a relatively sustainable Ecotourism experience, development in general and tourism development in particular, must take into consideration the values and ideologies of Pacific peoples, hence my suggestion for Ecocultural tourism rather than Ecotourism.

With respect to cultural values, most people I know or have come across are generally concerned with making a living, not necessarily making a profit. Like copra making, tourism, if it is Ecocultural tourism, can satisfy many people's limited cash needs without necessarily destroying both the material and non-material bases of their way of life and what they perceive as their cultural heritage. To this end education (or "marketing" in the business world), for both ecocultural tourists and host communities and countries will be the key. Education will ensure that both host communities and visitors will be made more aware of the total environment (including the people and their cultures) in which they find themselves, thus ensuring not only cultural integrity but also enhancing cross-cultural understanding.

It is my humble hope that those of you here today who are in positions of power to influence decisions related to tourism development in the Pacific islands guard against ecological blindness and cultural insensitivity. Similarly, Pacific islanders who are in the forefront of decision making, must not let themselves be consumed by their own individual wishes and desires for lifestyles characteristic of more affluent metropolitan societies at the expense of their more traditional, perhaps more sustainable lifestyles. Most importantly perhaps, here, in this conference, we can all try and unravel the interwoven thoughts that are hidden in the *magimagi* (coconut fibre or sinnet) that is our link to the earth and those who have gone before us. It held our *fale* (houses) together during tropical cyclones, and bound our *vaka* (canoes) in stormy seas. It may also be the one thing which could make ecocultural tourism work in an increasingly unpredictable world, thus allowing us to sustain, at least for a while, the experience of dawn and enjoy the purity of the morning.

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**NOTE**

Tihei Mauri Ora. Aloha kakou.

I can still vividly recall that chilly Sunday in June 1981 when a group of us Hawaiian businessmen waited at the entrance of the John Waititi Marae here in Auckland to be formally welcomed to this land of the "long white cloud". We came to talk business, but by the time we left we were talking about reaffirming our cultural and spiritual identity as Hawaiians. We had learned a great deal about ourselves from our "younger Maori cousins". This experience led to the founding the WAIAHA Foundation dedicated to the study of Hawaiian values and culture, and the writing of the book Ku Kanaka-Stand Tall, A Search for Hawaiian Values. I readily admit that I borrowed the title ku kanaka or tu tangata, and a few other ideas as well, from Maoridom. So I want to express in public here for the first in Aotearoa my gratitude to you.

Hai'oli loa no au e kipa mai, me na hoaloha o Aotearoa. Ua ha'awi oukou mai i'au i na mea 'ike. A mahalo au ia oukou apau loa.

Background

For the past few years, we in the WAIAHA Foundation have been deeply involved in developing cultural tourism in Hawai'i. You might wonder how come a non-profit organization dedicated to the study of Hawaiian values is so involved.

Briefly, in 1984 we were approached by the manager of one of Hawai'i's premier resort hotels to help him and his staff to be more sensitive to the Hawaiian culture and people; in short, to "Hawaiianize" his hotel. Although we had never done anything like that, risk-taking was our business and so we said of course we'd do it. We designed a programme to integrate Hawaiian values and customs into the hotel's management philosophy and practice. Essentially, it involved a combination of instituting regular mandatory cultural training for all staff and developing organizational or management techniques for implementing and internalizing a set of shared values. I call it "Management by Values" or BV (as opposed to MBO).

We first implemented the process in 1986 at the Ka'anapali Beach Hotel, a 431-room operation with 280 employees, located on the island of Maui. Six years later it is still going strong. Today the hotel is recognized by its competitors, marketing specialists, tour companies as well as local residents, as the most Hawaiian hotel in the State - and, for you-bottom-line watchers, one of the most profitable hotels in the industry.

In 1987, the State Legislature, impressed with the results at the Ka'anapali Beach Hotel, asked us if we could replicate the process or at least part of it in other hotels and resorts. We set up what is called "Project Tourism: Keeper of the Culture".

With an annual subsidy, we have worked with a couple of dozen hotels, resorts, visitor attractions, tour bus companies and others with varying degrees of success. We have trained and consulted with several thousand employees, including hundreds of managers, and a handful of owners and developers. In the process we have also established close relationships with leaders in government, business, education and the Hawaiian community. In short, we're empowered in more
ways than one.

What I want to do for the next few minutes is to share with you some of the lessons we have learned and some of the results of our work, much of which is described in the monograph entitled *Critical Reflections on Cultural Values and Hotel Management in Hawaii*. By the way, aside from its longish title, the report is notable for having caused hardly a ripple among hotel and resort managers for whom it was mainly prepared.

Let me say at this point I’m glad the conference planners have included cultural issues in the agenda. So-called "spiritual ecologists" like Jim Nollman (author of *Spiritual Ecology* and *Dolphin Dreamtime*) might argue that ecotourism is strictly about nature, not culture. Plants and animals, mountains and oceans, these come first, human beings come second. I don’t want to be caught in this biocentric versus anthropocentric skirmish because I believe cultural tourism and ecotourism have inseparable interests, not the least of which is a common challenge: mass tourism.

My remarks then will be about cultural tourism, by which I refer principally to native cultures, in one of the world’s most highly developed mass tourism destination areas. While you may not learn anything about ecotourism, I hope you will at least learn a little more about cultural tourism and, perhaps more importantly, how to better understand and deal effectively with those who market and manage mass tourism. I think that’s the key to whatever success we’ve achieved.

In this connection, I’m sorry that we don’t have more CEOs or general managers of major hotel, tour, financing and travel companies among our presenters or participants. Often times I feel that at conferences like this we end up talking to the choir.

Basic Assumptions

Let me begin by telling you what our starting assumption was and still is: it’s that the tourism industry has a moral responsibility to preserve and nurture native cultures in destination areas where their arts and crafts, customs and historic sites, among their things, are marketed, displayed, sold or exploited for commercial ends.

We’ve had a difficult time getting EOs and general managers in the industry to embrace this view. After a few years and several hundreds of thousands of dollars, we’ve concluded that most of them do not believe they have a moral responsibility to preserve the Hawaiian culture, or any native culture for that matter.

A couple of years ago the *Cultural Survival Quarterly* ran a series of articles entitled "Breaking Out of the Tourist Trap," documenting the impact of mass tourism on native cultures and peoples around the world. Clearly, the negative effects far outweigh the positive benefits. One of its conclusions was that international tourism does not feel any moral responsibility for the preservation of native cultures or peoples.

I don’t think there was anything wrong with our basic premise, except that no one at the top was listening. To catch their attention, we’ve had to change our approach - get off our moral high horse - and appeal to their competitive logic.

Pragmatic Approach

I goes something like this: In our competitive markets, a product that is different, distinctive or unique has a competitive advantage, doesn’t it? If Hawai‘i is your product, what makes it unique? It’s not its "sand, sun, surf or turf" because you can find that combination in many other places, and at cheaper prices. It’s not its beautiful scenery because you can find spectacular scenery all over Mother Earth. It’s certainly not its shopping or its entertainment or even its multiethnic society. Ultimately, the only thing unique about Hawai‘i is its Hawaiinanness. Now, if Hawaiinanness is a competitive edge, it’s an asset, and, all things being equal, it may be your most important asset.

I tried this on a client of mine, the vice-president of a major resort, who had trouble understanding the Hawaiinanness of his resort. So we organized a couple of focus groups among his employees and had them compile a list of the resort’s Hawaiian assets. It included the remains of an old fishpond, native plants, legends of the area, traditional art and craft work, special rituals and ceremonies, among other things. The exercise helped him to see Hawaiinanness not as some metaphysical abstraction but as something valuable that he needed to manage with care and understanding because it made not only logical but good business sense.

Admittedly this approach comes close to
"commoditizing" the culture, but we have to change mindsets not by preaching but by reasoning. Besides, the distance between feeling a fiscal responsibility and a moral responsibility is more a short step than a giant leap.

If cultural tourism is going to work, tour, travel or hotel company managers must be willing to learn about the native culture, its people and history. It's always easier said than done, isn't it?

One of the motivational tricks we use at the beginning is to give a quiz on the culture and history, especially of the place where their hotel or company may be located. We deliberately make the questions difficult since our main intent is not to find out what they know or don't know, but to embarrass or to humble them. When a person is humble, he is teachable. Also, when the general manager is committed to learn, then it's easier to get his or her staff to learn as well.

This underscores a principle about organizational change everyone should know: you can't succeed unless you have the full support of the person at the top.

We believe this need for cultural knowledge is so important to tourism in Hawai'i that we are lobbying for licensing all general managers and requiring them to pass an exam on Hawaiian culture and history. Needless to say, general managers aren't doing cartwheels over this one.

The cultural training programme for the staff takes the form of a regular annual series of workshops, three to four hours in length, covering various aspects of Hawaiian culture and history which all employees are required to attend on company time. The subjects have ranged from religion and mythology to herbal medicine, primal economics, Hawaiian technological achievements and music and dance. At the Ka'anapali Beach Hotel employees take a minimum of 16 hours a year of cultural training. At another client hotel in Waikiki, to impress on employees the seriousness of the training, test scores are filed and used for individual job performance evaluations.

An important by-product of this training format is that employees get to meet and know each other. In fact, for most of our clients, this is the only opportunity for interdepartmental socializing on a regular basis. Any such benefit cannot but help to sustain or increase in organization's cohesion and morale.

Concepts

One of the concepts we've tried hard to teach is the relationship between place and tourism. Tourism, after all, is the place business. At the risk of being obvious, people do not travel to nowhere; they always travel to somewhere, usually to some special place. By place I do not mean just located space, but located experience. Think of place as a container of all the things that have happened there over time. It has its own wai 'ula or mana or spirit or energy or rhythm or, to use Rupert Sheldrake's term "morphic resonance." This is why places, especially sacred places of wahi pana, can evoke in all of us powerful feelings, memories, images.

If managers and their employees understand the power of places, they could help their guests to be more sensitive to the feel of as well as have a better feel for a place, and, at the same time, so much more to protect and nurture its cultural and historical assets.

Recently I was having lunch with the president of a hotel chain with over 80 properties throughout the United States, Canada, Mexico and Hawaii and some 26,000 employees. When I tried to explain the relationship between place and tourism, he interrupted me and said, "Destination area' is the word we use in the industry." He missed the point.

Incidentally, he went on to say, "we're in the sleeping business." Which reminds me of a wise traveller who said that Hell consists of being condemned to stay at a different hotel every night into eternity.

There are many others in the industry who have little or no comprehension of a living Earth, Gaia, if you will, or of a sense of place. As a matter of fact, I've yet to meet a manager who has even heard of, much less a hotel school graduate who has had a course or even attended a lecture on topistics - that is, the study of place.

If today's managers are not listening well, tomorrow's managers may. One of the results of our work is that next semester I will be teaching a course in the Travel Industry Management School of the University of Hawaii. For the first time topistics will be a
major topic. This new course is not due to any initiative by the faculty or administration but by students who want a better understanding of such primal concepts as place.

There's another important, if not heretical, concept which we've tried to get managers to think about: namely, guests and hosts are equal. Since this plainly contradicts the service imperative of the day, that guests are always right, always king, you can imagine what they think about this idea. If managers get pathological about anything, it's this alpha and omega of customer service.

But in our native traditions of ho'okipa or hospitality, it is clear that both the host and guest have certain responsibilities. I don't know of any native culture that interprets hospitality as a one-way street in which the guest is free to do whatever he or she fancies.

If the guest is always king, what does that make the host-employee? Relegating the host-employee to a second-class citizen status is most often expressed as the "servant mentality", that waiting on guests or carrying their bags or cleaning their messy rooms, makes one subservient and servile. As one local highschooler put it, "I no like to be one servant for all da rich tourists." It's no wonder that very few young Hawaiians aspire to careers in tourism.

Your don't need to be my friend to agree with me that true cultural tourism, not to mention ecotourism, will never happen as long as the host people are looked down upon or treated as objects of inferiority.

Values

I mentioned at the outset that we try to Hawaiianize hotels or resorts by integrating an appropriate set of Hawaiian values into their management system. A perfect example of this is what we do with aloha, the Hawaiian term meaning love, compassion, affection, friendliness, warmth, kindness or charity - and hello and goodbye. Lest some of you believe that the term was concocted by Hawaii's tourism promoters, there's an ancient 'olelo no'eau or Hawaiian proverb that says O kje aloha ke kuleana, o kahih malihini or "Love is the host in strange lands," meaning visitors should be welcomed with love. Hawaiians practised aloha and ho'okipa long before the first tourist, Captain James Cook, arrived.

In any case, what we do is challenge our clients with what I call the "Iron Proposition" which states: if you're in the hospitality business, you're in the aloha business because you can't be hospitable without being kind, friendly, warm, compassionate and loving. Of the hundreds of managers we have trained, I cannot recall a single one disagreeing with this statement, but nor can I recall a single manager agreeing that is how their hotels are run. The notion that business and aloha do not mix is a pervasive and troublesome contradiction in the industry.

Predictably, when we've asked managers if they can remember the last time they talked about loving or caring in an executive committee meeting, they say, they can't remember ever talking about it, or at least not seriously. This is not to say that expressions never cross their minds or even their lips, but such subjects just do not appear on the agenda as priority items. They do not constitute business talk.

As one supervisor put it, "You have the feeling that nothing is sacred except money, and everything, including aloha, is expendable." Hard-headed business values, symbolized by the "terror of the bottom line", take precedence over hospitality values.

If we've made a breakthrough in our work with the industry, it's getting managers to acknowledge the contradiction in their values and their behaviour. As a result, one of our most popular workshops is called "Aloha Service 101" in which we teach the intellectual as well as emotional content of the term aloha in the context of being a mea ho'okipa or hospitalitarian. (Remember: you heard it here first, but, I must admit, the term hasn't caught on. People say it sounds too much like sanitarian).

One of my Hawaiian tohunga friends keeps reminding me that when you've got a good thing going, flaunt it. So we're now trying to develop two more modules, Aloha Service 102 and 103 which, among other things, have to do with getting rid of old attitudes such as the macho syndrome of the American male manager that prevents him from expressing feelings or speaking words like "caring" and "love". I want Theory X-type managers that there is no room in the hospitality business - or any business for that matter - for fear-driven, top-down, autocratic management styles. MBA or management by intimidation is out; MBA or
management by aloha is in!

If you can't wait for my book on the subject, read the recent book by James Autry, a seasoned Fortune 500 executive and president of the magazine group of the Meredith Corporation, entitled Love and Profit, The Art of Caring Leadership, in which he says, "Good management is largely a matter of love." For those uncomfortable with the "L" word, he suggests "caring." We suggest aloha.

General systems theory about management tells us that if you change one thing in an organization, you may need to change the entire organization, and that's because, as in an ecosystem, everything in an organization is interconnected.

This is certainly true with our efforts to replace fear-based values with aloha-based values. So, in Aloha Service 102 and 103 we talk about new ways of valuing, measuring and rewarding aloha-driven behaviours. One of the things we're grappling with is devising a different kind of balance sheet that would account for the tangible as well as intangible assets (such as aloha). In a world in which money still talks, we need to be able to link aloha behaviours to revenue generators.

Conclusions

If there's a message here, it is this: if you want to change the old, you had better be prepared to replace it with something as good, if not, better.

A decade ago I had the opportunity to help design and write a series of tourism development scenarios for several Maori tribes. One of the Maori elders I interviewed said something to me that I've since quoted or paraphrased on numerous occasions. In closing, let me leave you with his advice and its implied warning: "We can succeed in this tourism business, as long as we can maintain the integrity of our culture."
RESOURCE MANAGERS:
CULTURAL PERSPECTIVE ON ECOTOURISM

John Marsh
New Zealand Maori Arts & Crafts Institute
Rotorua

Mihi.....

Distinguished guests from across the ocean people of Aotearoa, greetings, welcome. Bring with you the generations of ancestors you are not privileged to know. May they rest in peace and may we the living strive to make our planet a better place.

We did not inherit this planet from our ancestors, but rather we borrowed it from future generations. The essence of tourism is to be found in the cultural distinctiveness of the country, the art forms, music, song, dance, history and lifestyle of people indigenous to that place. The significant constant that makes one destination truly different from any other is inextricably embedded in the people, their cultural roots and values of that nation.

Tangata Whenua

The first Polynesian immigrants to Aotearoa arrived here about 100 generations ago - to a rich land, but a harsher more temperate environment than the one they had left. These people (my ancestors) have become known as the Maori of New Zealand. Their first stages of occupation were probably difficult - relying heavily on the hunting of birds and the rich coastal resources. Many of these difficulties led to the evolution of effective conservation principles - such as rahui or the creation of reserves and tapu (sacredness). Tapu is not a concept which embodies enforcement and compliance - the modern side effects of protection strategies - but is a core concept in society for social control; a self-policing system because it is based on respect and reverence for Taonga or natural resources and for the children of Papatuanuku of mother earth. The environment came to provide a sense of belonging, security and sustenance.

Maori have, through settlement, use and protection of the environment, come to be "tangata whenua" (first immigrants). It is vital to consider what this means when trying to consider concepts such as ecotourism. Iwi Maori earned the title "Tangata Whenua" after 40 or more generations of working towards understanding the environment. They become not only "tangata whenua" but Kaitiaki (guardians) of these resources. Maori do not have authority over the land or over nature because they were part of it. Their obligation was to care for the land, and to pass it on as intact as possible. People belonged to the environment, and not the other way around.

Much of the iwi Maori conservation ethic can be understood from the language and from terminology used when talking about the environment. The language focuses on processes, systems, the inter-relatedness of all things. In the Maori language one meaning of tangata is "people"; "whenua" means land, and also means placenta. All the connotations of nourishment, cherishing and belonging are relevant. Placenta are buried in sacred places, reaffirming the connection to the land; placenta to land, land to man. The environment becomes linked to the person through genealogy (whakapapa), through oratory and song. The mauri (life essence) links humans, land, sea and nature - interconnected and interdependent. When Maori introduce themselves they are identified by a pepeha (a statement) setting out personal and tribal identity. For instance some people in my home area of Rotorua may be identified by:
ko ngongotaha te maunga - ngongotaha is the mountain
ko rotorua te moana - rotorua is the lake
ko kaituna te awa - kaituna is the river
ko to arawa te iwi - te arawa is the people.

The sudden and almost complete destruction of lowland forest in New Zealand last century has been paralleled in the loss of names. Most older Maori know the distinct names given to bends in rivers, parts of estuaries, mountain ridges all around the country. Today much of this is lost because it is not used - the land has been chopped up into districts, region and city councils, into electoral and conservancy areas, and by the national grid - a regimented system for mapping. An innuit elder testifying before an environmental panel said simply - "sure hope you people never learn to fence the sky". I share this concern.

Iwi Maori understood the impacts of freshwater habitats on estuarine zones, and consequently on coastal fisheries and in turn on the pelagic resources of the marine environment. They know that any interference with natural riparian vegetation along fresh water systems would have effects on the coastal fisheries nurseries of estuaries, and ultimately on the national and global resources of tangaroa (the god of the sea). Tangata whenua knew that the forest and water environments were functioning living systems of networks, cycles and flows, that species living in them were also dependent upon and vital parts of the processes of that system.

Statistics

- in the short period of human occupation in Aotearoa about 50% of endemic bird species have become extinct;
- 50% of indigenous frogs have become extinct;
- one freshwater fish species is extinct and 6 are threatened - almost the sum total of all our freshwater fish;
- at least 6 plant species have become extinct, 20% are at risk, and none are protected outside public conservation areas;
- 500 plants and animals are currently threatened;
- we have the highest proportion of endangered birds in the world (115)
- all our most critically threatened ecosystems are not represented in conservation areas, such as wetlands, dunelands, dune lakes, coastal and lowland forests and tussock grasslands;
- we have 30% of our land protected under some kind of conservation status but most of this is for landscape values and much of it is inaccessible. Very little of this protected land is for ecological values, much less spiritual values;
- less than 1% of our marine environment is protected;
- only 6 rivers have water conservation orders protecting them;
- 90% of wetlands have been drained or degraded;
- 60% of indigenous forests have been lost (compare that to Japan's total of 12% loss!)
- 90% of tussock grassland have been lost.

The statistics go on and they are frightening. The challenge now is to move away from this "colonial" mindset of developing and changing the land, air and water to one where we feel that we belong. Much of what is has meant to be a New Zealander in the last 150 years or so has been to "break in the land" - conversion of our natural areas into what is effectively pastoral deserts. Is New Zealand the beautiful, clean and green unspoilt place that tourism often portrays? Perhaps the few remaining wild areas are, but they are largely inaccessible to tourists. What is accessible - lowland rivers and forests, coasts, sea, cities, geothermal resources -and these have all been vandalised by so called "rural development".

Losses Suffered

Displacement of traditional land, water areas and food sources has often resulted in the loss of "traditional knowledge". Knowledge, like the land, was not owned but passed on to the next generation in trust. Knowledge of the processes and systems on which we depend for life-
support. It has also meant loss of knowledge about traditional medicine, traditional arts and traditional conservation techniques. It has also meant loss of access - access to food collection (mahinga kai) and to areas where plants could be gathered, with appropriate ceremony and respect for medicine or weaving. In "anglicizing" our environment by removing native forests, planting European trees and shrubs, filling in wetlands, diverting and straightening rivers and water courses, imposing rigid geometric grids on the landscape, significant losses have been imposed.

Much of what it means to be iwi Maori has been lost. The separation from land and its resources has had wide reaching effects on physical and spiritual dimensions of maroitanga. Loss of land has meant loss of some species of plants and animals - some of which iwi Maori were dependent on.

Iwi Maori have been separated and alienated from their land for the past 150 years. They have been excluded from exercising tino rangatiratanga, and the land has suffered and the people have suffered. The exercise of tine tangatiratanga or chieftainship provided iwi Maori with mechanisms for the welfare of people and protection of resources; they were bound together.

Iwi Maori have always been greatly dependent on waterways, particularly coastal systems. Alienation from these areas through reclamation, drainage, modern farming and pollution has caused great ecological and spiritual losses.

Indigenous culture has shifted metaphorically as well as physically to accommodate changes introduced by colonisers and in the process has lost much of its own data-bases/storehouses of knowledge. Our ancestors walked the land, they travelled light, created no mess and moved on with little trace; later settlers used vehicles and left a lot of themselves behind. The difference is my ancestors understood and knew where they had travelled while the settlers who followed knew by the signpost created out of changes to the land and people. In traditional times estuarine areas like Maketu in my area - the original outlet of the Kaituna River and the sacred landing place of the arawa canoe - was an area rich in seafood (kai matarai), famous for its food resources, for its flax for weaving, for its beauty, for the quality of animal, plant and human life it sustained, for the spiritual well-being of its people. In the latter half of this century the area has been greatly degraded - the river was diverted, resulting in progressive siltation of the once rich wetland, farm lands and factories have contributed to pollution and corresponding change from life giving waters to polluted waters. Dependent species of fish, shellfish and birds have left the area - followed soon after by people. The river and its estuary lost their life essence. Saving and restoring this area has recently become the task of the Department of Conservation and the people of the area. The life essence (mauri) of the area will be restored largely because traditional knowledge about the area remained intact. Life essence or mauri is a key concept in Maori thought because it possesses all living things. Any upset in the balance of this force has repercussions on other living things. This vital spirit, this sense of connection, processes and interdependence is now confronting conservationists and ecotourism promoters alike. Divide the land and you divide the people.

The Distinctiveness of New Zealand

The first impression visitors usually gain of New Zealand is out landscape, and indeed it is often what has brought people here.

But is this landscape what was distinctly New Zealand? Our current landscape in my opinion is a sad testament to our cultural identity and attitudes to the land. For many European visitors, the New Zealand landscape must make them feel at home - the same trees, farms and methods of "managing" the land as are found in Europe, particularly Britain. The original landscape of Aotearoa is a great part of our natural and cultural diversity and we must not allow any more natural areas to be altered.

Visitors coming here for an ecotourism experience are, I believe, seeking a natural experience and a wider appreciation of the country - of understanding the relationship of past and present generations to the environment. But what is that natural experience? How much if it embodies a distinct appreciation of the environment, and how much if it is what was distinctly New Zealand? The statistics quoted would indicate that there is not much left of what is distinctly New Zealand. How do we go about bringing what is distinctly New Zealand back into the places where we live?

Despite the principles embodied in the Treaty of Waitangi, the New Zealand equivalent to the
Magna Charta, western science dominates conservation research, policy and practice. It does this almost to the exclusion of traditional Maori knowledge. Reversing this will go a long way towards bringing conservation back to where the people are, instead of taking people to where the conservation is.

Visitors seeking a natural experience in New Zealand can be rewarded for their efforts. There are a growing number of ecotourism ventures proving to be successful - some are iwi Maori based. Whale Watch Kaikoura offers a blend of tourism, conservation and a cultural experience. The stunning natural beauty of the Kaikoura Coast provides an unstaged setting to iwi Maori to work again with their natural environment and taonga such as the whales and dolphins. But I believe this will become another classic situation where iwi Maori have given their trust and commitment only to be out manoeuvred by bureaucracy. It is important to realise that many legislative acts do not allow iwi Maori to carry out the traditional conservation practises. The acts are regulatory by design and intent. We currently have a situation whereby whatever system defines the problems, defines the solutions. There are distinctly Maori ways of achieving solutions to conservation issues, and they must be incorporated actively into policy and procedure. The Wildlife Act, for instance, does not protect plants outside conservation areas, it does not recognise their value to iwi Maori, and conservation and marine reserve acts fail to identify Maori roles. Legislative changes which incorporate the fostering of traditional methods and protection and acknowledgement of traditional knowledge are essential. The cultural well-being of iwi Maori can be ensured through active involvement in conservation issues, access to traditional activities and ecotourism, and through the recognition of the value traditional knowledge plays in these areas.

In the development of ecotourism Maori ways of operation are required. For this to be successful, active participation by the iwi Maori is required. Opportunities for ecotourism and conservation need to be identified and their development fostered and encouraged by national and local organisations. We do not want tokenism.

Bringing conservation to the people should not be a difficult task. Planing schemes and revegetation projects such as those along the Raglan-Kawhia cost and at Motutapu Island incorporate ecological and cultural diversity, and traditional and western science. The benefits are felt immediately at local levels through reintroducing native vegetation and species to the areas, and also ensuring access to cultural materials. But the benefits are also felt outside the local communities. These projects are attracting domestic and international tourists and are awakening the life essence (mauri) of these areas. The creation of conservation areas where we can all go, and which embody traditional knowledge, is critical. Protecting, restoring and conserving what is distinctly New Zealand will bring conservation to our back-doors again. The protection of processes and systems rather than isolated pockets of land and sea is what is needed. Natural areas need to be protected for non-material needs such an spiritual, cultural and aesthetic qualities. This can be achieved by creating corridors of protected environments, by protecting river systems from their source to the sea, including flood plains. This kind of protection would cross administrative, legislative and tenure boundaries and would rekindle a distinctly Maori conservation ethos. Let us raise the level of the debate beyond these artificial boundaries. If essential genuine ecotourism experiences are to develop, grow and endure, it must be conceived, managed and sustained in full partnership and shared with the indigenous peoples who have nurtured and guided these unique values since they first settled the land.

Whatever you achieve at this conference may it be to enhance the treasures we borrow from our descendants.

Kia ora.
Abstract

Auckland is richly endowed with a diversity of natural resources rivalled by few regions of comparable size and population. The vision of successive generations of citizens has ensured that spacious examples have been secured in public ownership and are valued highly as community assets. However the recent rapid growth of tourism, through Auckland being the gateway to the country and the main national commercial centre, is creating additional demands on these resources over which the community remains greatly divided.

The statutory consultative process for the preparation of park management plans is providing a way towards resolving these differences on a comprehensive basis. The conflict between conservation and commercialism is manifesting itself in a variety of ways.

A satisfactory solution can only be achieved through closer continuing consultation between the marketing arm of tourism and the resource management agency. The industry must recognise that it will be required to compete for appropriate concessions with other users and develop a reputation in the community for integrity and responsibility.

Introduction

I wish to focus on sustainable ecotourism from the perspective of a local government resource manager charged with the responsibility of administering public lands for the wider long term benefit of the community. The Auckland Regional Parks are an extensive and diverse resource based network of public lands now exceeding 33,000 ha and located on the fringe of a major metropolitan district.

My daily work life involves resolving the conflicts of conservation at the "coal face". I have to walk the knife edge between protection and use of these natural resources, determining a balance between local and regional needs and meeting the expectations of both residents and visitors. My performance is determined on both the short term enhancement of the quality of life in the region, and also the long term sustainability of these resources. My business skills are measured both in terms of the prudent allocation of financial resources and also the effectiveness of my advocacy in attracting an appropriate share of the public purse. It may be claimed that I am a bureaucrat in the political system, saying yes or no to tour operators, very often through the forum of an elected Committee.

Personally, I view my role as a steward of public assets, delegated the task of ensuring these resources are passed onto succeeding generations, unimpaired and hopefully enhanced through the course of time. As a private citizen I am intensely proud of the Auckland region with its diversity of resources, and I am keen to share them with our visitors - provided that use does not damage or destroy their integrity or value as a community asset. However, professionally I can go no further in the sharing of these resources than the wider community is prepared to permit me.

In the shaping of public opinion, the resource manager must be able to draw upon the experience and the assistance of the tourist industry. Effective dialogue between the two industries can lead to a greater understanding
of each other's expectations and aspirations. It is important that we develop common goals and share the costs to achieve them, rather than each following our individual paths which rarely touch. I hope that the wealth of knowledge and experience assembled at this Conference can stimulate greater cooperation and understanding at the action face of managing visitors in natural areas. I trust that my comments regarding Auckland and its regional parks operations provide an incentive in this direction.

Auckland Region

The Auckland Region has a population of 936,438 which is 27% of the country's population of 3,373,926 (1991 Census, Department of Statistics).

The Auckland urban area has a total population of 884,800 or 93% of the population of the Auckland Region. Like the residents of any other major city, Aucklanders look to surrounding natural resources for a significant part of their recreation. The bush and beaches are traditional recreational features in this region and, fortunately, protection of public land encompassing them has met public expectations. Since 1966 a Regional Parks network has had the responsibility of coordinating these protection programmes. The islands in the Hauraki Gulf are administered by a Central Government agency - The Department of Conservation.

Demand for regional recreation facilities in natural surroundings continues to increase due to a combination of domestic factors quite apart from those related to tourism growth. There is;

- an increasing overall population in the Auckland region.
- greater environmental awareness and a related desire for nature related activities.
- increasing importance placed on education outside the classroom in schools.
- growth in fitness and health related outdoor recreation.
- an increasing desire for scenic recreation resources out of the urban environment.
- decreasing opportunity for access to rural surroundings and activities.
- economic factors which determine that people seek lower cost recreation and leisure activities.
- an increasing demand for information

on recreation opportunities.

In addition to providing recreation facilities, regional parks have a conservation role and the needs in this sphere are also changing. Some of the more important causal factors are;

- an increasing realisation on a national level by both Government and the public as to the importance of protecting natural assets for future generations.
- the growth of Auckland's urban environment and a decrease in its rural open space areas.
- modification of the natural environment to meet increasing housing and service needs of the region's population, resulting in the loss of many of Auckland's natural and unique features in the urban districts, and the constant threat of the urban sprawl to the Auckland Region and its diversity of natural resources, particularly those of a maritime character.

This complex combination of trends is reflected in the increasing usage of the existing regional parks network. Total Regional Park visits have increased to an estimated 4.6 million visits based on June 1990 to July 1991 assessment and this exceeds the total visits of the national parks network. Camping bookings and groups activities also show increased usage.

Auckland's Tourism Industry

Auckland is the undisputed gateway to New Zealand. Approximately 95% of international tourists first set foot on Auckland soil and from their first alighting they begin to experience the natural, cultural and built assets that the region has to offer.

Tourism is becoming an important industry in the Auckland region. Over the past decade the rate of increase in visitor arrivals to New Zealand has been approximately double that of the world average. Tourism spending in Auckland totalled over $843 million in 1989 and is predicted to increase to $1,060 million by next year. Its contribution to gross regional product in 1989 was $519 million and there are predictions that there will be 26,000 tourism related jobs by 1993.

The largest increase in international visitors are forecast to come from Japan and Germany, which will therefore provide a potentially large sightseeing market. Our natural outdoor
attractions must be prepared for this, since tourism in this country depends on parks and open space, as well as maintaining the quality of the natural environment.

It is not sufficiently well known that Auckland as a tourist destination provides a microcosm of the natural outdoor assets that New Zealand as a whole promotes to international travellers.

Large kauri trees within 30 minutes of Downtown Auckland. Thermal springs and the jewel in Auckland’s crown - the sparkling waters of 3 harbours and the Hauraki Gulf with its island playgrounds and coastal fringe of sandy beaches and pohutukawa clad cliffs. For the sightseer, volcanic cones provide the region with unique vantage points to view the metropolis, seascapes and our clean green rural surroundings by day and by night.

Where else in the world is there a city where within half an hour you can climb an ancient volcano, take a boat trip to an island, swim in a thermal pool, walk amongst giant trees, watch sheep being shorn, or picnic beside a white sandy beach? Auckland’s diverse natural surroundings are an antithesis to its status as New Zealand’s largest city. For this reason perception of its potential as an ecotourism destination has been masked.

It is time to lift the lid and let the world see the diversity of experiences that the region can offer, but it will require community acceptance and tourist industry involvement.

Safeguarding Community Interest

As a manager of fragile attractions, however, I must first and foremost be conscious of the needs and aspirations of those who have a stake in the Regional Parks Network. Our stakeholders can be defined as the people of the Auckland Region - both living and unborn. So far, our concern has been to cater primarily for their conservation and resource-based recreation requirements. Use of the parks by tourists has occurred only where tourists’ needs coincide with those of our stakeholders. About 10% - 15% of visitors to Regional Parks are tourists in the broad sense (that is, they normally reside outside the region). It is recognised that the parks have a role to play in attracting tourists to linger longer in the region and so contribute further to its economy generally. But at present there is no direct contribution from the tourist industry to the upkeep and enhancement of the attractions on which the sustained growth of the industry will depend.

Dramatically increased tourist use has the potential to compromise the attractions themselves for only indirect economic benefits. The parks industry relies on long term sustainability of resources. It is imperative that the natural and cultural values embodied in our parks are retained for the appreciation and enjoyment of future generations. Our grandchildren and great-grandchildren would not thank us for a worn-out shabby parks network.

The responsibilities of a Resource Manager - Community Input

It is for this reason that park managers take their stewardship role so seriously. As a result, my profession may appear to be somewhat conservative in its approach to promoting its attractions to tourists. On a free entry basis, additional visitors place the limited parks budgets under greater pressure.

Tourists may come, enjoy and go, but park managers have a responsibility to ensure that the quality of the experience is optimised for all visitors into the next millenium. This involves considerable cost, and in these days of user pays it is inequitable for the people of the region to subsidise the use and exploitation of attractions by those who do not contribute to their upkeep. The application of the user-pays concept to the enjoyment of natural resources is still alien to the average urban New Zealander. Indeed there are justifications for avoiding it through some form of incentive on a national basis towards maintaining the facilities associated with our natural resources to an international standard. These features of our country are the products which the tourism industry promotes worldwide. It coordinates an infrastructure to facilitate their customers reaching these destinations. However the very real attractions of open space, forests and coastlines which entice the visitor appear to be ignored so far by the industry, to any great extent. These features are the very basis of ecotourism and are being sought by the international tourists. However they are essentially community assets and the process for forging linkages with industry are already in place in New Zealand and awaiting utilisation. I refer to the statutory park management planning processes involving the opportunities for public comment and which my Council has followed for over fifteen years now, with
virtually no input whatever from the tourist industry. The process, which utilises a Citizen Advisory Group at the draft stage, is presented diagrammatically as an appendix.

A park management plan is essentially a two part document which consists of a descriptive section and a prescriptive section. The former outlines the resources, assets, history and existing use of the area; the prescriptive section outlines policies and guidelines for the use and management of the area over the forthcoming five year period. It is participation of tourist industry leaders at that stage in park planning and resource management which will create an appropriate understanding of their needs and expectations by the resource administrators and the community at large. I strongly believe that the advancement of ecotourism tourism in the Auckland region will be inhibited until the person in the street becomes aware of its importance to the nation and obtains satisfaction from enhancing the enjoyment of tourists to our region.

Conflicts Between Conservation and Tourism

Even in the best planned situations conflicts do arise between conservation and tourism, and the conflicts we have experienced throughout the Auckland Regional Parks network are no doubt typical of those experienced worldwide - although perhaps they are escalated by virtue of occurring on the fringe of a major metropolitan population. As in any conflict situation, the earlier that the problems are identified the easier it is generally to introduce effective measures to halt the deterioration. The real difficulty with natural resources is that deterioration tends to occur almost surreptitiously and, unless constant monitoring is undertaken and recorded, the initial impacts can escape unnoticed.

The conflicts experienced in regional parks through increasing visitations and sophistication of facilities centre around the following factors;

Vehicles. Visitors require transport of some form to reach our parks. The integration of private vehicles and public coaches into the natural landscape is a challenge requiring considerable initiative and sensitivity. Not only does it have the potential to compromise the resource, but also to compromise the quality of life for residents on the access routes.

Pedestrian Access. The impact of pedestrian traffic in high use areas can have an erosive effect not only on formed routes but also on the landscape generally, and particularly foreshore areas. However the obvious solution in providing durable surfaces can be a further step in reducing the natural character of the site.

Disturbance of Wildlife. Increasing numbers of visitors bring the threat of disturbance to wildlife, particularly where their adjustment to human intrusion is unknown. We have one of the only two mainland gannet colonies in New Zealand within our network at Muriwai on the West Coast. Last year over 600,000 people visited this seabird colony and we believe the risk of serious disturbance is now high. Such is our concern that we are arranging for the University of Auckland to study gannet behaviour in the presence of humans over the forthcoming summer.

Information Needs. More visitors invariably means more signs for directional, regulatory and information purposes and these, unless well designed and appropriately located, can create visual conflicts in the landscape.

Merchandising. The modern traveller has an insatiable need in the areas of merchandising and catering and they have the potential to bring suburbia with all its trimmings into the natural landscape with dire consequences.

Park Standards. The cumulative effect of these pressures results in an overall deterioration of the quality of the resource unless high standards of presentation of the property are achieved. Tourism is a world wide industry which expects an increasingly high standard of presentation. Each feature is assessed by the tourist today on an international basis and unless it measures up to expectations, all parties suffer including the agency, the region, the country and the industry.

Solutions to Conflict and Deterioration

One may well ask what are the solutions. There are well tried systems and unfortunately time permits only an enumeration of them. They are:

- Good long term planning
- Competent well trained park ranger staff
- Comprehensive background knowledge of the resource being available
- Community involvement in both the planning and operational stages
- Meaningful interpretation and educational programmes associated with the resources
- Creating out of these educational programmes on environmental ethic so that visitors will have minimal impact on natural resources
- Selective and sensitive promotion of the resources relative to their capacity potentials
- Treating the tourist like any other visitor

These solutions are the basis of a prudent management system which will assist in minimising conflicts associated with ecotourism.

Conclusion

Ecotourism is therefore associated with stewardship consultation and developing a sensitivity towards the natural world.

Against my stewardship role of administering these outstanding natural resources for the benefit of posterity I wish to remain responsive to the present needs of my community. There is no doubt that one of those needs is providing for our increasing numbers of tourists attracted to our region. In meeting their expectations I require greater consultation with the tourist industry and greater assistance from scientists to ensure that these resources are handed onto subsequent generations unimpaired while at the same time continuing to give enjoyment to the visitor of today.
C.A.G. COMMENTS ON DRAFT

REVISED DRAFT TO REGIONAL PARKS COMMITTEE FOR CONSIDERATION

REVISED DRAFT ADVERTISED FOR PUBLIC SUBMISSIONS (8 week period)

HEARING OF SUBMISSIONS BY REGIONAL PARKS COMMITTEE AND C.A.G. NOMINEES

DRAFT INCORPORATING CHANGES RESULTING FROM SUBMISSIONS PREPARED

DRAFT PLAN (WITH AMENDMENTS) REPORTED TO REGIONAL PARKS COMMITTEE

REGIONAL PARKS COMMITTEE MAKES CHANGES AS NECESSARY ANDadopts PLAN

PLAN IN OPERATION FOR 5 YEARS OR UNTIL REVIEW BECOMES NECESSARY

PUBLIC INVITED TO COMMENT ON WHAT PLAN SHOULD CONTAIN (8 week period)

CITIZENS ADVISORY GROUP FORMED includes interested members of the public & representatives of local organisations & interests.

ISSUES IDENTIFIED

SITE VISIT BY C.A.G.

PROPOSED DRAFT PLAN PRODUCED

C.A.G. COMMENTS ON DRAFT

AUCKLAND REGIONAL COUNCIL
In preparing for this presentation I was reflecting on the fact that 10 years ago I was at the East West Centre.

I was completing my thesis which was based on the concept that the use of our natural resources should be environmentally sound, economically feasible, socially acceptable and politically possible, and working on a framework whereby resource development projects could be assessed against these criteria or principles. I was arguing that in resource management decisions we do not need to try and reduce everything to a common denominator and force, for example, a dollar value on the social and environmental impacts of projects.

I recall the scepticism that my supervisor displayed as I developed my thesis around this concept of balancing different values in making resource management decisions.

When I returned to New Zealand I began looking for employment. That was about the time that people were beginning to recognise the enormous economic potential of tourism, and it occurred to me that, if properly managed, tourism could be economically feasible, socially acceptable and environmentally sound. And, it was on that basis that I set about finding a job in the tourism industry.

At an industry level it is relatively easy to adopt those principles in broad terms; the challenge is to find a workable balance. Tourism is the largest earner of foreign exchange in the economies of our region and in some of those economies it is one of a limited range of options for economic development.

On that basis it is not surprising that environmental and social values are often relegated to secondary considerations, and priority given to economic growth and development. (We all know the saying that Money Talks.) In many instances we've been able to get away with chasing the dollar by sweeping environmental considerations under the carpet and assuming that communities will adapt to change. But we are all well aware that that kind of behaviour eventually catches up with us. Ecosystems begin to degrade and the fabric of host communities begins to breakdown.

Acknowledging this, people have begun to talk about sustainable growth and development and there is a growing awareness that the sustainability of economic growth is directly related to the carrying capacity of the resource base - both natural and cultural.

Of course to many of us gathered in this room, this is no great revelation. And indeed to the commercial world out there it is no great revelation either, but what is new is that instead of businesses simply recognising the principle of sustainability they are having to factor it into their business practices. We can no longer afford to pay lip service to being environmentally and socially responsible.

By way of example I would like to talk very briefly about Air New Zealand's business development strategy and where ecotourism as a philosophy fits into that. And I would like to emphasize the word "philosophy" because I firmly believe that when we talk about ecotourism we have to go beyond thinking of it just as a kind of product that sits on the shelf alongside ski packages and cruises. Ecotourism is a way of developing and
marketing tourism in an environmentally, socially or culturally and economically sustainable way. And the proposition that I would like to put to you is that in the long term the commercial viability of big and small players in the industry will depend upon adopting and implementing an ecotourism philosophy.

Why do I say that?

Leading up to the privatisation of Air New Zealand, senior management developed a new growth strategy for the company. We had had plans in the past, but like a lot of corporate plans they tended to be based on what happened last year plus 10% (kind of rear-vision mirror planning). In 1989 we adopted a different approach based on the premise that if we didn't invent our future, someone else would. And that is really what strategic planning is all about - inventing the future. (And perhaps that is what we are doing here today.)

As part of the planning process we quickly came to terms with the fact that for Air New Zealand to survive and grow we could not build our business on taking New Zealanders offshore. There is a limit to the amount of travel that a home-based population of 3.3 million people can sustain, placing a natural ceiling on growth. If, however, one reverses the equation and contemplates bringing travellers from all around the world down to New Zealand then the sky literally is the limit. New Zealand currently captures about 1% of the Japanese travel market, and it doesn't take a rocket scientist to work out that that suggests considerable potential for growth!

Air New Zealand now has a very clear strategic focus and direction based on developing inbound tourism to our part of the world. I should add here that we define "our part of the world" as the South West Pacific region - that's New Zealand, Australia and the Pacific Islands. New Zealand is our primary focus, we are the second largest foreign carrier into Australia and we have the most comprehensive Pacific Islands route network of any carrier. By focusing on inbound tourism we are accepting that our commercial success depends as much upon trading conditions in the aviation industry as it does upon the performance of the tourism industry.

For that reason we play a very active role in our tourism industry - particularly in international marketing - but also in tourism development. You see, as much as we might wish that the reverse were true, people do not sit in LA or Europe and say, "Gee, Air New Zealand is a great airline, I wonder where they fly to?" They first of all decide where they would like to visit on their vacation and then they select the airline. In other words, the destination is the motivation - the airline simply the transportation.

So where does ecotourism fit into all of this? We know that one of the key motivating factors for travellers to this part of the world is the quality of our environment. That means that we have to be committed to maintaining - and where possible enhancing - the quality of the environment because, if we sit back and watch the "assets" that motivate travellers to New Zealand being destroyed, then we are also destroying our cashflow.

Now that might sound a bit mercenary, and I will be honest - it is.

As a commercial entity our interest in ecotourism could be seen to be self-serving. But I accept that if we are going to use ecotourism then we cannot abuse it. By that I mean we accept that we cannot commercially exploit the environment without reinvesting in maintaining the quality of the environment. Just as we invest a huge amount of money in maintaining our aircraft, we must also invest in maintaining the other assets that our business depends upon. While we haven't quite reached the stage of factoring environmental assets into our balance sheet alongside our other assets, that is not to say we don't acknowledge their value. And it is not to say that they haven't entered into our profit and loss statement. Air New Zealand is in the process of spending $35 million dollars hushkiting its 737 fleet. We are doing this in advance of international noise regulations that come into effect on 1 January 1994. Can you imagine this happening five years ago?

The point is that we can expect to see more, not less, of that happening as we attach more value to the environment. I have been reading a book from Harvard Business School called "COSTING THE EARTH". They argue that allowing business to exploit the environment without paying for it is the same as governments providing business subsidies or incentives - it means that companies are not meeting the true cost of doing business. While it would be commercially irresponsible of me to suggest that we should start introducing green
taxes in a hurry (given that carriers are desperately trying to reduce cost structures, not increase them), by the same token it would be commercially naive of me to think that green taxes won't be introduced in the future, and we have to be prepared for that.

Meeting statutory requirements is one thing but environmental responsibility goes beyond that.

To illustrate my point I would like to present to you an innovative project known as the Oceans Campaign that Air New Zealand is involved in. I believe that this project represents a sign of things to come in that it is based on an unlikely alliance between Air New Zealand, Television New Zealand and the California-based "American Oceans Campaign" (AOC).

When we launched "Oceans" just a few weeks ago I commented that if you took an environmental lobby group, a number of Hollywood celebrities, an international airline, a television network and their natural history boffins and said, "Let's establish a partnership and make a series of featurettes on ecotourism", everyone would have said, "Quit while you're ahead."

Fortunately, we never did pose that question, we did form the partnership and we do have a successful ecotourism campaign.

Right at the outset we acknowledged that each party had different objectives but that they weren't incompatible:

- Air New Zealand wanted to promote tourism to the South West Pacific and to increase our market
- Television New Zealand wanted to gain exposure internationally and increase their audience
- AOC wanted to spread an environmental message and increase their membership base.

Our concept was to develop a series of featurettes on ecotourism issues to be introduced by Hollywood celebrities involved with the American Oceans Campaign (Ted Danson, star of "Cheers" being AOC's president). The issues would be serious but the tone positive, to demonstrate that people can make a difference. The first featurette, for example, is on whalewatching, and its basic message is that instead of shooting whales with harpoons and depleting the resource there is an opportunity to shoot them with cameras and develop an ecologically sustainable and commercially viable ecotourism business.

I know that Peter Hayden from Television New Zealand's Natural History Unit will be telling you more about "Oceans" tomorrow. As a preview to that I would like to show you a brief 'taste tape' on the Oceans project.

Our initial plan was to produce 12 featurettes, but in reality we can keep this campaign rolling for as long as we like. And the campaign doesn't stop at the featurettes.

We are currently negotiating the development of a one hour, world-wide television special using footage from the featurettes that will be hosted by Ted Danson and Patrick Swayze. I should mention that none of the celebrities involved with this campaign are charging us for their time - these are multi-million dollar stars who have donated their time to the cause.

Air New Zealand is also donating to the cause via a clever like marketing mechanism. Having viewed the featurettes inflight, travellers are invited to look in their seat pocket for an information card on the AOC. They can fill in their credit card number then and there and join AOC. In addition they can fill in a brief questionnaire that profiles their travel preferences. We can then match that profile with mailing lists in our key markets and undertake a direct marketing campaign with specially developed legitimate ecotourism travel packages. We have an agreement with AOC that for every package sold in conjunction with an Air New Zealand airfare, we'll make a donation to AOC.

We are enormously proud of this campaign because it demonstrates that big business and the environment can work together. Yes, it's blatantly commercial, but it also carries a very powerful environmental message around the world and it puts a value on our environmental assets. All of the partners in the venture, and most importantly the traveller who is enriched by the experience, win.

I'm not saying that airlines are squeaky clean environmentally, but surely this kind of initiative is a step in the right direction. I firmly believe that until such time as environmental values are totally integrated and balanced with commercial values, the only way you will get big business to be environmentally responsible is if you can demonstrate a commercial benefit in it (such as Oceans) or if you make it a regulatory requirement (such as hushkitting aircraft). That
is the reality and the challenge that we have to deal with - not environment against commerce, but developing formulae that enable the two to work together.

I empathise with Dr Helu-Thaman who said this morning that business developers will only talk about protecting natural and cultural assets as long as doing that yields a commercial return. In today’s environment that is a fact of life. Put bluntly, if, as a privatised carrier, Air New Zealand doesn’t earn the required return on shareholders’ funds then we simply won’t exist. And just as we can’t support a viable aviation industry without tourism, because of the distance from our major markets, tourism cannot exist in our part of the world without aviation.

So the solution has to be to find a balance and to invent the kind of future that we can all live with.

Part of what I hope this conference will achieve is a clearer definition of the future we want. Ian Oelrichs talked this morning about having a vision and I agree that that is something we should work on, although I would add to that the word “shared” - a shared vision of where we go from here.

The guidelines that we hope will emerge from the conference are also critical to defining our future. And on Wednesday we will be announcing the winners of New Zealand’s Ecotourism Awards. The awards are based on meeting rigorously defined standards that ensure we are promoting and developing legitimate ecotourism products. These are the kind of things that we must do if we want to retain the integrity of the visitor experience.

I have covered a considerable amount of ground in my presentation and I would like to conclude by repeating a few key themes:

1. We need to balance economic, social and environmental values (and I agree wholeheartedly with Peter Valentine that we need to find or establish models of how to do that).

2. The large players and small players must accept that sustainable commercial growth and development is directly dependent upon environmental and social or cultural sustainability and that we must be contributors, not exploiters.

3. Related to 1 and 2, we need to develop a new philosophy for tourism development and marketing and I believe ecotourism could be the cornerstone of that.

4. We need to develop new partnerships and we need a shared vision because we have to be able to coexist.

I said earlier that the Oceans project was based on an unlikely partnership, but we had a shared vision and we developed a common purpose. This is the challenge before us.

Finally, it was with a degree of trepidation that I stood up here representing the “bad guys of big business”. I would however, ask you to reflect on one thing. It’s people that make decisions, not anonymous corporations, and the power to change things is therefore in our hands. Let’s not be victims of a process; let’s be creators of it.
ECOTOURISM IN THE SOUTH PACIFIC AND THE CENTRAL EUROPEAN CLIENT

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Abstract

Motives for travelling have to be considered against the background of current European environmental issues. Interviews with young children and the growing demand for psychotherapy in adults indicate an increase in dispair and depression among young people. The South Pacific is perceived as a pristine destination with unspoiled nature. A high proportion of the travellers from Central Europe do not only want to look at the landscape but have an involving experience. Examples of Greece and Turkey show how uncontrolled development of tourism ended up in profitless volume mass tourism. To better identify different tourism ventures, six categories are proposed, ranging from nature experience tourism to entertainment. Ecotourism needs to be sharply defined and well distinguished from nature or culture sightseeing. Ecotourism meets the needs and expectations of a large proportion of central European travellers if it acknowledges the basic rules of group psychology: small client to guide ratio and empathetic interpretation. Ecotourism needs to be managed and planned. The impact on the environment must be monitored to the extent of cutting licences for operation. The paper concludes that well managed ecotourism could find a significant place on the market. If the vocabulary is not misused as just another label for better marketing, but can be recognized as realisation of a philosophy for sustainable and culturally as well as environmentally compatible tourism, the political importance of this might well extend beyond the South Pacific region.

Introduction

Before I present my paper I would like to thank Mr. John Gilbert for the invitation to speak at this conference. I would also like to thank Air New Zealand for their efforts in transporting me to this conference with as minimal impact on my biorythms as possible. My travel experience within the Pacific region is limited to New Zealand. I can therefore only comment on this destination. New Zealand's share of central European long haul travel represents only half a percent of all travellers boarding an airplane to leave Europe. It is worthwhile to draw a picture of the psychological background of these travellers, since their experiences will set future trends. It is also necessary to evaluate, how the European client would differentiate tourism ventures.

In my normal profession I am a pediatrician, not a travelwriter, with special interest in psychotherapy and intensive care medicine. Last week I attended a psychotherapy conference, where we discussed the current problems of young people. Some of their hopes and subconscious motives for long haul travelling are very similar to the reasons why they approach psychotherapists. When I look at European society and environment, the similarities to an intensive care patient are striking. There is no forest at all, not a single tree, where the knowledgable eye doesn't indentify the scars of acid rain. The rivers and lakes of southern Sweden have been dead for more than a decade. More recently the government of my new home country Switzerland is confronted with the damage of acid rain to the mountain forests of high alpine regions, which provide avalanche protection for roads and villages below. No one knows how to pay for concrete constructions once the forests are gone. Some pessimists say this will happen within the next decade, some optimists like me
They look at the Pacific and New Zealand in still marry, and they still spend holidays, and times are tough mate, and you ought to be cool on TV. As one said: "Boy, you don't understand nature. One of the bestsellers is the famous peaceful island somewhere, where men respect recent marriages of young urban folk. But they not alone. The destruction of the environment and tough too if you want to survive." He didn't even change the tone of his voice. This man is not alone. The destruction of the environment has slowly infected social life and found parallels in young peoples' personalities. One indicator is the divorce rate of 50% of the more overcrowdedness of their own environment. They wish to see other countries at the same class the 24-28 hour travel plus the jetlag is still towards heaven. If one doesn't travel business class the 24-28 hour travel plus the jetlag is still more torture than recreation. So what does the traveller seek, who considers a journey halfway around the world? Is it escape? Is it entertainment, just like TV? Is it a spiritual encounter? The market brief of the Tourism Board published earlier this year reflects about the travel motivations of central Europe visitors and I quote: "They are wanting to escape overcrowdedness of their own environment. They wish to see other countries at the same time strengthen mind and body. A release to a different way of life." Let me repeat: "escape overcrowdedness, strengthen mind, release to a different way of life." I think this data is correct. The Tourism Board of New Zealand currently aims to triple the numbers of visitors.

A Medical Perspective

Psychologists tell us that over 80% of ten year old children, when asked about their outlook towards life as adults, draw a dark disastrous image of a mechanized world of concrete with a few remnants of trees which died years ago. A lot of these children would themselves not want children. Even if one considers travelling to green Ireland to get away from the polluted air, one has to learn about the increased rate of leukemia in the neighbourhood of Sellafield. Suddenly one considers twice to buy Irish butter. The overwhelming presence of TV brought the images of Chernobyl-Children to everyone of us. Chernobyl blew up just six years ago. But our politicians already encourage us to believe the tales of the positive and tidy aspects of nuclear power generating. What a lot of people dont know is that several of the influential politicians have seats on the advisory committee of Electrocorp which is the major shareholder of the nuclear power plant construction company. It is no surprise, that a lot of young people despair. It is not surprising that they spark their protest into neonazi activities, get into drugs or switch on TV. As one said: "Boy, you don't understand the world. In these days you have to look after yourself. Quick money, quick success, quick sex. Don't get involved with anybody. These times are tough mate, and you ought to be cool and tough too if you want to survive." He didn't even change the tone of his voice. This man is not alone. The destruction of the environment has slowly infected social life and found parallels in young peoples' personalities. One indicator is the divorce rate of 50% of the more overcrowdedness, strengthen mind, release to a different way of life. A release to a different way of life. I think this data is correct. The Tourism Board of New Zealand currently aims to triple the numbers of visitors.

A European Perspective

Psychologically speaking, it is placed halfway towards heaven. If one doesn't travel business class the 24-28 hour travel plus the jetlag is still more torture than recreation. So what does the traveller seek, who considers a journey halfway around the world? Is it escape? Is it entertainment, just like TV? Is it a spiritual encounter? The market brief of the Tourism Board published earlier this year reflects about the travel motivations of central Europe visitors and I quote: "They are wanting to escape overcrowdedness of their own environment. They wish to see other countries at the same time strengthen mind and body. A release to a different way of life." Let me repeat: "escape overcrowdedness, strengthen mind, release to a different way of life." I think this data is correct. The Tourism Board of New Zealand currently aims to triple the numbers of visitors.
the destruction of culture and environment; a lot of operators successfully pump through large numbers.

However, most of the European travellers are happy with this. They will put up with the destruction of culture and environment; a lot of operators successfully pump through large numbers.

Since Gaugin visited Tahiti and presented his stunning paintings to the European audience, the Pacific region has been associated with tranquility, natural beauty, warmth of climate and human welcome: in other words, paradise on earth. All these places were reported to be inhabited by rather friendly people living in an unspoiled nature. What the Europeans witnessed in their home continent were the side effects of mass tourism. The first places flooded by millions of summer tourists in search for beach, sun and bronzed skin were the Costa Brava of Spain and Italy. Then the tide reached Greece. The southern coast of Turkey gives the most current example: Ten years ago Turkey was a hidden secret. Hardly any infrastructure was developed. One would travel to the beaches and bays, be welcomed by the locals and share their turkish coffee. Then, about five years ago a wave of backpackers entered the country, stimulated by cheap charter airfares to Antalya. The next year, the coast witnessed extensive building activity. The gazettas and catalogues were full of advertisements like: "Get away from the crowd, come to the unspoiled beaches of Turkey". This year some friends reported: Stay away, it's hardly different from Greece and Spain. The local's wife now works as kitchen aid in the international hotel. It took less than five years. Now commitments are made. Hotels are built, airplanes are bought, the debts need to be paid off, the profits returned to the owners of joint ventures in Ankara and Munich. Everyone knows, they will pull out and sell off, if Kuwait oil shares or Borneo hardwoods offer better revenue. The concurrence of overcapacity forces discount prizes. Nowadays one can purchase a two week special to Turkey for half of the price one had to pay half a decade ago. The only way the kitchen aid will not loose her job is if the big operators successfully pump through large numbers.

Categories of Ventures

I would suggest six categories of ventures. The first one can be named nature heritage experience, characterised by low impact on the environment, small groups, educational purpose of the travel and desire to increase understanding and knowledge about wildlife or fauna. The next category, which is named nature sightseeing has the main purpose of enabling the tourist to view nature, the interpretation is a sideline, the size of the group does not really matter, since nature viewing is not dependant on a low guide to client ratio. The third category is cultural experience. It requires active involvement of the client into the life, myths, beliefs and traditions of the visited country. Here it is most obvious how delicate the balance is between the negative impact caused by the visit and the benefits of it. Cultural sightseeing, which is the next category, lacks this active involvement. Examples are some of the museums or Maori-concerts.

The last two categories, adventure thrill and entertainment have one aspect in common: They can be found anywhere in the world. Even if they were originated in one place, like Bungy-Jumping, they are not essentially linked to the culture or nature of the area. One can Bungy-Jump in Cologne, join white water rafting in Nepal and ski in North America. Typical ventures that have nothing to do with the locality are casinos. They can be found on every of the continents, maybe except the Antarctic. As long as one doesn't consider the adventure thrill aspect of spending ones life savings, they clearly qualify for the entertainment category.

In each of these categories the relation between experience, amusement and
entertainment is different. Ecotourism to me can only be found in the categories nature experience or cultural experience. In addition to the criteria of those categories it would have to be demonstrated that the venture or operator had done something positive towards conservation of nature or cultural heritage. To enjoy green forests, the traveller just has to view. To really understand about the unique forests of Gondwanaland, and to appreciate the birdlife, excellent interpretation and guiding is necessary.

Characterizing European Visitors

Almost half of the central European visitors are young backpackers. Most of them seek a high proportion of genuine experience, nature experience in particular. Psychologically speaking they are in search for their selves. This might explain why they perceive the wooden cover of alpine tracks as offensive to their approach to nature. A lot of information amongst these people is spread by word of mouth and by travel publications like Lonely Planet - books that rather emphasise where to get the best deal than the need to protect alpine vegetation. These young visitors will work in factories a whole summer long or do a year of babysitting to afford the airfare to New Zealand plus a two month stay calculated on a basis of NZ$50 per day. They would rather sleep in a tent to save up for some special venture like a bungy jump or a Kiwi-watch. Still nobody who I met was aware of the existence of tour operators who guide and explain nature heritage and who take care of the places visited. They would rather regard guided tours to be some sort of soft adventure for elderly semiretired people lacking the guts to carry their own backpack. They all frowned when I talked about Kiwi-watching in torch light or bushwalks to penguin-nesting places. Then their eyes started to shine, a lot of them their own backpack. They all frowned when I about how to see the whole country within 25 days. These travellers find catalogues full of advertising by companies, abusing words like "ultimate experience", "the last paradise", "awesome" and "the venture you will never forget". A lot of these travellers are infected by the virus called: "I must see it all". Many of them but not all would sign up for a 10 midday trip to remote islands of the Hauraki Gulf - if someone had convincingly assured them about the quality of this experience before they left Europe. They too want to find out about unspoiled nature, want to experience real wildlife, but they are caught in the mechanisms dominating their daily life in Europe: rushing, time pressure, having to be effective.

Both types of tourists have hardly any chance to compare two trips: They will only pay one visit to the whales, one visit to the Coromandel bush, one visit to Great Barrier Island. Because of the natural beauty of the terrain even those tour operators will find clients who only offer the view from behind the window of a tour bus.

But how does the potential traveller find out about those few operators qualifying for the experience categories? When I returned from my last visit to New Zealand I took back some 50kg of brochures and books. Only three dozen ventures met my criteria for qualifying as nature or cultural experience operations. When I worked through the most recent journal published by the New Zealand Tourism Board for the German market I could not find any mention of the concept of ecotourism. Competition for the cheapest fares, rental cars and hotel deals takes first place in the fight for market shares on outbound travel to New Zealand. The only travel agent exclusively specializing in caring for independent travellers and special ventures went broke.

In contrast, a vast majority of the travellers are very sensitive to the issues of environment. Europeans are used to reading periodicals like "Ecotest". If there existed a judging panel, publishing independent comments on tourism ventures, I am sure the travellers would refer to them. This hypothesis is supported by the fact that the average German visitor to New Zealand will buy two to three travel guide books before boarding the plane. The competition amongst the tour operators to meet the criteria of this panel might encourage quality development. The weakness of ecotourism in a profit orientated society is its inability to create large revenue out of a single operation. It is therefore incompatible with the exploitative ambition to return high revenue to any
overseas broker. The strength of ecotourism for the country visited can be low overheads and the spread of the tourism dollar to distant regions.

Achieving the Best

As we can learn from Turkey, management and planning cannot be left to the market. Ulva Island, a small bird sanctuary on Stewart Island, may serve as an example. It is one of the most beautiful places I know of in New Zealand. Let us imagine the rumor spreads. We may assume this small island would be overcrowded by more than fifty free independent travellers at any one time. Toilets are needed. Boat access is needed. Imagine a big company acquires a launch built in Korea, capable of dumping 50 tourist per day, picking them up again two hours later and finishing the half day trip with a tour around the island. The captain could give some explanations via the microphone and assure the client before they leave the launch that they had a great day. Take $45 or so to pay off the hundreds of thousands spent on the ship. Advertise: "Visit Ulva Island, the unique nature experience. Join the famous catamaran jet, tailor made for this outstanding day on Peterson Inlet. A journey you will never forget." There may be two or three jobs created. There is no chance for any guide to set up his own tour on a small scale. But there is a second scenario: Let us imagine three operators who own small boats, taking parties of six each at $60. Let two other operators start a sea-kayaking venture to Ulva Island, taking four on each group at a charge of NZ$100 per person and day. Ron Marks might find enough clients for an early morning bird-voices tour. That might create a second job for an unemployed scientist. And on no day will there be more than 30 people on Ulva Island at the same time. The story of the backpacker saving up NZ$89 for a second bungy jump tells you, that this is not a tale from Fantasy Island.

In addition there is an invaluable psychological long term effect to this. I can give a personal example. A few weeks ago Rodney Russ guided me to a nest of Fjordland crested penguins hidden under a fallen trunk of a tree. Every time now when I push the accelerator while travelling on the unrestricted German autobahn, and I love travelling at 170 km/h, the vision of the Fjordland crested penguin warming its two eggs pops into my mind. This vision demands speed restriction, morally more powerful than any abstract idea about acid rain and dying forests. This is one of the treasures I took home from my last journey.

How does this treasure experience come about? To the traveller it starts with the size of the group. In one evening, the usual person can get a feeling of familiarity within a group of four to six. Throughout a decade of teaching I found the best ratio to be between one to four or one to six. It became difficult above one teacher to twelve students. The same rules apply to group psychotherapy. Above this critical mass of twelve any direct eye contact to each one of the group is lost; subgroups form. In tourism one talks about bus sizes - this requires a microphone. Only a few brilliant speakers will still enthuse their audience. Any group effort gains momentum when the group stays together for at least one night. I found this in workshops, in group psychotherapy, in intense teaching. These apparently basic human conditions of life suggest that an ideal ecotourism venture would enhance on the quality of the experience simply by respecting these facts: group size of six to twelve, overnight stay.

Another factor in promoting ecotourism is publicity. Tourism boards would be well advised to carefully examine the track record of the travel writers they invite. They may consider to support only visits to regions which need emphasis, like East Coast, Urewera National Park or Catlins of New Zealand. Rotorua, Queenstown or Milford Sound will take care of themselves.

It is, however, not sufficient just to know how to approach the client. Clinically speaking, we also need to know the pathology of something going wrong, only then we will know how to avoid disaster. In scientific medicine we have developed tools to measure parameters or indicators for the well being of our patients and we know well the so called "normal range". This development took several decades. To discuss the physiologic range of parameters that could measure impact of tourism on environment or culture is beyond my abilities. I have to leave it to the scientists and wildlife workers who will decide whether numbers of keas sighted, numbers of bush parrots, numbers of whales visiting Kaikoura represent the right measure for the physiology of the environment. It is obvious that some of the parameters will take a long time to adjust or change, so they require long term monitoring. Tourism somehow acts like cancer; no one dies from one single cancer cell, nor from a million. It takes years to grow and spread. Finally the
neoplasm simply outnumbers the ability of the body to cope. Once cancer is established only the most vigorous measures can stop the growth, some of them almost killing the patient. If we talk ecotourism, are we prepared to take as rigid measures to stop the spread of unwanted effects as the cancer therapists do? Who would be prepared to call off the whale watching operation if we discover the whales are affected? Which businessmen, which client would be prepared to accept the surgeon's knife that cuts the licence for operating?

The implication is the need for careful planning employed by the community to monitor the impact not only on the environment but also on the experience of the client. The concept of ecotourism requires powerful authorities to employ the surgical knife of cutting licences where nature or culture is affected, regardless of the tour operator's monetary commitments. We need to advertise this concept of sustainable tourism and should not compromise in the standards employed. It is a political decision of long term consequences to determine which of the six types of tourism should develop and what their balance should be. Leaving it to the market the bug of exploitation is very likely to grow to a septic pattern. Any normal immune system would wipe out unwelcome visitors to sustain life. The AIDS of tourism is the ideology of large numbers creating large revenue in short time.

Conclusions

The majority of European tourists to the Pacific will be prepared to respect environmental and cultural issues if informed. The concept of ecotourism could preserve some of the most remarkable and inaccessible areas of the Pacific for sustainable long term tourism. The realisation of the philosophy of ecotourism could be a step away from exploitation of the land towards an attitude of caring for the gift. It may help to encourage young visitors to do something about conservation in their own home country. Bearing in mind the inaccessibility of New Zealand and the fact that 30% of the land is under administration of the Department of Conservation, New Zealand to my knowledge is the only place on this planet where the administrative requirements are present to introduce sustainable tourism on a geographically large scale. There will always be some mass tourism, some entertainment tourism and little ecotourism. If the countries of the Pacific, however, strengthen the proportion of ecotourism, the importance of what the Pacific countries do could well extend beyond the Southern Hemisphere like the 8 hour working day and the women's right of vote that was first introduced in Wellington, New Zealand. The chance is here and it has to be taken, today, not tomorrow. I hope my little premature baby-friends will be proud of you when they are grown up to my age.
Introduction

World Wildlife Fund for Nature (WWF) is an international conservation organisation whose ultimate goal is 'to stop and eventually reverse the accelerating degradation of our planet's natural environment and to help build a future in which humans live in harmony with nature.'

Conservation organisations like WWF are interested in tourism because it is perhaps the one industry that can play a positive role in conservation. Although many conventional tourism practices continue to lead to negative environmental impacts, thus undermining the very foundations on which much of the industry is constructed, ecotourism by definition holds some promise of an active conservation ethic.

Conservation organisations realise that the conservation of natural areas in the South Pacific Island countries will not occur by locking up large areas of land in western style national parks. Land owning clans of Fiji and the Solomons are lured by the cash of large overseas logging interests, and who can blame them? So conservation organisations reason that if a more benign industry both protects the natural asset as well as satisfying development needs then this is preferable.

Thus ecotourism or tourism to natural areas that fosters environmental understanding, appreciation and conservation and sustains the culture and well being of local communities, promises both conservation and local community development. Theoretically it sounds the perfect partnership between business and conservation. But is it?

This paper does two things. First, it traces the historical development of the word ecotourism and stresses that ecotourism first and foremost is about conservation. Second, it presents an ecotourism case study in Fiji and discusses some of the problems of village based ecotourism business in the Pacific.

Conservation Origins

Ecotourism, the word, has its origins in the conservation movement.

Hector Ceballos-Lascurian, around the middle of 1983, coined the word when he was performing the dual role of Director General of Standards and Technology of SEDUE (the Mexican Ministry of Urban Development and Ecology) and a founding president of PRONATURA, a conservation NGO. PRONATURA was lobbying for the conservation of the wetlands in northern Yucatan as breeding and feeding habitats of the American Flamingo. Amongst the arguments Hector used to dissuade the building of marinas in the Celestun estuary area was the presence of an ever growing number of tourists, especially North Americans, interested mainly in birdwatching, Hector believed such people could play an important role in boosting the local rural economy, creating new jobs and preserving the 'ecology' of the area.

In 1984 Hector, along with Dr Richard Wilson, decided that they would create a travel agency serving people interested in nature and Mexican culture. They called the Agency "Ecotours". Eco being short for ecology which Hector took to mean 'relations between living organisms and environment'. The aim of the
tours was to promote conservation by giving tourists a quality educational experience whilst boosting the local rural economy.

Ceballos-Lascurian first formally defined ecotourism in 1987 and Liz Boo popularised his definition in 1990 in the WWF book entitled 'Ecotourism: The Potential and Pitfalls'. Unfortunately Ceballos-Lascurian's definition of ecotourism was not quoted in full and the book tended to equate ecotourism with nature tourism or any tourism taking place in a natural environment. Thus ecotourism came to mean just about anything to anybody.

Many tour operators have capitalised on the use of the term in the marketing of their activities. Labelling a tour an 'ecotour' has positive connotations. However unsuspecting tourists are not receiving the product they might have imagined.

Fortunately, after much discussion at international conferences like the IUCN Parks Congress in Venezuela and the Ecotourism Conference in Belize in early 1992, conservation has been put back into the definition. It is now widely acknowledged that ecotourism is tourism in the natural environment that promotes conservation.

If ecotourism is able to motivate the tourist, tourism operator, or local community to become active in the conservation of natural resources then it has achieved its main aim.

Sustaining the Culture and Well Being of Local Communities

Tourism and tourism based on natural resources does not take place in isolation to local people. Conservation may be the main aim of ecotourism but this will not occur unless the needs of the local communities are met. The introduction of ecotourism as a source of income can provide an economic incentive to minimise environmental degradation. However, if development is controlled by forces outside these communities, it is common to see overdevelopment and excessive economic leakage followed by high social impact. Resentment can also build among the disenfranchised causing blatant overharvesting or destruction of so called protected natural resources.

Local communities need to be involved in all levels of ecotourism development from planning through to management. The planning process must involve the community, with an understanding of how local communities can be best approached, understood and integrated within the economic enterprise.

Ecotourism as Business

A tourism or ecotourism enterprise is a business. A business aims to make a profit. Tourism business is based on western capitalist concepts. 'Business', however, in subsistence Pacific Island communities is culturally defined and usually involves community ties, solidarity and reciprocity. For ecotourism business to be successful at village level in the Pacific a huge gap has to be bridged between local culture and social structure and capitalist business principles. This is where ecotourism business becomes problematic at village level. Conservation is most likely to flourish where an ecotourism business is profitable and satisfies the aspirations of the village or local land owning clan.

Case Study - Tavoro Forest Park and Reserve - Bouma, Taveuni Is, Fiji.

In 1991 this ecotourism enterprise was seen by the Fijian Government, International NGO's and the local community as being 'successful'. I visited twice in 1991 to ascertain why.

This is what I found:

Tourism is indeed one way of conserving rainforest and sustaining the well-being of local people but it's cure-all abilities are certainly limited. Not all tropical rainforest can be conserved by tourism and there has to be a combination of factors present for 'ecotourism' to succeed.

Firstly, the environment to be conserved has to be worth visiting. Tourists have to be drawn to the rainforest for some reason. It has to be safe and ecologically or geographically spectacular or different. Other attractions such as waterfalls, beaches, or unusual endemic species will add to its appeal. However, natural splendours have no value for ecotourism unless they are accessible.

Secondly, the environment has to be seen as
worth conserving by the local community and these communities have to want to share their rainforest with tourists and possibly forgo some of their usual activities. The community has to see that tourism will improve its quality of life. This is not easy. Even though money may be the incentive, very few communities like change and any initiatives to disrupt daily life will be regarded suspiciously. A new project will usually only get the support of the community if it is similar in organisation to its own social structure, and it supports the community's cultural and ideological values. People are much more comfortable with something that is familiar. Local communities in rural areas of developing countries (where most of the tropical rainforests are located) are at different stages of entry into a cash economy. If money is to be the prime incentive for ecotourism, how this money is distributed amongst the community will also be important in the success of tourism as a conservation tool. In other words, the capitalist business / cultural social factors have to be well planned and integrated.

And lastly, for long term success, ecotourism has to be sustainable. Ecotourism enterprises will have to not only satisfy both the tourists and the local community but not cause any long term ecological damage to the site.

Tavoro Forest Park and Reserve is a protected area of rainforest at Bouma on Taveuni Island, Fiji. It is one case where the local community initiated, and now manage, an ecotourism project on their land. It is seen as economically, ecologically and organisationally a success.

1. **Tourist Appeal**

   Bouma has many qualities that appeal to tourists - stunning natural features that are safe and accessible.

   1.1 **Physical Features**

   Bouma has palm fringed beaches, crystal clear creeks with three waterfalls which plunge into perfect swimming pools, stunning coastal views, a lake, the rare and beautiful Tagamaucia flower and rainforest with a rich diversity of ferns and birds.

   1.2 **Accessibility**

   Fiji is four hours from Sydney, directly on the flight path to Los Angeles. Taveuni Island, the third largest island, can be reached by one of several cheap, short plane flights which leave Suva or Nadi each day. Taveuni already has a small but well established tourism industry as it is advertised as one of the best dive spots in the world. Most of the tourism on the island is controlled by expatriates and Fijian Indians control most of the commerce. Very few people come to Taveuni solely to visit the rainforest at Bouma. Bouma does not advertise but the guide books extol its virtues and once on the Island word of mouth at the resorts and camp grounds encourages people to make a day trip. The climate of Taveuni's coastal resorts is hot and sticky and the thought of a refreshing swim under a waterfall amidst lush rainforest attracts most people. The Park is 15km away from the nearest accommodation but public buses travel a scenic coastal route to the park each day. Taxis, although expensive, are easily obtained. Bouma is a paradise that is easily accessible.

   1.3 **Familiar Features**

   The fact that Bouma has a designated reserve with picnic areas, well marked paths and other facilities that tourists have come to expect in their own developed countries, gives it a safe, familiar appeal. There is nothing to threaten them in the park. There are no leeches or dangerous animals in the forest or in the pools and you can happily drink the water you are swimming in, a rare treat for inhabitants of more industrialised countries. Very few complain about the US$3.50 entrance fee.

2. **Community Appeal**

   Bouma has a unique combination of factors that enabled the community to initiate and develop their own ecotourism development.

   2.1 **Land Tenure**

   Those who own their land usually have a lot of say in how the land is used and one would assume that local landowners tend to respect the land more if they are the ones to suffer from its misuse. But this is not always the case. Fiji is fast losing it's indigenous forests.

   Eighty three percent of Fiji's land is owned by its indigenous people, who mostly lead 'affluent subsistence' lifestyles. They usually grow enough food for their own use but need cash for school fees, housing, church, clothing and household items. About 44% of Fiji's land area is covered by natural forests so logging is an easy way to get cash. A foreign owned logging company does all the work and the mataqali (land owning unit or clan) gets a handsome cheque. They are
convinced by the logging interests that their short term gain is worth it. As a result, 60% of Fiji's forests are now committed to logging concessions.

Land ownership on its own then is no guarantee that forest will be protected from harmful ecological practices. Other factors have to be involved.

2.2 Enterprising Individuals
In the late '80s an island-wide proposal to log all available timber was drawn up and a timber mill was built on the island. Several mataqali on the central western side of the island have already logged their land. It often takes an enterprising, far sighted person to break away from expected behaviour. On the eastern side of the island a local youth named Jonati, trained in land use and evaluation, realised that logging could cause severe ecological problems that would threaten future use of the land. He belonged to a mataqali at Qeleni village and had friends at Bouma. He tried to persuade his people and the mataqali Naituku of Bouma to withdraw their land from the logging proposal. He proposed ecotourism ventures for both mataqali but he faced stiff opposition in his own village where he is virtually disowned.

However, in Bouma a well educated and well travelled priest belonging to the mataqali Naituku agreed with Jonati and was able to persuade the elders of his mataqali to withdraw from the logging agreement.

The priest's father, a respected elder with accounting skills, and other members of the mataqali saw that tourists would pay money to visit their forest and falls and were able to persuade the chief that this would be better for all.

2.3 Level of Acculturation
The mataqali Naituku did not find tourists threatening or alien as small numbers had been visiting their falls and rainforest for decades. However tourists paid little for the privilege. A bundle of kava (a root that produces mild intoxication) presented to the chief sufficed. The village had also been home to several groups of young Canadians on exchange over the years and the villagers appreciated youthful adventurous travellers. Their social structure and cultural traditions had not been affected over the years by a steady trickle of affluent western visitors.

With the aid of the priest the mataqali approached the Fijian Government for assistance as it was felt that tourists would require something familiar like a national park with facilities if they were to pay a decent sum for the privilege of visiting the forest and falls.

2.4 Sympathetic Bureaucracies
The Native Lands Trust Board (NLTB) in 1989 provided a NLTB land use planner to draw up a proposal for landowner tourism-orientated development and heritage protection. This was done in consultation with the mataqali and the Ministry of Forests. Alivereti Bogiva, the Forests Amenity Officer and a native Fijian still very much aware of Fijian traditional life, forged an immediate friendship with the people and assisted them in developing a tourism development that would conserve their social structure and their cultural values as well as their forest. Both Alivereti and the priest can communicate equally well with villagers and western consultants and government bureaucracy. The New Zealand Government was approached to fund the project and they granted $60,000 for the first stage of the tourism development. This consisted of the building of walking tracks, picnic areas, a visitor centre, rest areas and signage.

2.5 Respect for Tradition
The position of head of the mataqali is hereditary and is a leadership role. Tevita, head of mataqali Naituku, is ultimately responsible for decision making but is content to be advised by those with greater knowledge. There are two committees composed of mataqali members - one for the tourism project which consists of those employed directly by the development and one for the mataqali. Any decisions made at the project meetings are passed on to the mataqali committee who are respected members of the mataqali. Any problems can always be referred to a steering committee consisting of Government officials set up specifically for the purpose. In Alivereti's words, "Government is a servant of the people".

Because they were aware of the social costs of tourism development, they have been careful to design cautionary measures to safeguard against too much intrusion into their lives by the tourists. The visitors centre
is located a few hundred yards away from the village so that many tourists do not even visit the village. Decorative poles have been placed around the boundary of the village to stop vehicles from trespassing. Day to day life is not disturbed by the tourists and if the tourists don't come, life goes on as usual.

Women were consulted as to what they felt could be negative side effects of tourist visitation. They wanted dress codes and respect from tourists on Sunday. They feel very much a part of the project because an outcome of meetings with a NZ Government consultant was a women's community craft centre, although this has been funded quite separately from the tourism project.

Women are reviving traditional skills - craft items are made for tourists to buy, and if requested by a tour group traditional singing and dancing is performed. No one in the village, however, is dependent on an income from the tourists in this way.

This respect for their traditions and the organisation of their tourism development along these lines has actually brought the community closer together. They are a cohesive group working together for the benefit of the whole mataqali.

2.6 Distribution of Wealth

The traditional Fijian way is to work cooperatively and share the benefits. The mataqali has sufficient land for members to garden for their own needs and to grow yagona for sale. Only those who have good educational qualifications work for a wage. The mataqali is not dependent on a cash economy. The profits from the project have been placed in bank accounts and the committees have decided how the money will be spent. It is distribution of wealth along traditional lines.

Another mataqali at Waikatakata on the Coral Coast in Fiji which owns rainforest, falls and hot springs, was approached by NLTB to organise a similar tourism development. Problems have arisen with this as the local landowners are already involved in the transition to a cash economy. Their village is alongside a luxury tourist resort and many of the villagers work in the resort. Those of course who earn money from their daily labour can buy more consumer items and therefore increase their social standing. More and more often they are loath to distribute their wealth with others. The development proposed by NLTB involved the local landowners giving their time freely to develop the project. This they would not do. There has been much bickering amongst the landowners as some already take tourists into the forest and are the sole beneficiaries of the profits. They don't want to help the project when they will probably have to work harder for less gain. For this development to succeed a close look at their changing social structure and economy will have to occur. Developing a project that suits the current social infrastructure and distribution of wealth may have more hope of succeeding.

2.7 Economic Success

The Tavoro Forest Park and Reserve was opened in March 1991 and by November tourists from all corners of the earth had paid US$8,000 just in fees to enter the park. The project employs three full time staff, a receptionist who collects the fee and sells handicraft items in the visitors centre and two workers who maintain the park. A guide works when tour groups request a guided tour. Wages take nearly a third of fee money but nearly 50% is left after other expenses and maintenance, for mataqali development projects. All 150 or so members of the mataqali Naituku benefit communally from ecotourism. School fees this year have been paid. Tevita will get the first new house. Not everyone can have a new house but they are not in a hurry. A slow return is all they require. The wish to keep the project small is a genuine one.

As far as the mataqali Naituku is concerned the tourism development is a success. They initiated and they developed it with expert assistance to suit their social organisation and needs. They are the ones to reap the benefits. So a community based ecotourism project is more likely to succeed if it does two things - it should be organised in a similar manner to their social structure and respect their cultural values and it should have economic potential that can be distributed acceptably amongst the community.

3. Sustainability

However, satisfying the needs of tourists and local communities is not enough to conserve rainforest in the long term unless the tourism development is ecologically sustainable. Ecologically sustainable development is "improving the quality of human life while living within the carrying capacity of
supporting ecosystems." (IUCN, UNEP, WWF 1991 'Caring for the Earth')

The Naituku mataqali has realistic expectations. The members know they are not going to get rich quick. They wish to maintain their present lifestyle and social customs. They wish to raise their standard of living without jeopardising their quality of life. They would definitely feel that their well being is sustained.

The mataqali Naituku will soon enter the second year of their ecotourism project. Tourists have caused no visible damage. Their forest is intact, their water quality is maintained and they have money to assist their development. Without the tourism project they would have kept gardening the forest between the waterfalls or even extended further into the forest. They would also have lost all their available timber to a foreign logging interest. Now 200 extra hectares of land are protected and tourists can enjoy 7 kilometres of tracks through 2,000 hectares of privately owned rainforest.

The mataqali realises they have something special. These are the words of an elder:

"Keeping forest benefits generations. If log benefit only some. The tourism project is wise use of the land. Will keep the forest as it is. If you cut the trees it will chase the birds away and there will be trouble - slides, the creeks will dry and the lake might burst and go away to sea. In tourism keep the birds and the trees and let the people come and they will give you money. And if you use the money wisely you can give your children education and housing. Most countries losing this."

So long as both the community's expectations and the numbers of tourists are kept modest, I believe that the project will remain sustainable and conservation of rainforest will have been achieved.

Postscript 1992

Several unforeseen problems have arisen since my personal observations of 1991. These have been relayed to me by Birandra Singh of the National Trust of Fiji and Annette Lees of the Maurua Society, New Zealand.

1) Qelini, the village mentioned earlier that decided on logging instead of ecotourism development, has now requested permission to withdraw from its agreement. This occurred just after my visit in late 1991 when the figures on how much the project made were released. Unfortunately, a study has shown that the present tourist visitation to the island would not support another ecotourism venture such as the Tavoro Forest Park and Reserve.

2) A member of the mataqali who lives in Suva is organising his own tours to the Forest Park. He is planning to collect the entrance fees for his own benefit and there is little anyone can do about it.

3) This is only stage one of the project. More money is due from the NZ Government for another village further down the road to also develop an ecotourism venture. Who will the tourists pay? Will they have to pay twice? If they only pay once on entering the area how will the money be distributed? Needless to say the Mataqali Naituku is not happy about further tourism development in the area.

These problems have arisen clearly through lack of planning. They may have been overcome, and still might, with a clear business plan and a legal business agreement signed by all members of the mataqali and all participating members of overall project.

However, it is obvious that there is no formula for a successful ecotourism business venture. Even if the problems with the Tavoro Forest Park and Reserve project are resolved, what has worked here will not necessarily work elsewhere. Business principles which apply so well to individual entrepreneurs or small family concerns working with an established capitalist system are extremely difficult to apply to communities where different cultural and social structures dictate a different value system. Further problems arise because communities themselves are often not unified. Ecotourism and therefore conservation of natural areas will only succeed if these problems can be resolved.

Conclusion

There is hope, however, that the problems on Taveuni can be resolved. I firmly believe that ecotourism can be profitable conservation but a lot more thought and planning has to occur before capitalist business, subsistence societies and conservation can coexist peacefully.
Abstract

Ecotourism is frequently billed as the panacea in helping conservation pay its way. The reality in the Pacific is that very few areas of conservation value also have the potential to support economic local tourism enterprises. To be successful ecotourism has to move beyond its conservation and rural development focus and be seen for what it is - a business venture that is expected by landowners and business operators alike to earn money. In this role, ecotourism needs to be based on a carefully planned and executed strategy that is targeted to its market and to meet the cultural and social needs of the village-based operators.

Introduction

The focus of much of the discussion at the Earth Summit in Rio this year was on a concept not new for many of us who have been working on environmental issues in the South Pacific - that conservation, at least in developing countries, must pay its way. Without some way of generating a living from the natural resources around them, the world’s rural poor are frequently unable to afford to protect nature. In the Pacific, village-resident landowners are selling their tropical forests to logging companies, or clearing forest themselves for coffee or copra or oil palm plantations to earn cash to meet their basic needs and development aspirations. For protected areas to be successfully established, more than just education about the values of nature protection is required. Forms of income generation that are compatible with nature conservation are critical to providing local communities with the economic opportunity to establish protected areas.

Of all of the options on the short list of environmentally benign developments for rural communities, ecotourism is perhaps the most enticing solution to promote. By definition it links environmental protection and development. It requires a pristine and beautiful natural environment to succeed. Because it promotes itself as a simple enterprise, sprawling hotel complexes are unlikely to be part of the promotion package. Instead, accommodation near or at ecotourism sites will probably be designed to suit the natural surrounds, and being locally based can be expected to better benefit rural communities. Ecotourism, frequently marketed as a learning and experiencing holiday, may attract the kind of tourists that rural people and village residents might like to have around, as opposed to the golf-club swinging, beer swilling, resort tourist. So it is often projected as also being socially benign.

It is little wonder, then, that great interest is stirring in the South Pacific over the potential of ecotourism to take care of the development side of nature conservation, as an example of the elusive village-based sustainable rural development, as a way of stimulating flagging tourist interest in a South Pacific tropical island destination, and as an aid and development package that donors can proudly put their name to.

For ecotourism to effectively meet these challenges it needs to be developed beyond its conservation and rural development focus and link in to a wider development strategy that pays attention to its role as a business enterprise and to its markets. This paper discusses the implications of those wider links and the problems that arise when they are
Focussing on a Business Strategy Rather Than the Development and Conservation Problem

Ubai Gubi in the highlands of Papua New Guinea is a key conservation area because of its exceptional concentrations of birds of paradise. An international environment group, keen to facilitate its protection, chose ecotourism as an income-generating project for the locally based landowners. The concept developed for the tourism enterprise was based around a presumed market for special interest, up-market nature tours to see birds of paradise. Wealthy clients were to be flown around key viewing sites by helicopter. A lodge was designed and built to accommodate them.

The project was a failure. Tourists have not arrived. The lodge remains but the enterprise has folded, yielding no benefits to the landowners or sound protection for the forest.

Because ecotourism depends on a protected natural environment for its success it is often assumed that any protected natural site has ecotourism potential. Ubai Gubi is an example of a conservation problem looking for an ecotourism solution - an approach that has only a slim chance of success. The reality is that very few areas of conservation value in the Pacific also have the potential to support economic local tourism enterprises. In the results of an ecological survey to identify key sites for biodiversity protection in the Solomon Islands 24 sites were recommended for conservation area status (Maruia Society, 1990). Of these only three were given any prominence as possible tourist destinations by an earlier comprehensive report on nature tourism in the Solomons (TCSP, 1987). Trying to promote the other 21 as ecotourism sites may well result in 21 more Ubai Gubis.

Ecotourism development needs to be focused on a careful assessment of market needs and realities rather than on the development and conservation requirements of a given area. A study to determine the size of the market of wealthy people with an interest in birds-of-paradise in Papua New Guinea should have been in place before any up-market lodge was built at Ubai Gubi. Results of the study might have meant that sponsors of that conservation area either pitched the tourism project at a different market or attempted to establish a different income-generating project altogether for the landowners.

Ecotourism should be seen for what it primarily is - a business venture that is expected (by landowners and business operators alike) to earn money. The long term success of a such an enterprise depends on it being part of a carefully planned and executed strategy, a strategy designed to attract the interest and meet the expectations of the potential customer, and that also delivers financial rewards to the owners and operators - rewards that will provide incentive for local residents to protect the natural site that is earning for them. In the South Pacific, it is also important that the strategy is built around the cultural and social concerns of the indigenous hosts, the operators of the tourism enterprise.

How might a strategy proceed in practice? Take the example of Bouma on Fiji's island of Taveuni. Bouma is a rare example in the Pacific of a community owned and operated ecotourism venture. An already reasonably successful community-based ecotourism venture was bringing in several thousand dollars a year for the landowners. With the support of the Fijian Government and bilateral aid it was decided to help boost the revenue of the enterprise. What should have happened at that point was the commissioning of a marketing study and business strategy. Questions could have been answered such as what will attract more tourists to Bouma, what will induce tourists to spend more money there, how many more tourists can Taveuni accommodate, how much should be spent on marketing and who should the marketing be pitched to?

Instead some $140,000 has been spent over three years on extending a pathway into forest above the main waterfall attraction, and on associated small buildings. Around $20,000 more has been spent on a management plan for the forests. A small amount of money has been set aside to develop a business plan for the landowners.

The number of visitors to Bouma does seem to have risen slightly, but even if numbers increase dramatically they could not net the landowners $140,000. In the meantime the Native Lands Trust Board in Fiji has been inundated with enquiries from other landowners on Taveuni wishing to participate in ecotourism ventures like that at Bouma. However, initial results from a Maruia Society sponsored study have revealed that there may not be enough
tourists visiting the island to support more ecotourism sites.

If the decision to help Bouma was based on trying to raise its revenue, to make it a more economic and thus sustainable venture for its rural landowners, then the project should have been approached differently - that is from a business and marketing perspective.

If the decision to help Bouma was based on trying to develop it as a pilot project for community based tourism in Fiji then it has been partially successful. Bouma has a high profile in Fiji and has attracted a lot of interest on the part of government officials initially sceptical about what is there known as "secondary tourism" - village based ecotourism. As well, it has highlighted forest conservation as a paying proposition which of course is crucial to the survival of natural ecosystems in Fiji. But landowners at Bouma were doing both of these things, very successfully, before the $140,000 went in.

Its true value as a pilot project has stalled because it is unlikely that other villages in Fiji will attract such generous donor funds to establish their ecotourism ventures. The lessons learned about how to build a $140,000 track are not very useful to other similar enterprises, but a comprehensive marketing and business enterprise development plan for Bouma and for the whole island of Taveuni would have had lasting benefits for a wide range of communities.

Bouma was succeeding very well on its own. With the right kind of help it could be even more successful, attracting more income, acting as a springboard for other ecotourism initiatives on the island, and as a model for communities wishing to get started themselves in village-based enterprises. But being viewed by donor and government agencies principally as a community development project with some nature conservation values thrown in, rather than a business enterprise, has in fact hindered the ecotourism project at Bouma from becoming a replicable role model.

Understanding the Indigenous Community

A critical component of success for an ecotourism venture is the support it receives from the community in which it is based. This may seem too obvious for serious discussion but in fact there are examples of government sponsored initiatives for tourism where communities were largely indifferent about development of a project on their land but where development went ahead anyway. At Waikatakata on the Coral Coast in Fiji, another rather expensive tourist track through forest has fallen into disrepair after storm damage. A visitor centre at the same site, again built with aid funds is largely unused, with regrowth returning rapidly to the site. Problems with attracting visitors to walk the paths are compounded by a landowner conflict over ownership and resource allocation. Landowners have little incentive to solve the problems of this project - a project which they did not initiate and have had only a detached interest in. Waikatakata is in a prime situation to attract large numbers of tourists since it is close to one of the most heavily used tourism spots in Fiji. Potentially, guiding visitors to the springs and forests is a sound business enterprise but it has foundered through lack of local support. The lesson? Wait until your assistance is invited.

In closely knit rural communities in the Pacific disputes over resource use and land tenure are common. It is unlikely that any development project could hope to avoid all such disputes but before a project begins it important that there is some consensus among landowners particularly over landownership and in respect of who benefits from the profits of commercial enterprises. Resource disputes have resulted in the failure or stalling of several ecotourism projects in the Pacific. An appraisal of existing and potential divisions in the community is an important start point for any income generating enterprise, ecotourism not excepted.

Bringing tourists, even ecotourists, to remote South Pacific Island villages is not without social and cultural problems. The women at Bouma village in Fiji are concerned that tourists are decorously dressed and behave with cultural sensitivity around their village, but frequently that is not the case. The ability of the women at Bouma to control tourists' behaviour rests on their control over the tourist operation itself. It is important that where ecotourism is developed on customary land and near villages, landowners retain a key decision-making role in policy and rule setting and that their views are respected in the initial design of the enterprise. A survey conducted in the Marovo Lagoon in the Solomon Islands revealed that of the 14 villages surveyed, nine overwhelmingly did not think that tourism was a good industry to come to the Marovo Lagoon and did not want to see tourists visiting or sleeping in their villages.
Ecotourism is set to expand in Marovo as landowners who have turned down logging concessions on their land search for alternative ways to earn an income from their resources. These obvious social and cultural concerns of village residents about having tourists in their villages need to be respected and incorporated into planning ecotourism enterprises for the Lagoon.

The Role of Governments

In the discussion above I have highlighted just two of the key issues which may determine whether ecotourism projects founder or succeed. I have not discussed examples of small scale private tourism schemes which are bringing income to rural people in the Pacific, but which do not quite fall into the definition of ecotourism and which could be improved in their focus and in their relationship with local residents. Their long term economic success has brought some financial rewards, however, and in that sense their success is likely dependent on the fact that they are privately initiated and run enterprises.

We should not underestimate the entrepreneurial spirit of village-resident landowners in the Pacific or their ability to define how they would like tourism to proceed in their villages. They may well need assistance in establishing a business but this should perhaps not be seen as requiring close government management. There is a positive role for government of setting the framework for ecotourism to succeed through supportive policies (such as those developed by the Solomon Islands Ministry of Tourism and Aviation), acting as facilitators rather than managers of local enterprises. If landowners are to be involved in joint enterprises with outside private companies, support should also be extended to ensure the cultural and social concerns of landowners are accommodated in the development of ecotourism.

Conclusions

Ecotourism ultimately may be able to meet the lengthy list of expectations that we have for it if it is treated firstly as any other sensible business enterprise. If those principles are not accounted for, ecotourism will have a short history in many places in the Pacific which will be gravely unfortunate, not only for the landowners attempting to engage in constructive and successful development, but also for the environmental.

References


Abstract

Many of the world’s finest natural areas have been established as national parks and other forms of protected areas. Those seen as of "outstanding universal value" are listed under the World Heritage Convention as World Heritage sites for their natural and/or cultural values.

These areas are frequently major attractions for tourism and are prime examples of areas calling for soundly based ecotourism to ensure that visitor experience is of a type and quality appropriate to the area’s value and management objectives and that tourism is at a level which is sustainable.

Case studies are drawn from a number of countries, including World Heritage sites. The need for sound planning and cooperation between protected area management agencies and the tourism industry is stressed. Guidelines developed by IUCN for tourism in national parks are tabled to assist in the development of guidelines for the Pacific.

Protected Areas and Tourism

National Parks and other types of protected areas are increasingly seen as fundamental, not only to the conservation of plants and animals, but to the survival of human society. The values they preserve - features of nature and culture which are the stamp of national and cultural distinctiveness - create identity and pride. They are also a key resource for tourism.

Ecotourism is that type of tourism which depends on the resources protected in parks and by heritage values. Ecotourism, in turn, can build the level of understanding and appreciation of natural values and respect for different cultures and, in the process, can play a major part in strengthening both international relationships and national economies.

Protected areas need management, management that ensures that the heritage the world shares is conserved for its intrinsic worth and is used wisely and sustainably for its economic value through tourism.

My introduction to serious debate about conservation and tourism came at my first international conference, long before the term "ecotourism" had been coined - 20 years ago. The setting was Canada’s Banff National Park and the occasion was a General Assembly of IUCN. At the time I was Director of National Parks for New Zealand and, as well, was a working group chair for a Tourism Development Conference. I sat in the centre of what was then a vacuum of understanding between conservation resource managers and tourism entrepreneurs.

As one who saw tourism as a natural ally for conservation, I was shocked to find how many of my international colleagues saw tourism as the enemy. Finally, the discussion came into balance and reached three conclusions about tourism and its relationship to management of heritage areas. These were:

- First, that tourism can provide an economic justification for conservation and, by enabling people to enjoy heritage values, tourism can promote public awareness and support for them.
Secondly, that tourism, if overdeveloped or uncontrolled, can endanger heritage areas, cause visual or cultural pollution and destroy the very resource on which it is based.

Thirdly, that there is a vital need for careful management and close communication and cooperation between the tourist industry and resource managers.

Now, twenty years later, I believe those principles are as relevant as ever. I am pleased that, increasingly, there is growing recognition of the mutual interdependence of heritage conservation and a healthy and sustainable tourism industry, with a growing appreciation of the role of ecotourism.

This recognition is evident from the focus on tourism at the IVth World Parks Congress held in Caracas, Venezuela in February of this year. It is evident, too, in the adoption of joint policies between tourism organisations and conservation agencies at the national level in many countries. At the global level, it is evident in the adoption and forthcoming joint publication of guidelines for development of national parks for tourism by IUCN - The World Conservation Union for the World Tourism Organisation in collaboration with UNEP. A very brief summary is given of the four general principles which can ensure that tourism development contributes to heritage area conservation (see appendix).

I am convinced that the secret to developing a sustainable ecotourism business lies in dialogue, understanding and sensitive management to maintain heritage values and the quality of the visitor experience. This means adopting appropriate management policies and goes right through to sensitive site design with close co-operation between the ecotourism operator and the protected area manager.

The World Heritage

Prime natural areas at the global level are nominated by the sovereign state in which they are located and are listed as World Heritage (Natural) sites after a rigorous process of evaluation and review. Their status enhances their often important role in ecotourism.

The World Heritage Convention, adopted 20 years ago, exists to define the world's natural and cultural heritage and to draw up a list of sites considered to be of such exceptional interest and such universal value that their protection is the responsibility of all. For all nations, World Heritage listing is a badge of honour which identifies the site as a prime attraction for visitors; for the less affluent nations, it also gives access to the World Heritage Fund as a source of finance and technical know how for those countries needing help in protection and better management.

The concept stresses the value of the natural and cultural heritage of a country and the importance of effective management and vigilance to protect those values while providing for people to experience and enjoy them through sustainable tourism.

The messages at the global level are equally relevant for heritage areas which have regional or local significance, as the same principles apply - a need for conservation and sensitive management.

That World Heritage sites are a focus for tourism is borne out by a quick review of some of the sites which appear on the global list, at present standing at over 300, some 80 of which are classified as natural sites.

Let us look at four areas: two already World Heritage sites, the other two nominated and being considered for listing this year.

Chitwan National Park, Nepal

Royal Chitwan National Park in the lowlands of Nepal was once a Royal hunting reserve but is now a national park and a World Heritage site surrounded by a heavily overused countryside. Chitwan is the habitat of the Asian one-horned rhinoceros and the Bengal tiger.

It is the base for an outstanding ecotourism operation established by the Tiger Tops company. Visitors are taken to a sensitively designed jungle lodge, given a cool drink and orientation by the company's naturalist and then embark on a programme carefully designed to maximise the experience and minimise the discomfort. Meal rests take place in the heat of the day and wildlife viewing is undertaken at times when animals and birds are most easily seen - early morning and towards dusk. The company's four wheel drive vehicles use well maintained tracks and visitors step from the jungle lodge onto company elephants for wild life viewing. This gives visitors a novel experience and minimises disturbance to the wildlife.
The visit can include a walk to an overnight tent camp and a morning float on the river with monkeys chattering on the riverbank.

Local guides are used and nearby villages provide food and labour for the ecotourism operation. And the scale of the operation is kept at maximum 16 to 20 people in each part to maintain a quality experience. Pioneered at Chitwan, Tiger Tops now operate similar programmes in other parts of Asia.

Local communities benefit from employment opportunities, a market for horticultural and craft products and from water supply and health services established by the company. Conservation benefits from the education and enjoyment it gives visitors and the company feeds some of its profits into a conservation trust.

Mesa Verde National Park, USA

Mesa Verde National Park in the United States conserves, among the canyons of plateau country in Colorado, the remains of an ancient early American civilisation of cliff-dwellers. Now a World Heritage cultural site, Mesa Verde attracts 750,000 visitors a year, 20 per cent of them from outside the United States.

Here, one of the chief concerns is the impact of increasing visitation on the park, and in particular, the archaeological sites. As the annual increase in visitors is now averaging over 10%, one million visitors a year is not far off. Park management realises that adding more parking areas and wider roadways is not the answer. The cliff dwellings are now overcrowded during much of the summer and the park's infrastructure is being strained.

Instead, management is looking at new and creative ways of managing the rapidly increasing number of people. One of the goals is to build a visitor interpretive and trip planning centre at the park's front gate.

A well designed visitor orientation facility is seen as critical for the park's future. With such a complex, not only could the park better manage the visitor patterns, but interested people could be encouraged to visit other important archaeological sites in the region. In this way the park Service could be a leader in regional planning for both site preservation and visitation.

The park also is in critical need of an adequate archaeological curation and research facility. Currently a "temporary" building houses over 1.5 million artifacts in a very small area.

There is also the possibility of moving the headquarters staff and the majority of the maintenance functions from the interior of the park to the area near the park's entrance.

Beyond that there is the long term possibility of having some type of park-wide public transportation system to eliminate most vehicles from the interior of the park, and place management in an ideal situation to distribute visitors to various sites on a regular and controlled basis. There is no question that this would certainly make a visit to the interior of the park more pleasant. The hectic pace of finding parking spaces and crowded conditions would be eliminated; perhaps the feeling of remoteness and quiet that visitors in the past experienced would return.

All this shows how important it is, when planning a new conservation area to look far ahead to avoid the sort of costly corrections the US Park Services now faces at Mesa Verde.

It is vital to look well ahead. When I visited Mesa Verde over 20 years ago, groups of 50 people were taken into Cliff Palace every 20 minutes. Now, with a self guiding system in place Cliff Palace is being viewed by over 350 per hour. Unfortunately, on peak days the ruins become very crowded and there is concern about both the cumulative damage to the site and the visitor's quality of experience.

Huanglong and Juizhaigou Scenic Areas, China

Finally, to two sites in China nominated in 1992 for World Heritage status for which I was part of the IUCN evaluation team. Here are examples of positive management from which we can all learn and some warnings which we need to heed as we look at this issue of heritage management.

The two sites are in the Min Mountains on the Tibetan plateau about 12 hours drive from Chengdu, the provincial capital of Sichuan. Around 170,000 people now visit the sites each year, most of them domestic tourists. Estimates
are that in five years time, this could increase to 500,000 with improvements in road reducing the journey from Chengdu to about six hours.

Today, only a handful of Western visitors go there but the Chinese hope that overseas visits will increase greatly if World Heritage status is approved.

Huanglong has, as its focal point, a valley descending from a 4,000 metre mountain whose flanks are clothed in rhododendron and azaleas. The unique feature is the valley, some 2 kms long with a series of travertine pools fed from cold water springs at the valley head.

The valley and its complete catchment are zoned as first-class conservation area with motor vehicles not permitted. Accommodation and other visitor and management facilities are kept right out of the valley where access is solely on foot. Excellent walkways lead the visitor through key areas and link with well constructed paths with lookouts at camera points designed in unobtrusive fashion.

Guides drawn from the dominant ethnic Tibetan people are there to inform and to encourage visitors to stay on the walkways. In anticipation of an influx of Western visitors, some of the guides have English language ability and are coached by the park ecologist in the main features of the area.

While Huanglong is essentially a natural area, its cultural values add an important dimension of enjoyment for the visitor. The region's strong Tibetan culture is featured in the architecture of the hotel near the park entrance, the design of the park entrance station and guides in traditional dress who will burst into song on request - and then invite the visitor to perform in return!

Huanglong - literally "yellow dragon" from the colour of the calcite formations - has religious significance to the Buddhist community and, periodically, ceremonial dances are held at the valley head providing a memorable experience for those fortunate enough to be there at the right time.

The greatest challenge in Huanglong is in visitors having the opportunity for quiet enjoyment of the beauty of the valley. Subtle use of a one-way circulation pattern in the valley is designed to spread the foot traffic as much as possible and thus enhance the experience.

The second nominated area visited was half a day's journey distant at Juizhaigou. Here, public access is focused on a series of terraced lakes seen from roads which lead up two valleys. One of these valleys was heavily logged and is now regenerating; the other is largely pristine.

In a paper on site planning for tourism given at the World Parks Congress this year, a British conservationist described Juizhaigou as "a reserve of unbelievable natural beauty with spectacular jagged mountains soaring above coniferous forest around a fairyland landscape of crystal clear, strange-coloured blue, green and purplish features with giant pandas and a wealth of other wildlife and colourful horse-back Tibetan minorities, prayer wheels, prayerflags and other ethnic side interests."

On the other hand, the same paper said of Juizhaigou that "what should have become a global showcase of what a national park should be is, instead, becoming quickly destroyed by quick profits, uncontrolled and massive tourism development. Buses belt through the park at dangerous speeds, thousands of visitors pour all over the reserve uncontrolled, picking flowers, throwing stones in the lakes, singing and camping and even lighting fireworks and rockets to brighten up the night air. A sprawl of hotels and hostels has sprung up all over the reserve with no concern for polluting the clear water system."

What is now planned to maintain the area's values while facilitating tourism? One plan in hand is to build a coach transfer station just outside the park entrance where visitors will transfer from their tour coaches to smaller vehicles under the park management's control. These will transport people in orderly fashion to drop-off points from which visitors can walk down the valley.

There are plans to encourage the Tibetan people whose villages lie inside the park to progressively switch from an agricultural economy to one servicing tourism. This, of course, needs careful handling as already some traditional Tibetan villages are sprouting tourist hotels.

The key, of course, is to get as much development as possible down valley right outside the park. The need for careful planning is seen by the juxta-position of one high-class hotel and nearby substandard development.
The Tibetan culture is dominant here as at Huanglong. The park director is Tibetan and there are the Tibetan villages inside the park. But there is, in my view, some debasement of the culture as local people at prime locations market photographs for visitors wearing what is almost a caricature of local costumes.

Similarly, at the head of the main valley in the park, where the forest is largely pristine, instead of a quality experience in what could be described as nature's cathedral there is all the "fun" and noise of a fairground. No nature walk through the forest but horses for hire for visitors so unfamiliar with the experience that their shrieks can be heard from a considerable distance. The visual and sound pollution they create is matched by the damage done by the horses to the few walking tracks that do exist.

Certainly, let the city people have their day on a horse, but not here at the head of a beautiful valley in a place nominated as part of the world's heritage!

The Juizhaigou management recognises the need to communicate conservation values to visitors not used to great natural places. They plan, in association with the coach transfer station, a visitor orientation centre. The aim of this will be to tell visitors that they are about to see a special place which needs to be respected.

It is my sincere hope that this will happen and will help to ensure that Juizhaigou can be enjoyed by people but in a manner which does not harm either the environment or the experience.

Resources like these are precious. It is good that they are shared but that sharing must be on terms which avoid destroying the resource while providing the visitor enjoyment and bringing economic benefit through soundly planned and sensitively operated ecotourism.

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Principle 1. Planning for tourism development must be integrated with other planning efforts, particularly those in natural areas which are potential destinations.

Because of its interaction with other land-use activities, the planning of tourism should be viewed as a component part of an integrated, comprehensive resource management plan.

Principle 2. Natural areas can be damaged by inappropriate developments or too many visitors, so it is necessary to estimate the capacity of those areas to absorb visitors so that such use is sustainable. Carrying capacity estimates are determined by the following main factors.

Environmental factors to consider in determining carrying capacity include: the size of the area and how much of the area is usable space; fragility of the environment; the numbers, diversity and distribution of wildlife; and the topography and vegetation cover.

Social factors include: activity patterns of visitors, in both time and space; availability of facilities; and type of visitor. Package tourists, who travel in busloads from airport to motel to enjoyment sites, have different environmental impacts than small parties of independent hikers: it can be seen that the environmental and social factors are somewhat subjective, but carrying capacity can be increased through managerial factors. These include measures such as: designing viewing trails to channel visitor use more appropriately; zoning areas for special uses; providing adequate information services; including visitor centres; increasing durability of heavily used trails, and providing facilities and design policies that encourage off-season use.
Principle 3. Require "environmental impact assessments" (EIA) for all tourism development projects or programmes.

Environmental impact assessment of developments is often seen by developers as yet another bureaucratic impediment being placed in the path of progress, but a well-done EIA is very much to the benefit of both the developer and the environment.

Principle 4. Require the preparation of management plans for all natural areas which are tourist destinations. Management plans guide all developments within natural areas and define the objectives of the area in terms of the wider region. Planning specifically for touristic uses is one part of the overall park management planning process.

Among the questions that should be addressed in the management plan include, what clientele does the park cater to?

Local tourists will usually have different requirements from foreign tourists.

Second, who is to be the primary beneficiary? Options include the local people, tourist agencies, or major investors from outside the region.

Third, to what extent should the area become dependent on tourism? Should tourism become the mainstay of the local economy? Should local people draw on tourism as a useful supplement to their normal incomes? Or should local people have only a minimal involvement in the tourism development?

Fourth, what scale of tourism should be promoted? An explicit statement of the further growth of tourism should be included in the plan for the tourist zone.

In striking the balance among beneficiaries, dependency, and scale, full weight should always be given to the effect on the social fabric of local communities brought about by the promotion of tourism.

These include impacts associated with a change in the consumption and behaviour patterns of local people through exposure to ideas and lifestyles of western tourists.

The management plan should also establish standards for developments in the park, covering the type, style and location of facilities, sources of energy, treatment of sewage and control of litter, means of transportation, preservation of open spaces, and means of public access.
ECOTOURISM - EDUCATIONAL TRAVEL:  
A GROWTH BUSINESS  
THE VICTORIAN EXPERIENCE

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Australia

Introduction

Ecotourism and its urbane cousin Cultural Tourism are both subsets of education travel. What distinguishes this form of travel from mass tourism or commodity driven tourism is content. By "content" I mean the subject matter of travel, the information, interpretation, the total learning experience incorporated into the tour. Ecotourists, whether they are part of a study tour or something less formal, must be convinced that they will learn something significant about themselves, the environment and their inter-relationship. The key to ecotourism is the content of the tour not the location, method of transport, or quality of accommodation.

The fundamental reason behind the success of ecotourism as an effective vehicle for learning about the environment or oneself is that participants in an ecotour experience the subject matter first hand. Ecotourism is hands on learning, it's the smell of a wildflower, the feel of a bird's heart on your hand as you release it from the mist net, it's the leech crawling up your leg in the rainforest. It's real, not something to be viewed from a bus window or video screen in your resort. Combine this real "hands on" experience with the knowledge of a skilled guide and teacher and you have a very potent educational mix that can impact on an individual for life.

Education research clearly demonstrates the power of "hands on" learning when compared to the alternatives.

The ancient Chinese idiom says it all

I hear and I forget  
I see and I remember  
I do and I understand

Accepting these features of ecotourism, why then is the Victorian State Government through the Department of Conservation and Environment encouraging the growth of this niche market?

The Victorian Example

Victoria, with its ease of access to a great diversity of protected ecosystems that range from deserts to rainforests, alpine to coastal environments, is a magnificent setting for skilled tour operators who are the key to successful ecotourism. Almost forty per cent of Victoria's land area is public land, including 32 National Parks, all of which are within a day's drive of Melbourne. The Department of Conservation and Environment which manages this public land network has accepted tourism as an important and integral role of land management. As such, tourism industry needs are taken into consideration in park management planning and operations.

The Government recognises that the very success of tourism based on our environmental heritage creates potential pressure and management problems on those attractions. It is therefore vital that environmental-based tourism is managed to integrate both protection and use. We believe that quality ecotourism operators who are licensed and accredited can achieve the dual goals of use and protection. Ecotourism is therefore the preferred form of tourism to our public land network. It is our aim...
that fully licensed operators undertaking endorsed tours will be considered and treated as an extension of the Government’s service to the management of these quality environments.

The reasoning behind this level of support is that accredited ecotour operators who control the behavior and impact of tour parties is preferable to unmanaged individuals and groups left to their own devices.

The level of co-operation between the Department of Conservation and Environment as land managers and ecotour operators in Victoria has been greatly facilitated by the existence of a peak tour operators body known as the Victorian Tourism Operators Association (VTOA). This Association was established several years ago with the assistance and support of government to represent, as one voice, the many tour operators in Victoria. Today VTOA has over two hundred members and is an effective communication network in the Industry. It is with this body that the Department has been able to address and negotiate licensing, accreditation and insurance issues. Sister bodies to VTOA are currently being developed in other States of Australia. Without such a peak body in Victoria the level of co-operation and communication between the industry and the Government would not have been possible.

In recognition of these competitive advantages for ecotourism in Victoria the Government recently released both an Ecotourism Strategy for Victoria and a product brochure detailing quality ecotourism operators and opportunities. The strategy is based on a thirteen point initiative plan to stimulate and facilitate ecotourism. Both these documents were developed with the support of the tourism industry and in particular the second author. The following is a Tour Operator’s perspective of ecotourism in Victoria.

An Operator’s Perspective

We want to address now what Ecotourism means to a Tour Operator. For companies like Australis which don’t run any other kind of operation, there are fewer potential complications than for companies which run a mixture of ecotours and non ecotours. Where the operator specializes in ecotourism, there is no conflict about ways of separating soft adventure experiences from ecotours. All products in the specialised operator’s brochures can be accredited as ecotours. But where there is a mixture of products, which will be the case with many of the companies who wish to get into this style of operations, each ecotour will have to be separately flagged and given some form of industry recognised logo to indicate that it is an ecotour. One also needs to realize that many international companies have a world-wide brochure of products, of which just a few pages may be devoted to Australia and New Zealand; again there will be problems of flagging ecotours that meet accreditation standards that may well be different in different countries, and even in different states of the one country.

We believe strongly that it is the content of the tour, especially its potential for enriching the holiday experience with solid information, that distinguishes ecotours from other kinds of experience. Thus in the development of an ecotour, what happens between airport and/or city hotel destinations is as important as what happens at the destinations. We choose our routes to maximise the opportunity to discuss issues along the way. Thus, a 4 day tour leaving Melbourne to the west will talk about Melbourne’s early settlement, and what is known of aboriginal people’s use of the land, now crowded with urban sprawl, three centuries before. The geology of the western plains is discussed in relation to the evolution of agriculture and pastoral activities, the firestick “agriculture” of the aboriginal people, the patterns of the current vegetation and weed invasion into Victoria. The morning tea stop is chosen to allow a discussion of the goldrush and its influence on the growth of Victoria and on architecture. The issues of soil erosion and salinity are picked up as we pass locations where their impact is evident. Lunch makes use of an aboriginal study centre and restaurant, with a Koorie guide to accompany the tour for the afternoon. The scenic and wildlife wonderland of the afternoon journey in the Grampians National Park leads to discussions of the flora, the associated bird fauna, and specialist foliage feeders such as koalas. The issues of native birds becoming “weeds” due to agriculture and feeding by tourists is obvious over lunch given the deafening racket of corellas and currawongs. The fate of small country towns as farm size increases is a theme looked at as the tour moves onto rich wheat lands. The first day ends at a lodge on the boundary of the second National Park, and the issues of the Park will dominate the next day’s experiences.

This small segment from a real ecotour
underlines the way the simple operation of moving from city to first-night's accommodation has been adjusted to permit a gentle, integrated, knowledge-rich introduction while doing the transfer of the clients.

The Guide

Making it work in practice puts strong demands on the guide, who with small groups is likely to also be the driver. Ecotour guides need to be, first and foremost, skilled in all aspects required by the hospitality industry. They must like people, be happy to solve the problem of getting a stamp for someone who wants to send off a postcard, know how to work with destination owners, coach captains, restaurant staff, and be prepared to deal with the lost suitcase/late aircraft arrival in a cheerful way that keeps the clients feeling they are the most important thing in the day of the guide. But in addition, they must be able to provide short bursts of informed commentary across a wide range of knowledge, there are strong linkages between ecotourism and cultural tourism and the guides must be good at both, and especially at the integration of the two. They must also look for and detect "knowledge saturation", allowing the people the chance to simply enjoy something special without talking about it. And especially when dealing with internationals, they will be quizzed about education systems, our Parliament, the local legal system, religions, multiculturalism, etc. etc.

We feel that developing an appropriate training system for ecotourism guides in which these skills are fostered is a most significant job for the industry. It is a potential career that should be attractive to university graduates in both Arts and Science who are prepared to undertake training in the hospitality side of the industry to ensure they have the necessary knowledge and people skills. Unlike so many careers, it also places a premium on maintaining general knowledge. We don't think there will be a rush of tertiary academics into this industry; those who are still strongly stimulated by academic life and its research functions are not likely to want to leave but many of them can provide input part time as specialist guides, and to make major contributions to accredited educational travel programmes for both school and university students. Ecotourism plays a major role in our company's activities in this area, as the mechanism of giving field-based experiences in natural history and Australian studies to visiting student groups whose courses count for credit in their home institution.

Salaries for guides in the traditional tourism industry have never been high and the industry is resistant to paying salaries attractive to the skill levels needed for ecotours. We believe this impacts on the nature of the markets that should be our first priority. Tours for FIT's (Free Independent Travellers) do not sell unless they are fixed and guaranteed departure dates, independent of the numbers wanting to go on the tour. Thus if one or two clients book for a particular day, the tour has to go, even if it takes 4-6 to break even. Since the quality of the tour is determined by the quality of the guide, and an experienced ecotour guide is nearly twice as expensive as the traditional guide, the FIT market is a risky area in which to launch ecotourism.

Marketing

While Australis company now has an FIT programme, we very much concentrate on the group market where the larger number of passengers travelling can help to offset the greater costs of the guide's salary. It is our view that this calls for very targeted marketing campaigns directed at appropriate group markets. Expenditure of money on generalized advertising, general mailouts, TV ads, newspaper ads, and attendance at holiday shows have all been very unrewarding for us. We have been most successful when we have approached societies which have newsletters into which we can insert our tours, and where we have gone after institutions whose members clearly have an interest in information rich holidays.

To date there has also not been much response from wholesalers. The great bulk of standard adventure travel does come through wholesalers or from FIT's who book after they have arrived in the destination country, and one would have guessed that wholesalers would be very important in getting ecotourism launched. Perhaps this will come in time as the market shifts its focus somewhat towards this type of experience. We have found that locally, word of mouth has been our best promoter, maximising use of radio and interviews with newspapers internationally, we have concentrated on going direct to groups we perceived would be good clients (eg. museum and zoo groups).
Conclusions

It is our view that ecotourism is a very important, new, growing sector of the travel industry, with a major capacity to transform the vision of both the clients who travel in this mode, and of the operators and guides who make it happen. We receive many letters and photos from happy customers, and perhaps the most satisfying are those who point out that the tour has "opened their eyes" and allowed them to see the world in a new way. That is what education is about and it is the best way to ensure that, down the track, the natural and cultural resources needed to mount this type of tour will be conserved, and that the resources to train the guides of the industry will be forthcoming.
ADVENTURE CRUISING: A NICHE OPERATION IN THE GULF HAURAKI MARITIME PARK

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Abstract

The Hauraki Gulf Maritime Park with its diversity of islands offers outstanding potential for ecotourism. This diversity is the basis of the ecotourism business in this case study. To combine tourism with conservation of endangered species, indigenous plants and animals, historical and archaeological sites, the enhancement of the environment and education through interpretation will require ecotourism operators to develop a conservation ethic on which to base their activities.

The Hauraki Gulf

New Zealand is an island nation characterised by diversity. However, the islands of the Hauraki Gulf are exceptional for their variety. Over 40 islands are scattered across the Gulf, varying in size, topography, wildlife, geology, vegetation cover and accessibility.

These islands are the result of millions of years of constant change. Uplift, volcanism, sea level changes and the immigration and extinction of species have resulted in many of the Hauraki Islands becoming museums of our geological and biological past and refuges for our most precious and endangered species.

Little Barrier, Great Barrier, Hen and Chickens, Gannet and Mercury, Tiritiri Matangi, Mokohinuas and Cuvier Islands are important to the future of threatened flora and fauna.

Rangitoto, Waiheke, Great and Little Barrier Islands and many of the smaller islands have significant areas of native forest and coastal ecosystems unique to the Gulf.

Beneath the waters of the Gulf an even greater range of species and habitat diversity exists. From the mud flats that provide extensive feeding grounds for birds, to the bladder kelp fringe and kina flats of sub-tidal zones, down through the ocean depths to underwater forests of Ecklonia and sponge gardens, the Hauraki Gulf provides a range of habitats with a vast array of marine plant and animal life.

The Hauraki Gulf's 7450 square kilometres of ocean provide a unique coastal haven for recreation. Fishing, diving and boating are popular. Auckland, with an urban population rapidly approaching one million, views the Hauraki Gulf as its natural playground - it has more boats per capita than any other city in the world.

"Te Aroha"

Our business is based around an historic vessel, the "Te Aroha" built in 1909 of solid Kauri. To talk about "Te Aroha" one must be familiar with such terms as centre-board casing, keelson, oakum, caulking cotton, pitch, Stockholm tar and felt. Earlier this century scores of tiny steamers and sailing scows used to carry stores and supplies into every inlet and river mouth of note around the coasts of both islands of New Zealand. Today the so called "mosquito fleet" has largely vanished, but "Te Aroha" is a reminder of just such an era.

"Te Aroha" has something special that no modern replica, built today to remind us of our history has - and that is a personal history. Many old salts that come aboard can tell a tale or two about past skippers, workmates, cargo runs, rough seas; in essence, the life and times of the "Te Aroha".

75
She has changed from what she was when originally built - a two masted schooner with a small auxiliary engine and a bowsprit, but old photographs record much of her past history, and the changes over the years can't hide her original lines.

We bought her in 1984 to carry cargo to the Great Barrier Island - 80 kms from Auckland. Great Barrier Island was a different place then. The arrival of the "Te Aroha" at any of the Great Barrier ports was a highlight.

Islanders, passengers and crew all helped discharge the freight. There was time for local gossip and a few beers as well. A small local tour operator - Martin Gillard of Safari - Tours took our passengers on a morning tour from Tryphena while we got on with the heavy lifts. Another highlight for our passengers was the stop at Wairahi Bay to unload the cargo over the side into the waiting small craft. Slings of timber, cartons, bags of cement or chicken feed as well as trays of beer. All hoisted aloft and carefully lowered into the craft below, precariously balanced and towed ashore. This cumulated in a once a year cricket match and barbecue over our Christmas and New Year trip. The passengers and crew against the residents and visitors. The stakes were high - the freight rates for the coming season.

Finding a Niche

A combination of our opposition having more modern vessels to carry freight, the back breaking nature of cargo work, the arrival of fast catamarans, and increases in our passenger numbers set us on our present path.

When you are in a niche operation you must be aware not only of why and how your operation is successful, but also of the impact of other operators in your field.

That we have survived in spite of fast catamarans with their huge carrying capacity and seemingly unlimited funds for advertising has shown us the growing demand for ecotourism.

Fast catamarans cater for mass tourism and tourists that are unaware of what is truly interesting out in the Gulf.

To counteract the impact of this we set up the "Friends of Te Aroha" newsletter and this proved to be a superb marketing tool. As well as catering for the pressure of repeat business, it provided an avenue to get the message across about the affects of mass tourism on a small venture. Let me tell you in the spirit of "aroha" there is nothing so focused as a "Friend of Te Aroha" who thought their favourite old boat was being undermined by some "major player". Turning adversity to advantage and being proactive, that was our strategy. Again our new brochure reflects this with our concept of the Hauraki Gulf Ecology Map.

Today, our operation concentrates on those places other boats don't go. Places of interest where there are no wharves and in many cases no people. Miners Head, many little bays in Port Fitzroy, the beautiful and remote islands of Mokohinuas and Arid to name a few. We are free to explore, not overwhelmed by logistics of numbers or timetables.

Today the "Te Aroha" provides a unique experience in a Maritime Park - the diversity of ecosystems as well as the pleasure of repeat customers has led us to set up many varied specialist trips with leaders who have knowledge in their field. Geoff Moon, NZ's top naturalist photographer and birdwatcher leads our bird trips. Ewen Cameron, the botany trips and John Walsby the nature watching at the beach. We also have photographic cruises, special interest day trips for Forest & Bird groups, botanical and historical societies, museum groups and for an ever increasing number of groups set up for the aged.

As well as our comprehensive brochure (which many travel agents tried to get us to cut in at least half--but which the consumers always commented favourably on) our leaders prepare special education material on the island or region to be visited.

We carry a series of flip files on board containing newspaper cuttings, booklets, brochures and articles about most of the islands around the Hauraki Gulf.

You will notice that this year's brochure features a "stamp" of the Hauraki Gulf. Hundertwasser said of stamps:

"This tiny, rectangular piece of paper links the hearts of the sender and receiver. It is a bridge between peoples and nations. This precious piece of art reaches everyone as a gift from afar. It should be a testimony to culture, beauty and the creative spirit of mankind".
Tiritiri Matangi

We hope our stamp will reflect that creative spirit, especially in the images of Tiritiri Matangi, one of the most successful ecotourism destinations. Tiri's success is due to a combination of vision, management and volunteers. It is a model of how the Department of Conservation should tackle some of the other challenges they are presented with in the Hauraki Gulf.

On the other hand Tiritiri Matangi is a classic example of an ecotourism destination that could be overrun by the pressure of the current "3 million by the year 2000" tourism equation.

Our three and four day cruises fit beautifully into the concept of Tiri - an island set up where regeneration of trees and threatened species have top priority.

"Te Aroha" is not a fast boat, during the 2 hour trip to Tiritiri Matangi there is time for the passengers to get to know one another and to meet us as well. Mike, my husband and skipper, has time to familiarise them not only with the Gulf, but also the history of Tiri. He includes information on why the island is so precious and how their action while ashore can impact on the island. On these trips we carry 20 passengers. When we take fifty on our day trips, there is still time to prepare people for the experience ashore. But when the guide leads the group through the wattle track to view the saddlebacks, fifty is too many and the group has to be split into two for the best results.

Challenges

The paradox of "green tourism" is that Small is Beautiful, and there needs to be many small operators. This does not fit comfortably with today's equation of "3 million by the year 2000".

If we are to overcome the problem of loving the place to death then we must be prepared to invest in our natural areas. Money and resources must be available to set proper management plans in place as well as environmentally sensitive infrastructures.

Rangitoto Island provides an example here. It is wonderfully scenic, unique, a scientific treasure trove of rare plants. It provides an outstanding resource for educating people about their impact on fragile environments.

It could have boardwalks to enhance the visitor experience and to protect the mountain. There should be a management plan in place so that tourist operators can set up operations that comply with the long term goals of ecotourism and the need to preserve the experience for future generations.

Ecotourism (as opposed to adventure tourism) must base numbers on the carrying capacity of the area. The tourism venture must evaluate the environmental consequences. If management plans for the area are not in place, this evaluation is almost impossible and the ecotourism operator has no guidelines on which to base the operation.

When the pest eradication programme for Rangitoto is complete, there should be plans for endangered species releases. There are people out there with vision. Can you imagine what could be done with public input and consultation? An excellent example of this is the "Supporters of Tiritiri Matangi" and the impact they have had on the direction of the development on Tiri.

They have proved that people with vision can generate the money necessary if they have some input in the project at hand.

Ecotourism operators must develop conservation ethics. In NZ where the Department of Conservation manages 30% of the land mass they must be instrumental in making this happen.

If they fail we could find that "endangered species" suddenly become a "sound economic investment" for the short term only.

Ecotourism is a high growth area in the tourist industry and it must be recognised that there will always be a point where economic benefits to be gained are outweighed by the ecological costs. It is impossible to create a satisfactory ecotourism experience based on mass tourism. Unless properly prepared, most visitors fail to realise the potential threat they pose.

We need to recognise that tourism is a complex business and that the simple pursuit of numbers of visitors is actually against the interests of New Zealand environmentally.
Many wilderness areas in which ecotourism operators have grabbed a niche, are here today as a result of the work of dedicated conservationists in the past. Royal Forest and Bird Protection Society members have for the past 69 years fought with vision and determination to retain many of these wilderness areas. Today they are one of the most advanced ecotourism operators in New Zealand.

Like the Forest and Bird groups, ecotourism operators need to stimulate awareness, appreciation and the understanding of ecosystems. Ecosystems upon which ultimately our survival depends.

Conclusions

In summary the basis of our operation is:

1. Intimate knowledge of the area of operation.
2. Basic knowledge of the flora and fauna.
3. Knowing and using experts on specialist trips.
4. Basing the operation on small numbers.
5. Varying our trip emphasis and destinations.
6. Not giving up - determination to get over hurdles put in place by those in power, be they commercial or bureaucratic.

In Conclusion - Are we successful?

We're still here.
We've met a lot of nice people.
We've maintained an historic vessel.
We've had a lot of fun.

Did we make a million dollars - No
Do we own "Te Aroha"?
No she owns us!
And by this I mean:
Our Business is our Life and Our Life is our Business.
Introduction

The State of Kosrae is one of four states comprising the Federated States of Micronesia in the Eastern Caroline Island group of the Northwestern Pacific. This recently independent country which was under trusteeship of the United States since the end of World War II, is now in a Compact of Free Association with the U.S., and last year became a member of the United Nations.

Kosrae is a single island with approximately 105 square kilometers of landmass surrounded by a beautiful, healthy, wide, coral reef platform which is notched by three harbors and a few minor estuary channels (see map 1). It possesses several volcanic peaks (600 to 629 meters); dense tropical forests (including cloud forest), productive and attractive agroforests; the most outstanding *Terminalia* swamp forest in Micronesia; extensive mangrove forests (including the largest *Sonneratia* trees in the Pacific); and an unusual set of marine lakes and connecting channels protected by barrier islets and strand (navigable at high tide) extending from Utwe village to Walung, perhaps 11 kilometers. Reef fish resources are exploited mainly as food for local subsistence, though a small commercial sale of reef fish and mangrove crabs is sustained. It is doubtful if harvests can be increased without depleting the stocks. Agriculture is mainly of subsistence nature, largely agroforestry, though a small, viable citrus horticulture is developing export markets. The island is relatively rich in cultural, historical features which include several village settlements along the landward edge of the mangroves (dating 1400-1800 AD with a few remains possible dating to 600 AD), Lelu ruins (one of three most impressive archaeological complexes in the Pacific, along with Easter Island and Nan Madol), and the sunken shipwreck Leonora captained by the notorious "pirate" Bully Hayes. At present there are only a few small, modest hotels or bungalows available for visitor accommodation, though at least two proposals for large modern developments, one of them involving a golf course, have been aired. Daily (except Sundays for traditional reasons) air service was instituted only a year and a half ago.

Nature-Based Tourism Potential

Small, developing tropical islands may well be ideal locations for establishing nature-based tourism. The establishment of conservation areas, in the form of parks and/or reserves, can theoretically provide the ideal resource base for modest tourism, in that both ecological and economic benefits can be gained within a context of cultural sensitivity. Yet, the fragility of both the natural environments and cultures on small, isolated islands present development challenges as diverse as the islands themselves. While Kosrae Island is not exempt from these complexities, it presents a unique mix of ecological, cultural and socio-economic circumstances that are conducive for the establishment of a successful nature tourism industry which incorporates conservation areas. The East-West Center/Program on Environment (EWC/ENV) in Honolulu, Hawaii has conducted a study at the request of the Kosrae State government to assess the feasibility of establishing conservation areas that could support related nature tourism activities on...
Kosrae's rich marine and terrestrial habitats, sandy beaches, sunny tropical climate, friendly people, political stability, as well as basic infrastructure and frequent air service by a reliable carrier, together make up the basic components of a tourism "paradise". Yet, on a small island like Kosrae, tourism development that does not incorporate an integrated, whole-island perspective, community involvement as well as ecological awareness and cultural sensitivity will not only destroy the "paradise" which attracted the tourists, but also the land, water and cultural resources which have supported the Kosraean people for generations.

The primary goal of nature tourism for the purposes of this assessment is to develop a tourism industry for the local people of Kosrae that is based upon the attraction of the natural environment. Therefore a variety of management mechanisms are needed to ensure that the nature resource is protected. These mechanisms can be driven and supported by economic forces - but if the natural beauty is destroyed, tourists will no longer be interested in paying money to visit these areas. Conservation areas in the form of parks and reserves, can both attract tourists and preserve biodiversity (wild species, habitats, ecosystems). Integrating natural heritage conservation with tourism can also provide an additional opportunity to preserve or at least enrich a sense of cultural identity. Given this concept of nature tourism, does Kosrae have the right mix of natural, cultural, and socio-economic elements to develop a successful tourism industry? If so where, and how? The primary purpose of the assessment was simply to answer these questions through investigation of selected sites and to provide plans and recommendations for conserving these sites. These recommendations range from long-term policy and planning directions to recommendations for specific measures and facilities that can be started right away. The importance of government and community members working together is emphasized.

The sites that were selected for this assessment were based upon the above criteria as well as those recommended in the Kosrae Island Resources Management Program report, preliminary site visits by the EWC and an interest in these areas by both government parties and village leaders. It is also suggested that the assessment carried out during July, 1991 could be a model for similar activity in other tropical islands.

The Assessment Procedure

The assessment team members were composed of biological and social scientists from the Pacific region and Kosraean experts, who collectively shared knowledge in the fields of forestry, fisheries, algae and macroinvertebrates, coral reef ecology, tourism, business, historic preservation and community attitude surveys. Although the study was multi-disciplinary in scope it was decided to break the large team into five smaller resource-specific teams to simplify logistics and maximize efficiency in a short time. Therefore the following teams were organized: marine resources, forest resources, cultural and historical resources, tourism aspects and community interviews.

All told, there were 16 individuals involved in the survey, 11 of whom were residents on the island. Having Kosraean counterparts in each of the teams not only provided a local knowledge base, a local cultural perspective and community acceptance, but had a training function which worked both ways, for the off-island "experts" also learned much. The resulting report was written by 7 individuals, with synthesis and editing by 2 of the team, and reviews by 6 other team members.

Each resource sector was assessed with regard to: resource quality (health, condition), species elements (rare, unique), current use by residents and tourists, potential for tourism, and threats to the resource (natural and human). The marine resources team conducted 15 SCUBA and snorkeling dives on the coral reefs off Yela, Okat, Walung and Utwe, as well as the marine lakes behind the barrier strand in Utwe. These supplemented similar surveys of different sites in the same regions conducted in 1986 during a Corps of Engineers sponsored coastal resource inventory. They also dove on wrecks in Utwe and Lelu Harbors. At each site, observations were collected on abundance, diversity, size and health for corals, fishes, algae and other marine invertebrates. The forest resources team resurveyed plots previously established in two mangrove areas in Utwe, as well as conducting visual surveys of the mangroves in Utwe, Walung, Yela, and Okat. The Terminalia forests in Yela and coastal strand forests between Utwe and Walung were assessed and the adjacent upland agroforests were visited. Several historical sites that contained ruins of living
compounds from the period before western contact were investigated in the coastal area of Utwe, Walung and Okat. Interviews were held with village residents in order to understand the community perspectives on resource use, tourism and nature conservation. Potential visitor interpretation and facility development sites were assessed.

Each evening the team members met to discuss their findings of the day, and to comment on results of other teams. From these discussions the specific recommendations emerged and given consensus, before the members left the island. Preliminary recommendations were "tested" on various government officials and community leaders before overseas team members left the island and preparing the report was prepared.

Recommendations

The nature base, cultural aspects and other interesting aspects of the assessment can be presented visually with slides by the authors. Maps of the three principal study sites (see Maps 2 and 3) indicate the nature of the resource, the proposed conservation areas, and basic visitor facilities. In addition to snorkeling and diving, fishing, picnicking, hiking, photography, birdwatching and visits to agroforestry enterprises the main tourist attraction in this proposal involves guided boat tours through the unique mangrove channel behind the coastal barrier between Utwe and Walung villages (a distance of roughly 11 km). The latter also gives access up side channels or by trail to historic sites. One other mangrove tour conservation area is proposed for Okat, and a total biological preserve area at Yela, because of the rich natural heritage. Two Historic Districts are proposed.

Since both publicly-owned (State) land and water and privately-owned or claimed as usufruct lands are involved, a cooperative partnership is necessary in spite of the difficulties often encountered in this type of arrangement. Recommendations for achieving this are made, and the way pointed out to giving these splendid endowments the protection and management they need if nature tourism is to grow and be sustainable. Copies of the 121 page report, 3 maps and 8 appendix reports on survey details were transmitted to the Government of Kosrae and Kosrae team members at the end of January 1992. Several letters from the Director of Planning and Budget state that the various government agencies involved have met, have given general approval to the recommendations, and will be following through on many of the recommendations. Greenpeace is following up with specific environmentally safe site facilities design and assistance. The Pacific Business Development Center at the University of Hawaii is offering to help with small entreprenurial activity. The Kosrae Tourism Office is holding community meetings. EWC has followed-up with explanotory meetings with government officials. The Kosrae Island Resource Management Program was authorized by the legislature in the spring, and recently the two implementing bodies - a Review Commission and an Advisory Committee have been set up. It looks as though something good will happen. It is important that Kosrae not follow the short range mass-tourism patterns already fraying around the edges in Guam and Saipan, and to some extent in the Hawaiian islands.

ANNEX - A FEW KEY ISSUES

1. Economic development needed as newly independent state - few options (fish?)
2. Recognition by government/church leaders/communities that tourism and money are needed for development.
3. Know that Waikiki/Guam style not wanted, not by elders anyway.
4. Cultural traditions important - carried Kosraeans through population crash 7000-200 / German, Japan, and American administration
5. Tourism is coming: 1 new dive shop this year, with, proposal for 16 unit accommodations - Japan (Phoenix), proposal for golf course and condo - Japan, retirement community, large hotel - Nauru "environmentally soft" devel. of hotel - Australia - $900,00 (Gold Coast).
6. Unusual natural and cultural resources - one of three most significant ancient cultural structures 600 AD - unique 10-11km protected channel - mangrove - largest Sonneratia in Pacific - still 63% forested - cloud forest at 1500-2000 ft. (500m) - user-friendly mangrove - friendly people - small 42 sq miles (105 sq km)
7. However, island is hard to reach and doesn't have outstanding beaches; and little comfortable accommodations. Maybe ecotourism will work.
8. Ambiguity in tenure:
   - State claims ownership to high tide, e.g., includes the mangroves
     should therefore be able to establish preserve or conservation area - **BUT** - long use.
   - Some ambiguity over upland forests which were delineated by Japanese as under control of government (Japanese line on map) ostensibly then inherited by U.S. admin. and now Kosrae State gov., cloudy claims. Some move to "give" land back to villages or clans. Might be opportunity before this happens to reserve some high peaks, develop trail easements etc.

9. Continuation of road around island, - opening of land for clearing for small farms, cutting mangrove, erosion, Walung village impact, cost of bridge.

10. Cultural/historic sites are on customary land, often several clans involved. Can some kind of revenue-sharing be worked out within proposed historic districts?

11. Formal designation, with legislation needed for conservation area and preserve since KIRMP and Review Board is not sufficient. Is timing right in view of recent KIRMP, and struggle for its enactment?

12. Proposed cannery (?) and increased port activity - conflict with Trochus sanctuary and Okat area?

13. How best to obtain benefits for locals from the traditional tourist packages that characterize Japanese tourism operations, - all prepaid.


15. Sustainability of nature resources
   - mangrove crab - probably going down now
   - historic/cultural - needs control against vandalism/pilfering, control by guides, licensed for divers, tours.
   - reef fishery - maintain for subsistence & domestic - not export
   - domestic forest cutting - combination of prohibition, demonstration, marking for control
   - encourage more fresh fruit, vegetable in agroforests for tourist consumption.

Others - just tip of the iceberg.
THE ROLE OF THE COMMUNITY COLLEGES
IN BRIDGING CULTURAL CHANGE

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Introduction

It is a pleasure to speak to you about some critical issues regarding tourism planning and development. We are facing other problems, we are looking at revitalizing and reinforcing cultural aspects of our culture. We in Hawaii have been involved in mass tourism over the past three decades and have seen remarkable changes in our environment and in our lives. We have seen Waikiki move from a sleepy, beautiful agricultural beach community to a large urban center, a destination for millions of people yearly to enjoy the sun and surf. We are experiencing the vision and success of the marketing of a travel destination.

Tourism development is not unique to Hawaii. It is the major and the fastest growing industry in the world. In many countries around the world, and certainly in the Pacific island nations, it is looked upon as a viable means for economic development. Between 1975 and 1988, the average annual growth rate of tourism has been 5.7 percent. This rate is much higher than the growth of tourism in Europe and North America, which experienced a healthy 3.5 percent growth over the same period (Gee, 1991). From an economic development standpoint, these are exciting changes taking place within our countries.

The economic benefits often seem to be positive, as growth means greater employment opportunities, more government revenue, better and improved infrastructure such as roads, water, electricity, and diversification of the economy. However, in Hawaii, we have come to realize that there are costs as well as benefits for this development. Today, I would like to address only one aspect of the effects of growth of tourism. I would like to address the effects on our human resources, our people and our culture.

Challenges and Responses

The positive impacts on the people within the Pacific island nations appear to be the opportunities for social mobility, better facilities for the residents, and reinforcement of the culture.

The downside of the increased growth of tourism can be a rise in crime rates, overcrowding and burdening of the infrastructure, breakdown of the culture and community, and acculturation. We have all experienced the loss of some of our cultural traditions, and although some is part of the evolution of life, I feel that we have a choice in what we hope to maintain, and what we chose to lose.

The State of Hawaii has had to examine its tourism development plans to address issues relating to the people of Hawaii. We have noted the growing tensions between the visitors and the local residents. There has been increased crime, targeted at the visitors, and continued sense of alienation. We have also experienced adaptations of the culture to provide visitors with experiences which are not authentic, but certainly profitable.

The University of Hawaii Community Colleges, through its visitor industry programs, have given serious thought to its responsibility in strengthening the human resources within the state. While the programs we have developed support the visitor industry, we have a commitment to assist in strengthening the
people who work within the industry as well. We have taken on the responsibility of supporting the community, which is our mission, and have taken a long term view on human resource development.

So how have we done this, and what are we doing?

Community College Programmes

The underlying value of all of our programs is to empower and to enhance the person's skills. In a culturally diverse society we cannot presume to know the culture or the information available to the members within the community. Instead, the community colleges have assisted in developing programs with the assistance of the community leaders. One such program is called community interpretation. It is a holistic approach to development and tourism, which incorporates the land, natural beauty, people, heritage, history and visitors. As resorts or visitor attractions sites are developed and the community colleges called upon to provide training programs for their staff, we work to assist them in identifying what it is they are proud of, and what they would like to share with their visitors.

Community interpretation tells the stories of and facilitates heritage experiences in a community for both its residents and visitors.

"Interpret Hawaii serves Hawaii's people by making our community's heritage come to life. Visitor Industry Personnel, visitors and residents will find that our programs will be memorable experiences as they rediscover the beauty, history and mystery of our Island home." (Kapiolani, 1987)

The process is beneficial to the community, as they begin to evaluate what is unique and special about their community, talk with elders and leaders to bring forth the positive images of the community, and begins to enhance community events, festivals, and traditions to be shared with visitors. Community interpretation has been a key element to foster community revitalization (Cherem, 1988). It is important that the community develop their programs to be authentic to their community, and to be supportive of their activities, and not to alter it to meet the visitor's ideas of what their community should be.

The college first of all looks at thematic structure which involves analyzing the stories within the community, the history and the culture that reflect the essence of the place. The next step is to identify target groups, or who is available to best tell the story of the community. Often, it is the kupuna or the elders who have a historical perspective of the community. Where there may be many stories or target groups because of the cultural diversity, several stories may be incorporated. For example, in a community in Hawaii, there is the local or Hawaiian cultural basis to the community. A subtheme is one of the struggle of the coffee growers, and the development of that industry. Both of these themes and others are viable stories to this community. What has transpired is a series of festivals and activities scheduled throughout the year to highlight this community. The benefit to the community has been a collaborative atmosphere celebrating the cultural diversity, leadership development in many different sectors, and strengthening the history of the community. From the visitor's perspective, it provides them opportunities to experience the "real" essence of the community.

The programs developed around these themes often emerge from the community itself, in terms of sites, walking tours, slideshows, festivals, storytelling sessions, craft fairs, etc. The strength of this approach is that it is community based, and therefore involves the people within the community and enhances their own community.

An Example

From an ecotourism perspective, in one community, the leaders chose a popular beach which was frequented by locals as well as visitors. The beach was a popular site for locals to fish and to swim. Visitors often used the beach for snorkeling while locals used it for fishing. There was potential for problems as local residents found their spot being encroached upon by visitors and the resources were being stressed. Water safety was also an issue as more visitors came to this area.

The community members agreed that some type of visitor information would be helpful. With assistance from the University, community members surveyed the site and gathered data to identify information to share with visitors. A sign for the beach and ocean environment fronting the park provided information about tides, animal and plant life. This has been
helpful in terms of safety, but also in sustaining the ecology of a highly used site.

The Initiatives

To promote greater involvement of the community members, the University of Hawaii through the Community Colleges and Sea Grant Extension Service county government provided grants to communities to encouraged them to set up activities within their communities in relationship to the ocean. One remote community began a traditional festival to coincide with their fishing activities. Songs, dances and crafts were part of this festival. It gave the community an opportunity to share their culture with others, while it gave visitors an opportunity to catch a glimpse of a Hawaiian community in its daily life. It also helped them revitalise an over-fished reef. Each community developed their own themes and exciting programs developed.

The University of Hawaii Community Colleges have developed programs on each of the islands and have assisted many destination areas in the development of their programs. The program, Interpret Hawaii, serves Hawaii’s people by making the community’s heritage come to life.

Conclusion

While on one hand the training programs developed are to assist in strengthening the visitor industry and the “heritage experience”, the real benefit, if planned well, is to the people within the community. While developing programs, as described above, there is also opportunity to develop human capacity in leadership skills. It assists the community in identifying the values they wish to maintain, and to preserve important aspects of their culture. Often when cultures meet, one is often viewed as “more primitive or less civilized”. However, moving beyond the superficial differences and by providing the visitors with an in-depth experience, there is richness in the experience and greater appreciation of the cultures they are meeting. From the community standpoint, the training programs can assist in developing a better awareness of their own culture, and pride in who they are.

Education is a lifelong process. The Community Colleges have taken advantage of every opportunity to facilitate learning within communities. We feel we are playing a vital role, and provide stability during a time of cultural change.

In terms of tourism development, I leave you with this caution, “be careful what you wish for, as you may get what you wish.”

References


Kapiolani Community College, 1987: One-page promotional literature describing Interpret Hawaii program.
THE GUADALCANAL TRACK ECOTOURISM PROJECT
IN THE SOLOMON ISLANDS

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Introduction

Large scale logging in Solomon Islands has been the cause of significant biophysical degradation and social disruption and the current extraction rate is so high that the Solomon Islands Central Bank has estimated that all reserves of lowland rainforest will be cut within eight to ten years (Central Bank, 1992). This scenario suggested the need to find alternatives to large scale logging which would have the capacity to ensure the survival of at least some of the rainforest. It was recognised in 1988 that an ecotourism venture in Guadalcanal might be one option having potential to replace a limited amount of logging, with the indigenous landowners declaring areas of rainforest to be 'protected'.

Methodology

Over the three year period from 1988-1991 some six field trips were made to Solomon Islands to investigate rainforest tourism and to identify impediments to its implementation. The areas to be examined included:

1. The strength of traditional society, especially in the two areas of:
   i) leadership structure - the 'bigman' system; and
   ii) customary land tenure.
2. The logging industry in Solomon Islands
3. The lure of 'cargo' - relatively immense wealth available to villagers through royalties received from logging.
4. Existing legislative and regulatory structures which directly or indirectly inhibit local participation in tourism development, despite policies designed to encourage greater indigenous involvement.
5. The efficacy or otherwise of conservation education programs, at least in the short term (i.e. the next twenty years), to deal with the situation.
6. The need to develop a venture with realistic goals and a workable management framework through the inclusion of characteristics likely to strengthen sustainability and to minimise or eliminate impacts likely to undermine that sustainability. To accomplish this, comparative studies of successful and failed indigenous tourism ventures in the Solomons, Papua New Guinea, Fiji and Vanuatu were undertaken during the same 3-year period, with field trips to each.
7. The development of a business plan and a market survey to assess the viability in commercial terms of any proposal.

Social Structure

According to Solomon Islander Leonard Maenu’u (1984), the structure of Solomon Islands communities was traditionally triangular in form and nature. The three main elements which bound the people together were gods (ancestors), land and the tribe. The one could not be divorced from the other. The land was peopled by both living tribal members and by ancestors in an unbroken line, with the present population being custodians of the land and its resources for future generations. The boundaries of tribal land were determined by pioneer settlement and contemporary custodianship is based on genealogies linking the ancestors with living individuals grouped together patrilineally or matrilineally. The tribe was the administrative body and within its boundaries individuals strived for status, influence and power.
Traditionally, Melanesian society rarely had a leadership hierarchy of hereditary chiefs but most often operated under a relatively 'flat' system where a series of 'big men' achieved their leading status by the accumulation of wealth, traditionally based on their excellence in different fields of expertise. Their hold on authority, power and influence was not guaranteed and the society was characterised by a robust competition where a fierce sense of egalitarianism found expression in socially sanctioned ways of reducing the status and wealth of 'big men'. Individuals could - and did - exercise individual rights but where any group action was proposed it was a society in which the entire clan or an even larger group were usually all required to agree (consensus, not decision by the majority) before any action would be taken. It was also a conservative society in which custodianship of land was so central to the culture that any new idea which impinged on land rights would be greeted with caution.

**Figure 1: Structure of Indigenous Solomon Islands Communities (after Maenu'u, 1984).**

The twin advents of Christianity and colonialism broke down many of the traditional structures and increasingly individualisation, reinforced to some extent by the 'big man' concept which still predominates, is replacing those structures. Maenu'u in fact claims that "the gods, tribes and land of the indigenous triangular association have all disappeared, leaving the people exposed and vulnerable." (1984). This may be so in the urban situation but there remain many traditionally oriented communities throughout the archipelago, even if the dynamics of social change are impacting adversely on those structures. As Melanesian society has moved more quickly into a monetised economy, however, even the ideal of clan 'consensus' is being ignored. Kudu, former S.I. Ministry of Development Planning officer and now Director, Development & Planning, Tourism Council of the South Pacific, Suva, (personal communication, 1992) has suggested that "when it comes to placing priority in terms of environment versus commercial venture, the determining factor is always the question of benefits, not so much collectively but individually." (my italics).

**Forestry: Cultural, Economic, Environmental and Political Factors**

In Solomon Islands the traditions of the Melanesian villagers are so integrated with their forests, coastal reefs and associated habitats that they are their most important social and economic resources. Individual, family, clan and tribal status, subsistence and wealth are derived from these resources. Some 80% of Solomon Islands landholdings are owned by indigenous villagers under customary rights. The Government owns only 8% of so-called
'alienated' land. The remaining 12% is also alienated land, some owned by Solomon Islanders with an in-perpetuity lease and the remainder (about one tenth) is owned by non-nationals on maximum 70 year leases. In this situation the strength of the traditional land tenure system is such that the Government's capacity to introduce and implement management policies is limited.

Because of ready accessibility, the lowland forests - totalling about 200,000 hectares - are being heavily exploited at an extraction rate of 8,000 to 10,000 hectares per annum (Central Bank of Solomon Islands, 1992). Licences now in force are reported to allow about 1.2 million cubic metres of log exports. This rate is in excess of regeneration capacity and is *several times bigger than any estimates made so far of the maximum sustainable yield of the natural forest* (Central Bank, 1992:14). Solomon Islands' foreign exchange reserves have been at a low level for a number of years. The timber industry was the largest source of foreign exchange earnings in 1990 (S.I.$60.8 million), exceeding fish and other agricultural exports such as palm oil and copra (S.I. Central Bank 1991). In an economy desperately short of foreign exchange and industries, the Government has a vested interest in maintaining timber exports at a high level, even though it is realised that this runs counter to sustainable harvesting of the resource.

The lack of local expertise in logging and saw-milling, the high capital cost of machinery, and the need for access into the international marketplace, have resulted in an industry in the Solomons which is dominated by foreign interests. Direct participation by Solomon Islanders is restricted mainly to semi-skilled and unskilled labour. Returns to landowners are limited to royalty payments of about 3%-5% of gross market value of the logs exported. Royalties to the timber-owning clan members (who are paid on an individual not group basis) average between SID$7 - SID$10 (AUD$3.50 - AUD$5.) per cubic metre of exported log. This compares with a market price in 1991 of up to SID$230 (AUD$115 ) per cubic metre (Central Bank, 1992).

Logging concessions have been granted by customary landowners in more than 30 areas in the past ten years. This is not surprising given that the average per capita income for villagers in rural Solomon is less than AUD$400 p.a. (not in cash) and that royalty payments from logging may provide a cash income many times greater than that. For example, if 70,000 cubic metres of logs from a clan's lands are exported annually at a royalty payment rate of AUD$5 per cubic metre, the total royalty payments of AUD$350,000 to be divided amongst say 50 landowners will realise an average per person payment of AUD$7,000 or seventeen-and-a-half times, in cash, the average village's annual income. Assuming the resource would last five years, the village would be paid almost AUD$2 million. The purchasing power of this amount in village terms is enormous. In the absence of any alternative means of accessing such relative wealth, and with neither capital costs nor labour necessarily being required, the attraction of granting logging concessions is obvious.

The slow move towards a cash economy has contributed to a breakdown of the previously strong moral sanctions supporting conservation practices at a clan level. Often individual rights will be pursued over clan rights as exploitative practices accelerate access to consumer goods, creating intra-clan conflict. It should be noted that the ability to exploit timber resources for virtually instant wealth is reinforced by that fundamental element of Melanesian society referred to in Section 2 - the constant striving for 'big man' status and consequent competition among 'big men'. The very structure of Melanesian society impels landowners to sell their trees to the highest bidder. It requires a wise person who will forego that access to instant wealth and therefore instant 'big man' status by giving greater weight to often intangible longer term benefits and prospects.

**Government Forestry Initiatives**

In 1989 the Government issued a *Forestry Policy Statement* (S.I. Government, 1989) which included four main objectives:

i) Re-afforestation and sustained yield management practices as key elements;

ii) the encouragement of value added industries using the wood as inputs;

iii) the development of participatory approaches to forest management between the government and the customary landowners; and

iv) the adoption of a 'Protected Area' approach.

It is too early yet to assess the effectiveness of these initiatives but given the limitations identified in Section 3, especially the increasing
breakdown of traditional mores and the pursuit of individual rather than clan objectives, and the lack of effective mechanisms for more effective participation of the customary landowners in a national resource management strategy, it is likely that progress towards achieving the Forestry Policy objectives will be slow.

Conservation Education

Educational programs, which a number of non-governmental organisations (e.g. the Australian Conservation Foundation, the Solomon Islands Development Trust), have attempted to introduce have made little progress in some areas because conservation principles may be perceived to cut across that fundamental and integral pursuit of 'big man' status. As Alebua (1991:38) noted, environmentalists have condemned logging operations in the Solomons but they have "offered only idealism without cash, and the resource owners decided to stick with the logging companies." This is not to say that the educative efforts of conservationists are not required; they remain essential but they lack the capacity to reduce logging in the short term. The danger in all of this is that rainforest resources may be lost forever.

Legislative Impediments to Indigenous Development

Solomon Islands had fewer than 150 foreign settlers and missionaries when it was declared a British Protectorate in 1893. That declaration provided a legal basis for British administrative and political centralisation of government (Woffers 1983). Solomon Islands thus by-passed the pioneer stage of development and moved directly from a scattered village based society with no central power structure to one where the colonial power imposed its authority and created a government apparatus which paid scant attention to traditional practices. Until then, the area had been almost a model of decentralisation, having no central governing structure and with power quite widely dispersed amongst the 85 tribal groups living in more than 2000 autonomous villages. These settlements were not hierarchical and each had its own leadership based on the Melanesian concept of 'bigman', owing authority to no other. The colonial power imported its own comprehensive legislation and imposed it usually with little or no modification. As Saemala (1983:1) noted, "As a colonised people we were subject to laws made by the British Government."

Legislation, particularly as it pertained to commercial activities, building standards, health and sanitation, focussed on urban and therefore largely expatriate needs. Regulations were designed to support the modern formal sector. They reinforced the primacy of the alien urban centres over traditionally oriented rural areas and the role of the city in the modernisation of the Melanesian landscape. The imposition and institutionalisation of western models on Solomon Islands, albeit unevenly, tended to pre-empt an evolutionary development of change. Government regulations and mission values directed change in prescribed directions. Both imported systems introduced sanctions, one legal and the other moral, to enforce compliance. The result was that the country to a large extent 'leap-frogged' the pioneer stage where imported practices and models might have been amended by necessity and combined with local traditional systems and practices to produce a 'new' Solomon Islands product. The adaptation that Turner (1961) so graphically described in his seminal essay on "The Significance of the Frontier in American History" was not given the opportunity to occur in Solomon Islands. Structural problems related directly to colonialism thus continue to exist today in Solomon Islands, leaving the country without a system which is conducive to the mobilisation of resources for internal as distinct from overseas investment in tourism development. Thus, in Solomon Islands the participation of indigenous communities in tourism will be strongly supported by government policy but inhibited in practice by long standing legislative and regulatory requirements.

While more than ten Solomon Islands Acts can impinge on tourism development and local participation only one will be outlined here. The National Building Code provides a graphic example of impediments to indigenous participation.

The National Building Code

The National Building Code is based on a combination of New Zealand standards (for seismic stress since the Solomons lies in the earthquake belt of the Pacific) and north Australia for cyclones and tropical climatic conditions. This code was only introduced after independence in 1978, replacing a London code used by the British colonial government which contained only minor modifications for the Solomon Islands.
environment. The building code is complex and standards are high. Specialist training in architecture and engineering is necessary to interpret and implement it. Compliance with the building regulations requires that formal plans be submitted - plans which under the legislation can only be drawn up by duly qualified and registered architects, engineers and draftsmen. Before construction can begin the village must find several thousand dollars to cover these costs.

To meet the code’s standards for seismic stress, cyclone resistance and fire safety measures, imported components such as steel, bolts, plates and fasteners, installed by qualified engineers, plumbers and electricians, must be used. The costs inherent in this application of the building regulations take even a small-scale tourism venture out of financial reach of most village communities in Solomon Islands. The Tourism Council of the South Pacific (TCSP), for example, estimates a small village resort in the Solomons would cost a minimum of US$100,000 (Solomon Islands Tourism Development Plan, 1991 - 2000). A recently constructed village-based resort in Western Samoa, consisting of six “fales” modified to meet that country’s building code, designed and constructed under TCSP auspices, cost about US$200,000 (TCSP 1987). If the site is under customary land tenure it cannot be bought and sold; it cannot therefore be used as collateral for a bank loan so the owners cannot raise the necessary capital.

Non-approved construction is ineligible for a habitation certificate. It cannot meet fire safety standards and thus cannot be insured. It cannot meet standards for storage of hazardous wastes, sanitation and preparation of foods for public consumption and so fails to comply with the Health Act. Without the required certificates and approvals it cannot obtain an operator’s business license, a bar licence, or a restaurant licence. The net result of the various Acts is to place outside approved or legal practice the establishment of a village guest house or resort constructed on customary land, built out of traditional materials available locally and utilising traditional building skills.

This situation is compounded by the National Tourism Policy (NTP) which was adopted in 1989 after two years of extensive consultations with government ministries and provincial governments. In the section on Regulations and Controls it states:-

"All tourism development will be subject to building regulations and all tourist operations will be required to operate under a tourist operating licence." (Solomon Islands Government 1989:12).

This guideline was included to ensure a minimum standard of accommodation would be available to visitors. The ten year Tourism Development Plan (TDP) reinforces this policy and its chapter on 'Model Facility Development' in which it sets out a model for indigenously owned village resorts is predicated on strict observance of the relevant regulations (MTA and the TCSP 1990). The unforeseen but nevertheless practical effect of the NTP guideline and the TDP’s implementation proposal is to remove the skills and material resources of the indigenous community from the equation by insistence on unmodified application of the building code of a technologically advanced society. Indigenous villagers are therefore disadvantaged despite the best intentions of the Government.

Given this situation, the proposal for rainforest tourism needed to avoid capital intensive, purpose-built rest houses as these could not have been constructed by the villagers concerned.

Comparative Survey of Indigenous Tourism Businesses

In an attempt to identify whether there were characteristics common to indigenously owned tourism ventures in Melanesian countries which might be necessary for sustainable development, a number of such operations were examined. They included:

Fiji: the Beqa fire walkers;
the Navua River Cultural day tour;
Nataleira Village resort.

Vanuatu:  
the pentecost land divers;
Erakor village resort, Efate.

PNG Ase Guest house in Buna Village, Oro Province;
four other village-based guest houses in the Tufi area of PNG.

Solomon Islands:  
Tainiu Guest House, Lake Te Ngganu, Rennell Island;
the shell money makers of Laulasi Island, Langatanga Lagoon, Malaita;
Lubaria Island Resort and museum, New
Georgia, and the Lau Lagoon artificial island rest house, Malaita.

Some of these ventures have failed (e.g. Lubaria Island, Erakor village resort, all but one of the Tufi guest houses in PNG); others have had a chequered career, sometimes being operational, sometimes being dormant (e.g. Laulasi Island, Langalanga Lagoon); some have resulted in severe cultural degradation and loss of authenticity (e.g. the Beqa fire walkers); and others have demonstrated a capacity for sustainability (e.g. the land divers of Pentecost). From these ventures, the following model suggesting a set of necessary characteristics for sustainability was developed:

i) The venture should have indigenous ownership and indigenous control through an appropriate structure. Both inter alia support traditional leadership roles and this in turn contributes to maintaining socio-cultural integrity.

ii) Ownership combined with indigenous management would ensure community support, which would supply acceptable consultative and decision making processes, without which the venture would wither.

iii) The declaration of a protected area to preserve the environment of a venture satisfies the principles of conservation and especially the concept of intergenerational equity which is central to ecological sustainability. Management practices for low impact on the environment subjected to visitation would also be required.

iv) The venture needs to reinforce traditional socio-cultural elements to assist intergenerational equity in the context of maintaining ethnic authenticity. Traditional skills would be passed on to younger generations as an integral feature of the venture. The exposure to a different way of life is seen as an integral part of the experience.

v) Priority would be accorded to environmental and cultural integrity over commercialism by the customary owners so that commercial considerations would be woven into and around traditional requirements and conservation needs, rather than becoming imperatives which could dominate and thus change physical and socio-cultural elements.

vi) Pride in one's own culture, which reinforces doing things the right (i.e. traditional) way needs to be fostered. It may be manifested in a willingness to share the value of the cultural entity concerned (e.g. village life, dancing, cooking) with sensitive outsiders (i.e. the educative element, demonstrating the worth of Melanesian culture in the eyes of both the owners and the onlookers) (see Fig. 2).

vii) Tight control over the size of groups (smallness) will lessen environmental impacts. It also assists the absorptive capacity of the village communities playing host to the visitors. 'Smallness' results in a degree of exclusivity; this characteristic although not essential is likely to enhance the appeal of the venture and hence its marketability.

viii) Government policies and structures of support are required. These should be of two main types:

i) general, e.g. environmental, tourism and cultural policies establishing a climate for indigenous participation in the venture; and

ii) specific e.g. the provision of services and technical expertise lacking in village communities (e.g. engineering requirements of a trail traversing an area with annual rainfall in excess of 100 inches), and perhaps subsidised marketing since this latter is beyond the capabilities of village communities.

ix) Any event needs to be intrinsically interesting, even spectacular. No artificial constructs are necessary. Such a venture will thus have marketable qualities which are essential to its capacity to attract financial returns.

x) Without making a profit (or at least breaking even) the rationale for continuation of a commercial ethnic tourism venture is lost and without the capacity to fulfil 'big man' expectations the venture will fold.

xi) There must be an equitable and acceptable system for distribution of rewards among the communities involved. Such a system is necessary to minimise endogenous and exogenous conflict which could disrupt the continuation of the venture. This issue has been a major factor in the failure of many attempts within Melanesia to maintain cooperative ventures over time.

xii) There should be no need for major capital works. The venture will thus avoid some degree of loss of control, since major
capital inputs would in most cases require a loan, leading to bank supervision and often to the imposition of an expensive expatriate with accounting and managerial expertise not present in traditional villages.

Figure 2: Essential Elements of Sustainability of Indigenous Melanesian Tourism Ventures
The Guadalcanal Rainforest Wilderness Trail

With this background established, the idea of a rainforest wilderness trail traversing Guadalcanal was examined in detail.

Guadalcanal has a land mass of more than 5,300 sq km (19% of the country's total area). It is about 100km east to west in length and more than 40km wide north to south at its widest point. A volcanic mountain chain runs the full length of the island, hugging the south ("Weather") coast, with the country's highest peak (Mt. Makarakombu, 2447m) in the centre. The mountains are extremely rugged with steep gorges, many fast-flowing rivers, waterfalls and caves. Vegetation zones extend from coastal mangroves through lowland tropical rainforests to montane fields of moss. Guadalcanal has some of the most extensive large forests in Solomon Islands. In the words of the TCSP (1987) report into nature tourism:

"The forests of the Solomon Islands dwarf all forests to the East in the Island Pacific both in extent and nature. Fiji, Vanuatu and Samoa all have impressive forest stands but they do not compare to those of the Solomons. It is a major resource which could, given appropriate site selection and management, be utilised for the dual function of both tourism and conservation."

Guadalcanal's forest resources have attracted foreign logging interests. There are currently (September 1992) four major logging companies with access to more than 10% of the total area of Guadalcanal. No re-afforestation is being carried out. The tourism potential of the resource has been ignored. And yet, as the TCSP (1987) has noted:

"Tropical rainforest is a topic of interest and concern in the developed world, an awareness which has greatly stimulated tourist developments in and around the areas of rain forest. Tourism to rain forest sites is long-standing, and is well developed in certain countries, eg Peninsular Malaysia and Costa Rica, but elsewhere such tourism is a recent development, nowhere more marked than in the limited rain forest of Queensland, Australia. Several of the countries of the South Pacific have considerable forest resources, but have to date totally ignored this tourist development potential, an unfortunate consequence of developing tourism on traditional lines of limited vision."

In an attempt to conserve part of the rainforest heritage of Solomon Islands, an alternative to logging based on the value of the resource as a tourist attraction was first proposed by the author in 1988 (Prime Minister's Office, 1988). It was a rainforest wilderness trail traversing Guadalcanal, under the control of an indigenous company of customary landowners. A central feature of the design objective was to provide a magnitude of income equal to that to be obtained from logging so that it would counter offers from logging companies. This would also achieve another key feature lacking in the educative efforts of some conservationists: it would make a cultural 'fit' with the pursuit of 'big man' status.

The business plan which was developed thus aimed at attaining an annual visitation of 1,000 visitors by Year Three. They would undertake a seven day trek at AUD$50 per day (AUD$350 per visitor) and annual income would total AUD$350,000, equal to the estimated annual royalties available from the amount of mill-able timber in the area. Income from tourism would continue long after income from logging had ceased.

Other features of the business plan were as follows:

i) Walking tracks already exist which have been used for centuries by the local people to cross from one coast to the other. One or more of these would be used for guided journeys by tourists, with the walk starting near Aola on the north coast and ending at Lauvi Lagoon on the south coast where there is a grass airstrip at nearby Avu Avu for light aircraft. Local villagers would be trained to provide the guide service.

ii) The customary landowners of the four tribes whose clan lands would be traversed by the trail would agree to set aside an area a minimum of 8 kms (5 miles) wide on each side of the trail as protected forests not to be logged. This would be essential to protect the environment and wilderness quality of the trail. It would conserve in perpetuity a corridor of Guadalcanal from sea coast to mountain peak across the entire width of the island, encompassing all habitats.

iii) Overnight stays would be made in the villages of the people along the way, with trail walkers accommodated in traditional thatched houses. No imported capital cost would be required to construct 'tourist guest houses'.
Meals could be traditional umus (feasts). The tourist would experience an introduction to and temporary immersion in Melanesian society and customs. Groups would be kept to a maximum size of ten to twelve persons. This number would not place inordinate strains on the small villages of the region and the overall numbers (an estimated peak of 1,000 per year, i.e. 100 days x 10 people) would cause little environmental degradation. Social absorptive capacity and environmental carrying capacity would not be exceeded.

iv) To maximise income from the venture the trail could end at a lodge (to be built under grant aid from the TCSP) at the south coast end of the trail, located in Bubuvua Village on Lauvi Lagoon. This is in fact a fresh water lake separated from the sea by a narrow neck of sand. It contains the eastern-most breeding population of the salt water crocodile in the South Pacific, and was a feature identified in the TCSP study with strong potential for tourist viewing. Such tourism has experienced unprecedented growth in Queensland and the Northern Territory in Australia in the past five years and Lauvi Lagoon has the crocodile population to exploit this interest, although strict management would be required. Thus the proposed Trail would in part implement the TCSP proposal (1987) for nature based tourism in the Solomons, with the capacity to provide a linking infrastructure and - importantly - visitors for the two TCSP-funded pilot wilderness lodges suggested for Vihona Falls in the mountains of central Guadalcanal and at Lauvi Lagoon (TCSP, 1991b and 1992).

In the context of a marketing plan, 1,000 annual visitors was considered an achievable target. Local "annually renewable resources" could account for about half the number. From the largely contract, short stay expatriate population of about 1,200 (with about one quarter to one third changing every year), a survey indicated that around 250 would like to undertake the walk each year. The United States Peace Corps, the Australian Volunteers Abroad and Japan Volunteers Overseas bring in about 100 new volunteers each year and they indicated willingness to incorporate the walk in their official orientation program each year (one Japanese volunteer and one US Peace Corps volunteer both participated in the first walk in July 1992). Four of the local high schools and the International School indicated that they could use the walk for leadership courses each year (and two of those schools sent teachers and pupils on the first walk).

Additionally, contact was made with an Australian company specialising in white water rafting and tropical rainforest tourism in Queensland which wants to add a Solomon Islands extension to its present tours. Currently that company 'processes' 84,000 clients each year, and attracting 500 of those (less than half of one percent) to Guadalcanal each year was considered highly achievable.

Implementation

Through the intervention of a prominent Solomon Islands 'big man' who is a customary landowner from the area (Ezekiel Alebua, a former Prime Minister) the proposal was first put to the four tribal groups concerned (Garavu - the eagle tribe; Koniahao - the eel tribe; Lasi - the fish tribe; and Manukiki - the hawk tribe) in 1989. Since access to traditional land was under consideration and because the venture also encompassed the intrusion of outsiders into the 'private' spatial dimensions of secluded villages, it took almost three years of sporadic consultations before a consensus emerged, approving the idea in principle. Final agreement was reached in June 1992 and a local company, Soltrust, was accepted as the vehicle to manage the venture in the interim while a company structure involving all four clans was developed. This was appropriate because Soltrust is involved in a number of ecologically sustainable developments and its Director is Alebua who had the trust of the clans concerned.

The timing of the the first trans-Guadalcanal walk - just before the fourteenth anniversary of independence on 7 July - allowed it to be incorporated into the official independence celebrations. The walk was labelled the "Ju Mi Wokabaot" (literally "Together Walk-about" or Independence Walk) and a press release by Soltrust (1992) advertised it as "A Venture to Celebrate the 14th Anniversary of Independence and Ecologically Sustainable Development."

This generated considerable publicity, and Soltrust, with assistance from the Foundation of the Peoples of the South Pacific (a non-governmental organisation active in community-based development in several South Pacific countries) also carried out a public awareness program over the Solomon Islands Broadcasting Corporation (SIBC), which reaches 80% of Solomon Islands villages. As a result of the publicity the first expedition was over-subscribed and in the event some 20 walkers participated. They included two New Zealanders, three Australians (including the
author), one Canadian, one Japanese, one Indian, one Englishman, one American and ten Solomon Islanders. In addition there were twelve local guides and porters. The SIBC and the "Solomon Star" both sent along reporters, and the Solomon Islands Tourist Authority sent one of its development officers to represent it. The former Solomon Islands Government botanist and fifty-year long resident of Guadalcanal, Geoff Dennis, one of the most knowledgeable experts on the flora and fauna of the Solomons, also accompanied the expedition. The walk took five days and the villages of Tuhuru, Kolobora, Haimatau and Haimarau provided overnight accommodation, meals and displays of traditional dancing. Lauvi Lagoon and the low coral island of Sahalu, three kilometres offshore, were visited by canoe. Sahalu Island was a reef prior to an earthquake in 1977 which raised it more than a metre above sea level. It is now thickly vegetated as a result of terrestrial colonisation and is of intrinsic scientific interest as one of the newest islands in the world (TCSP, 1991).

Figure 3. Trail Route, Guadalcanal

After the walk the SIBC ran a series of programs based on interviews carried out during and after the trek ("Current Affairs" programs for 6, 7 and 8 July); the "Solomon Star" ran a feature article with photographs in its edition dated 10 July and "Solomons Voice" ran a major feature article in its edition of 15 July 1992. The participants, the landowners and the institutions concerned all judged the walk a success. Total income for the locals was more than $3,000. The chief of the village of Kolobora, located high in the mountains above Lees' Lake, himself walked into Honiara a week after the walk to request assistance from Soltrust to establish a traditionally constructed lodge on the banks of the lake for future walkers.
Summary

The Guadalcanal Rainforest Trail offers an opportunity for ecologically sustainable tourism development, controlled and managed by indigenous Solomon Islanders in contrast to the exploitation of a finite resource through logging by foreign interests. It offers an opportunity to generate maximum environmental, socio-cultural and economic benefits for the traditional landowners. The conservation of a ten-mile wide corridor of land across the entire width of Guadalcanal, complete with the full range of habitats from coastal beaches and mangroves to high volcanic peaks, offers a model which could be applied in other countries as well as in other parts of the Solomons. The venture can provide on-going employment to an estimated 50 Solomon Islanders and bring economic development benefits to areas difficult to service in other ways, while supporting traditional lifestyles and the environment. It is consistent with the Government policy of developing tourism in ways which provide maximum economic benefit to its people while being sensitive to local customs and the environment. It is also consistent with the Forestry policy of 'Protected Areas'. The solutions proffered by the traditional landowners to ensure equal sharing of responsibilities as well as benefits, and the establishment of management and marketing through a local company, Soltrust, seem likely to retain consensus support, so essential for the continuation of the venture. It contains most of the 12 features identified as necessary for sustainability of indigenously owned tourism ventures in Melanesia.

However, the intensity of Melanesian tribal rivalry, the constant 'levelling' of 'big men' by competitors (which is such a dynamic component of Melanesian society), and the difficulties of managing so complex a venture in rugged terrain traversing four tribal territories where physical hardships confront travellers, could disrupt the present arrangements at short notice. The attraction of instant wealth through large scale logging also remains as a potentially divisive element which could destroy the current community consensus. Nevertheless, rainforest tourism while still in an embryonic stage has taken its first small steps in Solomon Islands.

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Foreword

This paper looks at the non-technical aspects of linking "ecotourism" projects with business interests, primarily in the Pacific Island nations. The paper sets out guidelines assisting planners to harmoniously marry sound and sustainable environmental practices, with equally sound business practices to benefit habitats and communities in danger of environmental or cultural degradation. While cultural and habitat degradation are two domains where ecotourism may have relevance, the similarity is not so great that they can be dealt with together. Consequently, while the main issues are basically the same, the subjects are dealt with separately in this paper. Even so, comments made in one part of the paper are sometimes self evidently valid in another part.

Throughout this paper, the terms "environmentalist", "developer" and "businessman" are used in various contexts. These terms are used generically due to the broad scope of the subject matter and interests of brevity. These terms are not intended to cause offence nor stereotype any of the professional and skilled people who deal with ecotourism issues in any context whatsoever.

Introduction

An efficient and effective ecotourism project will be based on a strong partnership and mutual understanding between business interests and environmentalists. Environmentalists and businessmen come from two very different worlds. Few specialists in one field will have an understanding of the intricacies of the other. Both fields require extensive training and experience to be able to offer the best results. It is unreasonable to expect professional and experienced business people to fully comprehend complex conservation issues. Similarly it is unreasonable to expect professional and experienced environmentalists to fully comprehend the equally complex issues of entrepreneurial business. Consequently, there is a tendency for either the businessman or the environmentalist to tell the other party "what to do" and "how to do it". Ecotourism projects based on this principle are not likely to succeed. The loss for the businessman in a failed project is usually confined to financial loss. On the other hand the loss to the environment is usually an irrevocable loss to mankind and the whole world.

A closer look at the aims and objectives of the business community will assist planners and environmentalists avoiding common pitfalls. Failure to avoid these pitfalls can lead to ecotourism becoming part of the problem rather than part of the solution.

Attempts to establish ecotourism projects as a means of raising vital funds to underwrite ecological or cultural problems is no simple matter. The tourism industry is complex, esoteric and little understood by people outside the industry. The hub of the tourism industry is represented by a relatively small and exclusive circle of business people. First hand knowledge, experience and trusted business contacts are the key to this little understood industry. Marketing strategies and networks of contacts are often closely guarded secrets.

Ecotourism has become a trendy word to include in environmental proposals; as if the
inclusion of the word and some vague proposal offers some guarantee of income for the project. In this way it would seem that "ecotourism" is sometimes being included in environmental proposals and studies as a money earning mantra. So firstly, let us set out any benefits that ecotourism offers an environmental proposal.

There is nothing ecologically sound in imposing visitors on an ecologically or culturally sensitive area and there is no guarantee that their being there will produce the revenue environmentalists need to carry out their programs. There is no endangered habitat, species or culture that will benefit simply from having tourists on site and intruding into the project. The value of community awareness is hard to quantify. Therefore, it is only the cash income from potential visitors that will benefit the project in any tangible way. The more money that can be gleaned from the minimum number of visitors, the better the prospects for success. Therefore, the best possible plan for ecotourism involves the best possible business proposals. If the project is well planned it need not be timid by nature. A bold project may well succeed where a more timid approach may stagnate for lack of impetus. A common complaint is that there is a shortage of investment capital for major undertakings in the Pacific islands. There is no shortage of funds for new business ventures in the developing world of the Pacific, only a shortage of sound business proposals.

**Ecotourism Projects - General**

Sound business proposals are well thought out in the minutest detail with feasibility studies, financial, operational, staffing and marketing plans to complement the project. It is not necessary for environmentalists to become involved in this commercial minutiae. It is, however, incumbent upon the environmentalists proposing an ecotourism project to provide the primary detail including clear and complete guidelines as to the scope and range within which commercial operations may take place.

This detail must set out clear environmental guidelines. In other words, set out a clear and irrevocable list of "do's" and "don'ts". Draw clear lines of demarcation as to levels of behaviour, permissible numbers of visitors, how far visitors may intrude, where and how far the commercial operator can go in every sensitive area. Where appropriate, any limitations in respect of photographic equipment including the use of flash bulbs, flood lights or any other paraphernalia used by visitors should be set out. Avoid grey areas. Do not presume through familiarity that any restrictions will be self evident to the average visitor. If anything, err on the conservative side. Ground conceded now can be impossible to claim back later on if ecotourism starts to become part of the problem as a result of visitors having been offered excessive freedom and license during the planning stages. It is better to concede ground later on after measurable results are available to assist in arbitration. Because the object of an ecotourism project is to raise money, a minimum income budget for the beneficiaries is not an unreasonable prerequisite and should be included in any project proposal.

The objective for the environmentalist should be to draw up a project proposal somewhat like a tender document. The project proposal document should set out the aims and objectives of the project and an as precise as possible list of parameters within which commercial operations are tolerable. The document should avoid any specifications that are purely commercial in nature that will tend to tell the businessman how to capitalise on the proposed business opportunity. In this way the businessman will have a free hand in examining the matter and proposing how to exploit the project to maximum benefit. He will also feel secure in the knowledge that his proposals will not breach acceptable levels of behaviour and cause potential ecological damage which would not only be harmful to the project but also harmful to the businessman's professional reputation. Provided the businessman's proposal remains within the parameters as set out in the project document, the type of exploitation proposed by the businessman is irrelevant to the environmentalist. Within these guidelines, the businessman will also be able to explore other areas of realising revenue which may have been overlooked by the environmentalist. Without these clear guidelines, the best possible business partners may be reluctant to commit their resources and reputation. This leaves the field open to business people of less ability and credibility which could result in an amateurish project of doubtful benefit to anybody.

Businessmen do not shy from regulations or restrictions. Businessmen, however, are reluctant to give their whole support to any venture where any regulations or restrictions
are implied, vague or open to future interpretation. Under these circumstances reputable business people will lend their support to a development proposal where clear parameters are defined. At worst, reputable business people faced with a clear picture of the project, may say that the project is not commercially viable. It is better to understand this before capital is invested. An ecotourism project that is not commercially viable will surely result in ecotourism becoming part of the problem. Once development capital has been committed or borrowed and subsequently spent, the process of reversal is highly problematical and costly to the intended beneficiaries.

In summary, let the businessman get on with the business of tourism development but let the environmentalist firstly set out clear parameters for permissible access, behaviour, volume of visitors and so on. In this way specialists in unrelated fields can work in harmony to put the "eco" into tourism.

**Ecotourism Projects - Cultural**

Ecotourism projects concerning endangered habitats or species are easier to manage if only because the ultimate beneficiary will not be a party to the dialogue or decisions taken on their behalf nor will they introduce subjective points of view. Culturally based ecotourism projects are more complex.

Among the Pacific Island nations, environmental issues and ecotourism projects concerning degraded habitat or the survival of an endangered species is less applicable than "cultural ecotourism". Abuse of culture in the Pacific through tourism is well in evidence. However, much of the cultural heritage is still in place, particularly in Melanesia. This is fortunate because Melanesia has the most to lose. Melanesia has the greatest per-capita cultural diversity in the world and one third of all the languages spoken by mankind; all of which is still largely in place.

As a businessman, I am frequently asked by villagers in Vanuatu to send visitors to their particular village to witness some event of cultural significance or perhaps just to patronise a new tourist bungalow project. The village representatives have usually thought it all out. They have arrived at a solution to their financial needs which will also revitalise flagging interest in their cultural heritage by imposing the demands of satisfied tourists as a goal. In principle there is nothing wrong with this. However, the villagers invariably fall into the same trap that environmentalists may fall into when promoting ecotourism as a solution to financial problems. The promoters of the ecotourism proposal have tried to solve all the problems themselves and present a "fait accompli" to the businessman. Once again the danger here is that the inexperienced businessman may be willing to support a non-commercial proposal that may even satisfy short term objectives. But almost inevitably, this will lead to long term disappointments for both parties.

In the South Pacific region, only Australia, New Zealand and to a lesser degree, Fiji, New Caledonia and French Polynesia handle large numbers of domestic and international visitors. No Pacific island country has the economies of scale that will support unstructured tourism development or the sort of development that capitalises on a large ambient population of visitors. The problems associated with small scale tourism, vast distances, unreliable and expensive internal travel can be daunting. The overwhelming majority of Pacific island travel is therefore packaged by travel wholesalers to offer cost effective vacations. In this way most of the inclusions to the package are pre-paid at point of sale. The wholesaler's less expensive package tends to lock the visitor into an itinerary that limits the visitors' freedom of movement. Attempts to draw on this pool of "packaged" visitors to visit remote and culturally interesting places is therefore difficult. Failure to adapt marketing strategies to this major source of visitors is to largely confine trade to the "back-packers" and experienced travellers, who are generally not travelling on a package and tend to buy in the lower priced end of the market. It is my considered opinion that this is one of the main reasons for the low entrance prices for Pacific, culturally based ecotourism projects. What appears to be happening is that the popular, "all inclusive" packages discourage travellers from taking large amounts of money with them on vacation. Consequently, visitors with limited cash resources, together with budget priced travellers are largely dictating the low entrance fees because they represent the largest source of visitors currently available. This need not be so.

Business partners and business associates must have international credibility and the ability to include the proposed project in packages covering the destination. Where a village or community wishes to earn business
expertise by developing their own projects and seeing them through, there is a high risk of failure. It is unreasonable to expect people to nurse a business, that is most likely heavily borrowed, through critical development stages at the same time as having to focus on the operational aspects of the business and come to terms with cross-cultural pressures. Financial necessity can force this type of venture to compromise on cultural values causing ecotourism to become part of the problem.

It is unjust to suggest indigenous people are unable to manage their own affairs based on the historical failure rate of indigenous projects. Local weaknesses are in marketing ability and to a lesser degree financial management. Therefore, marketing and financial management aspects of the project can be looked at separately. Marketing can be subcontracted to an established and credible agent, preferably on an exclusive basis for a fixed period of time. Similarly, financial management can also be farmed out. Many developing countries provide a level of financial management inexpensively, through local government agencies. In this way, villagers can focus on what they do best without the need to come to terms with the nebulous and esoteric world of international tourism marketing and financial management. In time, when experience and credibility are gained, marketing and financial management can be localised by exercising the option of not renewing the marketing and/or accounting contracts.

A major issue in cultural ecotourism is that the beneficiaries are free to propose and do what they will. Frequently, these proposals are highly subjective and based on a hazy idea of what a tourist is - and almost inevitably without any regard for the intricacies of marketing the project and the attendant management of finances. Where cultural heritage and tourism is to be the basis of earning money to satisfy village expectations, the villager's point of view is the paramount consideration. Despite the fact there may be major misunderstandings of the realities and practicalities of tourism, bridging the information gap remains a very delicate issue.

It is in nobody's interests to see paternalistic businessmen or advisers imposing their values on indigenous people keen on preserving their cultural heritage. By the same token, to assist villagers in pursuing commercially unsound projects is irresponsible. National government agencies are the logical bodies to ensure that these projects are well thought out and planned before permission to go ahead is granted. Too frequently, these decisions are left to the loan approval committees of development banks who are providing the finance but who have no overriding interest in cultural matters.

National governments have a responsibility to ensure that competent, impartial assessment and continual monitoring of culturally based ecotourism projects is readily available. The local National Tourism Office (NTO) is the logical third party to fulfil this role. However, these offices are usually staffed by employees who gained their positions through their academic achievements rather than their competence, understanding and experience in the tourism industry. Additionally, national tourism office employees are usually appointed by fellow bureaucrats. The tendency, therefore, is to create offices that satisfy government staffing requirements at the expense of objectivity and efficiency. More funding will not solve the problem. More funding will simply provide more of what is already in place. Entrepreneurial skills wedded to a deep understanding of local cultural values are imperative to any NTO or other authority that wishes to fulfill national or regional objectives in culturally based ecotourism. National and regional governments wishing to see tourism as a desirable and efficient earner of foreign exchange, must embrace the need for entrepreneurial inputs in tourism development at a policy level.

Virtually all the entrepreneurial, marketing and financial management skills lacking in any NTO are in ready supply within the local private sector. It is not unreasonable to tap these locally available resources by subcontracting NTO responsibilities to the private sector. For example, existing NTO expertise can be utilised to set out the parameters for culturally based ecotourism projects and generally oversee and monitor the projects on a long term basis. Commercial feasibility studies, economic plans and marketing proposals that form an integral part of the projects can be let out to tender. The cost can be minimised by encouraging the respective subcontractors to continue as a subcontractor through the implementation and post implementation stages for a fixed but limited period of time. Through this period the subcontractor can recover expenses from the profits of the new enterprise at little or no cost to the NTO. A major advantage in this type of proposal is that it avoids one of the problems that arise from using consultants. Consultants,
having completed their assignment, do not have to live with the consequences of their recommendations. Nor are they required to adapt their proposals to new and changing circumstances that may arise during the implementation period. A practising subcontractor has to live with his recommendations. Also his financial return will be directly linked to the success of the project; particularly if his remuneration is based on a percentage of net profit. Logically, any subcontract for specialised commercial skills or services should include clauses for successful technology transfer and training for equity partners prior to completion of the contract. In this way and at conclusion of the contract, the project should be self sufficient and self sustaining.

Where it has been agreed that an outside developer should develop a Pacific island cultural ecotourism project, some other potential problem areas need to be identified. One such area that causes major problems in cultural ecotourism is that of land ownership and to a certain degree, ownership of cultural rites. Individual or family ownership of land and cultural rites is a feature of much of the Pacific. Local villagers are keen to see their project get under way and sometimes do not give due consideration to jealousies that will arise when cash flow becomes a reality. Sometimes, this can lead to acrimonious disputes and even physical violence which may seem at odds with regional attitudes of sharing and community ownership.

Where culture is the basis for ecotourism it is important to interpose an impartial, third party between business associates and the village or community wishing to participate in cultural tourism. These parties can be the local NTO, regional governments, councils of chiefs or whomsoever is best able to understand and come to terms with the real wishes and aspirations of the people. Most ministries of tourism, the environment or home affairs will have the authority to implement the processes, checks and balances necessary to proscribe forms of behaviour, visitor access and development without the need for legislation. In some countries these regulations are already in place. However, whether or not these checks and balances are working satisfactorily is a moot point. Regional governments and environment units should be stimulated to examine more closely the intrusion of tourism into culturally fragile areas.

When carrying out research into the levels of village or community satisfaction, it is important to poll the general population rather than the leaders. Most particularly the older members of the community can remember and appreciate former values and patterns of behaviour. Community leaders or spokesmen for the project may be satisfied with the financial results but the general population they represent may hold differing views.

Prior to entertaining culturally based tourism, it is vital that the whole community that will be affected by any project is well aware of the long term consequences. Pacific islanders are amongst the most hospitable people in the world with a tradition of sharing wealth and gift exchanging. Village level seminars explaining the aims and objectives of visitors and a basic understanding of the cash flow of tourism is mandatory. What is to be paid for and what should be included as an entrance fee entitlement is a common source of confusion. Sometimes a village's subjectivity places disproportionate emphasis in what has value for the visitor. A realistic schedule of fees must be discussed before proposals are entertained.

Any developer or business associate without an intimate knowledge of Pacific island peoples is at a distinct disadvantage when dealing with communities "off the beaten track". There is a common but rarely expressed opinion amongst Pacific islanders that all Europeans have money but are basically impetuous. Much of the impetuosity stems from European attitudes towards decision making processes and protocol. Even in communities with a highly stratified social structure and an all-powerful chief, decisions are not taken but rather evolve over a period of time. A developer or business associate who is unwilling to spend several days in the village on even a simple issue will find that he can "resolve" issues fairly easily. But in reality, the speedy resolution of the issues was most likely a courtesy to the visitor and therefore, not binding. Despite assurances that clear objectives are already understood and negotiations can proceed, only collective decisions taken over a minimum of several days will hold water. Negotiations that commence on the day of arrival and particularly those that commence without observing the correct protocols will most likely result in worthless commitments. The observance of protocols is vital and too varied from culture to culture to set out in this paper. The breaching of protocol can be a grave insult difficult to forgive. No-one will point out when protocol has
been breached or propriety exceeded. Cordiality and hospitality will continue unabated in the Pacific tradition long after credibility has been lost.

Notwithstanding the consensus type of decision making endemic to the Pacific, final commitments must be set out in writing and understood by all parties. Interpretation of verbal arrangements can lead to disappointing results in the regimented world of commerce.

Where traditional land or cultural heritage is a feature of any ecotourism proposal, compensation for the land owners or the owners of the culture should be more than token. Employment as tour guides, kitchen staff or housemaids is not only demeaning but likely to lead to problems in the future. While employment agreements add to the merits of a project, they should not form the principle basis for compensation. Equity partnership is one way of involving the real owners of the property in the running of the project. Modern accounting practices however, can be confusing and promote distrust. Depreciation, provisions for future expense and other accounting practices may improve the profits by reducing taxation but these practices can lead to distrust when profits are hidden in accounting hyperbole.

Cash in hand is usually the best reward for the participants where a lack of business skills and experience is in evidence. The best approach is to offer a percentage of gross sales as compensation. There are two major benefits in this type of arrangement. Firstly, the participants can see the direct relationship between activity, industry and income. Also, there is a need to demonstrate that times of seasonal financial need may not necessarily coincide with seasonal highs in tourism. Secondly, any glance into the cash register or cash book will indicate the measure of cash flow into the society on a day to day basis. The ideal compensation is a combination of both proposals. A percentage of gross sales that will satisfy the minimum income requirements to the community and an equity holding in the enterprise commensurate with input. Stock purchase plans or buy back provisions will have greater meaning on the long term after entrepreneurial skills have developed within the community.

Conclusions

The Bougainville copper mine in Papua New Guinea and the disaster and tragedy it has become for the parties involved, will remain a beacon for people who choose to ignore the sanctity of Pacific islanders traditions, cultural heritage and their right to participate fully in the sustainable exploitation of their land, culture and resources.
EARTH FIRST CAN BE GOOD BUSINESS

John Gray
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Abstract

At Sea Canoe, everything revolves around "No Trade-Off" environmental conservation and customer satisfaction. All company functions from site selection to corporate formation to the actual design of the Sea Canoe itself are developed with customer satisfaction in mind.

Because Sea Canoe operates in pristine sites, the company employs a "No Trade-Off" environmental policy. Sea Canoe sees its sites as economic assets, whose pristine nature must be preserved if sustainable prosperity is to be realized.

To achieve sustainability and satisfy its moral obligation to preserve sites it discovers, Sea Canoe talks environmentalism to three publics - customers, staff and the host community. To achieve customer satisfaction, Sea Canoe introduced 50% local ownership and staff profit sharing to guarantee customer satisfaction and environmental protection.

Background

Something strange is happening in Phuket, Thailand. In a land noted for inexpensive travel, tourists from all nationalities are paying from $100 a day to $1,000 a week for the right to lie down flat in a "Sea Canoe" and slide into a dark smelly cave with little headroom.

Other, more standard trips are at least one-half the cost - if not more - yet Sea Canoe is sold out almost every day, even in the lowest valleys of the low season. Agents fight over seats in May and September, and Sea Canoe's greatest challenge is keeping up with our explosive growth.

Why?

Because at Sea Canoe the customer comes second only to the environment. Literally everything from our custom made sea kayaks to our product development to our very business structure is designed with customer satisfaction as our goal.

Product Development

Site selection is vital. Sea Canoe only visits the most startling spots in the tropics. Unless a site has overwhelming appeal, we look for another. Natural drama is the major attraction for ecotourism development, and on today's well-trod planet, it takes money and effort to find it.

We also look for an accessible infra-structure. In Phuket, infrastructure is one of the primary keys to our success. We operated open sea expeditions in some of the Pacific's most remote coastlines for eight years before we found a spot close enough to a visitor plant to run a day trip adventure. Now, our "slice out of a typical expedition day" makes adventure travel accessible to Phuket's everyday visitor, and our promo day trip introduces everyday travellers to the adventure travel industry.

Judging from our overnight bookings board, general travel products just don't match up with adventure travel, where programs generally offer higher quality and better value than hotels and standard tours.

When we developed our day trip, we did not adapt our product for day trip service. Even if they are in and out in a day, clients are more than a voucher number - they get eight full hours of exploration, and more importantly, our
respect as people rather than cattle. We take a genuine personal interest in them, and the resulting quality far surpasses the typical day trip experience offered in any resort area. Top quality product and solid travel industry marketing are the basic keys to the Sea Canoe success story.

Contemporary adventure travellers are independent and intelligent. Many are engineers, doctors, technicians - scientists in their own right. Others are business people well versed in professional efficiencies. All appreciate an educational experience. More and more people want something meaningful out of their free time. It's the job of Nature Tourism to send them home fulfilled.

It may be difficult to see education as a vacation experience, but there is little doubt that once in the field, today's clients want to feel that their time was well spent. Pure educational trips are their own speciality, and on all but museum tours, a balance of education and recreation makes for a satisfied customer.

In our planning process, philosophy preceded product. Sea Canoe was designed for a specific goal - enhancing environmental awareness by renewing one's personal relationship with nature. That requires active personal participation.

Since I have lifelong ocean experience, we decided that sea kayaking dramatic coastlines is our way to bring people back in touch with nature. But just the word "kayak" is ominous. Most people think of icebergs, eskimo rolls and getting trapped inside a capsized boat.

Not with Sea Canoe. Instead of the tippy hardshells loved by the purists, I visualized a boat for the everyday outdoors person - stable, buoyant, easy to use, transportable yet a credible expedition tool.

Unfortunately, there just isn't anything like that on the market. Far from being serious expedition craft, most factory stock inflatables are a step up from bathtub toys. I literally had to invent the boat - and therefore the activity - before I could develop the Sea Canoe product. (Of course, we subsequently trademarked and copyrighted the "Sea Canoe" name and logo.)

The ultimate outcome was a product for almost anybody, from the family with children to the serious explorer. By paddling, people get closer to nature than they have ever been before. In the Sea Explorer, they also feel relaxed in safety and security while at the same time feeling like a true adventurer.

Sea Canoe strives to deliver intimate perceptions of Nature, to reawaken the animal spirit that rests within all of us. We want people to think lofty thoughts about their place in the Universe and their relationship with Nature. They can only do this in a relaxed state of mind. In life-threatening situations, anxious thoughts of survival supersede philosophical nuances - and even if people are safe in the operator's mind, the perception of danger is distracting.

No Economic "Trade-Offs"

One of the harsh realities of adventure travel is that we operate commercial activities in remote pristine sites of overwhelming natural beauty and fragility. We are visitors, somehow granted the privilege of entering these areas on a temporary basis. Most nature tours operate in places somehow touched by Man, but since Sea Canoe was the first to visit many of our sites, we have an extra responsibility to keep them pristine.

In addition to the moral responsibility that comes with our "first entry" capabilities, we are also protecting the environment as an economic asset that allows us to exist. Thanks to these factors, Sea Canoe developed a "High Quality, Low Volume Meaningful Experience" format. All three factors afford environmental conservation.

With high quality comes that personalized staff:client ratio. More than just butlers, our guides are also policemen. Well intending as they may be, many people just don't know how to act in Nature. Somebody who may think that tossing an orange peel is a sin may have no qualms about breaking a stalactite for a souvenir.

Even so, adventure travellers are generally more discriminating than general tourists. They notice commercial impact. By making conservation our highest priority, we accomplish several things:

- Sea Canoe demonstrates that prosperity can be achieved without an economic:environmental trade off. If we feel our programmes involve "trade-offs", we simply don't run them. We
share our philosophy with our guests, and they see that we are not hypocrites. Sea Canoe's "No Trade Off" concept is our basic reason for existence.

- Our guests feel good about keeping our sites perfect, and help market us upon their return home.

- Our staff sees that we truly stick to our word, and our environmental ethic becomes contagious. In a country noted for its deplorable environmental record, our Thai staff are now rabid environmentalists, closing caves to guests during bat mating seasons and limiting the number of guests in the smaller caves.

Low volume is almost a mandate in environmental tourism. I can't think of a pristine setting that can cope with volume tourism, a great destroyer of beauty. Our basic challenge as environment tourism operators is to achieve economic prosperity with low volume programs - a concept that requires organisation and creative energy.

The Sea Canoe experience says people don't mind paying a fair price for a quality, low volume product. If you match the expectations of your customers, they will be satisfied, and they and their friends will return, paying top dollars as long as we as operators deliver a fair value. More and more the market understands that efficient use of resources, low volume, consideration to time management and top quality luxury camping, great food and no surprises costs money.

Remember, ecotourism is not a "mint". Don't think you can cut corners on your product and still maintain high prices. You can't. The adventure travel business is tough. But as five-star hotels discovered long ago, people will pay a proper price for a better value.

Doing Business in Rural Settings

If you as an operator are truly committed to conservation and quality (and you must be or you won't be sustainable) you serve three basic "Publics" - your customers, your staff and your host community. Satisfying all three simultaneously isn't easy.

Environmental awareness is peaking, and if you run a "dirty" trip, your customers will be your own worst critics. People who don't understand the difference between throwing a fish-head or a plastic bottle into the sea are automatic experts on the preparation and care of field latrines. Your only hope for customer environmental satisfaction is to maintain the highest level of preservation.

Government officials need to be educated, because only they understand that your program brings prosperity (and tax dollars) along with conservation, all but the most corrupt will stand behind you. Do their work for them and give them the credit, i.e. make the bureaucrats the heroes without burdening them with work. You can't lose.

That leaves your staff and managers. Building camaraderie with your staff is vital to customer satisfaction. We understand that happy staff makes for happy clients. Repeatedly, we are told that our staff are what really makes the Sea Canoe experience.

Sea Canoe employs the most progressive management concepts to develop a happy staff - profit sharing; excellent benefits; career advancement and ownership opportunities; and participatory management.

We also create a pride in providing the best service and best product in the business... and it never hurts when a happy customer confirms to the staff that our operation is the best vacation product they have ever experienced.

Typical for a service industry, Nature Tourism company is nothing but its people, i.e. staff. Sea Canoe treats our staff as equals, and provides more than the legally required benefits (including a profit sharing plan) despite a compensation plan well above the industry standard for our areas.

Every day, our trips return with singing staff and smiling guests. Customer satisfaction means "No Complaints" and that means happy travel agents. Our whole primary objective in life is to avoid problems. Over and over, agents tell us they book Sea Canoe because they know that no matter what the price, we return satisfied customers. Rather than complaining about our $100/day price tag, guests thank their agents for helping them book Sea Canoe.

Business Structure

Now a final word about doing business in foreign lands - don't expect a cash flow for at
least two years, don't trust anyone and don't pay corruption even if it is the norm. Once you start, you can never stop.

When you visit a foreign land on your survey trip, devote half your time and efforts to business structure. Go to the country's capital city and find an international lawyer with a good track record. Ask for references and check up on them.

Once you are satisfied with your choice in a lawyer, go slowly, make sure everything is translated into your native language and cleared by legal counsel before you sign anything.

In Asia, the definition of business ethics takes on a new meaning - especially in booming resort areas that attract fly-by-night con men (or women). Rather than being perceived as a benefactor, you are seen as a walking bank account. Once you've built the business, lesser souls will try to copy-cat or take it away. Those who are consumed by money don't have the vision to see that the vision to of the original operator is the fuel that makes a successful environmental business.

Listen to the Sea Canoe voice of experience - don't make anybody (except your well researched lawyer) a legal partner until you've worked with them for at least a year, and then make them sign a blank share transfer agreement before they sign on as a shareholder. Find a host country accountant willing to report to your accountant back home, and then get them bonded.

If everything isn't perfect, future problems are guaranteed.

If you have the creativity to see an ecotourism experience that others missed, the patience and economic resources to wait out a two year start-up time (give at least a year after your survey trip before you can even market your product) and the patience to develop an environment awareness where none existed before, you might have fun in this business - but unless you've got a commitment to "Environment First, Business Second", I suggest that there are plenty of easier ways to make a living.
Abstract

While tourism holds promise as a means of development for Pacific Island countries, it has also been a major agent of environmental and cultural destruction in the Pacific region. Unfortunately, little information has been presented to suggest that so-called ecotourism does not cause many of these same problems. If tourism is going to avoid harm to the environment and local culture, and is also to provide sustainable development with real local benefits, there is a need to develop alternative models which are locally controlled, use technologies and practices that prevent impacts, and are small enough in scale to be supported by local infrastructure and support services. Greenpeace projects to encourage this type of tourism development are described and policy recommendations are made to Pacific governments and the tourism industry.

Impacts From Tourism Development

While tourism holds promise as a means of development for Pacific Islands, it has also been a major agent of environmental and cultural destruction in the Pacific region. Coastal resources are impacted from direct destruction, such as the filling of mangrove swamps or reef flats for resort development, as well as indirectly from pollution during construction and routine operation of tourist facilities. Examples include erosion and siltation from disturbed soils, increased fresh water run-off, pesticide contamination and harmful sewage discharges. The tourism industry also generates large amounts of garbage which add to already existing disposal problems. Other impacts include increased water and energy demand, and the disruption of traditional land uses.

Typically, large-scale tourism development by foreign investment brings with it a host of social problems as well, and contributes relatively little to the local economy, with a majority of tourist expenditures going off or never reaching the island. In many cases, most of the jobs both during construction and operation of large hotel resorts are filled by imported foreign labour willing to work at wages below local standards. Often, many of the materials and supplies used in a resort and purchased by tourists are also imported. In addition, the influx of relatively affluent visitors and new residents can drive up the cost of living sharply, creating hardships on the local population.

A wide range of these impacts are surveyed in the Greenpeace report, "Impacts of Tourism Development in Pacific Islands". The report describes and presents documentation for over 50 categories of socio-political, economic, demographic, health, cultural, and environmental impacts caused by tourism development in the Pacific.

Recently, much hope has been expressed that ecotourism can provide economic development while avoiding the problems which have accompanied conventional tourism. Ecotourism or adventure travel packages are a fast-growing segment of the travel industry around the world. There are indeed many exciting prospects for this new vision, and even a few operating examples which attempt to carry it out. Unfortunately much of what is being called
ecotourism is not in reality any more environmentally sound or sustainable than conventional tourism. Even though operators may be genuinely attempting to attract a different breed of tourists to experience the natural and cultural attractions of the region, most so-called ecotourism operations still pollute the local environment with sewage, garbage and other wastes, use too much valuable fresh water, are not energy efficient and in other ways may be less than environmentally sound. As well, they often provide too few benefits to the local economy to be labelled examples of sustainable development, importing food, materials and labour instead of deriving them locally.

The Need for Alternatives

If tourism is to provide sustainable development with real local benefits, there is a need to develop alternative models which are small-scale, locally controlled and environmentally sound. The use of technologies and practices which prevent environmental impacts can avoid the potential conflict between environment and development. Governments and local communities must be able to see that there are options other than conventional models.

Local Control

Small-scale, locally controlled businesses of any kind stand a much better chance of being environmentally sound than do large enterprises controlled by foreign investors. In part this is due to scale, but more importantly those with the greatest stake in the protection of natural resources are the local people who must depend upon them over the long term. Only those who directly depend upon the environment for their survival have a true stake in protecting these natural resources. There is simply no way that any foreign resort investor has the same interest as a local landowner who wants to be sure that his or her children's children can continue to fish the way that generations have done before them. Local control can help also ensure that development is compatible with cultural concerns, which in turn help to maintain the direct connection between local people and their environment. Outside developers are unlikely to give these long term concerns priority over the relatively short term returns on their investment.

Real local economic benefits come from locally owned businesses ranging from the hotels themselves to food production and handicrafts, not from a few jobs as chambermaids. Many foreign owned hotels don't even provide these menial jobs, opting to bring in lower wage alien labour and imported food as well.

Too often however, potential local entrepreneurs lack the basic resources required to undertake successful economic ventures. Further, those that are genuinely concerned about protecting the environment often lack information and access to the technologies and opportunities available to help them do it. Even today, Pacific Islands remain relatively isolated, with limited ability to seek out information and resources which may be readily available in any industrialised country.

Many Pacific Island leaders and potential entrepreneurs have genuine concerns about protecting their environment and culture, and would like to pursue a path of sustainable development. However, with few resources and limited development opportunities, they are anxious to attract any foreign investment they can. Though they may prefer the right kind of development, they also understand that they have a limited ability to pick and choose who they do business with. If they are going to have development at all, they know that they must attempt to do business with whatever investors show interest. Unfortunately, this is usually a transnational corporation primarily interested in their own profits and relatively unconcerned about the local benefits or consequences of development. Sometimes the only options are to deal with unscrupulous characters with a history of shady business ventures and criminal activities.

Potential entrepreneurs in the Pacific need to be given assistance to overcome these obstacles to small-scale development. They require not only access to technical information and basic business skills, but they need ways to be in touch with their potential trading partners, with the market for their product and with sources of capital willing to invest in making these local ventures a success.

Preventing Environmental Impacts From Tourism

The conventional approach to protecting the environment has been based on attempting to control or mitigate environmental impacts rather than to prevent them at the source. Hence, most environmental laws and regulations tend to assume that a particular economic activity will inevitably cause certain problems, and the
focus has been on trying to lessen their impact on by controlling them or by locating these activities in places where they will impact presumably less important areas.

Unfortunately, the history of modern environmentalism in the past 20 or so years of using this approach has shown it to have largely failed. By most measures, environmental problems in the industrialised world have not improved significantly during the time that modern environmental regulations based on trying to control environmental impacts have been in place.

In addition, the conventional "control" oriented approach to protecting the environment has created an unnecessary conflict between economic development and the environment. This is both because any particular development activity is assumed to inevitably cause a certain set of environmental problems and because implementing measures to control or mitigate them are an additional cost to the project.

This has tended to be the approach taken with the tourism industry as well. Even the most well-intentioned resorts are usually planned assuming that certain levels of energy and water consumption, sewage and waste generation will be required and that a set amount of habitat must be destroyed. Environmental measures tend to focus on locating tourism development in places deemed less ecologically important ("sacrificing" them for the sake of other areas), and on assuring that various control and mitigation measures are in place. A hotel may be required to build a sewage treatment system, produce its own electricity, or have its own source of fresh water, though these measures do not eliminate environmental impact. More often, hotels are required to hook up to the existing infrastructure, simply transferring the responsibility and environmental burden to the local government. The host community is informed that this is simply part of the price that must be paid for economic development.

In recent years a new approach to environmental protection based on prevention has emerged. Its premise is that it is not only more effective, but cheaper and easier to prevent environmental problems in the first place rather than attempting to control them after they have been created. The prevention approach has been embraced by the United Nations, SPREP, and other organisations and has been recognised in numerous international agreements including the recent UNCED conference.

The prevention approach means changing the way activities are carried out to eliminate the source of environmental problems. It is important to note that this does not mean doing without, but doing things differently. In the tourism industry, this can be accomplished through designing facilities and planning operations to minimise the use of water energy and other resources, and the use of technologies and practices which can provide needed services in ways which do not cause adverse impacts. Appropriate technologies exist for clean energy production, water conservation, biological waste treatment and other aspects of operating a tourist facility while preventing environmental impacts. With the use of these state of the art technologies and proper site planning there does not need to be a conflict between local aspirations for development and the need to protect the environment.

An important example of the use of this approach in tourism is a new "sustainable design" initiative launched by the U.S. National Park Service in November 1991. In a collaborative effort involving architects, engineers, environmentalists and ecotourism interests, the National Park Service is developing guidelines and recommendations covering nine subject areas for visitor use facilities in tropical climates.

Greenpeace Projects

This year, Greenpeace has begun several efforts to encourage environmentally sound tourism as an alternative to conventional tourism development. The strategy has been to provide information on how environmentally sound tourism development can be pursued, in the hope that local landowners will choose options which allow them to earn income from the land without giving it up to foreign developers because of the many cultural incentives to maintain local control of the land and traditional use of resources.

Environmentally Sound Tourism Guidelines

We are currently in the process of gathering technical information which will be published in the form of a handbook to be distributed in Pacific Island countries. The guidelines are intended not only to present local landowners and business people with an alternative to
conventional tourism, but to provide practical assistance to those who are interested in developing small-scale tourism facilities. The guidelines will describe technologies and practices which can be used in the planning, construction and operation of small-scale resorts and tourist facilities to prevent environmental and social impacts. The following topics will be covered:

Sanitation and Water Use

The guidelines will describe ways to provide for water use needs through conservation, dry composting toilets and other biologically-based waste technologies which prevent wastewater discharges to the environment.

Energy

Renewable energy and conservation options will be described, and a model energy plan for a small ecotourism resort will be presented.

Garbage and Other Wastes

A strategy for garbage and waste prevention will be outlined along with a step-by-step set of procedures focusing on the use of safe materials and products which do not cause waste problems.

Appropriate Architecture/Construction Methods

Basic concepts for sustainable design will be described including use of low-impact materials, and use of passive cooling. It is interesting to note that while these principles were always incorporated into traditional housing design, relatively few Islanders have retained this knowledge.

Preventing Social Impacts

The guidelines will include a description of the various ways a tourism facility can have adverse social and cultural impacts and a step-by-step process that a developer can use to avoid them including social impact studies, community participation in the decision making process, and integrating the facility into the local economy.

It is our hope that this handbook will complement efforts underway by a variety of environmental, development and travel industry organisations focusing on so-called ecotourism. While not meant to be comprehensive, they will serve as a resource for Pacific Island government officials and local landowners to help provide a vision of alternatives to conventional tourism and a sense of how do it.

Micronesia Demonstration Biological Toilet Project

This year, Greenpeace has worked together with teams of local participants in Kosrae and Yap, in the Federated States of Micronesia, on a pilot project to demonstrate alternative biological waste treatment technology. Biological toilets, which do not use water and do not discharge sewage into the environment, are an example of the kind of technologies which can allow tourism development to take place in a way that prevents environmental impacts.

i) Background: Sanitation and sewage problems are of great concern all over Micronesia. Simple privies (pit toilets) used in most villages cause health problems and overflow in heavy rains, polluting nearby surface water. On low-lying atolls and in coastal areas of larger islands even septic systems can pollute the groundwater. The sewage treatment systems in the few towns that have them rarely work well, and can be significant sources of pollution even when functioning properly. Water collection and distribution systems are often poorly developed and can cause water shortages even in places with abundant rainfall. Under these conditions, the amount of water required for flush toilets is significant. As development occurs, these problems only worsen and place an increasing burden upon local governments for improved infrastructure.

The extension of the sewage outfall into Lelu Harbour has raised the profile of this issue in Kosrae. Many village and State officials have expressed concern about the potential impacts of this project. No information exists about any pollution resulting from the many septic systems which have been built in recent years, but given the close proximity to the water of most villages, increased development could make this too a concern.

Although Yap's simple sewage treatment plant generally functions well, any significant tourism development in
Colonia would quickly overwhelm the tiny system. There is concern with the growth in demand for water supply in villages outside of Colonia's municipal water system, as well as possible groundwater contamination from water-sealed toilets which are built in these areas. This is particularly troublesome for the low lying outer island atolls.

Biological Toilets: Composting, or "biological toilets" use a controlled biological process to transform human excrement into an inoffensive and harmless residual that can be utilized as a soil conditioner for plants. Pollution from septic systems and wastewater discharges from sewage treatment plants are prevented. Since water is not required to operate the system, as is the case with conventional flush technology, potable water resources can be utilized for more pressing human needs such as drinking and cooking. While biological toilets do require some maintenance to assure proper operating conditions, they utilize relatively simple technology which is not subject to the breakdowns and failures of large centralised treatment plants.

This technology has been in use around the world, including Europe and The United States for two decades. Numerous national agencies and laboratories have developed exacting performance standards for biological toilets. Those systems which have passed the rigorous testing under these standards are accepted by government health officials world-wide. As part of a whole-system ecological approach including water supply and all other wastewater outputs (from washing etc.), biological toilets are an environmentally sound and affordable alternative for providing sanitation in tourist facilities as well as private homes.

Project Description: Community agencies, state officials, local business people, and other interested citizens on participating islands work together with Greenpeace to design and build a demonstration biological toilet. The purpose of the project is to develop the capacity to build and maintain similar models using locally available materials and labour. Greenpeace provides education and training while the local participants provide the materials and a site for the demonstration model.

We begin with meetings and workshops introducing the project and providing presentations of the technology. Project participants work together to plan the details of the project including installation of a commercially available biological toilet, and maintenance training. Then we plan the design and location for another demonstration model to be built from locally available materials and resources. This is constructed during a subsequent visit. Greenpeace works together with participants to choose a design appropriate for use and manufacture on each participating island. This could include incorporation into existing sanitation programs, other government projects, Community Action Program projects, and use in housing and tourism development. Because various proven designs can be made with a variety of materials including fibreglass and concrete, we hope that this can spawn opportunities to local businesses for their manufacture.

Progress Report: The locations of the demonstration models were chosen by a committee of local participants based on criteria established by Greenpeace. The installation of a commercially available biological toilet, donated by Greenpeace, was completed on Yap in May, 1992, and has been functioning well. As of September, those using the facility reported an absence of any unpleasant odours and indications are that the biological degradation of wastes is proceeding well. In September, a site-built model designed by Greenpeace was constructed and is expected to have begun use by October. It has been designed to be low-cost, using concrete, old fishing net and does not require electricity. If found to work satisfactorily, it will be appropriate for use on outer islands and other remote locations.

Work began in Kosrae on the installation of a commercial biological toilet.
system, donated by a Norwegian manufacturer, as part of an addition to a house in Kosrae. It will become functional upon completion of the new addition, expected soon.

A follow-up trip by Greenpeace to the demonstration sites is planned for November-December. At that time a preliminary evaluation of the effectiveness of the demonstrations will be undertaken together with local participants and any design adjustments will be made as necessary. More workshops and maintenance training will be conducted and other demonstration sites will be considered. A final assessment of how well the demonstration toilets functioned will take place after one year when samples of the residual material are analyzed for pathogens.

Recommendations

Adoption of the following recommendations would contribute to achieving sustainable development through ecotourism:

Pacific Island Governments

Economic development planners, tourism authorities and other government agencies can do much to encourage environmentally sound tourism and assist local entrepreneurs to succeed in these enterprises. Three specific steps are outlined below:

1. Establish criteria for the types of technologies and practices used by tourism facilities. Require new projects to use technologies which prevent impacts - such as low-flow showerheads and taps, zero-discharge sewage treatment systems, clean energy production, and strategies to minimise garbage generation.

2. Require community participation in development planning to ensure that projects are compatible with local needs and uses of natural resources.

3. Make small-scale loans available for the start up of local tourism operations and related businesses which meet established criteria. Often, existing financial institutions do not lend amounts small enough to be accessible to small local tourism operations and have been reluctant to finance ecotourism facilities which do not follow the conventional model.

4. Require foreign investment driven tourism projects to establish a fund for training and other resources to assist in the formation of local small businesses to provide ancillary goods and services to the resort such as gifts, food, and day-tours in the local area.

Travel Agents and Tour Operators

Travel agents and tour operators in developed countries where tourists originate should take the time to find out about the places they're sending tourists to, and the people they are doing business with at ecotourism destinations. Travel agents are in a position to assess whether these ecotourism operations are having a beneficial or a degrading impact on the local environment and they have a responsibility to give honest representations to their customers.

Greenpeace urges those promoting ecotourism to consider evaluating tourist destinations based on the following kind of criteria:

Is the operation at least in part locally owned?

Do they employ local people?

Do they rely primarily on local food and support services?

Has the local community been involved in the planning of the operation and its activities?

Do they encourage visitors to experience the natural environment and local culture with a minimum of interference?

Do they drain the local infrastructure - water, electricity, waste facilities - depriving the local community?

Do they use clean energy sources?

Do they avoid generating garbage and other wastes?

Do they cause pollution problems from sewage?
Based on these kinds of questions, it is possible to seek out locally owned, small-scale, and environmentally sound tourist destinations. Local operators in the Pacific need business relationships with people in the developed world who are genuinely concerned about the potential impact of their industry on the environment. Concerned travel agents can make the difference between the success or failure of these local enterprises, and between the preservation of their fragile environments or their destruction.

By forming relationships with local tourism enterprises, travel agents can provide them with the markets they need, help them find small-scale sources of investment capital for appropriate development and help them to understand how to provide tourists with the quality experience they are looking for. Most often they do not have the knowledge or resources to reach out and form these relationships, but the travel industry of developed countries are in a position to seek them out. If this is done, the travel industry will not only be helping to encourage truly sustainable development, but will provide their customers with a superior product.

**Reference**

CULTURAL AND ECOTOURISM - BUILDING A SENSE OF PLACE

Francis Oda
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Hawaii

Introduction

Resort development should be a catalyst for strengthening of culture and the preservation and enhancement of eco-systems. Given the focus of energy, resources and talents which are brought to bear for resort development, it is a unique opportunity to be pro-active in regard to eco/cultural tourism. It is also good business. This paper suggests why it is good business and describes the efforts in two resorts to enhance the environment and culture of their communities while cultivating a sense of place.

Historical Background

The tradition of travel and tourism has always been to leave the familiar to go to exotic and interesting places. Whether by shop, balloon or caravan, travellers were intrepid and places were very different. In the last 50 years, however, the advent of air travel has allowed many more people to search for exotic places. Travellers were no longer intrepid adventurers but just average people like you and me who wanted the comforts of home. In the United States, Conrad Hilton and others recognized this change and offered in hotels all over the world a little bit of America. Whether in Singapore or Thailand, an American chain offered a modern hotel, American food, and American toilet paper.

Air travel, modern architecture and TV have had a homogenizing effect on the world so that places have begun to look and feel very much alike. Waikiki and Miami must feel very similar to the average visitor. Destination resorts in Ixtapa, Mexico look a lot like Kaanapali in Hawaii because there is a pattern of developing large hotels for group travellers.

During the past 30 years, another phenomenon was created - Disneyland. Here the traveller could go only a short distance and feel like he had gone to another country or another time. The traveller could again feel like an intrepid adventurer - within a clean, safe and comfortable fantasy.

The success of Disneyland led to other theme parks and most recently in Hawaii, the Fantasy Hotel. Hotels such as the Grand Hyatt Waikoloa and Westin, Kauai and the recently opened Grand Hyatt Wailea provide a fantasy environment within a modern, luxury hotel. Futuristic trains and boats pass through the lobby and provide transportation for visitors at the Hyatt Waikoloa. Cascades of water, abundant waterfalls, appeal to the fantasies of guests. Even swimming with dolphins is offered at the Hyatt.

Reality

While these hotels seem to satisfy some travellers' desire for pure fantasy, a problem is that they have no relationship to Hawaii's ecology or culture; just as the Hitons did not relate to the cultures and environments within which they existed.

Pure fantasies can be short-lived. The Hyatt Waikoloa temporarily closed down at least 1/2 of their 1,200 rooms and the Westin, Kauai has experienced very low occupancies.

Why is this? Is this a trend for the future? My opinion is yes. Future trends appear to reflect the following:

1. As more and more people travel, they are growing in sophistication and will increasingly
seek out interesting yet authentic experiences. Ecotourisms where people seek out exotic sites like Ankor Wat or Antarctica will be more and more popular.

2. This indicates that people are increasingly also interested in learning as they travel. When they travel, they want to have fun - but also learn ..... about cultures, new skills, crafts and other interesting things.

3. Tied to "life-long" learning is the fact the increasing bulk of world-wide travellers will be the "baby boom" generation (from 1946). This group has more time and money as they grow into middle-age. They have set the trends for all subsequent groups. They are well educated, increasingly well-travelled and eager to have new and deeper experiences. By their sheer numbers in nations around the world, they will continue to establish the trends for tourism.

4. Health living is a world-wide trend among baby boomers and others. In hotels and resorts, this means healthy food, healthy environments, opportunities for a wide range of activities such as golfing, skiing, windsurfing, mountain biking and snorkling.

Case Studies

I wish to share two projects with you which are positioned to appeal to this active, life-long learning quest and, therefore, to be catalysts for the advancement of culture and the environment.

The first is Kawela Bay which is a beautiful spot but largely unknown because access to it was controlled by private interests. The bay is a feeding ground for the Green Sea Turtle, a threatened species, as well as a panoply of fish life.

We agreed with the community that a park should provide public access to the Bay. On further study, however, the Bay proved not to be the pristine environment it was previously thought to be. Murkiness was the result of a lack of natural flushing. Bathymetric and currents studies identified the problem and core samples of the bottom showed "muck" or sediments blanketing portions of the bottom. Coral and other marine life was being threatened.

We discovered that a major contributor of sediments to the Bay was Kawela Stream. The stream diverted to the Bay in the 1930 from its original alignment leading to a trench. Here a strong current carried sediments seaward. We are determined to restore the stream to its original alignment.

In addition we proposed to protect the marine life in the Bay through the establishment of a Marine Life Conservation District (MLCD) within which a Marine Fisheries Management Area (MFMA) would be designated. Fishing practices would be controlled - for example not allowing gill netting yet permitting traditional throw netting. We feel that this combination of establishment and controls will allow a major aquatic resource to be sustained and available to the community and to visitors.

Further east of the resort is the 70 hectare Punahoolapa marsh - a wetland disturbed by decades of agricultural activities yet sufficiently intact to be the habitat of four endangered Hawaiian birds: the gallinule, Hawaiian stilt, koloa duck and the coot.

In order to provide sanctuary to the endangered birds and to create an environmental resource with significant interpretive value for visitors and residents, the resort has begin work creating major nesting and feeding areas within the marsh. A moat surrounding the sanctuary has been dug to keep out feral cats, dogs and mongoose. The fringe of the marsh and associated wetlands have been incorporated into a championship golf course designed by Arnold Palmer.

A wetland was almost filled inadvertently. The remedy was to substantially increase the water surface area and provide vegetation along the margin for nesting. This wetland is now incorporated into the 14th fairway.

It appears that we have balanced the interests of these gallinule chicks with those of Arnold Palmer. Income generated by golf will be used to maintain a portion of the sanctuary. The sanctuary certainly benefits the golf experience and provides a whole other dimension of interpretative experience not otherwise available in the region.

I would now like to share with you a project that has recently been completed which focuses on cultural tourism.

The Island of Lanai is one of the smallest of the major Hawaiian Islands and its population is about 2,200 people. Most of these people were employed by the Dole Company's pineapple
plantation which owns 98% of the land area of the island.

For many years it was apparent that pineapple production would decline and other job opportunities needed to be created. Younger people were leaving the island after high school because they did not want to work in the pineapple fields. The island’s population was strangely divided between the school-age youth and the middle-aged and older. Most of the young adults had left.

We began the design process by understanding the current culture and the history of Lanai. Prior to being a pineapple plantation, it had been a cattle ranch. We understood that while the need for jobs was apparent, people feared that the development of hotels would change and damage their peaceful lifestyle. Most Lanai families did not lock the doors of their homes. We wanted to create two hotels on the island which would be the focus for economic, social and cultural renewal in this community.

The first hotel was next to the only developed area, Lanai City, which is in the center of the island and approximately 700 meters in elevation. Lanai City is a collection of quaint plantation homes surrounding a park and several shops and stores.

An important structure in Lanai City is the Bloomfield-Brown House which was built for the first plantation manager. He had been a recent graduate from Yale University and was from New England. The house he built was a New England house, similar to those built by missionaries in Hawaii. His work force was 10-12 Japanese carpenters. Neither spoke each other’s language but they built a New England house adapted to the Hawaiian climate using Japanese wood construction techniques.

It was this rich history and multi-cultural quality that we wanted to use as a mode to capture in the Lodge and Koele. This 102 room 5-star hotel was not to be a hotel at all but rather the house of a family such as the Bloomfield-Brown family, and guests were to feel like family friends. We wanted to have these friends experience and participate in the gracious lifestyle of the family and the island.

The "Great Hall" of the Lodge is designed as a large living room with two massive fireplaces. The furniture does not look like it was bought at one time but rather, that it was accumulated over many years, each piece representing some family history. The dining room is not a restaurant but a large residential dining area. Food can also be served in the library and music room. The guestrooms each have a window seat and feel like generous bedrooms.

Important trees existing on the site were kept and a reservoir was discovered as we cleared the area. The reservoir was restored and filled with water.

Today, the Lodge at Koele looks again like the ranch-site that is once was. Mr Richardson said to me at the opening that "this is the way it was." I don’t think it’s strange that developments can bridge a gap of time and history yielding something new, yet something that evokes memories of things past.

In addition to architectural and landscape features, the foods served at both the Lodge at Koele and its sister hotel, the Manele Bay represent a multi-cultural theme. Many of the ingredients used in the dishes now originate on Lanai and whole new agricultural activities such as cattle, poultry and pig raising, vegetable farming and bee keeping have been developed on Lanai as part of this project. The ranch lifestyle of horse-back riding has also been renewed on Lanai.

Native Hawaiian cultural awareness in terms of historic research, archaeological study, renewing of performing arts and crafts have been supported financially and programmatically by the resort. Current works of artists and craftsmen now have a market. A complete programme of drawings and paintings by Lanai artists was developed to use in the interior design of the hotels.

Conclusions

It is not an exaggeration to say that the hotels have led to an economic, cultural and social renaissance on Lanai. It is interesting to consider that developed in the wrong way, say as a fantasy resort, these hotels could have led to the cultural and social destruction of the island’s lifestyle that many residents had feared. These hotels are not so much a fantasy but part of a dream; a dream that has its roots and results in reality.

Resorts and hotels should be positive contributors not only to our economy but also to arts, crafts, performing arts, agriculture, food and other aspects of culture. They should preserve and enhance the environment and
wildlife in a sustainable symbiotic relationship. Above all, they should contribute to people and their values by defining and clarifying, in each community, a sense of pride and a sense of place.
MANAGING FOR GROWTH:  
REGULATION VERSUS THE MARKET

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Abstract

The question of how best to manage ecotourism growth to ensure that potential negative impacts on environmentally sensitive areas are eliminated or minimised, and to obtain positive conservation returns, has become a subject of wide international debate. Solutions range from proposals for firm government regulation to arguments that market forces will achieve these objectives efficiently. The paper canvases these options, identifying conditions under which alternative approaches are most likely to succeed, and considers other variations such as industry codes of conduct and self-policing, and negotiated trade-offs. It argues for a non-doctrinal approach to selecting the best management solution to each problem area.

Regulation Versus The Market

A few months back, when the title of this address was being fixed, it seemed like a fairly stark choice between regulation and the market.

There had been, and still is, a great deal of writing that tourism impacts on natural areas require firm regulation. The places being visited, are by definition environmentally sensitive; ecotourism, if not controlled, would damage the natural features; regulation was desirable not only for conservation reasons but to protect the industry from itself - tourism would not want to see destroyed the very features it was dependent upon.

More recently another large volume of writing has emerged, internationally, through books, learned journals and popular articles, that managing tourism growth in environmentally sensitive areas could no longer depend on regulation. Regulation was too directly "command and control" oriented to meet either the needs of tourism or the needs of the environment. The market, on the other hand, was proving adept at meeting many of society's needs and clearly had some answers to apply to managing the tourism-environment interface. One of the peaks of this argument was the view that if central planning has been such a failure at managing economies, why should we expect it to be any better at managing ecologies?

The field is fast moving and my opinion is that people will be writing different articles and delivering different speeches about it over at least the next five years. What is clear now is that regulation and/or the market between them offer some of the answers, but the focus of our approaches should not be to choose between them on the basis of a philosophical preference for one or the other. Rather we should see them as part of an extensive menu to which we should be trying to add as much variety as possible, so that we can choose the best solution for each particular management issue.

It helps to identify the sorts of problems inherent in ecotourism growth. One category contains generic or national type problems. These relate to such issues as waste disposal, the use of non-renewable and polluting materials, and air and water quality. A wide range of these sorts of issues apply to transport, accommodation and other parts of tourism enjoying growth. What I mean by generic is something like this: it ought to be possible, and many areas have done this, to establish standards of water purity required at
beaches relative to the disposal of sewerage and other waste. Once defined, that standard can apply to all beaches in a region or country, with a minimum of case by case consideration.

A second category is site specific: the question of impacts on say a particular stretch of coral reef, a wetland or forest, an unusual rock formation, a geothermal feature, a wildlife area, a sensitive, localised ecosystem. Each of these is very different from the others and each is likely to demand a different management technique.

And there will be plenty of issues raised by tourism growth in natural areas which do not fit neatly into one or the other of these two broad categories. That is why the menu of potential solutions must be long. We will be stunting our approaches, limiting ourselves quite unfairly, if we start from a view that solutions must be found from within a limited framework - that only the market can do this, that only regulation will solve that, that only the public sector can be active in this area, that the private sector must do it there.

You can see from this that I am accepting the desirability of some sort of management regime for these situations. The challenge is not whether to have one, but what sort. Of course one may end up in a particular situation that nothing is required, but that would be a conscious outcome.

Regulation

Let us look first at regulation. I omit from this discussion regulations imposed for safety reasons, such as we can have only one jet boat at a time roaring up a narrow gorge, or a mountain road is to be closed in winter because of avalanche risk. We are talking about the use of regulation to manage tourism impacts in environmentally sensitive situations.

We have a number of these in New Zealand of widely varying types. For example, flight paths over national parks for sightseeing are clearly defined, primarily to protect major park areas from sound pollution. On some mountains there is a specified altitude limit above which ski field development is precluded.

Defining carrying capacity is a particular type of regulatory mechanism. It is reached, in ecological terms, when the number of visitors or the nature of visitor activities start to degrade the ecosystem or upset the wildlife. It normally involves specifying the optimum number of people, coaches, boats, planes or whatever, in any given location. It is a widely held view that conservation management requires the fixing of carrying capacities in many situations.

But it is a complex subject, and this approach requires almost infinite flexibility. The number of people who can watch the whales off Kaikoura each day without unduly disturbing the whales is determined by the size, engine noise and behaviour of the boats. The number of people which can be handled daily at Milford Sound depends almost totally on the quality of the facilities there, and the way visitors are spread or not spread over the day. There was serious overcapacity there a year ago before appropriate amenities were built; with the splendid new facilities, there is now significant spare capacity.

There are strict number limits on visitors to Kapiti Island - 50 per day and 150 per week. But this has nothing to do with any perceived carrying capacity of the island or its bird life. It relates to the capacity of the sole resident ranger. If there were a need to cater for a significant increase in visitors, obviously a management-type solution could be found. Similarly fixed capacities on certain of our walking tracks are determined by the bunk spaces in the huts rather than any ecological capacity of the tracks themselves.

In fact, there is arguably only one environmentally sensitive point in New Zealand where currently a rigid carrying capacity is required, and that is the Waitomo glow worm cave. There is strong scientific evidence that when carbon dioxide levels from human breathing get above a certain level, the glow worms start to die. Those caves are a very special contained and controlled environment.

Some very recent literature, also questioning most measures of carrying capacity or maximum sustainable yield, is beginning to conceptualise about more flexible alternatives in such terms as "managing for the recurrence of desirable conditions".

However, having said all that, there may be a particular role worth identifying for contemplating the carrying capacity of different situations. That is, to decide if anything needs to be done at all. This must be done subjectively all the time. For example, no one to my knowledge has suggested that there ought to be a limit, for environmental reasons,
on the number of boats on Lake Taupo. But someone might well suggest a limit on boats on some stretches of river feeding into or out of Lake Taupo, because of the effect of the wash on river banks or other effects on wildlife. So considering carrying capacity issues may help identify if a problem exists. My point then would be, if there is a problem, don't jump to the conclusion that regulating a carrying limitation is the best management solution.

The Market

Now, what of the market option? I think that the best approach is to interpret this to mean, not laissez faire with the unseen hand of the market solving everything, but rather the use of what is being called economic instruments. The essential components of this are that an individual or company is permitted to do something with a right or permit which is tradeable, and/or that prices are used as incentives or disincentives to modify behaviour. The range of possibilities is very wide, and includes pollution taxes; property rights, or pollution permits or resources quotas which are tradeable; performance bonds; and pricing mechanisms. In New Zealand our tradeable fishing quotas as a means of managing the fish resource, and the pricing differential between unleaded and leaded petrol, are examples of these.

One of our difficulties is that while case studies on the application of market instruments to environmental questions of forestry, fishing, air quality, water quality, everything else, abound, very little has been directed to tourism. For that reason we (the Ministry of Tourism) have proposed to the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Tourism Group that the tourism ministries of member countries engage in an exchange of studies and experience on managing the tourism-environment interface.

However, it is a nice fact that without much theorising market instruments of a sort have on occasion been applied as pragmatic contributions to management issues on the public estate in New Zealand. A permit or a concession to operate is a form of property right. Two permits were issued by the Department of Conservation for operators to send boats whale watching at Kaikoura. Subsequently, one of those operators sold his permit to the other, so the permit self-evidently was a tradeable instrument. The result in that case is a monopoly, and that there is no inherent problem with that outcome. Certainly there is scope for natural monopolies to operate within a general framework of tradeable rights. Equally, additional permits could be issued if the situation warranted it.

The principal problem at Milford Sound has been the growing tendency over many years for tourists to visit it in a one day trip from Queenstown. This means a great bunching of arrivals by coaches in the middle of the day. An economist would surely argue that a simple pricing mechanism, of charging a high premium for mid day visits, and offering heavy discounts for visits earlier or later in the day, would rapidly have an impact on that.

A related issue is one of funding. Managing tourism growth will require additional money - for huts, walkways, wharves, landing strips, interpretation centres, whatever - in areas where private sector funding has historically been precluded or is difficult. Some economic instruments offer possibilities for fund raising, and offer suitable means of managing private, or joint public and private investment.

Other Approaches

Now, let us range wider still in compiling our menu of management options. A third category, besides regulations and market mechanisms, is industry self control or self management. This is a rapidly growing area led by tourist industry associations producing codes of conduct relating to the environment. At the least, these represent recognition of the importance of conservation by industry leadership, and if the message of the codes is repeated and reinforced by a variety of association activities, the persuasive power of these codes is potentially quite substantial.

Codes have developed in the space of three or four years from being simple homilies to tourists about "respecting nature" or "don't drop litter", to quite sophisticated strategies for environmental protection or sustainable development. As tourism developers and operators tune their activities to the standards of these codes, their game will be lifted, but this in itself will not be a sufficient management tool.

Codes are now emerging which are specific to sectors of tourism, such as accommodation or air transport, and quite technical in nature. The Pacific Asia Travel Association (PATA), one of
the sponsors of this conference, has developed an exceptionally useful overall code, and is now preparing to produce such sector-specific codes which, unlike the generic code, will contain performance measures.

A most effective example of a code in practical operation is that developed by cruise operators to the Antarctic. In the absence of regulation, this has ensured a consistently high standard of behaviour, reflecting perhaps the smallness of the group and the very specific set of circumstances being dealt with.

But codes will need to develop further before they become primary tools of management. They will need to become, in some degree, enforceable. The monitoring of standards and policing are future steps. There can be performance measures, and the withholding of benefits when these are not achieved. The Antarctic Tour Operators, aware of this, have formed an association and are determined to expel from it any company not strictly adhering to its code.

In most situations, a code will provide an effective instrument only when it is negotiated say between a group of operators and a local authority, and when it incorporates auditible procedures.

So while there is a range of possibilities here, the tourist industry still has some distance to go if it seeks seriously to promote codes, self-regulation and self-policing as an alternative management tool to regulation and control.

Codes at present are contributing to a conservation ethic within tourism and to sector wide problems such as reducing usage of non renewable resources. They have less application, to date, to unique site-specific issues.

A fourth set of techniques has no name but I will call it for today's purposes, "negotiation". Consultation and cooperation are a part of it. It will involve developers undertaking environmental impact assessments before they commence a project, and working through the implications of the findings, in most cases with a local authority. It will involve trade offs and developing the concept of no net loss, although perhaps not in Pacific countries on the scale of the famous case in New England, where a company was permitted to build a new emission-producing power station provided it planted a forest in central America with a comparable absorptive capacity. It will involve accepting resource consents with significant conditionality. It will, sometimes, involve adopting a "BPO" - best practical option. It will involve forging partnerships between government, business, and local communities or tangata whenua to ensure goals of sustainability are achieved.

So we have a wide range of management techniques. We can add to them as we realise the possibilities. It is essential that we look at all these possible techniques as a menu, and choose the one, or the combination, best suited to the situation. Both developing the menu and choosing from it requires creativity and innovation, dialogue and discussion. Neither task should be approached with preconceived notions about, for example, what ought or ought not be done by the private or the public sector.

In New Zealand we are in the comfortable position of having a new Resource Management Act which de-emphasises the setting of rigid requirements and rules, which are basically types of input control, and emphasises instead the result or impact of any proposed activity, essentially an output control. It specifically provides for the use of economic instruments. However, it is doubtful if legislation with that specific type of provision is necessary in most countries to do the sorts of things I have been talking about today. On the other hand, if a country has legislation which specifically precludes some of these mechanisms, it may wish to consider the desirability of that, and whether it is not cutting itself off from some exciting possibilities.

Conclusions

The debate on regulation versus the market will rage on. That's good. Let it, like joy, be unconfined, and include all options. But we, whether policy makers, managers or commercial operators in ecotourism, also need to feel some sense of urgency about getting on with it. Tourism in most of our countries is growing rapidly, and interest in natural attractions and ecotourism experiences is soaring. We want sustainability, not a mess. We need to pool our thinking, not compartmentalise our approaches. The fact that some options are new, and theoretical debates are still raging, is no excuse for avoiding creative problem solving and problem-avoidance from this point on.
ECOTOURISM - SAVING OR SINKING NOAH'S ARK

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Abstract

The diversity of Western Australia's landscapes and the high degree of endemism of the State's plants and animals make their protection important on a world scale. Currently 195 000 sq km of the State are protected in national and marine parks and nature reserves, areas that continue to attract increasing numbers of tourists. Given the vastness of Western Australia, the size of its parks and reserves and their wide dispersal, and a relatively small population of taxpayers, external funds and resources are becoming important to the Department of Conservation and Land Management to manage parks and wildlife and to provide recreation facilities: Nature-based tourism is one means by which the Department can attract external funds to meet its mission. Ecotourism ventures are being organised by private agencies and academic institutions and involve volunteers who pay to assist with research and management projects. Ecotourism is controlled by a management planning process that involves the public in preparing plans that protect Western Australia's conservation values.

Introduction

This paper seeks to examine the relationship between nature-based tourism, generally, ecotourism, specifically, and managing conservation reserves in Western Australia to protect biodiversity. The State covers more than 2.5 million sq km, a third of the continent's land area and coastline, an area characterised by great diversity in landform, climate and biota.

Of the 16,000 species of vascular plants found in Australia, 12,000 are found in Western Australia with over two thirds being endemic to the State. Over 70 percent of floral species in the south-west are endemic. The State has 179 species of indigenous mammals (including 37 marine), 480 species of birds, 387 species of reptiles, 68 species of amphibians and 1600 species of fish.

Of Australia's 250 species of mammals, 13 percent are endemic to Western Australia as are 42 percent of all reptiles, 50 percent of all inland fish, and 54 percent of amphibians (CALM 1992). These figures show that Western Australia has a diverse range of species endemic to the State, and their conservation is significant in protecting global diversity.

Australia faces high rates of species extinction. In Western Australia, 11 mammal species (or 8 percent) of the original 140 terrestrial species are extinct. Since European settlement 200 years ago, 18 Australian mammal species have become extinct, 7 percent of the country's mammals. This represents half of the mammal species recorded as becoming extinct worldwide in that time (CALM 1992). A further six now occur only on offshore islands. At least 100 species of Australia's vascular plants have become extinct, with 52 species presumed extinct in Western Australia. This compares unfavourably with 27 species recorded extinct in Europe and 39 in Southern Africa (CALM 1992).

The Department of Conservation and Land Management (CALM) is responsible for protecting wildlife throughout the State as well as managing 195,800 sq km of State lands and waters. The managed area represents 7.5
percent of the State (equivalent to 70 percent of the area of New Zealand). The main categories of reserve are national park (about 48 900 sq km), nature reserve (about 107 500 sq km), marine park (about 11 300 sq km) and State forest (about 17 500 sq km).

The conservation estate is rapidly expanding. In the last six years the area of terrestrial conservation reserves managed by CALM has increased from 164 420 sq km to 187 570 sq km, an increase of 23 150 sq km. An average of 3850 sq km each year.

CALM's responsibilities are, therefore, significant, especially given the potential threats to conservation values from feral animals, weeds and inappropriate fire regimes. The introduced "dieback" fungus, Phytophthora cinnamomi, is an added serious threat that can be compounded by human activities, including those of people seeking to observe, experience and appreciate the State's natural wonders.

CALM monitors the number of people visiting conservation areas throughout the State. Despite a small population of 1.6 million people, more than 4.5 million visits are made to reserved areas annually.

While it is projected that the Department will spend $21.1 million AUD on nature conservation and wildlife management and $17.8 million AUD on tourism and recreation management in the 1992/93 financial year, these amounts are considered minimal when compared with the growth in demand for visitor facilities and services, and the threats to nature conservation values given the vast size, remoteness and ruggedness of the national parks, nature reserves, marine parks and other reserves in the conservation estate.

The Department has taken the view that it manages an immensely valuable resource, both biological and economic, and will always require more resources than those made available by a relatively small number of taxpayers. CALM also recognises that the competition for taxpayers' funds will continue to increase and that it is necessary to enter into partnerships with groups and agencies, including the tourism industry, to achieve its mission. Rather than seeing nature-based tourism as a threat to its mission, which is "to conserve Western Australia's wildlife and manage lands and waters entrusted to the Department for the benefit of present and future generations", it sees it as an essential partner in achieving that end.

Furthermore, a vibrant, sustainable ecotourism industry provides valuable support for adding areas to the conservation estate in the face of competition from other land uses.

Tourism and the Natural Environment

Tourism is vital to the Australian economy. According to Bureau of Tourism Research it is Australia's single most important export earner. In Western Australia its contribution to the State's economy continues to grow. Statistics on tourism in Western Australia (WATC 1991) indicate that the vast majority of tourism is by local and interstate visitors. However, the dollar value contribution of international tourists is of greater economic significance than the level of visitation.

Currently little information is available about the importance of the natural environment as an attraction to tourism. The Australian Tourism Commission found that 71 percent of all American visitors put as their number one first choice for visiting Australia as "unusual birds, animals and flora". Similarly 71 percent of UK visitors and 77 percent of European visitors stated the same reason.

The second choice by 63 percent of European visitors was that they were seeking some form of "unique style holiday", 63 percent of American visitors and 54 percent of UK visitors were seeking the same type of holiday.

The third choice of "interesting landscapes" was made by 75 percent of American visitors, 63 percent of UK visitors and 81 percent of European visitors.

The fourth choice by 73 percent of UK visitors, 69 percent of European visitors and 62 percent of American visitors was that Australia was "not overcrowded, fairly unknown and not overdeveloped" (ATC 1984).

Western Australia combines all these features - unusual birds, animals and plants, unique style holiday, interesting landscapes, and is not overcrowded or overdeveloped. This creates a comparative advantage for Western Australia with its range of habitats, remnant tropical rain forests, kari and jarrah forests, mangroves, heathlands, deserts and coral reefs. These are combined with bizarre landscapes, beaches and gorges, masses of wildflowers, and features such as the pinnacles or the striped
beehive domes of the Bungle Bungle massif or the large meteor crater at Wolf Creek. Added to the attractions is the easy access to a large variety of wild animals, such as the dolphins at Monkey Mia.

Western Australia is obviously a place where climate and wildlife combine with wide open spaces and unusual geological features to create opportunities for people to experience close contact with nature.

CALM research shows that visitors are interested in the natural environment. In 1990/91, 4.5 million visits were made to CALM managed areas (Haynes et al. 1992). While the majority of these were to sites near major urban areas, the most rapid growth rates are in remote locations such as the Purnululu National Park (Bungle Bungles), which is in the Kimberley Region approximately 3600 kms from Perth.

The number of visitors by ground has risen from 3772 in the 1988 visitor season to 7758 in the 1992 season, a 105 percent increase over four years.

The spectacular growth in the number of tour operators focussing on natural tour areas shows that the worldwide phenomena of booming nature-based tourism is occurring in Western Australia.

While accepting its role in the tourism industry and spending a projected $17.8 million AUD 1992/93 on tourism and recreation, the recoup from fees, camping and entrance concessions, and leases amounted to $1.45 million AUD in 1991/92. Although the State benefits directly through nature-based tourism and indirectly by way of multiplier effects, limited resources are channelled directly from users and the tourism industry to manage and protect the natural resource. CALM is vigorously addressing this issue.

Nature-Based Tourism, Conservation and Aboriginal People

As Aboriginal people are returning to and protecting their traditional lands, they are looking to develop an economic base to sustain their communities. Being involved in conservation management is providing an opportunity to some degree. Aboriginal communities are seeking living areas as well as a role in managing conservation reserves, and currently joint management plans are being prepared for several national parks. In all instances nature-based tourism presents the opportunity to generate income and provide employment. The nature tourist is generally seeking cultural as well as ecological information and experiences and Aboriginal people are well placed to provide for this need.

Until recently access into Purnululu National Park was restricted to four wheel drive vehicle only to protect the wilderness experience. Recently air operators were given approval to land a limited number of visitors in the Park each day. A traditional owner of the Purnululu National Park is one of three ground tour operators permitted to take fly-in campers and already the demand for the genuine Aboriginal experience is being sought by tourists. Many tour operators are meeting this demand by providing Aboriginal cultural experiences in their programs. The Aboriginal Heritage Act 1972 guarantees that Aboriginal cultural sites are protected.

Protection and Management

It has often been argued that increases in levels of nature-based tourism will lead to greater pressure on protected areas and threaten conservation values, including rare and threatened species. CALM deals with anticipated impacts on conservation values through a planning process. This process develops management strategies for the 10 year life of a plan based on projected increases in visitor numbers.

Consideration is given to developing tourist infrastructure and its impact on the natural environment by tourists agencies and environmental agencies. The Western Australian Tourism Commission (WATC), in conjunction with the Environmental Protection Authority (EPA), has produced two documents, "The Ecoethics of tourism development" and "An administrative guide to the environmental requirements for tourism developments" (WATC/EPA 1989a, 1989b). These non-statutory guides give direction to intending tourism developers and operators. CALM has also recently published a draft document for community comment entitled "A nature conservation strategy for Western Australia" (CALM 1992).

Commonwealth Legislation

The Federal Government has a range of legislation that impacts on tourism activity in
legislation that impacts on tourism activity in protected areas. The most significant are perhaps the Australian Heritage Commission Act 1975 and the World Heritage Properties Conservation Act 1983. The former gives power to list cultural or natural properties, the latter provides the framework to give effect to responsibilities under the World Heritage Convention.


**Statutory Controls Statewide**

The Environmental Protection Act 1986 and the Town Planning and Development Act 1928 provide mechanisms to protect the environment and control tourism activity Statewide. The Town Planning and Development Act 1928 provides guidelines for local authorities to control developments. The Environmental Protection Act determines the level of environmental assessment that will apply to any project or proposal. The level of assessment set by the EPA is appealable by the general public with the Minister for the Environment being the final arbiter of both assessment and conditions of approval for projects or activities. The Act also provides for individuals or community groups to refer to the EPA for assessment of projects or activities they feel will adversely impact the environment.

**Statutory Controls on CALM Managed Lands**


The CALM Act directs management activities to given tenures and purpose of reservation. Most protected areas are vested in the National Parks and Nature Conservation Authority (NPNCA), which prepares management plans and policies applying to protected areas. The NPNCA represents the wider community interest, including the voluntary conservation movement, academic institutions, local government, Aboriginal interests and recreational groups. Management plans are the mechanisms by which protected areas are managed and tourism development and activity is controlled.

**Management Plans**

Before any tourist development can take place the CALM Act requires that a management plan for the national park or protected area must be in place and that the activity is approved. The only alternative is if the activity is deemed to be a "compatible operation". Such a determination can only be made by the Minister for the Environment after seeking public comment and allowing a two-month period for public submission.

Management plans are produced at several levels. Regional plans cover CALM's nine management regions throughout the State. These plans examine broadscale planning of reserves in all categories and recommend additions to the conservation estate. Such broadscale planning helps address the common criticism that tourism planning is on a project basis rather than looking at the cumulative impacts of several projects or activities over a wider area. This allows parks and reserves with varying opportunities and settings to be developed and managed for visitors in such a way as to complement each other.

Management plans are also prepared at area specific levels for one or several national parks, nature reserves or marine parks in close proximity. These plans prescribe management actions for up to 10 years. They also indicate the level and type of tourist activity that is appropriate to maintain conservation values. The CALM Act states that as far as national parks and conservation parks are concerned management plans should be designed "to fulfil so much of the demand for recreation by members of the public as is consistent with the proper maintenance and restoration of the natural environment, the protection of indigenous flora and fauna and the preservation of any feature of archaeological, historic or scientific interest."

Management plans are required by Statute to be made available as a draft for public comment for at least two months. In fact, much wider public involvement occurs than is
required under Statute and this ensures that all aspects of community interest and concern are expressed before the NPNCA forwards the final plan to the Minister for the Environment for approval.

Site Development Plans

Where tourism and recreation facilities are permitted by way of management plans specific site plans are developed. These plans ensure that visitor facilities and services are located in zones where the impact on the environment is minimised and the benefit for the visitor maximised.

These site plans are developed where degradation occurs or the potential for degradation exists or it is perceived that management intervention is necessary to prevent environmental impact from increased numbers of visitors.

These plans take into account visitor needs, scenic values, management capability as well as environmental concerns using concepts such as the "recreation opportunity spectrum" and the "limits of acceptable change". Important components in these site plans are signs as well as interpretation and education plans and programs. Site plans are developed in close association with local communities and interest groups and are of particular interest to tour operators.

Over 300 CALM field staff have had intensive training in recreation site planning by specialist landscape and community education and interpretation officers.

Policies

CALM has published policies endorsed by the NPNCA and Minister for Environment for recreation, tourism and visitor services. These comprehensive policies are predicated on four major principles: (i) the need to preserve values of land and water; (ii) consistency of any activity with the purpose for which that land or water is vested, that is nature reserve, national park, marine park or conservation park etc; (iii) equity of use; and (iv) CALM’s ability to manage the impacts of any proposed activity or development. Flowing from these principles are numerous statements that deal with issues such as public safety, fees, leases and concessions as well as those that deal with specific activities such as four wheel driving, horse riding or shell collecting. These policies, combined with intensive training, have enabled a culture in management which understands the balance between use and appreciation and protection.

Tour Operators’ Permit System

Tour operators require approval to operate on CALM managed land and are required to apply for a permit to operate. Approval is given subject to conditions designed to protect conservation values. It allows managers to be aware of the numbers and types of tour operations taking place. A database has been developed that provides a means of keeping tour operators informed of current conditions and relevant information about tenures. Licences and leases are issued where exclusive use or limited access is given to lands and waters.

It has become clear to CALM and the wider community that natural areas can be managed to provide for nature-based tourism and recreation without compromising conservation values. This does require effective planning and management intervention. It has become equally apparent that tourism has the potential to provide resources to sustain management.

Given the vast and growing conservation estate, the limited financial resources, and the prospect of declining funding in real terms, CALM has vigorously sought external sources of support, including sponsorship, philanthropy and off-set funding from the corporate community. It has also sought donations and bequests, support from trusts and foundations, and to develop partnerships and cost sharing schemes to improve its level of resourcing. An active volunteer scheme has resulted in over 1000 enthusiastic and motivated people delivering a wide range of services that meet both personal goals and CALM’s objectives.

However, the potential revenue from nature-based tourism, through fees and charges, has an immense role to play in future resourcing as well as a means of controlling the level of activity. As important is the community support and understanding that results from an involved and understanding visiting public who have had meaningful nature-based experiences.

CALM and Ecotourism

Most visitation to CALM land could be described as mass nature-based tourism and
recreation. It is catered for by the planning and management processes already outlined. As indicated, the direct financial return to management is extremely limited when compared to the outlays. Increasingly, CALM is attempting to improve the revenue raised from popular areas where funds for facilities and services has been injected and collection costs are not high. CALM has had success, such as at Nambung National Park (Pinnacles) where, over a two year period, the entrance revenue raised increased from $7000 AUD to $146 000 AUD after enhanced collection efforts.

Collecting revenue from camping, entrance fees and concessions is becoming a priority. It is a difficult proposition in a wide open State where in many areas there has been open and unrestricted access in the past, particularly in non-urban areas, and where many national parks, marine parks, and nature reserves are relatively "new". These difficulties are compounded by the public having limited knowledge and appreciation of the costs of protecting conservation values from fire, feral animals and weeds as well as providing visitor facilities and services. The tourism industry is generally more understanding and accepting of fees and charges than the local community, particularly when it knows the funds are being used to manage and protect the areas that help sustain it.

An even more direct benefit to protecting and maintaining biodiversity is through ecotourism in its "purest" form. While not wanting to enter into a definitional debate it can be argued that ecotourism can be differentiated from nature-based tourism.

Valentine (1991) suggests that "ecotourism" should be restricted to that kind of tourism that is based on undisturbed natural areas, is non damaging or degrading, contributes to protecting and managing areas used, and is subject to an adequate and appropriate management regime.

CALM has entered into ecotourism ventures that meet the above criteria. It could, in fact, be argued that ecotourism has provided the means by which endangered species have been protected and biodiversity enhanced.

It was recognised some time ago that the scientific information, experience and activities of CALM staff is an invaluable tourism resource. The decision was made to actively engage in partnerships with private tour operators and academic institutions to jointly participate in research.

The following benefits were anticipated in addition to the potential to save rare and endangered plants and animals, their habitats and protected areas:

(i) greater community support and understanding for the research and management efforts of CALM

(ii) human resources to assist in management and research efforts; that is "paying volunteers"

(iii) funds to directly support the research effort, in some cases to actually enable the scientific effort to take place

(iv) a means by which the knowledge and experiences of staff could be released and exposed to the community.

In March 1992 the Minister for the Environment announced a policy in which he asked CALM to conduct trials using CALM staff, interested Aboriginal groups and local naturalists to interact with tour operators to market ecotourism in remote areas to overcome the lack of expertise on wildlife and the environment.

A number of successful tour operations are now using these resources.

Case Studies

The Dorre Island Story

Dorre Island is about 60 kilometres off the coast in Shark Bay and is the habitat of four rare mammals extinct on the mainland. Protected from introduced predators, these animals - Rufous Hare-wallaby, Banded Hare-wallaby, Boodie and Western Barred Bandicoot - are the last remnants of what were once thriving mainland populations. CALM scientists have been studying the animals for some years and are poised to reintroduce them to mainland areas from which exotic predators, including foxes and cats, have been removed. Desert Discovery, an ecotour company which had previously undertaken tours with CALM scientists proposed to take a tour to Dorre Island in August 1992. The funds from Desert Discovery have underwritten the cost of the scientific expedition and have made the project
possible.

Dorre Island is a nature reserve to which access is prohibited without the approval of CALM’s Executive Director. No doubt, the exclusivity of access to the Island and to the research activities and animals add immense "value" to the tour.

The ecotourists were to help the research by acting as research assistants to track animals with radio collars to determine habitat preference. The synergy between "paying volunteers" financially and physically assisting CALM’s researchers was evident.

However, there was immense resistance to the project from two areas, local conservation groups and Aboriginal people. Conservation groups opposed the trip on the grounds that "tourists" and "tourism" threatened the Island's animals, and Aboriginal groups were concerned because the island had been the site of a hospital for Aboriginal people located there around the turn of the century and they feared that unidentified gravesites might be disturbed.

Actions were taken by national, state and local conservation bodies to prevent the tour taking places. Media campaigns were initiated by opponents of the tour. The tour was referred to the EPA for assessment.

The tour eventually took place in August 1992 and was singularly successful in realizing the research objectives. Local Aboriginal groups were satisfied with the measures put in place as conditions of the tour and the assurance that Aboriginal community members would be trained as Honorary CALM Officers to protect the interests of Aboriginal people during future tours.

Lessons can be learnt that may well apply to other resource management agencies. There are concerns, apart from the ideological rejection of tourists and tourism because they are commercial, that may need to be addressed, including:

(i) management agencies may allow unacceptable environmental impacts to secure resources for scientific projects; that is the agency compromises itself to win resources;

(ii) the priorities of scientific research are reoriented and dictated by the availability of funds. This distortion of priorities could result in less important or less relevant research being undertaken; and

(iii) ecotourists may not be capable research assistants. If they are poorly motivated or focussed more on being the traditional tourist then research efforts may indeed be hampered. It is theoretically possible that the efforts to meet the expectations of ecotourists may, in fact, be more costly than conducting the research in traditional ways.

The concern about distorting research effort and priority is dealt with by CALM producing annually a rolling five-year research program. Ecotours conform to that predetermined priority.

As far as protecting the environment, the ecotour of Dorre Island was subject to agreed conditions, including:

(i) tour group to be accompanied at all times by CALM scientists;

(ii) camping was banned; the tour group stayed on board a charter vessel anchored offshore;

(iii) no fires were to be lit on the island; and

(iv) all refuse and waste was to be removed from the island.

Future ecotours will also be subject to similar conditions as well as those ensuring benefits to research.

Desert Dreaming Project

Ecotourists also contributed to the final phase of reintroducing the Burrowing Bettong and Golden Bandicoot, two endangered species, to the Gibson Desert. Forty animals of each species were airlifted from Barrow Island to the desert and reintroduced to habitat where they have not been present for over 30 years.

This project was financially supported by the Australian National Parks and Wildlife Service (ANPWS) and West Australian Petroleum (WAPET), the company which drills for oil on Barrow Island.

The ecotour expedition was organised through the University of Western Australia’s Extension Service in conjunction with Landscape, CALM’s quarterly science and environment magazine. The 20 ecotourists functioned as "paying
volunteers” to help trap, identify and monitor animals using radio telemetry. Profits from the ecotour, which was readily subscribed, will be used to continue the Desert Dreaming Project.

Unlike the Dorre Island Expedition, this project did not depend on the resources made available from the ecotour. However, the financial resources are vital to continue and expand the program. Involving ecotourists in the Desert Program was far less controversial than on Dorre Island, possibly because of the association with a reputable academic institution and its publicly acclaimed community extension program and Landscape.

These two case studies show that ecotourism can be a mechanism by which remnant populations of threatened animals are protected.

Conclusion

It is clear in the case of Western Australia that the immense task of preserving the biodiversity within the State will require resources beyond what the taxpayer is willing or able to make available. Furthermore, the protected areas have the potential to contribute to the economic well being of the State through nature-based tourism. The task is to ensure that some of the benefits that flow from nature-based tourism are channelled back to protect and develop facilities and services for visitors, and to maintain conservation values.

It is equally apparent that ecotourism has the potential to contribute directly to saving rare and endangered plants and animals through financial as well as human efforts. It can be argued that the absence of ecotourism presents a greater threat to biodiversity than its presence.

References


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ECOTOURISM AND THREATENED SPECIES

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Auckland

Abstract

New Zealand has a small land area and a low diversity of species of flora and fauna. These species evolved in the absence of mammalian predators and browsers. The introduction of such mammals, and other damage by human activities, has resulted in the extinction of 48 native taxa and the listing of 418 taxa as endangered, vulnerable or rare. Many of these can today be found only in remote localities or fragile habitats. In considering ecotourism in relation to these species, or their habitats, protection of the species is of paramount importance.

Introduction

New Zealand is an island archipelago and as a result of its small size and isolation has a low diversity of species and many have made unique adaptations to suit the natural environment of New Zealand.

In its natural state New Zealand was almost entirely forest covered although following the last ice age there were relatively extensive grasslands. At the time of human arrival in New Zealand these grasslands were slowly changing to forest. At this time there were no mammalian predators although two owl species, a falcon, harrier, and possibly an eagle, existed. There were no mammalian herbivores. The only mammals that existed were three species of bat. It is to this environment that the first human immigrants to New Zealand came more than 1000 years ago. These Polynesian migrants to New Zealand brought with them fire, which over the next 800 years made a significant change to the landscape. During this period 32 species of birds became extinct (Gill & Martinson 1991).

With them they also bought now extinct kuri, or dog (Canis familiaris), and the kioe or Pacific rat (Rattus exulans). The kuri probably had significant impact, but its extinction in early European times means that we have no specific knowledge (Anderson 1990). We might suspect though, that as a dog accompanying the polynesian hunter, kuri would have greatly assisted the hunter in the search for prey, and as such may have contributed to the demise of some moa (Order DINORNITHIFORMES) species and to an increased catch of species such as kakapo (Strigops habroptilus) and weka (Gallirallus spp).

It is unclear exactly what impact kioe had in those early days. Recent research presents compelling evidence that kioe was responsible for significant changes to the flora and fauna of New Zealand (Atkinson 1978, 1986; Towns 1991).

European migrants significantly changed this situation as they deliberately cleared large tracts of forest and brought with them a host of mammals from Europe. First were rodents, black and Norway rats (Rattus rattus and R. norvegicus). Both of these species are larger and bolder than kioe and each have their different niches in the forest and pasture ecosystem, so both have taken over from kioe and are responsible for significantly more damage to the ecosystem.

Cats (Felis catus) were also an early arrival and with the presence of a good rodent population at that time, and a greater abundance of birds than is present today, cats
survived very well. From experience on offshore islands we know that cats alone are capable of exterminating bird species. It is clear that their impact on the mainland ecosystems of New Zealand was significant.

European settlers brought other mammals, either to make this place like home, such as the introduction of rabbits (*Oryctolagus cuniculus*) and deer (*Cervus spp.*) for hunting, or with the view to making money, as in the introduction of the Australian brush-tailed possum (*Trichosurus vulpecula*). All of these browsing animals came to forests which had evolved through thousands of years in the absence of mammalian browsers. Browsing has had a significant detrimental impact on species which evolved in New Zealand forests and grasslands in their absence.

Ferrets (*Mustela putorius furo*), stoats (*M. erminea*) and weasels (*M. nivalis*) were then brought in to control the rabbits. They failed to do this but, with the help of the rats and cats, succeeded in eradicating 15 bird taxa entirely and a further eight were exterminated on the mainland yet survive on islands (Gill & Martinson 1991).

Early European visitors, and the Government of that time, also set out to place mammals, particularly goats (*Capra hircus*), on islands as food for shipwrecked mariners. Cats, rats and mice (*Mus musculus*) also got to islands by accident. Attempts were made to farm a few islands. As a result introduced animals were present on many islands. Goats, and 11 other species of introduced mammal, have now been removed from 85 offshore and outlying island reserves (Veitch and Bell 1990) and more removal programmes are in progress. These restored islands are valuable habitats for the re-introduction of threatened species.

Plants brought to New Zealand for their ornamental value, such as old man’s beard (*Clematis vitalba*), wandering Jew (*Tradescantia fluminensis*), and Japanese honeysuckle (*Lonicera japonica*), have invaded many forest areas and overtop existing vegetation or prevent regeneration of natural shrublands and understorey layers. The spread of weed species is often assisted by human activity or introduced animals. Seeds are readily transported in people’s clothing. Atkinson (1984) noted that thinning of forest understorey by browsing animals may improve light conditions for seedlings of plants like old man’s beard and the seeds of this plant can be carried on the animals’ hair and hooves. The main dispersal mechanism for wandering Jew is fragmentation. Grazing of one forest remnant resulted in an entire ground cover of this species (Ogle and Lovelock 1989).

Of the many insects which have been accidentally introduced to New Zealand we have knowledge that some are causing significant impacts on threatened species. The most notable example is that of the *Vespa* wasps in honeydew beech forests near Nelson. In one area their peak numbers reach 27 000 workers per hectare (Thomas et al 1990). While it is difficult to measure the impact of these wasps on insect prey it is clear that they are competing with insectivorous birds for that prey. The wasps also consume honeydew and compete with birds for this food source. When wasps are in such high numbers they also keep humans out of the area.

Little note has been taken of the impact of the introduced garden snail (*Helix aspersa*) and the three species of introduced slug but they may be having a significant impact on the regeneration of native vegetation. They have certainly been identified as contributing to the decline of kowhai ngutukaka (*Clianthus puniceus*) through eating seedlings (Shaw in prep).

The New Zealand Ecosystem and Species Today

We now have a significantly reduced forest area (Figure 1). Not only has it diminished in area but the introduced mammalian browsers and predators continue to have significant impacts on the survival of flora and fauna. It is notable that as soon as one level of change takes place there is room for other levels of change. For example, when browsing animals modify forest vegetation introduced bird species will enter that forest (Diamond and Veitch 1981). This, in turn, may change the insect fauna of that forest and hence the food available to native birds. Or, if the invading bird is a nest predator such as the myna (*Acridotheres tristis*), then there is a direct impact on native birds.

There is also a continuing human impact on the forests, as areas are cleared or burnt or have roads pushed through them, thus allowing further invasions of exotic species. New weed and insect species are continuing to reach New Zealand either accidentally or in a controlled
manner with the intention of controlling a previously introduced pest species.

The result of all this is that today we have 488 taxa of native plants and animals listed as threatened. The word "threatened" encompasses the six levels of threat defined by the International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (King 1982) as follows:

Presumed Extinct (P): This category is used only for species which are no longer known to exist in the wild after repeated searches of the type locality and other known or likely places. It includes species extinct in the wild but surviving in captivity/cultivation.

A species may be listed as extinct in one country while surviving in another. Extinction can never be regarded as more than a probability, and rediscoveries are occasionally made.

Endangered (E): Species in danger of extinction and whose survival is unlikely if the causal factors continue. Included are those whose numbers have been reduced to a critical level or whose habitats have been so drastically reduced that they are considered to be in immediate danger of extinction.

We include all species whose populations are so few or small that loss by natural means, such as inability to breed due to lack of genetic diversity or a natural catastrophe, becomes possible. We consider it useful to include species whose survival in the wild depends on habitat manipulation or continued management.

Vulnerable (V): Species believed likely to move into the Endangered category in the near future if the causal factors continue. Included are species of which most or all the populations are decreasing because of over-exploitation, extensive destruction of habitat, or other environmental disturbance; those with populations that have been seriously depleted and whose ultimate security is not yet assured; and those with populations that are still abundant but are under threat from serious adverse factors throughout their range.

Rare (R): Species with small world populations that are not at present Endangered or Vulnerable but are at risk. These are usually localised within restricted geographic areas or habitats or are thinly scattered over a more extensive range.

Indeterminate (I): This category is used for species thought to be Extinct, Endangered, Vulnerable, or Rare, but for which there is insufficient information to allow allocation to a category.

Insufficiently Known (K): Species placed here are suspected, but not definitely known, to belong to any of the above categories. There is insufficient information to be certain.

It is sometimes difficult to draw a line between what is Endangered and Vulnerable on the one hand, and what is Vulnerable and Rare on the other. Vulnerable is essentially a dynamic category implying change and the need for active protection. Rare species may not need urgent protection although they will require monitoring.

Table 1
Threatened New Zealand Taxa

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Terrrestrial Mammals</th>
<th>Birds</th>
<th>Freshwater Fish</th>
<th>Amphibians</th>
<th>Reptiles</th>
<th>Terrrestrial Invertebrates</th>
<th>Plants</th>
<th>Totals</th>
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<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>33</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
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<td>25</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>30</td>
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<td>183</td>
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<td>110</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>294</td>
<td>489</td>
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</table>

Sources: Bell, 1986 (excluding introduced taxa); Given, 1990; Ramsay et al., 1988; M Simons pers. comm.

Many of the threatened species survive only on offshore islands. Some have been translocated from the mainland to islands and this has saved the species from extinction. Others that
survive in mainland habitats can survive only in that habitat and are also dependant on the habitat being maintained in good condition. Some species require large tracts of mainland habitat.

Compared to some countries the number of threatened species in New Zealand, and our ability to manage them, appears be even worse. For example, based on land area New Zealand has 38 times more threatened species than the United States of America but the United States has a tax base which is 76 times larger than that of New Zealand to pay for conservation work (Towns in press).

On the positive side New Zealand can claim an excellent record for saving threatened species. Active management, specifically targeting a threatened species, is in progress for more than 80 taxa and general habitat management is also benefitting other species. For many we have no concise knowledge of whether they continue to decline or hold their own. Other species, which are not currently listed as threatened, are also declining in abundance and range.

The Ability to View Species

To see some of our threatened flora and fauna may be a very difficult task. They may be cryptic, have close relatives which are much more abundant and difficult to differentiate from, be nocturnal, live in a fragile environment, or live in places that are remote or inaccessible to the tourist.

There may be some plant and animal communities which are so sensitive to disturbance, or their habitat so fragile, that any visitation constitutes a significant threat to their security and survival. Endangered plants existing at only one or two sites, for example, may be particularly vulnerable to imprudent collection if their precise locations were widely known. Birds of prey are also attractive to collectors and we have seen in other countries the necessity for elaborate protection measures to safeguard them when they are nesting.

There appears to be a growing demand for visits to islands where seabirds such as petrels and shearwaters are nesting. These birds nest in burrows in the ground and the burrowed soil is very fragile. They are also nocturnal and avoid strong torch light. Visitors could easily destroy the habitat or, if visiting during the bird's courtship or mating period, cause disruption to the breeding cycle.

Ecotourism and Species Today

The majority of today's ecotourists do not appear to seek out threatened species. The emphasis seems to be on visiting remote places, such as islands in the Pacific or the sub-Antarctic, places where a species is particularly abundant such as a bird breeding colony, or remote or natural ecosystems, rather than the species that occupy these systems and even less the threatened species that may be there. We can, however, look at existing ecotourism opportunities and consider the impacts and benefits of tourism.

Sutton (1992) found that some 44% of people wanting to visit Kapiti Island wished to see birds but fewer than one percent of the 4000 visitors who get to Kapiti Island each year actually seek to see any of the threatened species that are there (Peter Daniel pers. comm.). Up to ten percent of the 1200 visitors to Little Barrier Island each year wish to see threatened species (Chris Smuts-Kennedy pers. comm.). In these two locations the tourists are generally not considered to be detrimental to the species, provided they follow the rules. A few of those that do wish to see a threatened species have a prime object to simply record (tick) that they have seen the species rather than study, photograph or understand its place in the ecosystem and these people are recognised as being very determined and the most likely to break the rules. Organised tour parties are generally well controlled.

Gannets (Morus serrator) can be seen at both Cape Kidnappers and Muriwai Beach. At Cape Kidnappers tourists are not allowed access to the area until mid-October by which time most egg laying has been completed. After that time visitors are restricted to certain areas. The imposition of this restriction in 1967 allowed for significant increases in numbers of birds in the parts of the colony which were closed to tourists and demonstrated that such visitor control was necessary (Robertson in prep). There are no indications that these controls have diminished the visitor experience. At Muriwai no gannets nested successfully until visitor exclusion barriers, in the form of a three metre high fence, were erected, but now 300 000 to 450 000 people (Chris Howden pers. comm.) a year get excellent views of nesting gannets. Changes to the placement of fences may allow further expansion of this
colony as it is expected to expand at a rate of 2% per annum in keeping with other gannet colonies around New Zealand (Robertson in prep). A significant proportion of the visitors to this area are there for reasons other than nature tourism. Their visit, and their assimilation of the information available, therefore gets conservation information to a new group of people.

The royal albatross (*Diomedea epomophora sanfordi*) breeding colony at Taiaroa Head attracts some 40 000 tourists each year (Robertson in prep) and they are able to view nesting birds from a specially constructed observatory. While the total Taiaroa Head royal albatross population has been increasing since 1938 there are some areas of previously prime nesting habitat which have not been used for nesting or courting since tourism commenced in 1972. The rate of increase of royal albatross nesting within the area visible from the observatory has not increased at the same rate as in the area out of view, despite the presence of more than adequate nesting space. This can only be attributed to birds being disturbed by the sight or sound of humans during their courting and territory establishment period which may take up to five years and extends throughout the season while older birds are nesting (Robertson in prep).

Tourists are taken occasionally to see birds such as kokako (*Callaeas cinerea*) and kiwi (*Apteryx* spp.) which are attracted by tape-recorded song. These locations are not monitored and I am aware of two possible effects from over-use of this technique. The first is that the bird recognises the tape recording and does not react to it. The second is that the bird spends so much time reacting to the tape recording that its life-style is changed and it may fail to rear young.

Some 2000 people visit the Okarito white heron (*Egretta alba modesta*) colony each year as participants in guided tours. Access to this site is closely managed and the visitors enter a hide and view the birds from the hide without disturbing them in any way. This operation has no known detrimental impact on the birds and has also given the local community a considerable boost.

A more recent development has been the growth in whale watching tours at Kaikoura. The benefit of 40 000 visitors a year has boosted the town enormously (Mike Morrissey pers. comm.). Visitors and local residents alike now have a greater awareness of the need for marine conservation. In this environment it is difficult to assess whether the tour operations are having a detrimental impact on the whales so the concession rules err on the side of caution. If there is a detrimental impact then the first sign of it may be that there will be no whales to see.

The Future for Ecotourism and Species

There is little doubt that ecotourism will increase and with it the demand to observe native plants and animals. I believe there is considerable potential for the development of species-oriented ecotourism in New Zealand. Appropriate and sensitive development will do much to improve public awareness of, and support for, species conservation. It is vital, however, that ecotourism developments do not impart any detrimental impact on the species.

The most obvious needs, therefore, are tracks, walkways and observatories which will allow people to see species without harming the species or their habitats. Ideally, revenue from ecotourism would not just pay for the necessary visitor facilities, but also contribute to threatened species conservation programmes.

Revenue from species-oriented ecotourism should also cover the costs of monitoring. There is much to be learned about the impacts of ecotourism and the intensity of monitoring necessary to detect any induced changes. It is clear that appropriate long-term monitoring must be instituted in concert with any ecotourism programmes.

An alternative to allowing ecotourism in prime natural areas is to promote such activities in "restored" habitats such as Tiritiri Matangi Island Open Sanctuary, where there may be greater flexibility to accommodate the needs of ecotourists.

Appropriate ecotourism can play a vital role in promoting conservation awareness and can also contribute directly to the conservation of threatened species in New Zealand. If ecotourism and conservation can proceed into the future wisely and in concert I believe we will all benefit.
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NEW ZEALAND'S SUBANTARCTIC ISLANDS: 
A CASE STUDY IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF 
ECOTOURISM POLICY

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Abstract

Tourism on New Zealand’s subantarctic island nature reserves began in an ad hoc way in 1968 and since 1988 has developed into a significant use of some of New Zealand’s most fragile and isolated island ecosystems. By 1993 a total of 2850 people will have visited the islands on ship based tours.

The paper charts the rise of interest in ecotourism (which here is defined as wildlife based nature tourism) with a focus on environmental education on the subantarctic islands and the development of NZ Government policy and management guidelines in association with tourism operators to ensure that protection of the natural conservation values of the islands remain paramount.

Tourism operators have assisted with funding the management of potential tourism impacts on the islands (i.e. boardwalk construction, rodent contingency) and a visitor monitoring programme has been put in place to determine possible long term impacts and expectations of visitor use.

Introduction

New Zealand’s subantarctic islands nature reserves (The Snares, Campbell, Auckland, Bounty and Antipodes Islands) are New Zealand’s most remote and ecologically...
vulnerable reserves. (Figure 1)

They are significant island refuges for a range of plants and animals found nowhere else in the world and contain some of the world’s last remaining areas completely unmodified by human activity. They are also important breeding grounds for thousands of seabirds, penguins and marine mammals.

Because of this fascinating assemblage of wildlife, flora and geology and the potential vulnerability of these ecosystems the island’s have been given the highest form of statutory protection available in New Zealand, with their designation as National Nature Reserves under the Reserves Act 1977.

The key objective of management in terms of their legal status is quite clearly the protection in perpetuity of the natural ecological values of the islands. Other uses such as tourism can only be allowed provided that this primary objective of management is not jeopardised in any way.

Attractions for Ecotourism

The remoteness of these rugged windswept islands set amongst some of the wildest oceans in the world combined with superb wildlife viewing opportunities are key attractions for tourists seeking remote destinations with a focus on nature tourism.

Here on these five island groups are features such as:

New Zealand and the Subantarctic Islands

![Map of Subantarctic Islands]

[Map showing Chatham Is., Auckland Is., Campbell Is., Antipodes Is., and Bounty Is. with grid lines and scale in kilometers.]
The world's largest breeding populations of royal albatross on Campbell Island and wandering albatross and shy mollymawk on Auckland Islands.

One of the greatest diversity of penguin species in the world (four breeding species, two endemic, and ten visiting species).

The giant subantarctic megaherbs including the Pleurophyllum genus which is found nowhere else in the world.

The endemic Hookers sealion with its principal breeding ground at Auckland Islands.

Four endemic species of land birds.

The spectacular rata forests of Auckland Islands and the southernmost tree ferns in the world.

The Snares (328 ha) are estimated to have over six million breeding seabirds (comparable to the total number of seabirds around the entire British Isles).

20 species of birds and 200 species of plants.

The world's rarest commonor, duck and penguin species.

One of the world's largest rodent free islands (Adams Island).

A fascinating history of exploration, shipwrecks, sealing, whaling, farming and early scientific expeditions.

The features of New Zealand's subantarctic islands that justify their status as national nature reserves also make them some of the most desirable areas in New Zealand, and indeed internationally, for the development of wildlife based nature tourism. Unfortunately some of the areas considered most desirable by the ecotourist are also our most ecologically sensitive. The accidental introduction of a new plant or rodent species to these islands could have a devastating effect on the entire island ecosystem.

Development of Tourism

Landings and entry onto the islands are restricted in terms of the Reserves Act 1977. Tourism has been permitted however, on Auckland and Campbell Island Nature Reserves since 1967 and since 1984 has been formalised in the respective management plans on the condition it is strictly controlled and does not compromise in any way the primary management objective of the preservation and maintenance of the natural values of the islands. It is also recognised that well managed tourism can assist the ultimate protection of the islands in that tourists with a clear understanding of the values of the islands often become advocates for longer term conservation goals in terms of protection, especially with respect to southern ocean marine and wildlife conservation issues.

Indeed New Zealand’s first subantarctic ecotourist was probably the Governor of New Zealand, the Earl of Glasgow who in 1895 established the annual practice of Governors at that time, in taking their summer holiday aboard the ship “Hinemoa” that regularly serviced the shipwrecked sailor castaway depots on Auckland and Campbell Islands.

The first cruise ship to visit the islands purely for tourism purposes was the "Maggie Dan" in 1968 in connection with the development of the first tourist cruises to Antarctica.

The steady growth in Antarctic tourism set the scene for a number of continued visits by Linblad Travel ("Linblad Explorer") and Society Expeditions ("World Discoverer") between 1968 and 1987 (refer Table 1). Trips were infrequent with a maximum of two ship visits of up to 100 persons each in a summer season and then periods when there were no visits for up to four years (1974-1978). The Ports of Lyttelton and Bluff were used equally as gateway ports during this period, with the emphasis on expedition cruising stops enroute to and from the Ross Sea, Antarctica. Infrequent visits were also made by private yachts.

In December 1988 the first of the New Zealand based tourism operations focused exclusively on the attractions of the subantarctic islands began with the sail ship "Tradewinds". Discovery Charters South Seas marketed adventure type nature tourism opportunities for small groups of people (20 passengers max). By 1989/90 a further two New Zealand based operations, Southern Heritage Tours ("Acheron") and Pegasus Dive Charters ("Pegasus II"), were marketing subantarctic island nature tourism opportunities in addition to the international cruise ship operators.

Two tourism markets had clearly evolved at this stage. That of the "floating hotel" expedition cruise ship operation, the other being the lower cost adventure tour boat operation with small groups of people and principally New Zealand based. The large ships plus some of the New Zealand operations have a clear focus on environmental education to enhance visitor
experiences through use of guest lectures, guides and interpretation. By 1988 virtually all ships were using the Port of Bluff as gateway port due to their need for rapid turn around and the increased sea voyage to Lyttelton or Dunedin. Joint Antarctic/subantarctic expedition tourist cruises had also established a pattern of voyages, Bluff to Hobart and vice versa.

### TABLE 1
TOURIST VISITS TO NEW ZEALANDS SUBANTARCTIC ISLANDS
1967 - 1993

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cruise Season</th>
<th>No of Ship Visits</th>
<th>Passenger Nos</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<td>45</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>*500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>2850</td>
</tr>
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</table>

(* proposed 1992/93 cruise season)

Tourists From World Discoverer land on Enderby Island, Auckland Islands.

During the twenty year period 1968-1988, only 1300 tourists had actually visited the subantarctic island nature reserves and all the New Zealand Government reports expressed a favourable reaction to the level and type of tourism and the ability of the islands to withstand this level of tourism pressure. By comparison, in the period 1988 - 1993 there was a significant increase in tourism activity with a further 1550 tourists in only five years.

In 1988 the Department of Conservation received the first advance notice of the intentions of both Salen Linblad Cruising ("Frontier Spirit") and Society Expeditions ("World Discoverer") to operate a series of Antarctic and subantarctic island cruises over the 1990/91 summer season, in addition to the recently established New Zealand based cruise operations. A total of 16 applications for entry permits totalling 1500 passengers had been lodged by November 1989 for the 1990/91 summer cruise season.

This increase in tourism activity was brought about by a combination of factors:

- An increased public interest in remote and different tourism destinations, and in particular wildlife tourism, as a result of increased public exposure to the unique experiences available on the islands through television, magazine articles, publications and advertising by tour operators.

- A clear move by some of the international tour operators away from the rapidly increasing overcrowding occurring on the Antarctic Peninsula to even more remote and yet to be
discovered ecotourism destinations, that reflected their focus on a premium tourist experience.

- The fact that the New Zealand Government allowed closely controlled tourism on New Zealand's subantarctic islands for a longer time period than other Governments with jurisdiction over subantarctic islands (e.g. South Africa, France, Australia, Norway).

- The move by a growing number of international tour operators to focus on the specialist Antarctic/subantarctic tourism markets with more ships during the southern hemisphere summer cruising season.

- The fact that it is difficult for international operators to market Ross Sea Antarctic cruises without access to New Zealand's subantarctic islands due to the long sea passage from New Zealand to Antarctica, and the fact that on early season cruises access to the Ross Sea can be prevented by pack ice.

- International exposure given to New Zealand subantarctic islands by the International Ornithological Congress held in Christchurch in November 1990 and the subsequent IOC organised subantarctic cruises.

When written, the individual island management plans had not predicted such a dramatic increase in tourism activity. However, the Department had the rare opportunity of having a two year lead in, to plan and manage for the increase in tourism activity on the islands, with a twelve month period before entry permits had to be confirmed with the respective tour operators.

The challenge to the Department of Conservation as manager was to manage this increased demand, protecting the premium experience that these tourists were seeking and, most importantly of all, ensuring the longer term protection of the islands. It is important to recognise that the department was not developing the islands for tourism but responding to the sudden increase in demand for already existing and approved tourism operations.

Development of Tourism Policy and Visitor Guidelines

The current tourism policy, as outlined in the respective management plans, is provided in terms of the Reserves Act 1977 provision of "entry by permit only" to all nature reserves. It is:

“To permit visits to selected areas of the reserve by tourists but under such controls as deemed necessary to ensure protection of its natural features, ecosystems and cultural values." (Management Plan For Auckland Island Nature Reserve, 1987).

The Department's overriding philosophy in establishing policy and specific visitor guidelines in accordance with existing management plans was the ultimate vulnerability of these fragile island ecosystems and the fact that every single visitor, be they scientist, manager or tourist, puts the values of the islands at risk in some way (e.g. accidental weed or rodent introduction).

The key to establishing a working set of tourism guidelines emphasising the inherent protection of the islands was the production of a series of draft guidelines on which a wide range of opinions were sought. Essentially the first draft was based on a close scrutiny of the cruise boat operations existing within Galapagos Islands National Park, especially given their focus on island based wildlife tourism. Charles Darwin Research Centre were instrumental in recommending to us the strengths of the Ecuador Government tourism policy and some of the very real problems in managing island tourism from a Government agency perspective.

The development of the tourist policy and visitor guidelines were also discussed with:

- Tasmania Department of Parks, Wildlife and Heritage - to ensure that guidelines for both New Zealand and Australian subantarctic islands were compatible, as tour operators were regularly visiting both island groups on the one cruise.

- Existing Tour Operators - to ensure that the guidelines we were proposing were workable given the distinct difference in sizes and types of tour ship operations.

- Non-Government Organisations - Royal Forest and Bird Protection Society and Greenpeace.
DSIR Antarctic Division - in view of the strong links of subantarctic with Antarctic ship based tourism and the recent moves to regulate tourism through the Antarctic Treaty System.

The Department received positive feedback from the tour operators, who saw the desirability of guidelines that protect the very values and quality tourism experiences that they were promoting and marketing. This view has also been reinforced by the International Association of Antarctic Tour Operations (IAATO), which has been recently established to consolidate efforts to self-regulate the Antarctic tourism industry.

It became very clear that organised ship based visits are the most ecologically safe approach to tourism for such vulnerable island ecosystems given the key role of the New Zealand Government representative aboard each cruise ship and the ability to control groups of tourists in comparison to the effects of unlimited access by individuals.

Operational Tourism Policy

The management plans have been implemented by way of policy for all island groups which takes account of the increased tourism activity as follows:

• To allow tourism at designated visitor sites only on islands where some modification (e.g. rodents, introduced animals and plant species) had already occurred (e.g. mainland Auckland, Enderby and Campbell Islands). All other islands in pristine or near pristine condition remain strictly closed to entry (e.g. Adams, Snares, Antipodes, Disappointment and Rose Islands), although zodiac cruising is permitted around the islands.

• Visitor impact management criteria:
  - tourism must be ship based with no overnight stays on the islands
  - maximum ship size of 180 passengers
  - only one ship visit is permitted per visitor site per day
  - a maximum of 600 tourists per visitor site per cruise season
  - all tour operators comply with a 1:20 guiding ratio
  - construction of boardwalks wherever tourism impact was concentrated and keeping all tourists to defined tracks or flagged routes, where necessary, to avoid damage to soft peat soils.
  - no operator is granted exclusive access or use.

• The adoption of precautionary measures by each tour company for rodent and plant quarantine (e.g. rodent guards, ban on mooring lines).

• Special restrictions have been introduced on certain visitor sites which recognise the importance of these locations as breeding grounds to subantarctic wildlife species:
  - no landings are permitted on Bounty Islands during the New Zealand Fur Seal breeding period (November - February)
  - all tourists must stay clear of the actual beach area at Enderby Island when viewing Hookers Sealion during the breeding period (December - February).

• The provision of a New Zealand Government representative or Honorary Ranger as a condition of entry permit on all cruises with roles of:
  - Enforcement of animal and plant quarantine procedures
  - Compliance with Reserves Act, Nature Reserve Management Plans and Tourism Guidelines
  - Explanation of policy and management to visitor Visitor impact monitoring programme
  - Visitor education.

(N.B. This representative role is shared jointly between Department of Conservation and New Zealand Antarctica Programme for cruises involving both Ross Dependency, Antarctica and New Zealand's subantarctic islands).
Three distinct tourism opportunities were recognised: cruise ships; tour boats and private yachts (Table 2). Fees payable by the tour operator are levied to cover costs of providing for these tourism opportunities. A tour boat with only 10-15 passengers pays a minimum fee of $2,800 for numerous island visits while a large 160 passenger cruise ship pays approximately $21,000. In comparison the tour operators are charging between $2,900 per passenger for an 11 day subantarctic cruise right through to $30,000 per person for a Subantarctic/Antarctic cruise. The fees levied are per cruise and can include from 1-10 landings at designated visitor sites. These include New Zealand Government resource rental, the provision of the department’s Subantarctic Island Guidebook to each visitor and costs of rodent quarantine, visitor monitoring and construction of visitor impact facilities (e.g. boardwalks).

Each ship type creates a different potential impact. The large cruise ships tend to concentrate a large number of people (100 plus) on a relatively small area and a small number of visitor sites while tour boats often visit more sites with a smaller number of people but increase the risks of accidental plant or rodent introductions to a larger number of sites. Private yachts are potentially the most difficult tourist operation to regulate given the isolation of the islands and their ability to move easily between islands undetected.

A visitor monitoring programme is in place. It aims to:

- monitor physical impacts of tourism, and assess what pressure the islands can withstand in terms of tourism carrying capacity
- ascertain visitor expectations and visitor satisfaction with this type of tourist experience.

Visitor Guideline

The primary objective in establishing visitor guidelines was to maintain the islands in their natural state. A Minimum Impact Code was drawn up and the NZ Government representative plays a key role in ensuring that all tourism operators and visitors understand the reasons for the adoption of the code and comply with its principles (see Table 3).

Management of Tourism

In preparing for the increase in tourism to coincide with the 1990/91 cruise season the Department planned a number of developments aimed at reducing visitor impacts. These are indirectly funded by the tourism operators through the passenger fee. These included:

- Constructing a 3 kilometre board walk to allow tourists to view Royal Albatross on Campbell Island and shorter board walks at Auckland Island visitor sites to prevent damage to the fragile peat soils common on the islands. (A temporary flag system is used at those sites with no boardwalks to avoid damage to soil and vegetation).

- Rodent contingency planning to prevent the accidental introduction of
rodents with the purchase of a full rodent contingency kit, held in Invercargill. Regular rodent poisoning has also been carried out at Port Pegasus, Stewart Island where the smaller tour boats usually anchor before leaving for the subantarctic islands.

- Additional visitor sites at Lake Hinemoa and the Auckland Island fiords to reduce the impact on the two most popular visitor sites (Enderby and Campbell Island) with assistance by the Royal New Zealand Navy in carrying out additional hydrographic survey of the fiords.

- A visitor impact assessment project was initiated at Enderby Island using permanent photopoints and also at the Royal Albatross viewing area on Campbell Island where the albatross nests have been plotted in relation to the viewing area, for longer term monitoring.

- A Subantarctic Islands' Guidebook was produced, with an emphasis on interpretation information related to the designated visitor sites and expected code of conduct for tourists.

- Individual copies of New Zealand's Subantarctic Islands Minimum Impact Code are also given to each visitor.

### TABLE 3
NEW ZEALANDS SUBANTARCTIC ISLAND NATURE RESERVE VISITOR GUIDELINES
MINIMUM IMPACT CODE

- Animal and Plant Quarantine - All footwear and clothing is checked and cleaned before and following each separate island visit. All ships and gear checked for rodent quarantine.

- No disturbance or removal of any plant, animal or rock specimens.

- No collecting of any specimens or souvenirs is permitted (e.g. historic artefacts).

- No rubbish of any kind may be left on islands (e.g. film packages, tissues, orange peels).

- No avian food products are permitted ashore to reduce risk of spreading diseases to birds.

- Individual space of wildlife must be respected at all times
  - all animals have the right of way
  - visitors must get no closer than five metres to all wildlife
  - visitors must not surround or offer food to any animals
  - noise must be kept to a minimum particularly around nesting birds.

- Visitors to keep to formed tracks and boardwalks where provided to minimise damage to fragile peat soils and plants.

- No toilet facilities are provided on any island.

- No smoking is permitted ashore.

- Overnight visits are not permitted.

- A 500 metre distance is practised in terms of viewing whales.

Significantly the limits on cruise ship sizes (180 passengers) and the conservative limit of 600 visitors per cruise season have ensured a premium tourist experience that is, as far as we can determine, ultimately sustainable without longer term detrimental effect to the islands. The figure of 600 was chosen jointly with the Tasmanian Department of Parks, Wildlife and Heritage (McQuarrie Island) and remains in place until we can determine whether or not that limit needs to be raised or lowered in terms of our visitor impact monitoring programme.

In practice the tourism operators have worked extremely well with the Department in the implementation of both the adopted policy and the visitor guidelines. In part this is due to the early and regular consultation that the
Department has carried out with the respective operators. It also reflects the rather unique relationship that has been established in having a New Zealand Government representative accompany each tour visit. What has essentially developed is a large degree of interchange between the Department and the tourism operator and a similar philosophy regarding the protection of the resource by both parties. The provision of the New Zealand Government representative has also had direct conservation benefits in terms of additional conservation work that can be carried out accompanying each cruise, particularly in the area of species monitoring programmes.

The close working relationship established with the tour operators has also had benefits in terms of the transport assistance to scientific and management parties working in the subantarctic and the collection of ecological information on specific cruises (e.g. rockhopper penguin census, Auckland Islands and seabirds at sea inventory programme). This has been particularly beneficial to the Department given the isolation of the islands and the high inherent costs of transport in carrying out the Department’s management and scientific programmes at these locations.

**Roaring Forties Subantarctic Experience**

Given the increased national and international exposure the islands have been gaining, the Department gave additional priority to the vast majority of the public, who because of the high costs of subantarctic islands eco-tourism ($2300 for subantarctic islands only; up to $29,000 for Antarctica plus subantarctic islands), will never actually set foot on the islands. It is also recognised that the fragile nature of the islands means that the carrying capacity for tourism purposes will and should always be very limited.

With these factors in mind the department worked closely with the Southland Museum and Art Gallery and the New Zealand Tourism Department in promoting the concept of a Roaring Forties Subantarctic Experience within the newly constructed pyramid at Southland Museum in Invercargill. The key objective is to provide a subantarctic experience as close as possible to what one could gain from actually visiting the islands. A subantarctic audio visual has recently been completed, with the interpretation gallery to open in 1993 and a series of live plant and animal displays to be established in the immediately adjacent Queens Park.

This will be the only subantarctic island interpretation centre in the world. It is seen as a key additional attraction for cruise ships using the Port of Bluff in connection with subantarctic and Antarctic tourism as well as the general public. It is also recognised as being complimentary to the visitor experience and interpretation gained in the Antarctic Visitor Centre in Christchurch.

**The Future**

The value of long term monitoring of both visitor impacts and visitor satisfaction is crucial to the longer term future of subantarctic tourism because of the inherent difficulty in being able to properly manage tourism without knowing what sort of pressure that natural areas can sustain. For this reason alone the current policy reflects an initially conservative approach that is open to review if the monitoring programme identifies any need for change.

These exists now, and always will be, a close relationship between Antarctic and subantarctic tourism, due to a large number of tours visiting the islands enroute to Antarctica. For this reason subantarctic tourism guidelines need to be compatible with the Antarctic situation, as recognised in terms of the Antarctic Treaty System. New Zealand has had a significant advantage in this area by being able to closely control and monitor the level and type of tourism operations to date. The Antarctic Treaty consultative nations are now moving towards closer regulation of Antarctic tourism in terms of the Protocols on Environmental Protection adopted at Bonn in October 1991. Internationally subantarctic island management agencies should continue to follow these developments closely given the similarity of tourism operations, potential impacts and threats.

New developments in Antarctic tourism, such as the use of larger 400 passenger cruise ships and the operation of helicopters for sightseeing, are currently not permitted for New Zealand’s subantarctic island nature reserves but are increasing in Antarctica. Undoubtedly the responsibility for environmental impact assessments for new types of tourist opportunity such as these should lie with the respective tour operators.
Conclusion

Tourism presents special challenges to the management of New Zealand's subantarctic island nature reserves. In many ways the challenges that exist to management agencies in allowing tourism on the subantarctic islands are potentially greater than the problems of managing tourism in Antarctica, especially with regard to the risks of accidental introductions of rodents and new plant species and the fragile nature of the vegetation and peat soils found on the islands.

The Department has already erred on a conservative basis in establishing the current tourism policy and visitor guidelines principally because, as managers, it is difficult to set tourism limits on impact for which the results may not become evident for a ten to twenty year period (e.g. reduction in albatross breeding near tourist viewing areas).

While future levels of both subantarctic and Antarctic tourism are difficult to predict, the visitor monitoring programme aims to assess visitor satisfaction the potential impacts of tourism and as a result maintain a degree of flexibility in the Department's management of ecotourism opportunities on New Zealand's subantarctic islands.

While the primary objective in managing tourism has been the longer term protection of the islands, it also recognises the importance of protecting the very experience of remote nature tourism that the ecotourist is seeking, particularly when one looks to the current situation that now exists in two of the most important international ecotourism locations of the Antarctic peninsular and the Galapagos Islands where it is increasingly difficult to visit these two locations without seeing other ship based tour parties seeking the same tourism experience.

The close inter-relationships of ship based tourism in the southern ocean (Antarctica and subantarctic islands) point to a continuing need for close consultation between respective tour operators, IAATO, Antarctic Treaty Consultative members, and other National agencies with management responsibilities for subantarctic islands.

References


Operating Within Natural, Policy and Legal Environments

Vili A. Fuavao
Director
South Pacific Regional Environment Programme
Apia, Western Samoa

Thank you for the opportunity to learn from you, as well as sharing with you some of my views on the topic, "Operating Within Natural, Policy and Legal Environments".

My comments and remarks will be confined to what I perceive as the constraints to and assistance needed for ecotourism - whatever "ecotourism" means - from these factors. It will not be comprehensive, but I hope it will generate further discussion.

Tourism in general, in the view of the small countries in the Pacific, means foreign exchange, employment and development. The countries of the region are sparing no effort to attract tourist dollars, and have set out to develop tourism industries with vigour and conviction. Some countries in the Pacific claim success with their tourism industries, becoming their largest earner of foreign exchange - others have had modest success, while others have had little. Tourism and its promotion goes on.

I am not here to insinuate that the Pacific countries should not develop tourism. Rather, I hope our discussion and sharing will indicate the forms of tourism development that are suitable and appropriate for the region. The Pacific is diverse, with many competing and some conflicting needs. The kind of development appropriate for Tuvalu and Marshall Islands may not be appropriate for Tonga and Solomon Islands. So in my view, a clear definition of what this fancy title "Ecotourism" stands for is needed, particularly in relation to tourism per se.

The definition must also be considered in the context of the characteristics of Pacific thinking. It is only through clear understanding of this thinking that appropriate "ecotourism" plans can be formulated for the South Pacific.

I recently visited Niue for three days. It was heartening to visit development sites and discuss future plans for the tourism industry in Niue. The philosophy behind them was "to fit these developments into the natural surroundings, rather than the other way round". It convinced me also that the development plan for Niue is specifically for Niue, and so may not work, in its entirety, in other similar sized countries in the region. Each country needs its own national tourism plan.

Mr Chairman, tourism (regardless of whether it is "Ecotourism" or "Natural Tourism") is a form of economic development. It is, therefore, no different to any other development program. So, if it is to be sustainable, it must include environmental concerns and considerations. This is especially true in the South Pacific where the infrastructure to support a tourism industry is not as well developed as in other parts of the world and, more importantly, the natural resources needed to support it are very limited. These resources include clear water supply and land.

The Setting

The South Pacific region can be characterized as islands and groups of islands sharing a common thread of evolutionary and human history. This region is unique, not because its geographical, biological, zoological and economic characteristics are found nowhere else in the world, but because of the unique combination of these characteristics. The South Pacific has small land masses dispersed over much of the world's largest ocean, a high
degree of ecosystem and species diversity; an extraordinary level of endemicty; a high degree of economic and cultural dependence on the natural environment; vulnerability to a wide range of natural disasters; a diversity of cultures and languages, traditional practices and customs which are central to the special and close relationship of Pacific peoples with their environment.

Let me be more specific about the features and aspirations of the region, as only through understanding these can we discuss the suitability, constraints and affordability of "Ecotourism".

1. Pacific Islanders share a common aspiration for economic development and improved living standard for their people. For thousands of years they lived a relatively sustainable way of life in the island environments at a low level of material well-being - a level which they no longer consider adequate. The Pacific islanders are very committed to maintaining the harmony which characterises Pacific island peoples' relationship with their environment. They do not want the pursuit of material benefits to undermine their cultural systems and values, nor to cause any permanent harm to the land and marine resources which allowed them to sustain island life for many centuries.

2. Traditional knowledge and practices have major relevance for environmental protection and sustainable economic development. Land tenure systems vary throughout the region, but are commonly based on patterns of communal land ownership. In some countries, negotiations on land use, such as the harvest or conservation of forest, are not undertaken by national or provincial governments, but directly between the proponents of a venture and the custom landowners.

The degree of on-site environment and policy control which government agencies have been able to exert has, in practice and in reality, been quite restricted. This sensitive and difficult issues has established criteria or policies which are difficult to enforce, and in some cases, exposed landowners to exploitation.

3. With the exception of Papua New Guinea, the region has very limited base for natural resources. For example, land and water resources are quite limited on most atolls in the Pacific. The the region's population growth rate is high at well over 2 percent per annum, with some countries over 3 percent, even reaching 5 percent in Wallis and Futuna. Population can, therefore, be expected to at least double over the next 20 years. In pursuing economic development, foreign exchange and better living standards - which I believe are quite justifiable - the limited natural resources we have are coming under more stress. So, it is crucial that a systemic approach to all development, including "Ecotourism", be developed and enforced. This approach should assess many factors, including the ability of the resource base to support the proposed industry. We have all been tourists at some time in our lives - so know how resources are being used. In the Pacific where the weather is hot and humid, tourists can take 3-4 showers a day.

4. From experience, it is appropriate to say that long-term environmental concerns are rarely given the consideration vital to the sustainable development planning process. For example, Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) procedures are still considered, by some administrations, to be unnecessary or only grudgingly initiated when sufficient pressure is applied. EIA, unlike economic, financial and legal assessments, has yet to be used routinely to appraise cabinet submissions or proposals for development projects.

5. The likelihood of sea level rise is a major consideration for any development planning or projects on Pacific atolls and low-lying islands. A particularly serious effect of rising sea level is the likely salination of freshwater lenses underlying the atolls. Tied to the concerns for physical and social well-being are fears of serious economic
consequences - foreign sources of physical and social well-being are fears of serious economic consequences - foreign sources of risk capital are not expected to make long-term investments in low-lying areas of the region.

6. Generally, there is a lack of appropriate infrastructure such as adequate sanitation systems for disposing of or treating sewage wastes. This constraint must be considered in the planning stage of any development, including "Ecotourism".

7. The public and the government should be aware of the difficulties and likely benefits of tourism based on sustainable development and ecological conservation. It is only through awareness that an appropriate policy and approach can be formulated to deal with this issue. It is important to realise that not all "Ecotourism" projects are sustainable and environmentally friendly.

8. Generally, there is either little legislation or excessive legislation existing in small countries to deal with development as a whole, let alone "Ecotourism". Existing legislation is usually unenforceable, particularly where it ignores or conflicts with the national culture. Lack of guidelines, legislation and policy directive are quite common throughout the Pacific countries.

There is no doubt I have missed some constraints for and benefits from "Ecotourism". I hope though that I have given enough food for thought to encourage discussions - after all, I am also here with you to learn what "Ecotourism" is all about.

Let me conclude by briefly discussing the views and role of the South Pacific Regional Environment Program (SPREP) in "Ecotourism".

SPREP has 22 member countries and territories in the region - in an area that covers about 30 million km².

SPREP recognises the global movement toward sustainable development and the lack of guidelines linking development and conservation. This was further emphasised at the Rio Summit. As part of SPREP's effort to make sustainable development a reality in the Pacific, SPREP, with assistance of the Asian Development Bank, UNDP and AIDAB, "jumped the gun" at the beginning of 1990 and invested substantial resources to help Pacific Island countries prepare their National Environment Management Strategies (NEMS). Participating countries include Palau, Solomon Islands, FSM, Marshall Islands, Tonga, Western Samoa, Kiribati, Tuvalu, Nauru, Vanuatu, Niue and Tokelau. SPREP endeavours to secure resources to extend this service to those countries currently not covered under NEMS projects.

The NEMS are prepared by a national Task Force formed by the Heads of various Departments of the Government. The NEMS is a policy document combining development and conservation, of which tourism is one part. SPREP is also looking to use the NEMS, after they have been appraised and endorsed by the governments, as the basis for its assistance to member governments. We are committed to implement these and Agenda 21 of the Rio Summit, hand in hand with our partners such as NGOs and other regional institutions, and the respective member governments.
THE ROLE AND ACTIVITIES OF THE TOURISM COUNCIL OF THE SOUTH PACIFIC, PARTICULARLY IN RELATION TO ECOTOURISM DEVELOPMENT

Donald Kudu
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Suva, Fiji

Abstract

The Tourism Council of the South Pacific (TCSP) over the past six years has developed from a loosely knitted voluntary organisation into an independent regional inter-governmental organisation with a well established permanent and functional Secretariat. It has developed a comprehensive and wide ranging work programme which is well known amongst its thirteen regional members. This paper reveals in summary form, the depth of the activities TCSP has been involved in and which set a solid foundation for further regional development and cooperation amongst Pacific islands. TCSP's role in cultural and environmental protection, which is the base for ecotourism development in the region, is also highlighted.

Introduction

We have heard some very interesting presentations and discussions on ecotourism development, the topic of central focus to this conference. And it is indeed a topic which I think is fundamental to the small Pacific Island Government in trying to promote tourism as a means of achieving developmental goals.

I use the general Development goals, rather than specific Economic Development goals, because our approach must deal with a number of broad development objectives of an economic, social, environmental and cultural nature involving both growth and distribution of growth.

My topic is on the Role and Activities of TCSP in this area of development. From its inception and through its transformation into an inter-governmental organisation, the fundamental purpose for which the Council was established has been to foster regional co-operation in tourism and to enhance the contribution of tourism to economic and social development of the member countries.

First of all I would like to give you some broad dimensions of regional tourism. For purposes of my presentation the term South Pacific means the region covered by the TCSP countries while the term tourism refers to international or foreign tourism movements to and within the TCSP countries. Domestic tourism in the South Pacific has not yet been quantified, but from experience it is known that in virtually all TCSP countries it is insignificant.

With 621,000 tourist arrivals in 1991, the South Pacific claimed a negligible proportion of 0.14% of the total of 450 million tourist arrivals in the world, as recorded by the World Tourist Organization (WTO). Within a more narrow geographical zone, the TCSP countries' share of international tourism in the East Asia and Pacific Region, as defined by WTO, was only 1.2%.

After three years of continuous growth from 1988 to 1990, at an average annual rate of 6.5%, tourist arrivals in the TCSP region recorded a drop by 4.7% in 1991 to 621,000 from 657,000 in the previous year. I shall not try to bore you with statistics as these are readily available.

Perhaps I should continue with the roles of this established regional body.

As stated in its corporate plan, TCSP has several roles. First, a leadership role, to
formulate policies and strategies for the growth and development of tourism in the region, and to guide and co-ordinate the collective efforts of its members. Secondly, an advisory role, to advise and assist member countries in the development and promotion of tourism to their countries. Thirdly, a representational role to advance common tourist interests of members and the region with governments and regional as well as international organisations, and this includes securing technical and development assistance for its activities and for the region as a whole.

The Work Programme of the TCSP, made possible, first of all through financial assistance from the European Community under the Pacific Regional Tourism Development Programme, is well known for its comprehensiveness and wide ranging scope.

On the administrative and organisational side, TCSP has developed from a loosely knitted voluntary organisation into an independent regional inter-governmental organisation with a well established, permanent and functional Secretariat.

The main functions of the TCSP can be divided into four broad areas of activities, namely:

- Tourism Planning and Development,
- Tourism Marketing and Promotion,
- Tourism Research and Statistics, and
- Tourism Education and Training.

Before going into details with the main subject area of this session - ECOTOURISM DEVELOPMENT - I shall briefly outline the principal activities and achievements under each of these broad areas.

**Activities and Achievements**

**Tourism Planning and Development**

Our Tourism Planning and Development activities have focused partly on the tourism planning exercise and the development of planning guidelines and instruments, partly on the development of the broad tourism product through practical assistance to member countries.

Within the first category of assignments, we have provided technical assistance to the Solomon Islands, Western Samoa, and Tuvalu, for the preparation of comprehensive 10-year national tourism development and the protection of the natural environment.

With a view to increasing the economic linkages between tourism and other sectors of the local economy in member countries, a series of economic linkages pilot projects have been or are in the process of being completed. To supplement this scheme and to broaden the tourist product base of member countries, a series of tourism product development projects are under implementation including the construction of a cultural centre in the Solomon Islands, restoration of World War II defence guns in Kiribati and the development of a historical hill fortification in Fiji.

In addition, as the traditional cultural patterns, together with the rich natural environment, of the South Pacific contribute significantly to the region's attractiveness as a tourist destination, TCSP has prepared a review of existing museums and cultural centres in the South Pacific and made recommendations as to their further development.

**Tourism Marketing and Promotion**

Within Tourism Marketing and Promotion, TCSP has since 1988 co-ordinated the region's participation at major international travel and trade fairs in London, Berlin, Las Vegas, Sydney and Melbourne within the concept of the "South Pacific Village". Recently this promotional effort has been expanded by combining the trade fair participation with a series of travel trade seminars and road shows. The TCSP Secretariat has also prepared regional promotional tools comprising a series of special interest brochures on diving, game fishing, nature and adventure tourism, a series of four posters and a tourist map folder covering the member countries. The promotion materials have been published in several international languages such as English, German and French, and have been distributed widely to the tour wholesaler and retail sales markets in Europe, North America, Australia, and New Zealand.

Further, TCSP's fifth annual edition of its regional South Pacific Islands Travel Manual will be published this month. This perhaps most effective regional promotional tool is being printed in 40,000 copies and similarly distributed to the travel industry worldwide.
In 1989, TCSP established marketing representations in London and Munich with the main objective to strengthen our marketing efforts in the European market.

Based on TCSP's Regional Marketing Strategy Plan and in line with TCSP's endeavour to increase awareness of the region, the Secretariat has also produced 10 half-hour documentary country films, a one-hour regional documentary film and a 12-minute tourist promotional film. The films have been produced in several different languages including English, German, French, and Japanese, for television screening and other non-theatric distribution.

Further, TCSP has completed its Regional Marketing Strategy Plan and has also provided technical assistance to PNG for the preparation of a national marketing plan, including a short to medium term promotion programme.

Tourism Research and Statistics

Within Tourism Research and Statistics, TCSP has continuously strived towards standardisation of regular and up-to-date tourism statistics in the region. The Regional Conference on Tourism Statistics held at the beginning of 1988 was a major breakthrough in this connection with the agreement amongst participating countries to introduce standardised visitor arrival cards now implemented in 9 member countries. In addition, TCSP has provided guidelines for the compilation of arrival statistics as well as tourist accommodation statistics, and has set up a computerised regional tourism database.

On the research side, TCSP has conducted first-time-ever research in six member countries of the visitor profile, travel behaviour patterns, visitor attitudes and expenditure operation with the Statistics Office in Vanuatu, launched a survey of cruiseship passengers.

Tourism economic impact studies have been undertaken in Tonga and Vanuatu, in the latter case by using a modified input-output computer model. Data collection for a similar survey in Fiji is being conducted. In addition, TCSP is currently undertaking a survey of information technology applications in tourism.

The Secretariat has also conducted tourism research outside the region, in the source markets. First, a tourism travel trade study has been conducted in the West Coast States of the USA and Canada and, secondly, a comprehensive market research study completed in Western Europe. Thirdly, a travel trade perception study was done in Japan.

Tourism Education and Training

Within Tourism Education and Training, TCSP has not only developed a hotel catering and services package delivered by its own four-person regional training team, covering the four main areas of hotel operations, namely food and beverage, kitchen, front office, and housekeeping services, but has also developed its own training materials, specifically to suite the needs of the region. The training package covers the basic, intermediate, and supervisory skill levels and have been developed according to the principle of "training the trainers". TCSP has also developed a manual and is conducting training seminars in member countries on Training Techniques. Further, it has produced four training videos covering the topics of food handling, food and beverage services, front office operations, and housekeeping operations. The training videos have been distributed to individual hotels and main restaurants throughout the region. The videos, produced first in the English language, will subsequently be translated into the indigenous languages of member countries.

The Secretariat is similarly delivering regular training in tour operation and tour guiding at both the regional and national levels and is periodically conducting other specific training seminars to suite the needs of the national tourism organisations, the private travel sector and other government departments. Amongst other things, these training seminars cover tourism awareness, information services, strategic marketing, participation in travel fairs and tourism statistics.

In addition, TCSP has in co-operation with the University of the South Pacific established a university level tourism studies programme. The programme will eventually cover short tourism courses, certificate and post graduate diploma studies as well as a research programme leading to a Masters Degree.

Other training and educational activities include the establishment of a regional tourism resource centre at the TCSP office as well as national tourism training resource centres in each of the eight ACP member countries. Within tourism awareness we have developed an awareness poster and a tourism awareness...
manual for national tourism organisations and is currently in the process of producing a series of four awareness posters and an awareness video, all produced in the indigenous languages of our member countries.

TCSP's Role in Cultural and Environmental Protection

The goal of TCSP's role is to foster a type of tourism which on the one hand brings maximum economic benefits to the region and at the same time minimises potential adverse social, cultural, and environmental effects.

If we look at the pleasure travel market for the South Pacific in terms of primary travel interests and activities, we distinguish a number of broad sub-segments of general and special interest travel. Naturally, the tourists' interest and activities reflect their purpose of travel and also provide an insight into their travel motivations. Corresponding to these are a series of tourist products offered by South Pacific islands.

This pleasure tourists come to South Pacific island for the following main type of holidays: beach-based holidays, family holidays, honeymoon travel, inter-island pleasure cruises, touring and sightseeing, diving, sport fishing, adventure tours, nature tours, culture tours, expedition/exploration cruises.

Why does TCSP's planning and development component contain a scheme for the protection for the natural environment and a scheme for the preservation of traditional cultural patterns? Quite simply, because tourism to the South Pacific is founded on the two pillars of a magnificent natural environment and unique cultural patterns.

This statement has been clearly verified in TCSP's series of visitor surveys in member countries where departing tourists, among other things, are asked to list the principal attractions of the host country and the tourist attractions that they have visited. Thus, the surveys undertaken in seven countries show that between 50-80 percent of all tourists mention the natural environment as one of the principal attractions of the host country. Not surprisingly Papua New Guinea tops the list with almost 80 percent of the visitors listing the natural environment as a principal attraction. But also in the Cook Islands, it is noteworthy that 63 percent of all tourists mention the natural scenery as a main attraction of the country.

Also folklore/culture is frequently mentioned as a principal attraction and again, PNG tops the list with 48 percent of all visitors and as much as 69 percent of the pure holiday visitors mentioning folklore/culture as a main attraction. Further, our recent survey in the Solomon Islands showed that as many as 56 percent of all visitors to the Solomon visited the National Museum. In fact the survey showed that the museum is the most visited tourist attraction of the country followed by another museum, the Vila War Museum, visited by 43 percent of all visitors to the country. In addition, most if not all governments in their national development planning clearly state that any development of tourism and in general shall take place in consideration of conservation of their natural and cultural environment.

Due to the importance of the natural environment as highly regarded tourist attractions of the South Pacific, TCSP has a keen interest in the protection and preservation of the natural environment.

Since the interception of the EC funded PRTDP project, TCSP has been involved in assignments related to the natural environment and its protection. In 1987 the Secretariat published the report on "Nature Legislation and Nature Conservation as a Part of Tourism Development in the Island Pacific". This report was followed up by "Guidelines for the Integration of Tourism Development and Environmental Protection in the South Pacific", which was published by the Secretariat in February, 1990.

In addition, the protection of the natural environment plays an important role within TCSP's tourism economic linkages pilot projects and regional tourism product development schemes, in particular with regard to the Solomon Islands nature sites project which comprises the development of three nature sites, i.e. Savo Island, Lauvi Lagoon, and Vihona Falls, into tourist attractions.

The recently published "Guidelines for the Integration of Tourism Development and Environmental Protection in the South Pacific" contains a large number of recommendations, among other things, regarding environmental legislation, including legislation guidelines to be incorporated into new legislation or regulations produced under existing statutes, guidelines for protection of the natural environment specifically directed towards tourism operators and NTOs, environmental impact assessment.
(EIA), development of tourism in protected area, physical, biological, and social/cultural carrying capacities, as well as recommendations regarding the production of education and information materials.

The Secretariat is currently producing a series of four regional education and information brochures on nature related subjects as recommended in the "Guidelines", i.e. coral reefs, forests, flora and fauna.

There is a need to follow-up amongst member countries on the other recommendations made in the guidelines report, in particular related to the environmental legislation, the establishment of protected areas and development of tourism in protected areas, and perhaps more importantly, how TCSP can assist member countries in further implementation of the recommendations with the objective to enhance the tourist utilisation and enjoyment of the South Pacific's outstanding resources of rainforest, reef, lagoon, flora and fauna, and in this way assist in the protection and conservation of these resources. This is where Ecotourism Development comes in.

In addition, the TCSP is cognizant about the problems in getting communal landowners convinced that their land often serves better unexploited than exploited, in particular as the latter often provide the landowners with immediate and visible economic benefits. This is one of the central issues in ecotourism project design.

As a consequence of the difficulties generally being encountered in establishing protected areas on communal land, it has become widely appreciated that tourism has a major role to play in the development, with the potential of considerable economic benefits to the landowners.

Thus, there is a need to not only identifying the problems being encountered in member countries in respect of establishing tourism generated protected areas, but also to emphasise to member countries the socio-economic benefits which can accrue at the village community level.

Development Problems and Opportunities

To conclude, I wish to address briefly some of the problems that must be effectively looked into in order for ecotourism to flourish and sustain. Throughout the South Pacific, whilst the natural resources are here, the same link between conservation and tourism has not yet been well defined or marketed. It means that the potential for establishing protected areas as tourist attractions has not been realised.

Protected areas can be National Parks, Wildlife Reserves, Forests Parks, Scenic Reserves, Historical Sites, etc. which are abundant in some islands than others. It is found that not many protected areas have actually been established and very few areas have been established as protected areas with the prime aim of attracting tourism. Reasons are numerous, but perhaps the most common one is that there does not seem to be a need by the residents of the area, and when this perception is coupled by the problem of land tenure - you are not going very far.

Other problems encountered in developing nature areas as tourist attractions are remoteness, incompatibility of tourism and protected areas goals, lack of coordination between conservation departments and tourism department, and lack of communication with landowners who are not informed and because of this, block proposal.

TCSP has been involved in developing nature sites in the Solomon Islands for the past couple of years. The important aspect of management is that the project area should be declared a wildlife management area with management vested in the custom owners with advise from the Ministry responsible for Wildlife. The whole project needs to be managed by local landowners so that it is not seen as an alien imposition.

The fact that most Pacific Islands are relatively late entry into the ecotourism can be turned into a major long term advantage. By adopting a planned and controlled development approach, Pacific Islands, by and large, are still in a position to expand their tourism sectors in a way which emphasises environmental conservation and cultural preservation and enhances the quality of the overall tourist experience. This will, no doubt gain community support, but also contribute towards improving the standard of living and quality of life of their people.
Table 1. TOURIST ARRIVALS IN TCSP COUNTRIES, 1985-1991

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Sources: National Statistics Offices
## Table 2. TOURIST ARRIVALS IN TCSP COUNTRIES BY MAJOR MARKETS, 1991

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Sources: National Statistics Offices

Notes: [a] included under Other Europe  [b] included under Other Asia  [c] included under Other Countries
INVESTMENT AND ECOTOURISM

Albert Stafford
Manager Planning, Policy and Investment
New Zealand Tourism Board
Wellington, New Zealand

Where Does Ecotourism Fit In?

Let me start by saying that all tourism must be ecotourism if it is to be sustainable. All tourism involves an interaction between visitors, and the environment, communities, cultures and traditions of the host nation. To be sustainable, the interaction has to be positive. This approach is recognised in New Zealand's strategic plan for tourism to the year 2000.

The growing interest in the environment, in cross-cultural experience and interaction with local people and customs, and the move to more independent as opposed to group travel are global trends that we must respect and accommodate.

New Zealand's natural environment is one of our greatest assets. For this reason, the Board accepts the principles of sustainable management and environmentally sensitive development.

Ecotourism

I realise that there are many diverse opinions as to what ecotourism embraces and who are the ecotourists.

In a specific sense "ecotourism" is used to describe the recent upsurge of interest in adventure, natural and cultural tourism. The key is interaction with the environment, in activity or learning rather than passive viewing.

In a broad sense we could say any nature and culture-based tourism is ecotourism, particularly tourism in national parks and other protected areas. This broad definition would include almost all New Zealand tourism, which is historically based on natural scenic wonders in remote areas - geysers, Maori culture, great lakes, fjords, glaciers and alpine splendour.

A third view requires that ecotourism be environmentally and culturally responsible. New Zealand's new Resource Management Act establishes this requirement as the prime consideration governing development activity.

Environmental responsibility simply makes good business and investment sense whether the operation is a major resort or a guided exploration of a delicate cave system.

There's a growing market demand for ecotourism, a wide range of opportunities for it in New Zealand, and it follows that ecotourism must be placed high on the agenda of potential investors in tourism development.

Who Will Fund Ecotourism?

- revenue potential to the Department of Conservation (DoC) through activity concessions granted on the conservation estate, leases for accommodation facilities and transport operations;
- probably will be self funded, i.e. pure commercial operations providing consumers see value and are prepared to pay for the experience.
Overseas Examples of Ecotourism:

- Trekking through the Baliem Valley in Central Irian Jaya, comprising: guided walks and interpretative comment on local custom, protocol and history; staying at various villages with individual uniqueness; experiencing ancient culture, unique fauna, flora and animal life including exotic birdlife, pythons and fresh water sharks. In essence, a composite tourism experience which ensures physical, social and economic interaction.

- Exploring the ruins of ancient Portuguese fortresses in the Bands Islands, (the old spice islands famous for their nutmeg and mace):

- Observing the sealife on the reefs surrounding Truk, Palan and Saipan, in the Mariana Islands, or snorkelling over the wrecks of old ships. Once again, the interaction of naturel and man made offerings giving a composite attraction which reflects the uniqueness of the destination.

It is the aspect of uniqueness which each destination must strive to define: to differentiate itself from others, to create a "must see" experience. In many respects New Zealand provides the international visitor with a variety of scenic diversity, from rugged alpine regions to sub-tropical rainforest. But establishing a sense of our uniqueness can be difficult when the whole country is perceived simply as offering a picturesque landscape.

New Zealand has the benefit of a rich, unique culture in Maoridom.

Our other resource is the rich diversity of our regions. Our regions offer excellent opportunities for ecotourism development and investment built around

- unique fauna and flora
- cultural differentiation created by tribal uniqueness
- interaction of man with environment
- and the heritage interest generated through activities such as gold mining, gum digging, forestry.

Ecotourism opportunities need not be only small scale, though the quality of the experience is often enhanced by the intimacy of a small group rather than larger tour parties.

Trends

Through ecotourism developments in many countries over the last 5-10 years one of the key words which is now often heard is sustainability; sustainable development.

An equilibrium has to be found between allowing interaction with the environment and protecting the very assets tourists have often travelled thousands of kilometres to see. Expectations must be met. The most effective form of promotion is a satisfied customer relaying positive word of mouth comment to family and friends.

Unfortunately, in a number of instances the most effective mechanism for controlling or managing visitor flows is the pricing mechanism, though many resent the inequalities which this can create. Nevertheless, the management and sustainability of the natural and cultural assets we have is the skill we now need to effectively master.

There is a growing trend in interest and concern over the environment and a desire to visit unique areas in order to understand and view them as part of this heightened awareness. Undoubtedly, there is also a degree of brag value about visiting exotic locations, especially where this is now associated with undertaking ecotourism experience.

As more and more tourists wish to view and visit areas of environmental or cultural uniqueness, so the pressures of coping with the influx of people occurs. However, much of the research on the environmental impacts of tourism is fairly recent and has been limited to after-the-fact analysis. As such it has methodological shortcomings including:

- the difficulty of distinguishing between changes induced by tourism and those induced by other activities;
- the lack of information concerning conditions prior to the advent of tourism and the lack of a baseline against which change can be measured;
- the paucity of information on the number, types and tolerance levels of
different species of flora and fauna.

- the concentration of researchers upon particular primary resources such as beaches and mountains, which are ecologically sensitive.

These problems should be borne in mind when the results of research are examined.

Tourism is too easily apportioned responsibility of a multitude of negative impacts when causal linkages are still highly questionable. The value of ecotourism is often simply quantified in number of visitors and/or the level of income derived from specific activities. These established values attract investment. But we need more comprehensive and effective research and analysis before costs, benefits, impacts, profitability and sustainability can be accurately determined.

Tourism and the Natural Environment

The natural environment has provided a sound base for New Zealand's tourism development. Complementary natural attractions are highly desirable even if the area has a unique culture or interesting history. The combination of natural attractions, historic artifacts, unique cultural experience and an appropriate style of accommodation and service is the elusive blend of experience that will draw visitors and investors. But there is no reason why the blend must be achieved at the expense of any one of these essential ingredients.

Tourism can provide the incentive to restore or preserve historically significant attractions and provide for the conservation of natural resources. In many countries it also provides the economic means by which this can be achieved. This is a significant benefit of tourism.

The potential for tourism has provided the justification in many parts of the world for the preservation of large areas of ecologically significant land. Equally, the protection of vitally important natural resources enhances and sustains tourism.

Participants in the tourism industry in New Zealand must have the same level of interest in environmental preservation as organisations specifically dedicated to this cause. Ecotourism activities can complement the operations of hotels and tours and provide opportunities for people to enjoy our natural environment when, on their own, they may not generate sufficient interest or profits to be viable.

The environment is a cornerstone of our tourism industry and the preservation of prime natural attractions is a sound investment that also preserves the economic viability of tourism.

Type of Investment

Investment associated with ecotourism is likely to range from small scale privately owned operations providing ecotourism activities to larger investments in accommodation associated with ecotourism activities.

On the larger scale, we see investment in specialist ecotourism operations such as Kaikoura whale watching, the Antarctic Centre in Christchurch and the Royal Albatross Centre in Dunedin.

One would expect a number of the small scale operations will expand over time and require additional capital as ecotourism becomes an attraction for increased levels of international and domestic tourists.

The large accommodation based ventures are the most likely type of development to attract foreign investment. Two examples of this type of development could be:

- a small to medium sized hotel development located close to the boundary of the conservation estate;
- or a lodge or activity/special interest based resort located within the conservation estate.

In addition to guided touring in the conservation estate, we see opportunities for soft activities on the periphery - such as golf and horse trekking in the surrounding areas. More energetic activities such as mountain biking could be made available in designated areas.

A further type of development is high quality base amenities at the entrances to national parks. These could typically include general park conservation information, interpretation centres, parking, camping facilities, good quality toilets and food and beverages facilities, and retailing including souvenirs, art galleries and bookshops.

These facilities can be tastefully designed to
blend into the natural environment and would be used by domestic and international visitors alike.

Quality base facilities will increase the appeal to visitors wishing to make day visits into the parks and allow an ecotourism component to be more easily included in visitor itineraries. These visitors could be charged a park day rate providing revenue for DoC, supplementing concession revenue received from the licensed providers of amenities and services.

Short day walks could be of an interpretive nature with guides informing people of unique local vegetation or interesting cultural and heritage aspects of the area.

The development of day trip facilities will increase the appeal and tourist awareness of our conservation estate. It enables a quality ecotourism experience to be gained by visitors with a preference for softer adventure activity and who maybe lack the confidence, endurance, or time to undertake a 3-4 day tramp. They could gain a taste of the experience and be encouraged to make a more adventurous repeat visit.

There is potential for the expansion of specially designated mountain biking areas with appropriate signs and tracks combined with nearby bike rental facilities. A logical location of these is within close proximity to skifield infrastructure as they are complementary activities. Mountain biking would provide a suitable alternative activity should the skifield be closed and expand the year-round utility of developed facilities which currently enjoy extremely seasonal use.

This is one of the ways in which the profitability of existing enterprises can be increased to contribute the revenue required for the environmental management of the natural resources being utilised, as well as the required return on investment.

Location

The location for developments that are of considerable size, such as new accommodation facilities, is likely to be initially close to the traditional tourist main trunk route in New Zealand.

Significant greenfields development would need to be located close to the ecotourism activities that the anticipated guests would utilise. But they must also be located reasonably close to other tourism infrastructure. This is because the established infrastructure includes other attractions, transport and accommodation to provide a ready market and an established flow of tourists, reducing the market risk of the investment. In addition, the presence of existing roading and nearby utilities will help to reduce the cost of establishing the development.

Reasonable proximity to an airport offering ease of access for people to reach the facility may also be necessary to enable the level of usage required to support major investments.

Operators of major new ecotourism activities need to develop linkages and networks with established accommodation and transport operators to increase their marketing effectiveness.

Once we have seen further growth in the industry along the existing tourism axis in New Zealand, we are likely to see demand for the development of more large scale accommodation facilities associated with ecotourism in outlying regions.

However, a more immediate opportunity exists in these areas to increase the level of home and farm stay facilities. This is a relatively inexpensive way to increase the accommodation stock to support new ecotourism ventures. This type of accommodation is well positioned and provides the tourists with the opportunity to meet friendly New Zealanders who can informally provide the cultural interaction that is an essential part of the ecotourism experience.

Market Driven Developments

Any form of tourism development in New Zealand needs to be market driven, not supply led. We must determine not only what the market currently requires but what its further requirements are likely to be, and deliver accordingly.

This is especially important if we are to sustain the levels of tourism growth anticipated and provide the high level of visitor satisfaction which must be maintained.

There's a clear need for quality research so niche markets can be identified and correctly targeted. Developers need to identify the environment, traditional and cultural resources of their region and to establish its own unique
appeal and market edge.

The impact of seasonality, weather, visitor traffic, changing tastes and trends, competition and the operating methods of the travel industry all need to be taken into account whenever development is contemplated.

Developers and operators need to develop linkage with major operators, tour companies and the New Zealand Tourism Board to undertake joint promotional efforts to maximise economies of scale and increase the effectiveness of their marketing expenditure.

We need a more professional approach to researching, financing, marketing and managing of all tourism ventures - but this challenge is strongest in the sensitive and demanding field of ecotourism where a broader range of factors must be taken into account.

**Recent Tourism Investment Trends**

There has been little large scale New Zealand institutional tourism investment in recent times. The majority of new investment has been from foreign sources and has tended to be largely from Asian investors.

Although a high level of Japanese investment exists in the New Zealand tourism industry, there has not been much new Japanese investment over the last 12 months.

Investment has been almost entirely focused on acquiring existing hotel properties. This is because of the cheap acquisition price when compared with replacement cost, even in our prime locations.

What we must do now is focus on the development of new greenfield projects. It is difficult to attract this sort of investment when opportunities still exist for acquisition, refurbishment and repositioning of existing plant.

To attract development investment that is either from New Zealand or offshore we need to put together bankable proposals that are well conceived and professionally researched, analyzed and presented to suit the requirements of targeted investors and financiers.

The most effective proposals are likely to be the result of coordinated team efforts comprising a developer, construction company, potential operators, local regional or city councils, the Department of Conservation, parks boards and iwi authorities. This sort of commitment will send the right messages to potential investors and financiers.

More importantly, the pooled resources and expertise will ensure that the proposed development is the most appropriate to the environment and culture of the location.

Therefore, the proposal will have a higher probability of generating the required level of return on investment at a time when growing numbers of visitors seek the experience of ecotourism.

Professional proposals of this nature will not only help to attract major foreign investment to New Zealand but also new large domestic institutional investment and funding into the tourism industry.
THE ROLE OF FILM IN TOURISM

Peter Hayden
TV New Zealand
Natural History Unit
Dunedin, New Zealand

On the first day of spring about five years ago Grandma, the oldest Royal albatross from Taiaroa Head near Dunedin, arrived back at the colony after two years at sea. She'd come back to breed. After an argument with her mate over the location of the nest (an argument that she won and the location was changed), they made up and got down to the business of making a family, they copulated several times during the morning. I know, I was there but so were 600 million others watching the oldest known bird in the world (60 years plus) and her mate celebrating spring in the most productive way possible.

Obviously, all 600 million of us weren't at Taiaroa Head. I was. The rest were watching on T.V. the final segment of World Safari, a two hour wildlife spectacular, taking viewers live around the world. That memorable, visual opportunity is still paying dividends of bringing visitors to the colony. For some it is the hope of seeing Grandma; for others it is just to get close to these remarkable birds.

If our conference is about ecotourism, then one of the most potent icons of ecotourism in New Zealand is the royal albatross. More than 100,000 visitors come to the colony each year. The albatross and other sea birds are symbols of these islands called New Zealand that sit out in the roaring 40's with one end poking into the sub-tropics the other into the sub-antarctic.

Television New Zealand's Natural History Unit was invited by the BBC to join this global wildlife link-up as part of a relationship that's been going on for fifteen years. More than 100,000 visitors come to the colony each year. The albatross and other sea birds are symbols of these islands called New Zealand that sit out in the roaring 40's with one end poking into the sub-tropics the other into the sub-antarctic.

To date the Natural History Unit of Television New Zealand has made more than 100 documentaries. They have been seen in more than forty countries and apart from the one off event already described, audiences of documentaries run into the 100's of millions.

The Unit is very much open for business as we approach the year 2000.

Discovery Channel in the USA has recently taken six titles for next season. Two are Islands, the story of evolution on islands using the South Pacific as a Model. Distribution deals have been signed or are close to signing with major broadcasters in Italy, Germany and France. The future is bright.

This chronicle of achievements is by way of demonstrating the role of the Natural History Unit's productions in bringing visitors to New Zealand. We are obviously only part of the equation but its a very important part. We see ourselves as planters of seeds in potential tourists minds or the minds of those who might persuade travelling friends and relations that New Zealand and increasingly Australia and Pacific Islands are places well worth visiting. We are remote, exotic, unusual, fascinating and should be clean and green as we make out we are.

As the producers of the finest images about New Zealand in the world (a reputation and a mantle we have inherited in the last fifteen years from the National Film Unit) our productions and our images will continue to play an important role in the growing tourist
industry in this region.

You, as ecotourist operators and us as film makers are quarrying the same mine. We're both using the same resource - that's the environment, mountains, forests, lakes full of fish, coral reefs, deserts, places of mood, mystery and magic. All this is not only being discovered by visitors in their millions but also by film companies from many countries. Competition is hot, so if we're all miners together, all we say is don't bury our claim through thoughtlessness or carelessness.

Here's an example of what I mean. A German film company came out here recently and made a film about Kea in about two weeks. The company received a lot of support from hotels, rental car companies, airlines and a number of concessionaires. The films was not bad for two weeks effort. It showed in Germany to a small audience but has had a huge damaging effect on us trying to get a major Kea documentary into Europe. Ours has all those cute easy to get scenes but its got the hard ones too. It is still being completed and will go to market in autumn when chicks fledge, but the marketing damage has been done with an inferior product.

We're not asking you to help us tie up all nature related films in this region. We couldn't possibly do it, nor would we wish to. We are asking for you to take care when approached by film companies. They range from fly-by-nighters out here on spec, and a long holiday paid for by you through to top rate production companies who will reach a big audience with a quality product. Learn to tell the difference.

We need to get out of the grateful mode - grateful that someone, anyone is going to tell a story about New Zealand. There are a lot of smooth talkers around but you need not be seduced into giving them two weeks at your five star hotel - just because they're doing a story on New Zealand. Check them out. If they are asking for you to put in money, definitely check them out. If no one else is investing, its being done on spec. - leave it alone. Ask simple questions - Who'll see it? What time of day/night will it screen? Ask for a script - then take time to read it. A lot of money and resource has been wasted over the years in ventures that have not benefitted New Zealand one little bit.

If you want to check out the film company, Television New Zealand or any of the major film and T.V. companies in New Zealand should be able to check the international register for you.

Some of the film ideas are kind of fun - a Japanese film company came looking for Moa - but many aren't worth entertaining. You shouldn't waste money or resources.

Good value for money came recently from BBC production for children. Called Blue Peter, it is a very prestigious and long running show and a big audience of tomorrows visitors.

Good Morning Australia. Live inserts into a very popular nationwide programme. These sorts of programmes are worthy of support.

We would rather work with film companies than have to line up behind them to film a Kakapo.

At the moment we are working with Japanese, American and U.K. film companies in New Zealand. We can also sell footage. Wildsouth has an extensive library of fine behavioral footage of most of our species and habitats. We can help raise the quality of other company's productions in this way.

Later on, I'd like to show you some of our images. Those images include a highly successful co-operative venture. It's called Oceans Campaign. The venture has three partners, The American Oceans Campaign, Air New Zealand and Television New Zealand. Twelve in flight featurettes are being produced for Air New Zealand fronted by Hollywood celebrities, Ted Danson and Patrick Swayzie, both of whom are closely involved with the American Oceans Campaign - a non profit organisation to assist research and action in protecting marine ecosystems. American Oceans Campaign gets a member's flyer in every Air New Zealand seat pocket, Air New Zealand get the twelve featurettes and greater legitimacy to the claim as being the Pride of the Pacific and Television New Zealand get a full length documentary from the featurettes fronted by two Hollywood notables. It's bound to be highly saleable. The simple equation is Win, Win, Win.

On a local level, the Natural History Unit is producing a video with a major operator at no cost to the operator. How? The deal is simple. The operator guarantees to take and sell 2,000 videos over two years and after that and over above that, to split the revenue. Not bad for a video that will cost you nothing.
A video like this is worth a lot more than the money spent (or in this case not spent) because it will draw from images in the Natural History library and have the stamp of quality that the Wildsouth brings. Qualities of mood, story telling, appropriate music. Our name is our endorsement and the quality is what our audience has come to expect.

This operator wanted a list of Natural History Units Awards on the back of the pack. Michael Stedman, Head of the Unit was unable to comply with this request because as he said - "there's not enough room to put them all on". The Unit has received sixty plus International Awards.

Let us talk videos for a moment. You may or may not have had experience in having one or more made. Again, be careful, price and quality more often than not correlate.

At the cheap end, there are a number of individuals and companies that have graduated from family Christmases and Birthdays to Weddings and then on to tourist videos. Visitors often buy these efforts in good faith and are terribly disappointed when they get home. They look at the video once and put it on the shelf. They certainly don't share it with friends - a marketing opportunity is thereby lost.

Is the video a must see, a must share or a disappointment? Good ones will wear out through over use.

We live in the most beautiful region on earth. There is mood, contrast, emptiness, vastness, drama, and many videos miss the lot!

If you are contemplating having a video made for your region, your tour or your hotel, hop around, get prices, get treatments (not like the dentist), ask for scripts, ask to see show reels, and find out what this company has done before.

Let us go through the different types of video:

1. Take home video of the experience or the region. The enhanced experience. Most visitors see a place in a few days in one season. The video can take the viewer through the year. Most visitors have paid a lot of money to come here, most are educated, the video should not treat them like morons. Instead, it should offer images and information that are challenging, dramatic, evocative and extend their experience. It should be one they'll want to look at time and time again when they get home.

Soon we hope we will be seeing a major upgrade of National Park audio visuals. Imagine a screen being able to give film slide, printed text, micro views that you can pick and choose on a host of subjects related to the area. That's the exciting future of lazer-disc technology. It isn't far off and it isn't vastly expensive.

Perhaps as more and more people travel with Handycams there is enterprising opportunity to integrate an amateur video with a professional one. Let the visitor voice it all, put a front and closing on, package and sent to friends or take home.

Perhaps as operators and tour guides you should acquaint yourselves with the basics of video technology so you can tell your clients where some exciting shots are to be had. Often the locations are very different to those chosen by a still photographer. The notion of a video stop should become part of the guides repertoire - Also sound. Turn the bus off, ask others to keep quite if the waterfall, birds, sea, factory has unusual or distinctive sound, this too is recorded as well as the image. The enhanced experience is much more valuable. Enhancement = ownership = sharing.

The video used to sell the experience, city, region. Often the cost of these are shared by several operators and as such may end up as a camel (which is a horse made by a committee).

These videos play in booking offices, selling trips, airports, in-house hotels. A common fault is that each operator wants it to be known that they have a cafe and toilet facilities so it becomes a dream trip only for the incontinent glutton or it goes like a rocket - images, music, pan, zoom, headache.

First decide what we are selling. If the video is about Auckland then either give the visitor a choice of Scenic Auckland, Adventure Auckland and
Distractions Auckland (that's the one which can have all the cafes and toilet facilities) or if three videos are not possible, let's have some Moods of Auckland, some depth to the treatment and some appropriate music. Every Wildsouth has music composed. Its worth it. For a one hour documentary, international release, $5,000 for music is average. Composed music for a ten minute video won't blow out the budget.

Pace of a video doesn't come from the speed of cuts and an incessant drum beat. Pace is a product of new information, revelation and discovery. A shot that lasts ten minutes has pace as long as it keeps revealing new images, ideas, information. The first of a landscape or city scape is emotional. The video has to reflect this.

We are also selling uniqueness. Visitors rarely come to New Zealand, indeed Australia for the shopping unless its for products they can't get at home - sheepskin, aboriginal art. Invariably what we are selling - the thing visitors fly half way around the world to experience is - "green". Ecotourism isn't a badge to be stuck on to net a few people. It is got to be real - whether you like it or not, the only thing we've got to sell is "green". (Green is freedom, remoteness, clean). Unless you think green, learn green, believe and sleep green your insincerity will be revealed and you will fail. You can't coat tail on the notion of green. If you don't believe it, you'll fall off. Ecotourism is a rock solid commitment. Its a contract that we sign with the environment.

Preservation and conservation are the keys to survival in Ecotourism. We don't go round shooting geese that are laying golden eggs, or albatross either, but its a fine line. Research at Taiaora Head indicates that in recent years the birds are tending to favour nest sites away from the lookout building. If this trend continues then, bang, a goose has been shot. The lookout is on one side of a headland. The albatross are beginning to nest away round the corner out of sight and that's what 100,000 plus people pay money to see.

You can see them flying for nothing by staying in the car park but for a more intimate view of nesting you need to pay money to go up to the look out. So what's to be done?

That brings me to a third kind of video - The camera in location. Imagine in the weeks that follow albatross egg laying, small remote cameras are placed at a discrete distance from a few nests, cables run back to the visitors reception area and shop where you can view a bird live that's incubating an egg, hatching a chick and feeding a chick. The tragedy of the Gulf War reminds us vividly of the appeal of live pictures - we are hooked. So would our visitors bet our geese or rather our albatrosses could go on laying golden eggs in relative tranquillity.

There are other species and habitats that may not be able to withstand the pressure that increased visitor numbers could place upon them. The Yellow Eyed Penguin panics and deserts the beach if it sees just one human at close quarters and some of our prettiest cave systems are just too fragile for big numbers. Remote cameras would be ideal.

Further than that, tele-diving is already a reality in Milford Sound. While a diver with a camera explores the steep side of the fiord, a cable feeds live pictures to visitors above. The video technology already exists, it merely needs applying.

Endoscopes and borscopes can take us into burrows through the moss carpet on the forest floor as if it was a giant forest. There are many possibilities. What visitors come to see will in many instances not stand a lot of interference. Not only must our accessible locations be as clean and as pristine as we can make them for discerning Europeans but there are some places where only electronic eyes should venture.

Our role in whatever we do is to help people to see and to inform and educate them about what they have come to see. What have they come to
They are far more likely to be making this trip to the South Pacific, Australia and New Zealand in the belief that here and here only are to be found pockets of originality, to be reassured that the world has not been totally overrun by our own kind, to visit these most beautiful countries in the world. If they've come for experiences to extend their fun, they choose imaginative, innovative, local grown experiences. In New Zealand there are bungy jumps, jet boat rides and rubber rafting.

Backpackers come in for much criticism because they don't spend much. They try to get as much as they can for as little as possible and that upsets many operators. Backpackers can be a great investment in our tourism future. How many of you did overseas experience (O.E.) - dosed down in a grotty flat in London but had a great holiday? Similarly, today's backpackers are tomorrows business folk with disposable income, families and warm memories of a wonderful country. They too should always be treated with respect and courtesy.

So what other things should or should not be in a video. Mood and diversity. Per kilometre New Zealand has the greatest diversity of landscape, changing light and mood than any country in the world. Australia is very different, Pacific Islands all different - find and exploit the character of what you are trying to portray in a video. Photographers like Brian Brake and Craig Potton don't race up to Mt. Tongariro and snap - they wait, they compose, they capture different moods. On film, we can run moods together with time lapse or concentrate on just one or two for an emotional effect.

There are 100's of millions of people around the world whose first and in many cases only images of New Zealand come from Wildsouth documentaries. We sow the seed, you create the opportunity and the experience.

Anyone can hold a camera, take a picture - there is a skill in making the image live and then putting it into a sequence that captures a mood. Such videos can be made and are being made already. Compare what is available with what you know is possible because that is what we should be offering our visitors. Videos that will wear out with over use.

There's a little of the pioneer in all of us and to show images of locations in high flood, storm and snow will help the visitor get the thrill albeit vicariously of being in a dramatic landscape.

The video can be the front window of experience. Visitor steps of the plane, drives to the hotel, checks in, goes up to the room and turns on the T.V. before going to sleep. What do they get? The in-house video, hopefully not full of shopping, cafes, toilet facilities and bars.

There is a need for all of us to understand the needs of our audiences. Many are informed and intelligent and they are looking for the reality behind the "green" image.

- They see that we have problems, weeds, predators and erosion but that being a relatively small nation with a relatively high standard of living we're doing something about it and getting on top of things. They come from countries often over populated, polluted and with problems that seem insurmountable. If we seem to be protecting the environment, they feel better about their world.

- They meet the Department of Conservation (DoC) - our green front liners. Some of you may have a beef with the local DoC Officer, but whatever the beef that organisation is charged with protecting the very thing that you are selling. If its not there, or its been degraded in a few years time, then - bang, that's another goose gone off the lay. Its sometimes hard on a day to day basis to see the logic in some of DoC's decisions e.g. Helicopter Line would like to fly in more areas of Fiordland National Park. They have the ire of Department of Conservation who require their helicopters to use corridors -they may even exclude the Milford Track, the logical route over to Milford. Hikers from the fast lanes of Europe, Asia and United States do not want their tranquility shattered by helicopters and fixed wing aircraft. There should be "no go" areas for aircraft in National Parks. Walkers are going this way,
why can't joy riders go the other way? We must all work together to create complementary experiences in ecotourism. The effect of working together is to create synergy. An energy greater than that of the individual effort.

Coming back to the Oceans Campaign. Some see the involvement of big business in ecotourism as fashionable, a fad, a current flavour. Some would rather sit on their hands and do nothing, wait for environmental collapse so that they can say "I told you so".

There's no doubt that the greening of industry is happening. Companies, if not lining up and waiting for a rare species to adopt, are at least sympathetic generally. Evidence is emerging, however, once companies take their first step into a green future they begin to believe in what they can achieve they begin to care and develop company policies that are pro-environment.

It's still not so easy for rare plants or rare snails, spiders and other lower lifes to get corporate backing however.

So whether we're listed on the Stock Exchange or just in the telephone book, if we are working in the are of ecotourism in the South Pacific there is the potential for a fine future if we co-operate.

If our company charters a lone course we're destined to go on various rocks and shoals of misguided effort.

- If we compete with one another, we're doomed.

- If we co-operate, we maximise many small but important resources.

For its part, the Natural History Unit is keen to develop partnerships in both a formal way, making videos etc or informally - e.g. advising operators which of our programmes are coming up, in which countries and when, so that print advertising might be targeted to take advantage of tourists opportunities.

It works both ways; we're always glad to hear of documentary ideas that we might be able to support.

We're all in the business of selling ourselves and whether it's broadcast or narrowcast videos, this medium, if presented right, can make an unbelievable difference to both securing and satisfying our visitors.

You've got to believe in conservation in ecotourism. The bottom line is that we are far less likely to destroy something, knowing that visitors are prepared to come and pay good money to see it.

Ecotourism is not a goldmine its a "green mine" where the seam doesn't run out..........
Introduction

The Conference recognised the essential symbiosis between environment, community and visitors which is the hallmark of ecotourism. In the Pacific the nexus between people and the land is critical as each have evolved together. This document sets out the many views which were presented and the collective experiences of participants as expressed in both formal papers and discussions.

Within each area the conference was particularly focussed on three crucial aspects for ecotourism business. These are:

i) policy and planning;
ii) business; and
iii) education, training and research.

In preparing this draft document the many comments and issues distilled from all the working sessions have been reviewed and edited into a set of goals which provide a series of advice, guidance or guidelines for communities and business interests considering an ecotourism option. The results of this process are set out below.

Further material was developed by the working party around the three broad headings of policy and planning, business, and education, training and research. These are not yet edited into a consistent framework but this should be done as part of the final drafting process.

Policy and Planning

General Principles

1. The basis of ecotourism investment decision-making must be knowledge, rather than ideology.
2. Ecotourism must benefit the environment, the local community and the business.

Policy

Some of the criteria identified for policy were:

1. the need for policy formulations to be comprehensive;
2. to be realistic;
3. to incorporate a smooth interface between policies of different interests; and
4. to include input from the community, industry/business and government.

Planning

Some of the criteria identified for planning were:

1. Planning of the resource. This would necessitate involvement of Government, community and industry
2. The setting of standards. This would involve Government and industry.
5. The need for periodic review. This would be the responsibility of the Government and industry.
Separate Goals for Planning and for Policy

There are public policies and private policies. Public policy (i.e., policy by Government and government agencies) should be undertaken for:

1. Tourism
2. Conservation
3. Planning
4. Industry development
5. Treasury
6. Cultural issues
7. The coordinating arm of government

Private Policy. Key bodies in the tourism industry may make policies for themselves and the industry they serve (e.g., hotel chains, industry groups, airlines, etc).

Planning needs to be undertaken in the following areas:

1. Research
2. Marketing
3. Product Development
4. Infrastructure and support
5. Implementation
6. Business
7. Education

Planning needs to be undertaken by all levels of government and all levels of industry.

Issues

Issues which emerged from the Conference in the context of community and policy and planning were as follows:

1. The need to provide opportunities for community participation in tourism which would ensure community values were appropriately reflected in the planning process.
2. Planning should incorporate the development of dialogue between the community, local authorities, host government and the tourist industry to promote a shared vision of ecotourism.
3. Ecotourism planning should promote social responsibility in the context of community needs.
4. In planning for the future it is imperative that local people do not lose access to natural areas and resources.
5. Ecotourism ventures should not proceed without a full and comprehensive study of the environment and the development of an environmental protection plan.
6. Long term carrying capacity or use capacity levels must be established for each venture.
7. Ecotourism should be used to help establish protected areas as part of sustainable development.
8. Develop National policies to provide a management regime to support the conservation of natural and cultural sites.

Goals

All sections of government and industry with a policy role and/or responsibility for tourism, natural resources, planning, management, and economic development require realistic, workable and achievable policies that are comprehensive, cross demarcation boundaries and yet are fully complementary.

Planning Goal #1.
Government and industry require a long term strategic plan for ecotourism that both parties are fully committed to, that is comprehensive in terms of its coverage of the issues, and which integrates the concerns of all relevant constituents.

Planning Goal #2.
All sections of government and industry which have a role, need and/or responsibility for the planning of any aspect of tourism conservation and/or management require medium term tactical and short term implementation plans that implement their stringent responsibilities as set out by the long term strategic plan.

Planning Goal #3
Be practical in developing your plan. Do not wait until all the information is available; use what you know to set targets, standards, thresholds, plans - and get on with it!

Planning Goal #4
For marketing, product development and resource management, etc., develop a parallel research and monitoring program and review it regularly and at frequent intervals.

Ecotourism Business - Goals, Issues, Principles, Guidelines

1. Ecotourism developers must match idealism with economic survival to ensure that businesses reflect high ethical standards yet are financially
viable. An unrealistic business proposal which cannot meet customers needs achieves nothing for a proprietor and one which denies ecological principles will fail to appeal to clients if it contributes to environmental degradation.

2. Along with an emphasis on ethical correctness and scientific principles, to ensure ecological standards are maintained, any operation must keep business aspects in mind to remain viable. These include:
   a. Proper planning
   b. Proper markets
   c. Proper financial analysis/control.

Tempering idealism with financial realities will ensure that eco-business will have the most likelihood of becoming a viable business. Thus, ecotourism projects should be subject to a rigorous feasibility plan including a market survey, business plan and financial management plan.

3. Business based on ecological principles must remain flexible and realize that economic realities may modify original visions. Market conditions may change the conditions for doing business and a dogmatic, rigid approach to operating a business will damage chances for long term success.

4. Business should remember that customers are paying first and foremost for an experience. If an enjoyable experience is not provided the service is not successful.

5. By the same token there is an inherent social and environmental responsibility. Ecotourism businesses are linked to local communities of people and to the natural environment which provide the experience that the tourists are paying for.

6. Ecotourism business should never sacrifice quality for quantity. Experiences which are based upon high volume trips are likely to deny people the very experiences ecotourism boasts of providing.

7. Indigenous people entering into ecotourism business must determine the true value of retaining ownership of their land rather than selling it to outside investors. Partnerships may be appropriate, depending on the circumstances, but losing the land tends to undermine the principles of ecotourism and may "disempower" the indigenous people who should achieve success in promoting their culture and natural heritage.

8. Ecotourism must keep one careful eye on profits and one on protecting those assets which allow the business to succeed. Such attention to both short term profits and to the long term sustainability of the enterprise will be more difficult than with a conventional business merely interested in deriving profits. This dual responsibility to both profitability and sustainability is implicit in earning an income from natural and cultural attributes. This is a special challenge for ecotourism businesses.

9. Eco-businesses must market themselves as any other niche-orientated business. This includes modern marketing tools:
   a. Play to strengths.
   b. Be single minded about the particular niche one fits best.
   c. Communicate the image of the business and destination internally as well as externally.
   d. Plan financial as well as ethical positions to ensure long term continuity.
   e. Do it rather than avoid action.

10. Management techniques must reflect the highest standards of respecting the rights of people and allowing the greatest flexibility of the organisation. Management tools include:
    a. Training personnel on the environment,
    b. emphasising quality over quantity,
    c. encourage empowerment of authority.

11. Ecotourism ventures, through their operations, activities, educational efforts and ethics, should contribute to the conservation of the natural and socio-cultural environments on which they depend. Profits of an eco-business must support the local communal or natural heritage providing for that business.

12. Business must be required to undertake dialogue with local authorities, including residents and nature based agencies, to ensure cooperation, support and an appropriate plan.

13. Regulations are best when they provide multiple options to business and allow for greatest flexibility. Partnerships can be achieved with regulatory agencies if attitudes are able
to rise above "turf fighting" and try to do the best for economic growth and sustainability of heritage.

14. To encourage diversity to producers and services and ensure high standards of creativity and potential for success, ecotourism business should avoid "reactive action" or copying competition and strive always to provide a unique experience to customers.

15. Non-indigenous owned ecotourism businesses should facilitate the effective transfer of business skills to local communities and encourage local entrepreneurs; provide employment opportunities for local people; and promote local opportunities for service industries associated with supporting ecotourism (e.g. local food supply, building, handcrafts etc. - so-called "back linkages").

16. Governments and their agencies need to accept a role in the provision of access to financing for village scale ecotourism development, (e.g. through appropriate national development bank policies) and develop National policy which provide incentives for ecotourism developments at the local level.

17. Business activities must not exceed environmental limits. They must be designed to eliminate, negate or minimize adverse environmental impacts.

18. Travel agents should be encouraged to differentiate between greenwashed tourism and genuine ecotourism opportunities.

19. As part of the ethics and ethos of ecotourism, business should utilize feasible environmentally friendly technologies.

EDUCATION, TRAINING AND RESEARCH: GOALS, ISSUES, PRINCIPLES AND GUIDELINES

Introduction

When a phenomenon such as ecotourism moves away from a narrow base and demonstrates a wider relevance for communities and the general public, the need for education, training and research becomes imperative. Accordingly, the objectives of the sub-committee on education, training and research were to:

i). identify the key issues for education, training and research in ecotourism; and

ii). identify the "targets" for education, training and research.

Issues

The Auckland conference, with its focus on the business of ecotourism highlighted the need for:

i). an appropriate and acceptable definition of the term "eco-tourism", with an understanding that the term included - but was not limited to - both biophysical and socio-cultural environments and the values of conservation and intergenerational equity.

ii). Greater public awareness and understanding of the term ecotourism;

iii). more specifically policy makers, decision takers and the providers of ecotourism to increase their understanding of this phenomena;

iv). institutionalised education to present and promote studies in ecotourism;

v). research to assess the impacts (environmental, bio-physical and socio-cultural) of ecotourism ventures;

vi). the paradigm of developers to be changed;

vii). cross-cultural training for all those involved in the industry;

viii). short term and long term strategies designed to address the different aspects of the concept and different targets requiring education, training and research;

ix). minimum standards to be developed to ensure the quality of the ecotourist experience is attained and maintained, with industry accepting the vital role of appropriately qualified guides in this highly specialised segment of the tourism industry;

x). in association with the previous point, an appropriate accreditation scheme for such guides;

xi). the "research platform" rather than the "advocacy platform" to be the basis for informed analysis of the business of ecotourism.

xii). Ecotourism ventures should not proceed before a comprehensive study (research of environmental, sociocultural and economic factors) has been completed.

xiii). Research and education should
provide communities with the capacity to understand the implications and impacts of any ecotourism venture prior to its inception.

xiv) Opportunities be provided for the education and training of local people with the skills needed to fully participate in all aspects of ecotourism ventures.

xv) High quality interpretation should include involvement of village people, especially the elders, where appropriate.

xvi) Full use should be made of traditional knowledge in addition to other research efforts associated with ecotourism.

xvii) Industry must be made aware of environmentally friendly technology, especially regarding appropriate engineering, architecture and waste disposal methods.

xviii) Ecotourism ventures must provide the highest quality interpretation for visitors.

xix) Local communities should be assisted to develop appropriate environmental skills to facilitate involvement in ecotourism.

xx) Research should identify the environmental limits to development before investment is approved.

Three general issues apparent in much of the Conference presentation and discussion were:

i) A dichotomy between 'developed' and 'developing' ecotourism industries (which sometimes, but not always parallels the so-called 'developed/developing countries differentiation);

ii) the need to ensure that in all education, training and research, the socio-cultural factor is presented as totally integral to the concept of ecotourism, rather than a narrower definition which focuses on 'nature based' tourism; and

iii) Cognitive and affective learning need to be incorporated into the ecotourism experience.

Targets

In the context of the business of ecotourism, 'targets' for education and training may be conceptualised as a central core surrounded by concentric circles when less direct education and training is required. It is emphasised that education, training and research is necessary as an ongoing activity at all levels, and the conceptualisation is designed to differentiate between those more directly involved in the business of ecotourism rather than as necessarily signifying a priority for action.

Thus in the inner core are:

i) The Leaders:

a) Government: Ministers, senior public servants, and statutory authorities with direct policy making roles;

b) Industry: Owners, operators and managers - the providers of ecotourism, taking the decisions to establish a business and then running it; and

c) Educational Institutions: Schools, technical colleges and universities with the responsibility for establishing appropriate courses and studies in ecotourism.

At the next level are:

ii) The Forntline Workers:

a) Government: Officials involved in providing services or regulating activities - park rangers, customs and immigration officials, local government licensing officers, etc.

b) Industry: Especially guides and interpretive staff who interface directly with the visitors, and others whose work is to assist in the multiplicity of services provided for those visitors.

c) Educational Institutions: Training the trainers!

At the next level are:

iii) The 'Gate-Keepers':

a) The Nature Keepers; and

b) The Cultural Keepers.

Then there are:

iv) The Guests and the Hosts

a) the guests (visitors) who need to be made aware of the geo-physical and socio-cultural 'sensitivities' of the ecotourism experience; and

b) the host community, which includes those who will have direct interaction with the guests and others whose
interaction will be indirect but who nevertheless form part of the web around the tourist.

And finally, there is:

v) the general public.

Guidelines for action need to be developed for these target groups.

SOME GUIDELINES FOR ECOTOURISM FOCUSED ON THE NATURE BASE
(Dr L.S. Hamilton, East West Center, Honolulu)

1. Overuse by tourist to the point of damage means short term rip-off and long-term disbenefit in both ecology and economics. Establish long term carrying - or use - capacity levels.

2. Joint management and action on shared natural resources, e.g. a lake, a coast, a river, a mountain, can safeguard long term gains to all, whether it be individual operators, resource managers, or nations. Where resources migrate or are interlinked such cooperation is essential.

3. Short term and rapid restoration action pays off because environmental damage may build up quickly and has cumulative effects (especially pollution, invasive alien species, erosion). When degradation first is apparent, act immediately.

4. Formal designation of natural areas as having protection in a national park, conservation area or cultural landscape can often increase its attractiveness to tourists, especially international visitors. This must not, however, be a 'paper declaration' only, but must include some protection. Establish more protected areas as part of sustainable development.

5. Pedestrianisation or de-mechanizing visitation can often not only give greater safety to the resource but increase the carrying capacity (less zone of impact per visitor). Work toward reducing use of machines in both visitation and maintenance. (Note however, that the handicapped visitor may require increased mechanisation).

6. Any new human constructions, from boardwalks to visitor accommodation, should blend in with the natural and cultural environment. Design parameters for architects and engineers encompassing these factors should be unambiguous.

7. Rare and endangered species offer special opportunities but also strict and special contraints on their "use" or habitat alteration.

8. Physical developments should be planned to correspond to use-zones which in turn are based on biophysical characteristics of attractiveness, quality, resilience and sensitivity to disturbance. These zones should be based on thorough scientific assessment. When in doubt - opt for conservative use or "bank" it for future study and allocation.

9. Hygiene and proper waste disposal are important not only to visitors but to the natural environment and welfare of local people.

10. Interpret and inform about the nature base. We will not protect it unless we love it and we will not love it unless we understand it.

11. The natural environment is a total package and all elements must be maintained in top quality, not merely the main natural attraction. Polluted air, excessive noise or smelly water destroy the tourism values of even the most pristine forest.

12. Recall continuously that market signals about changes in the natural resources and their quality are usually imperfect and lag, or are even non-existant. Monitoring biophysical change is the best reading of the "state-of-the-environment".

13. There may be elements or areas of the nature base for tourism that must be separated out for total protection despite their potential touristic exploitation.

14. Measures to manage demand in order to avoid resource-damaging peaks may not only benefit the resource, but give greater stability to the tourism business and reduce costs or over-designed, unused capacity (e.g. promoting off-season residents' visitation, staggering school holidays).

15. Environmental impact assessment procedures, with public disclosure, should be a requirement of any proposed development at the earliest stage of the proposal.

16. Tourist attractions requiring intensive nature modification which are more in
the arena of outdoor recreation (e.g. golf courses, tennis courts) should be sited elsewhere than in natural areas suitable for ecotourism.

17. National laws with respect to environmental protection should be provided in unambiguous fashion to tourism developers and those laws affecting tourist interactions with nature (e.g. hunting, collecting) should be clearly posted and interpreted at the visitation site.

18. An increasing number of handicapped persons are becoming tourists. Appropriate access facilities should be planned and this requires extra skill in avoiding damage to the nature base.
The Workshop

The two senior authors provided a one-day basic workshop in business planning. More than 50 people attended the Pacific Island workshop, with approximately another 20 people attending for partial periods during the day. The interaction was high between presenters and audience and among members of the audience. There was a general outline followed by the presenters, but much of what took place occurred spontaneously and as a result of the intense interaction.

As an introductory element of the workshop, Peter, Terry and Peter Thomas of The Nature Conservancy and Trever Sofield of James Cook University presented the cultural, economic, and environmental elements of a hypothetical island of the South Pacific. The significant facts about the island, as well as slides compiled from throughout the Pacific showing natural and cultural areas to represent the island, were developed jointly by the Center, The Nature Conservancy, and Mr. Sofield. (See appendix A for listings) This was provided to encourage audience members to imagine a place possessing the general natural characteristics of a Pacific island as well as the economic indicators and impetus to initiate ecotourism development.

The process was ultimately educational for all who participated. Audience members freely provided comments and suggestions of revisions of the fact list which described the island. It became evident that most participants were unaware of the complexities involved in considering and then moving ahead with development plans. Although this dialog was a welcome and vital part of the workshop, it took considerably longer than the co-facilitators had anticipated. This was fueled in part by individuals who found it hard to use an island which did not really exist and who preferred to work with an existing island. But as the facilitators pointed out, with support from other participants, no island met all of the needs required by the workshop. Also, there was a sincere effort to avoid slighting or offending anybody by selecting a particular island. Some people could not accept specific details of the island or were unwilling to take the island out of the greater web of global activity which in fact does influence Pacific Islands. The dialog was important since it did help to foster an awareness and appreciation of the complex realities of Pacific Island ecotourism development. After a long discussion concerning these issues, the nature of the hypothetical island, and its name --Vanua-- was resolved to the satisfaction of the audience. A location had been created upon which economic opportunities and constraints could be placed.

Various components of the hypothetical island such as infrastructure, government regulations and demographics were identified not to suggest an ideal business setting, but rather to allow the audience to see that these are the obstacles and realities that the potential operator is up against and to emphasize the importance of thorough detailed planning to address how to deal with these complexities. The actual operator in a real island setting is up against at least some subset of the island described and must plan to anticipate and work within the existing environment.
The second stage of the workshop began.

This entailed having the workshop participants break up into five smaller groups, each with the responsibility of developing three businesses concepts appropriate for development on the island of Vanua. The make up of the groups were made arbitrarily but each was composed of a mix of U.S. citizens, Australian and New Zealand citizens, and Pacific Islanders including Maori and others from South Pacific and Northern Pacific jurisdictions. Professions included those in academia, private sector ecotourism operators, and individuals involved in government agencies and other public sector programs.

After animated discussions among each group, representatives presented their ideas along with detailed defenses of why they would be appropriate. Each was briefly examined in terms of feasibility, and it was decided that one which appeared to have the best chance of success would be used as a concrete example for the purpose of illustrating a business plan. (Please see Appendix B for listing).

The third stage of the workshop then began.

The following points were addressed:

1. General ecotourism concepts
2. Reasons for selection of business ideas developed by members
3. Principal concerns/problems associated with choices
4. Business Planning

Peter Veglak facilitated a discussion about the purpose and components of a business plan. A basic outline is as follows:

1. Market Analysis
   Who is coming?
   How?
   Where are they coming from?
   How many people can be brought to the location on any given day?
   What are the existing visitor trends?

2. Planned Marketing/Sales Activities
   How do you get the word out to prospective customers?
   How do you find out what other operators are doing?
   Will you coordinate with other operators, airlines, etc.?
   Price structure -- how much will you charge?

3. Employment Needs
   Identify job classifications -- what types of skills are needed?
   Can all of the job requirements be filled by local residents?
   How many expatriate employees are needed?
   What are your training requirements?
   What are the locally accepted wage rates and pay roll taxes?

4. Operations
   Is the site easily accessible?
   How do guests get to the site?
   What activities will you offer the guest? (lodging, meals, hikes, diving, etc.)
   How will you keep track of the financial records (bookkeeping)?
   Where will you get your supplies and equipment from?
   How will you generate power, source water, communicate with the outside, handle waste, etc.?
   Will you coordinate your activities with the surrounding villages?

5. Management
   Who will own the business (individual, community, etc.)
   Who owns the land?
   Who will manage the day-to-day operation of the business?
   How will you distribute the proceeds generated by the business?
   If you use the services of other villages/communities, how will you pay them in a fair and equitable manner?

6. Funding Requirements
   Where do you plan to get your funding from (your own savings, the bank, outside investors, etc.)?
   How much money will the entire project cost?
What will you use the funds for (equipment, construction, initial inventory, etc.)? On a loan, what is the interest rate/monthly payment?

7. Financial Analysis

How much revenue (cash in) can the business generate on a monthly basis?
How much will it cost to run the business on a monthly basis?
What is the break-even point (when revenues equal monthly costs)?

Immediately, marketing questions consumed the members of the audience. There was some lack of understanding of the process of marketing, and Peter Veglak reminded the audience that marketing itself is a complex process and in fact is a four year degree program at most universities.

General ecotourism concepts were reviewed quickly. Individual members defended the reasons they selected the businesses they chose. The entire group discussed concerns associated with choices. To analyze the market viability of the ecotourism concepts, it was recommended that the group use a marketing technique which identifies the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats of each concept. This technique is sometimes referred to as SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats).

Strengths are items internal and within the control of the business, location, and/or community which should have a positive impact on the success of the concept and the eventual pursuit of the vision. It is important that strengths are identified early in the planning process since they are the critical elements that will allow the business to strive toward its vision. Without the appropriate strengths, the vision may be unattainable. Therefore this portion of the planning process can help to identify which parts of the organization need to be improved. The existing strengths should be nurtured and maintained throughout the planning and development process.

Weaknesses are items internal and within the control of the business, location, and/or community which may have a negative impact on the success of the concept and the eventual pursuit of the vision. It is important that weaknesses are identified early in the planning process since they are the areas which must be improved in order for the concept to become a reality. As long as the weaknesses are not addressed, the vision of the business may be in jeopardy. Therefore this portion of the planning process can also help to identify which parts of the organization need to be improved.

Opportunities are items external and uncontrollable by the business, location, and/or community which may be exploited, capitalized upon, or used to the business' advantage. These include worldwide trends and local occurrences which should contribute to the potential success of the business. Some opportunities might include the growing interest in nature based tourism or the establishment of additional air carrier service to an island. It is important that opportunities be identified early in the planning process because it is these outside trends which will determine if there is a market available to support the vision.

Threats are items external and uncontrollable by the business, location, and/or community which may jeopardize the success of the concept. These include worldwide trends and local occurrences which may contribute to the potential demise or failure of the business. Threats might include local and international competition or lack of infrastructure (transportation, electricity, water, etc.). It is important that threats be identified early in the planning process because it is these outside trends which make it difficult and sometimes impossible for the vision to become a reality. However, once the threats are identified, the business person can identify alternate strategies to overcome these difficulties.

Given this outline, the group identified the following strength, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats for Vanua's ecotourism project:

Strengths:
- Novelty
- Local uniqueness
- Business champions
- Limited to community development
- Phased development
- Goes slow
- Low impact

Weaknesses:
- No inventory
- Pre-defined sharing of benefits poorly
Project endangers marine life

Opportunities:
- Training for next phase of development
- Ecotourism awareness will improve education
- Utilizing local operators will empower residents
- Reviving traditions to present to tourist will rejuvenate elderly and pass on skills to young
- International awareness of island will improve status
- New markets for traditional crafts will emerge with popularity of status

Threats:
- Foreign investment hazards
- Disruption or destruction of habitat
- New affluence has impact on culture
- Toxic paint from boats will affect marine life
- General erosion of values
- Importation of foreign laborers impacts community life
- New competition among islands will alter traditional lifestyles
- Health issues such as diseases brought in from outside will affect public health standards

Many issues consumed the group discussion. One specific issue was if marketing should be customer driven or proprietor driven. Who in fact would ultimately champion a project was a critical issue questioned by participants, as both national governments and private sectors play a role in such business development. Another was who ultimately does the marketing -- the business, the government, an association of industries in the region, or travel agencies located elsewhere. Extensive discussion followed on the necessity of marketing and the potential conflicts it presented by presenting relatively swift cultural changes to an island community.

Sales activities prompted questions on what kind of travel packages should be provided to tourists, whether "turn key" or combinations of recreational and lodging. It was not determined which would provide the ultimate good, and pros and cons were found for each possibility. Facilitators were less interested in convincing the argument of the ideal solution than in encouraging the questioning process and "empowering" participants to critique the options.

The utilization of foreigners in business development was a common problem, as the small business/ecotourism process encourages training of local residents to enable them to develop and operate their own businesses. However, the expertise of individuals from off-island could not be neglected. Their presence is obvious and noted and therefore needs to be carefully incorporated into any planning along with appropriate provision for local staff transition. Training was a fundamental problem also because it implied new information being introduced into traditional communities and there was concern about the short and long term impact of such changes. It was agreed that training would be necessary for developing skills of residents but that it would have to be applied carefully and with wise regard for its impact.

Transportation and accessibility issues proved difficult to resolve as islands require connecting flights from larger population centers and the logistics of linking up travelers was hard for many audience members to conceive. It was a more global issue which provided so many unknown elements that it became a futile exercise. The reality of travel in the Pacific Islands is one which cannot be neglected, but in the case of the scenario it became more important to assume certain parameters of travel arrangements in order to move on to more specific issues of business planning.

Many felt that management should be done in traditional ways as much as possible but also be efficient. Because there would be necessary mixes of traditional and modern leaderships, the choice of management was debatable. Interestingly, this matter was another one in which islanders welcome the opportunity to learn management skills while non-islanders who consistently defended a more protective stance of residents and natural areas contested the need for such training. Leadership skills were concluded to be important to maintain among residents to discourage loss of ownership and control but caution was encouraged.

Joint ventures were explored as a viable means of raising money to start up businesses as long as ultimate control remained with the residents. It was acknowledged that business plans would be required, and at this point the facilitators returned to the basic outline of a business plan in order to have the audience thinking again in terms of financial considerations.
It was asserted and agreed upon by the audience that any business plan requires a vision and statement of values in order to determine what the business must stand on in the process of altering the island through development. Financial statements could then be viewed as the “business terms” of the values.

The audience acknowledged that the business issues involved in development were indeed complex and involved every aspect of life on the island. Prudence should always be practiced, and the overall impact on cultural traditions and natural resources should be weighed before action is taken. It was also agreed more expertise would enable decision makers to better plan the future, but that power should remain in the hands of local residents rather than be sold or given to outside authorities.

BUSINESS PLANNING

Business planning is critical to success for any business. The development of a document which can be used both as an organizational tool by the entrepreneur as well as a description for review by potential financiers is a necessary component in business development. The importance of planning, setting out goals and milestones, and anticipating the future development of a business or organization cannot be overemphasized. Furthermore, the planning must start and end with the vision and passion of an individual, group of individuals, or community.

The resources required for preparing detailed business plans are not readily found throughout the Pacific Islands business communities yet the vision and passion very often is. As such, many businesses are founded and operated without formal planning and quite often take on a “life of their own” evolving into something that is either unprofitable, environmentally disruptive, or very different than the initial vision. Proper planning can provide the “road map” which provides the direction and guidance to achieve the vision, allows for a sense of location to ensure that the business does not travel too far off course, and identifies when the road may become treacherous. A formal business plan is essentially a requirement by a lender or investor when a business person is applying for funding. But moreover, planning can reduce otherwise unforeseen difficulties in the life of a business and allow the organization to anticipate and prepare for course adjustments.

Business plans are not meant to be inflexible or constraining, but rather, by having a plan or a map, we can identify alternate routes to take leading towards the final destination -- the vision.

Conceptual development, preparation and completion of business plans is a service provided by the Pacific Business Center to its clients in the American Affiliated Pacific Islands.

APPENDIX A

General Description of Island

There is a small main town and numerous smaller villages. An airstrip does exist as a small field. There are cultural sites and war relics and roads connect some of the villages, although it does not go all the way around the island. Government owns 7% of the land, private owners own 3% and 90% is owned by custom. There is an old copra plantation still in operation, an extensive mangrove forest, an intact coastal forest and lowland rain forest as well as higher altitude rain forest. Several freshwater streams drain the low hills. A north lagoon is fringed by a reef as is an east lagoon.

1. Distance to Main Airport
   1 1/2 hour flight
   $125 US Round trip air fare

2. Population
   10,000

3. Literacy Rate
   Adults: 40%
   Children of school age: 90%

4. Banking
   Bank of Hawaii
   Westpac Bank
   National Development Bank

5. Commercial Rate of Interest is 10%

6. NBD rate of interest
   To locals: 6% (maximum $2 mill)
To joint ventures 7.5% (maximum $3 mill)

Bilateral and Capital Development Annual Budget: $25 million US

Chamber of Commerce organization exists

A Royalty payment is required for use of reef
Negotiating with developer to bring in charter boat

An ex-pat researcher is in the process of making an inventory of the resource base

The Church representatives on island will not accept development proposals of any kind

Total tourists annually: 500
Hotels: 2
Number of beds: 10
Tourist source markets:
30% Australia for diving
30% Japanese for war returnees
30% American for diving
10% others

Main Airport at larger neighboring island receives Boeing 767 Only, not jumbo jets. A smaller plane flies to Vanua.

General Economic Issues

1. Business license required from Island Council ($550 US per year) and restaurant and liquor license ($500 US per year) required.
2. Business tax is 10% net profit, which can be waived for five years for foreign investors
3. Compulsory 1% net profit tax is required, which is provided to national training center
4. Compulsory 7% NPF for each employee
5. Transport license for public transport ($500) US per annum is required
6. Insurance mandatory
   a. Third party insurance required
   b. General insurance required
7. Workers compensation is compulsory 2% of payroll
8. Land tenure costs are being considered.
9. Bed tax is 4% per person, proceeds of which goes to NTO.

Socio-cultural

1. 90% of the island community is semi-subsistence agriculture and fishing
   a. 60% are under 16 years of age
   b. 20% are over 50 years of age
2. A strong cultural tradition in rural areas remains
3. A wide range of social cultural traditions regarding value systems of giving, exchanging and providing services remains strong
4. There are three government primary schools and one church secondary boarding school
5. Strong religious ethic is among residents
6. English is the language of education and church
7. There remains a traditional control over use of forest resources and marine resources

Policy and Legislation

1. Policy encourages decentralization of tourism industry to encourage it to expand to outer islands
2. Policy calls for greatest degree of local participation
3. Policy is to ensure flow of economic benefits to communities
4. Environmental Protection Act calls for EIAs for all developments. However, this is generally ignored by locals
5. Building codes exist for all buildings, with permits required. However, this is generally ignored by locals
6. Public health requirements exist and are vigorously enforced
7. There is a five year tax holiday available for foreign investors

**Infrastructure**

1. Grass airstrip doubles as playing field
2. One schedule air flight per week, maximum of 19 seats
3. Cargo/passenger ship arrives once every 24 days, one wharf receives materials
4. Diesel generated electricity for main town only, with a major cold storage facility fish cooperative
5. Natural catchment water supply system
6. No sewerage treatment or pumping
7. There is a government clinic with one nurse, malaria is present in different areas
8. No rubbish disposal facility
9. There are 20 vehicles on island, 10 government and 10 private
10. Short wave radio/telephone, one only in main town
11. One cell police station
12. Three Chinese trade stores, one coop store

**Government structure**

National Government
Parliament
Provincial Seats (3)
Island Councils
Village Councils

Administrative Center in main town
- Public Works
- Agriculture/fishing office
- Education officer

Copa Plantation
- Employees contracted on yearly basis
- Local employees (single only)

Irregular bait fishing -- large operators

Some local subsistence fishing 2 boats per village

**APPENDIX B**

**Business Ideas**

1. Eco-cultural experience
   - 3-5 day package
   - Live in village, share meals
   - Proceeds distributed to village
   - Encourage villages to practice traditional skills

2. Trips on traditional canoes, visitors stay in traditional meeting house

3. Cater to Divers (Discourage pilfering of artifacts)

4. Invite established dive tour operators
   - North lagoon protected
   - Fishing allowed only with traditional methods
   - Landing fee is $1 plus $0.60 per dive
   - Limited camping sites

5. Extend to local participation
   - encourage villages to offer tours
   - river paddling

6. Use stored revenues
   - Localize industry
   - Build low level locally owned locally built resort, owned by council of chiefs
   - Reasons: Good business and little investment required
   - Good ecology
   - Controlled growth
   - Self sufficient
   - Revitalize interest in cultural heritage
   - Constraints:
     - Ability to manage
     - Malaria
     - Cultural degradation

7. Package Tour of Island
   - Solar powered boat tour of mangroves
   - 1-2 day package of rain forest, mangroves and villages
   - Trained guides
   - Build and maintain a museum
   - Use existing hotel
Provide storyteller
Share experiences with local villagers
Use computerized reservation system
"Friends of Vanua" sales network
Snorkeling in lagoon

8. Little or no development required, use available resources
   Network with organizations on larger neighboring island
   Keep numbers of guests small enough to live with local families
   Train families for hospitality skills
   Return benefits directly to villages

9. Use Plantation and main town as cultural base and lagoon for marine-based activities.
   Use Government land
   Local employment wherever possible
   Use family accommodations as well as existing hotel

10. Sea kayaking and camping as main nature-based activities

One group adopted role playing to present ideas. The following individuals presented their arguments for development:

1. Traditional land owners representative
2. Village elder church authority
3. Ex-pat developer
4. Ex-pat environmentalist/conservationist
5. Consultant researcher
6. Head of national tourism office
7. Human Resource trainer
8. Ex-pat political adviser to national government
9. Ex-pat social scientist with outspoken conservative outlook
10. Consultant representing ex-pats on island.

General Concept of Development:
   One week immersion in island culture and life for visitors
   Leave lifestyle as unchanged as possible to limit cultural impact
   Small scale business owned and managed locally
   Small guest houses locally built with local materials

Requirements:
   Limited funding for infrastructure
   National government keeps conservation in line
   Training for local work force
   National Tourism Office coordinates development
   Local leaders consulted
   Benefits must be shared
   Entire local management
   Compensation
   After selected number of years, total ownership of developed businesses goes to villagers.
Thank you for inviting me to speak at this conference on ecotourism in the Pacific. For all delegates and speakers, especially those who have come from overseas, welcome to Auckland and to New Zealand.

New Zealanders take a special pride and strength from the unique beauty and diversity of these green and pleasant islands. Visitors, too, leave New Zealand intrigued, moved and hungry for more. New Zealand shares the amazing variety of the Pacific region, and let us not forget that all of the countries in the area were once a part of the ancient continent of Gondwanaland. What we have and who we are is special to us.

Foreign and domestic tourists can take up the challenge provided by snow and wind, or reflect in comfort on the grandeur of nature. And they can do it all in one day if they choose. New Zealanders know that our "clean, green" image is a major drawcard for visitors from overseas. We also know that we need to stay clean and green not just for our visitors but for ourselves and our children. It is the job of all of us to keep in mind just how important it is to look after what we've got. It is also the job of each of us to do the looking after.

As New Zealand's Minister for the Environment, I am charged with ensuring that the country's natural and physical resources are not abused or exploited, but sustained for future generations. My government has passed a pioneering law to this effect, which I learned at the Rio Earth Summit back in June, is widely admired around the world. As that law says, we don't want to lock our resources up; we want to manage them in a sustainable way. In other words, development must always be environmentally compatible.

Which brings me to ecotourism.

The term enjoys many names - green tourism, appropriate tourism, ecological tourism. But it could probably be summed up as responsible, nature-based tourism which fosters environmental appreciation and understanding. Whatever we call it, New Zealand can expect to see very many travellers seeking it in the years ahead.

The basic difference between ecotourism and mass tourism is quality and quantity. There is a suggestion that foreign investors are inhibited from investing in tourism in this country because they're worried about the Resource Management Act. That perception may have arisen because one or two large tourist projects were not approved, mainly because the size, shape and thrust of the development was out of harmony with the local environment. But by contrast, I have recently been happy to approve as Minister of Lands and the sale of Forsyth Island in the Marlborough Sounds to an experienced tourism developer. It is a development welcomed by local people because the developer took the time to get their opinion. He is creating the solitude experience of Forsyth, building chalets in secluded areas of the island, where people can enjoy the peace and tranquillity, while at the same time preserving exactly that. In this situation tourism development is sustainable, enhancing, and eminently desirable. It shows what we could call eco-sensitivity.

As travellers increasingly seek more authentic, sensitive and environmentally oriented experience, those areas which have invested
heavily in the infrastructure of mass tourism will be most vulnerable.

Changing demands place a greater premium on remoteness and isolation. By and large the demands are only satisfied by wilderness areas. Usually these are contained in national parks and if not then they are still remote enough to have escaped the pressure of development and visitation.

A problem with "ecotourism" is the scarcity of the wilderness environment, it is necessarily a scarce resource, an endangered resource. And with an industry gearing up to bring vastly increased numbers of tourists to New Zealand within the next decade, there are going to be considerable demands upon our unique physical, biological and human landscape.

Clearly not all of these visitors will fall into the category of ecotourist, but a steadily growing proportion will be.

The increased demands that tourists - overseas and local - will place on our environment means we must foster a new expertise and management style. First, the protection of our heritage, wilderness and conservation estate must be placed right up front in new development plans. Second, we are going to have to think about cultivating an educational relationship with the tourist. But in the short term, the local tourist industry, too, may need a few sessions in the classroom.

All those involved in the industry - the bus operator and the guide, the hotel manager and the receptionist - need to get a good understanding of the meaning of sustainable tourism development.

The people in this audience have already shown their commitment to ecotourism by their very presence at this conference. Leaders in the tourism industry, conservationists and environmentalists all understand what ecotourism is about. But has the message got through to those who are face to face with the tourists? The people who package the itineraries, run the coaches and guide the tours - do they know enough about responsible tourism and sustainable development of the industry?

Yet there are encouraging signs that the local tourism industry is coming to recognise that good environmental management will help, not hinder business.

Voluntary codes of practice - a good enlightened self interest - are increasingly being adopted within all sectors of the business community.

The N.Z. Tourist Industry Federation's new code of environmental principles for tourism acknowledges that the future of the industry depends on sustainable natural resources. The code also calls for both management and staff to learn about environmental awareness and conservation principles. It is good to see that the industry recognises that the fact of tourism is changing and that the natural and physical resources it is based on must be safeguarded. It is time that we as a community began to respond to the challenge of using resources in a sustainable way.

At the Rio Summit which I attended in June, the solution to the world's environment and development problems was seen to be "sustainable development" globally, nationally and locally. Sustainable development is at the core of sound economic, social and environmental policies. All are interconnected.

The subject of tourism was addressed at Rio in a number of chapters of Agenda 21, the final conference document and our framework for action in the coming century. Agenda 21 will serve as a baseline reference document by which individual countries can measure their efforts to achieve sustainable development of their economies.

One of the key messages from this refreshingly hard-nosed conference was that businesses everywhere need to employ good environmental practices - not to save the world - but because their bottom lines will increasingly depend on it.

One of the most impressive products I saw at Rio was a report from the "Business Council for Sustainable Development" - a high-powered group from all continents charged with bringing a business perspective to the conference. The council coined the useful term "eco-efficiency" to describe those businesses - and those nations - which are able to add maximum value with minimum resource use and minimum pollution. They found that the concept of eco-efficiency offers a natural link between business excellence and environmental excellence. Businesses which achieve such efficiency will also win competitive advantage over their rivals, nationally and internationally.
New Zealand’s Resource Management Act, which as I said earlier was praised at Rio, factors in the environment and focuses on avoiding, mitigating and remediing adverse effects of activities both in the present and over time.

The law places a big emphasis on the inter-relationships between a resource, an industry and a local community. It says that specific account must be taken of Maori cultural values and rights under the Treaty of Waitangi. For example, if an industry like tourism exploits the local community, this will not only cause ill-feeling among the locals, but it will damage the industry and the resource. Naturally the reverse applies. The ecotourism industry needs to become part of the community.

New Zealand’s Resource Management Act sets up a process by which everyone can make a contribution to the resource management of an area. The tourism sector must take advantage of this opportunity if it is to avoid unnecessary statutory hurdles to any proposal. Your industry needs certainty, certainty of standards, certainty for investment, and certainty that the values can only be achieved if the industry looks ahead and works with the host community.

The country’s infrastructure is also significant to the tourist. If, for example, a network of cycleways were created along New Zealand’s main roads we would be enhancing this resource for the large numbers of visitors who want to see the country on two wheels, with obvious advantages for everyone. All too often I see cyclists labouring up the metal roads of the Coromandel or fixing punctures by the side of the road.

As Minister of Transport as well as Environment, I would like to see people encouraged to get out and use bicycles, most of which are just not suited for very rough roads. Touring the country by bicycle is an environmentally sensible and above all highly enjoyable way to go. Having fun is surely what tourism is all about.

I would like to see New Zealand cities start to emphasise cycleways. Currently most ignore the amenity value of such paths as shown in places like Canberra where they have proved quite an attraction, with bikes for hire at local hotels.

New Zealand must start to respond to the challenge of providing tourists with alternative and inexpensive modes of transport.

New Zealand Rail’s Tranzalpine Train, which runs daily from Christchurch to Greymouth is an excellent and highly profitable example of the kinds of new services we need. With its panoramic windows and viewing platform, the train takes its passengers, mostly overseas tourists, through rugged and spectacular scenery that would otherwise be inaccessible. The Tranzalpine offers a great opportunity to see the countryside and is a very pleasant way to travel.

Some local cities are responding to the fact that domestic and foreign tourists like to be able to explore a place without having to grapple with large numbers of motor vehicles. City planners in Wellington and Blenheim have both acknowledged the need to bring people and cars together in a sensible way. This is another sound example of the integrated approach to resources I have been talking about today.

And so to another kind of bouquet. Shortly I will present the first New Zealand Ecotourism Award which is being established for the purpose of setting a standard of excellence for tourist operators who work in the area. An although the standard has to do with the operation itself, it is more about how much care and effort an operator takes to conserve the natural environment or minimise the environmental impact of their business.

The award has been co-sponsored by Air New Zealand, the Royal N.Z. Forest and Bird Protection Society, the N.Z. Tourism Board and noted German travel writer Dr Jo Fischer, who I understand is with us today.

For judging, the following criteria have been used:
- The purpose of the operation must be environmentally educational.
- The operation must minimise and monitor its impact on the environment.
- The tour operator must have a proven track record of active involvement in conservation. It is not enough just to use the environment for his or her business.
- In any year, the judging panel has the right to announce no winner, if none of the operations meets the criteria.

I congratulate the winners and have great pleasure in opening New Zealand Day at this ecotourism conference.
"NEW ZEALAND ECOTOURISM -
THE ROLE OF THE PRIVATE SECTOR"
PLAYER AND REFEREE
Rodney Russ
Southern Heritage Expeditions
North Canterbury, New Zealand

Abstract

Private Sector operators are, in the majority of cases, at the interface between the ecotourist and their eco experience. They fulfil the role of 'player' and 'referee'. This dual role has tensions, but makes private sector operators an obvious partner in developing sustainable ecotourism.

There are very good reasons why the Department of Conservation should not have sole responsibility for the management and development of ecotourism in New Zealand. If New Zealand is going to continue to be an ecotourism destination, providing the sort of experience ecotourists seek, then a new 'Management Body' consisting of representatives of Department of Conservation, Private Sector Operators, Tourism Industry Representatives and Conservation organisations needs to be established. Their task would be to identify ecotourism resources and set maximum sustainable impacts at each of these sites based on the resource, the experience and the 'return' to conservation. Once levels have been set then a 'quota' system should be introduced to license operators.

Players and Referees

In the majority of cases the private sector is at the interface between the eco-traveller and their eco-experience the significance of this fact is often overlooked. The service's we offer our clients, whether it be a half day interpretative walk a package tour or cruise, is often the door to a greater understanding and appreciation of the natural world. For many of our clients this experience builds upon or confirms an existing knowledge or appreciation base. For others though, it can be a real awakening, a life and attitude changing Damascus Road experience. The manner in which we conduct our business is of the utmost importance. Our presentation, attitudes and information are constantly under the microscope as eco-travellers are among some of the most discerning and most demanding of all travellers. The sub title for this paper is 'player and referee'. We are 'Players' in the sense that we actually do the guiding, field interpretation and teaching 'Referees' in the sense that we conduct our business in the knowledge that the resource is finite and to ensure that it remains so, means that we will necessarily need to set rules and enforce them. It is naive to believe that we can survive in business by packaging or offering any sort of product. We only remain players in this game as long as we:

1) respond to market demands
2) have a resource with which to work.

This dual role has it tensions, but far from being an impossible situation I believe it can contribute to planning a sustainable future. There is urgency for the industry and the authorities to consult with and involve ecotourism operators. The operators also have a responsibility to liaise and cooperate with each other.

Sustaining Ecotourism

What are the demands that the market puts on us? What motivates ecotourists? Paul Eagles of the University of Waterloo (Eagles, 1991) conducted a survey amongst Canadian ecotourists and it is interesting to look very briefly at the results of that survey (Table 1).
TABLE 1
Summary of the Motivations That Are Significantly
More Important to the Ecotourists (from Eagles P., 1991)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Motivation</th>
<th>Rank</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wilderness/Undisturbed Nature</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lakes and streams</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Be physically active</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mountains</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Parks</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experience new Lifestyles</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural Areas</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oceanside</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meet people with similar interests</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Simpler lifestyles</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visit historic places</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outdoor Recreation</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Be daring and adventurous</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural activities</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>See maximum in time available</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rediscover Self</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change from busy job</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local Crafts</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Historic sites and Parks</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reduced fares</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thrills and Excitement</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Museums, art galleries</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Budget accommodation</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Escape from demands of life</td>
<td>24</td>
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<tr>
<td>Participate in sports</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Try new foods</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have fun, be entertained</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smaller towns, villages</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local festivals and events</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Go places friends have not been</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inexpensive meals</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Talk about trip after return</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Live theatres and musicals</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is very clear what motivates them. The obvious question is, is it possible to continue to provide that experience without sacrificing the resource? I contend that unless the private sector is made a partner in the administration of the resource the simple answer is NO, New Zealand will not be able to do it. We will not be an ecotourism destination next century, we will have very little to offer the ecotourist.

Right now the New Zealand Tourism Board is sending mixed and confused messages to potential visitors. The message "come to New Zealand and enjoy the unspoilt nature and wilderness areas but bring all your friends because we want at least 3 million of you to visit us each year" is contradictory. The Department of Conservation is sending similar messages to private sector operators in its concession policies and cost recovery programmes. Tragically - both messages are driven by dollars, not quality of experience or service. The Department of Conservation seem to have lost sight of the fact that ecotourism is primarily a 'conservation tool,' not a direct revenue generator - the revenue and benefits are downstream not in cash up front.

Roles of the Private Sector

The private sector performs three very important functions, all of which must be incorporated into a model for sustainable ecotourism development.

1) Product development

The private sector tests the boundaries of what is acceptable or permissible. Left to Government agencies this would not happen. The private sector is the only group with the freedom to do this - we are constantly in dialogue with the market place we know what the market wants.

Boundary testing should not be aggressive or threatening, but informed and responsible. However, when officials take an ostrich stance they may need a kick in the most exposed part of their anatomy. As a result of the ongoing examination and discussion some boundaries may need to be contracted, others may be extended. The private sector should be ensuring that all boundaries are constantly under review so that our product meets the demands of both the domestic and international traveller. We appreciate that legislation inherited by the department places some constraints on them, but that legislation should
not be a place of refuge - an excuse for a lack of action. In many cases there are ways to work within the legislation and I want to commend some Department officers for their efforts and ingenuity in doing this. It often takes that little bit of extra effort.

2) **Product Presentation**
As private sector educators or interpreters we enjoy a freedom and flexibility that is unique. This means that we are often better equipped and better prepared than those who have traditionally carried out the interpretative role. There are a number of time honoured models of interpretation. As players we must decide which, if any, of these models we use or whether we design new models or methods to tell the story. There is a fascinating story to tell, there is no curriculum, no hard and fast rules of where to begin or where to finish or what to include. There are a thousand pictures to be painted - the choice is ours. As private sector operators we have to choose carefully and with an eye to the market as we compete for ecotourists with other destinations around the world.

3) **Product control**
One of the fundamental truths we interpret is that the resource is finite. This means that we will set boundaries and rules. For example, we will set rules on the ratio of guide to client, on standards of presentation and interpretation, we will have rules for behaviour of clients on historic sites or near wildlife. These in house rules will vary from operator to operator and to a large extent they will determine the success or otherwise of the company. There is no greater critic or advertisement than our clients. The majority of ecotourism operators bring a vast experience and knowledge to their operation - it is almost a non-negotiable criteria if they are going to succeed. In many cases the expertise and knowledge is equal to if not greater than many of the staff in Government Departments. There is no resource like experience but it would appear that there is nothing more threatening either.

**Responsibilities**

There are very good reasons why the management and development of the ecotourism resource should not be solely the responsibility of the Department of Conservation:

1) **Development of sustainable ecotourism** requires more than management. The Department is primarily a manager not a developer of resources;

2) **Development of a sustainable ecotourism resource needs a coherent nationwide strategy/vision.** The department is firmly locked into a regional mentality;

3) **Cost recovery programmes that have been forced onto the department means that ecotourism is seen increasingly as a revenue generator.**

Ecotourism as a conservation tool, and the advocacy role it plays is seldom considered. What money is generated is lost in the consolidated fund and seldom if ever gets ploughed back into real conservation projects.

Whatever organisation has the responsibility and oversight for the development and management of ecotourism in New Zealand needs to address the following:

1) **Sustainability of the resource**
I doubt whether there is much disagreement on what this means. The resource we have is our wilderness areas, undisturbed nature and unique wildlife. These areas encompass a wide range of ecosystems and landscapes and the ecotourist has the opportunity to be physically active - e.g. tramp or climb - within these areas. Extensive coastlines means that they can cruise or sail. However they choose to travel they can observe or explore.

2) **Sustainability of the experience**
Probably a little more contentious as 'experience' is difficult to "quantify". I believe that it is of equal importance in motivating the ecotourist to travel to a particular destination. If they know that there are going to be a large number of other people at a particular destination or that destination is so highly regulated and managed they are far less likely to travel to it. Obvious management techniques such as board walks, extensive sign posting, hand rails can all detract from the experience. Travel in large groups can also affect the experience (not to mention the environment). Inappropriate styles of accommodation also impact on the experience.

3) **A realistic return for conservation**
When this question is asked, it is sadly always expressed in dollar terms. There are other very tangible returns for conservation which are not measured in dollars. However, since we are
talking about dollars, the question should also be asked how much or what level of charges private operators sustain? I personally believe the department has unrealistic revenue generating expectations of ecotourism. A confidential memo circulated to all Area Managers suggests a minimum 2.5% tax on all ecotourism operators, regardless of how much time is spent on the estate. Under this regime a ecotourism operator offering a NZ ecotour would in effect be paying an extra 2.5% on accommodation, meals, air travel etc. We don't mind paying our share, but what criteria is going to be used to define an ecotourism operator when you can't even agree on a definition? What about overseas companies who use inbound operators for their services? Who is going to be charged, the inbound operator or the overseas company? How are you going to police it? There is an awful amount more work to be done yet to establish a system that is fair and equitable that doesn't penalise a small sector of the market that could be your closest ally.

Research

There is a strong case for the development of partnerships between ecotourism operators and conservation and research agencies for the funding of specific projects. This in my opinion, is a far better use of the ecotourism resource. Southern Heritage Tours has advocated this approach to conservation and tourism since it began operating in 1985. To date we have raised over $80,000 to fund two specific research projects. In 1989 we organised and funded a survey on the distribution of Rockhopper penguins on the Auckland Islands. We are currently funding a survey by Dr Ian Mclean of the University of Canterbury on the Fiordland crested penguins. Both these projects have been written up and the information is available for management and or recovery plans. We offered to support the sealion research programme on the Auckland Islands this summer. It was declined but we have since learnt that the offer was never conveyed to the researchers. There must be a lesson in that.

We are currently negotiating the funding of a further research project with one of the Crown Research Institutes. The number of projects that could be both funded and assisted by ecotourism is limited only by the imagination. Projects don't have to be as large and perhaps as ambitious as ours. They can be equally well done on a local level. However they do require a commitment and a vision from both operators and Government and at this point I must commend the Southland Office for having the vision to approve our current projects.

A Model

Finally I want to offer a model which I believe will address some of the issues which I have discussed in this paper and will ensure that we will have a sustainable resource and experience into the next century. It is perhaps, not as radical as it might sound. Parts of the model are already being used in some areas of the country. The basis for this model is the premise that the resource is finite and that unless there are changes to the management structure then the resource and experience that the ecotraveller desires will not be available. The model draws on the experience and expertise of a much wider range of people than are currently involved and puts a value on the dual role of 'player' and 'referee'. It also places a sustainable value on the ecotourism experience ensuring that it will be available for generations to come. This value is returned directly to conservation in a number of different ways.

From Paul Eagles study and no doubt our own observations we know that ecotourists visit wild remote places to see undisturbed nature. We need to begin by identifying those places in New Zealand that can provide that experience.

From Paul Eagles study and no doubt our own observations we know that ecotourists visit wild remote places to see undisturbed nature. We need to begin by identifying those places in New Zealand that can provide that experience. (vision/strategy) We then must establish what I have termed Maximum Sustainable Impact (MSI). MSI would be set only after considering the physical impact on the environment and the impact on the experience. This is already done at places like Little Barrier Island, Kapiti Island and the Subantarctic Islands. I would like to see it extended to other areas.

The task of establishing MSI in these areas would be the responsibility of a board made up of representatives of the Department of Conservation, Tourist Industry, operators, conservation organisations (e.g. Forest and Bird, WWF). Once the MSI had been established this would then be allocated to approved and licensed operators on a quota basis. MSI could be increased or decreased depending on visitor impact monitoring studies which would be an important part of the quota. Quota would attract a fee which would be paid into a special conservation fund. MSI would ensure a value added product that would have both international and domestic appeal ensuring a return to conservation.
Conclusion

I fully realise that this model will not find favour with all sectors of those involved in ecotourism, probably least of all the Dept of Conservation. However there are good reasons why the Department should not have sole responsibility for the management and development of the resource. They bring special skills and a legislative framework to the task. As both 'player' and 'referee' the private sector brings special skills and knowledge to the task. There are also others who can make a contribution and must be included to ensure a sustainable industry, resource and experience.

References

NEW ZEALAND ECOTOURISM:
ROLE OF NON-GOVERNMENT ORGANIZATIONS

Tony Stanlford
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One of the major roles of a non-Government organisation in tourism is to try and bring this extremely diverse industry together into a "one industry" body or organisation. We devote an inordinate amount of time to this effort.

We seem to think that the problem we have with this is peculiarly New Zealand, but in fact it is the same all over the world. Various countries have developed varying organisational structures which simply try and overcome the nature of tourism in a way which best suits their circumstances.

Why is it so difficult? Simply because a tourist industry pervades all areas of a community. It can't be contained in this or that corner or area. Visitors are free agents, they go anywhere and react with all sorts of people in good or bad situations. We can't keep them together and organised with sheep dogs or guides like good NZ sheep. But surprisingly, like sheep, the majority like to stick together.

So before we look at the NZ Tourist Industry Federation as a non-Government organisation I will briefly recap on the structure of the industry.

Books have been written about the basic question "What is Tourism" and I'm not sure that if you read them all you would be any the wiser - in fact you would probably be more confused than you were at the start.

However I see tourism as comprising four basic components:

1. The Tourist A person who seeks various experiences in a place outside their normal abode. The type of experiences desired will largely determine the destination chosen.

2. The businesses providing those people the goods and services tourists require, and hopefully make a profit from doing so.

3. Governments, whether national or local, which need to provide the infrastructure to service the visitor and who see the industry as an economic good providing foreign exchange, employment, taxation revenue etc

4. The host community within which the visitor, in Mao's example of guerilla warfare, "swims like a fish".

So a good definition as set out in Tourism: Principles, Practices, Philosophies - McIntosh and Goeldner is:

"Tourism - the sum of the phenomena and relationships arising from the interaction of tourists, business, host government and host community in the process of attracting and hosting tourists or visitors."

Various methods have been developed to demonstrate the wide diversity of the industry but I have always liked the "tourism tree" example (Figure 1).

Another area of the tourist industry which is different from most other industries is its distribution system. In its organised form it is much like other industries with manufacturers, wholesalers and retailers (Figure 2).
Figure 1: The "Tourism Tree".
Figure 2: The Sales Distribution System.
But with tourism the consumer can and does deal direct with the product supplier on all levels.

Some other characteristics of tourism which are important to understand

* it is the world’s largest industry
* it is a 24 hour day seven day week
* it is labour intensive
* it is mainly an industry of small businesses although large ones seem to dominate
* it has few barriers to entry
* it is quite decentralised and is a prime means of regional development
* it is a low pollutant and can contribute to conserving and maintaining our environmental and cultural heritage
* it is a vehicle for better understanding and goodwill among all peoples

The broad nature of the tourist industry which I have tried to illustrate has led to the emergence of a range of industry board organisations (has it ever!) to reflect sectoral interests. HANZ, MANZ, TAANZ, etc. The challenge of the industry is to co-ordinate effectively the activities of each sector towards achieving mutually agreed and beneficial objectives.

That’s what the Federation is all about.

The need for an overall private sector organisation to represent and promote tourism was recognised in 1953 when arrivals were 19,000 and tourism receipts were $3.6 million. The NZ Travel and Holiday Association was formed. The name and structure change in 1970 when arrivals were 155,000 and receipts $26 million. In 1984, when arrivals totalled 567,000 and receipts reached $1 billion the concept of a “Federation” to represent the whole industry was approved.

The Federation comprises four sections - National Associations (MANZ, HANZ, TAANZ), Regional Tourism Organisations (Otago, Wellington, Northland etc). Industry members (Air New Zealand, Skyline, Southern Pacific Hotel Corporation etc), and Allied members - usually smaller businesses or individuals operating on a regional basis. All sectors can operate by themselves and are all represented on the Board. Two other sectors are being developed - Tourism Educators and Adventure Tourism Operators (Figure 3).

The Federation’s Mission Statement is:

"To provide leadership for the tourist industry to ensure the growth, value and quality of the New Zealand tourism experience."

Its objectives are:

To serve as the voice of the industry; To stimulate and promote tourism to and within New Zealand; To encourage research into, education and training for, and development of the industry.

The Code of Practice is:

"To provide top level service through staff training and reward structures
To provide value-for-money in the provision of products and facilities
To care for the natural, cultural and historical environment and to enhance these aspects wherever possible
To fully attend to the needs of the customer and quickly rectify any problems brought to their attention
To contribute to the overall development of New Zealand’s tourist industry"

Which it encourages its members to subscribe to but has no power to enforce.

Voluntary organisations such as the Federation have a number of roles as well as simply doing what its members want. They need to take a lead in areas where single businesses or individuals might not be able to be involved or represent overall views. Areas such as education and the environment are typical. In a lot of cases organisations need to act as the conscience of the industry and highlight and support many “motherhood” issues. It is always hoped that individual companies will follow suit in time.

The Federation has very good antecedents on environmental issues. It has always promoted tourism as a more positive way to utilise our grand scenery and landscape than extractive type industries and in fact tourism provides an economic justification for conserving the environment. The organisation has always worked closely with National Parks under Lands & Survey and now the Department of Conservation.
The organisation was a prime leader in the campaign to save Lake Manapouri in the late 60's and this remains one of the largest programmes undertaken by the organisation and resulted in success.

It is currently endeavouring to change attitudes at and funding for the Department of Conservation to enable the necessary developments to take place to manage the number of expected visitors in the future in a manner which will protect the environment.

So the Tourist Industry Federation has been "green" for some time. Tourism and the environment are natural partners as tourism is dependent on the natural environment as one of its major attractions. Just consider the emphasis placed on Rotorua's geysers or Milford's Mitre Peak or the Shotover River Gorge in our marketing activities.

The key to the future development of the industry is ecologically sustainable development - development that does not jeopardise the future productive base of the industry's resources and which sustains ecological processes necessary to maintain quality of life for present and future generations.

Sustainable development recognises that environmental issues should be an integral part of economic decisions. It involves an integrated approach to conservation and development which seeks to optimise the net benefits to the community now and in the future - from resource use.

In this context, tourism development and environmental conservation should not be viewed as mutually exclusive. Indeed, with responsible planning and management they are quite compatible. Conservation of the environment can help retain the appeal of our tourism product and enrich visitors' experiences. Conversely, the provision of controlled visitor access to environmentally sensitive areas can assist their conservation by:

- enhancing community awareness of their conservation value
- limiting environmental damage from uncontrolled visitor access, and
- providing a source of revenue for conservation management.

There is growing recognition among industry and conservation groups of their common ground. Evidence of increased industry awareness of the importance of conservation is illustrated by the development and acceptance of the Federation's **Code of Environmental Principles for Tourism in New Zealand**.

The Code was initially discussed with our Board and interested members and a draft was presented to delegates at our Convention in 1990. Eight discussion groups spent two hours debating the Code but in the end there was a remarkable unanimity from the majority on the principles put forward. It was further developed in consultation with industry representatives and other interested parties with specialised knowledge in the area.

Adoption of this Code by the NZ Tourist Industry Federation is the first step in an education process designed to demonstrate the interdependence of tourism and the environment and to emphasise the advantages to both the industry and the environment if an effective working relationship is developed.

Its guiding principles are:

- to promote environmentally sustainable tourist development so as to ensure that the tourist industry can continue to be based upon the natural resources of New Zealand in the long term
- to recognise that both development and conservation can be valid and complementary uses of New Zealand's resources.

**Protection and Development**

- to manage existing natural and cultural areas associated with tourist development and use in such a way that they are protected and enhanced
- to recognise that every environment has limits of acceptable change which in some areas may be considerable but which in other areas may be small or zero
- to encourage the relevant agencies to identify areas worthy of special protection and determine carrying capacities for sensitive areas
- to adopt general conservation policies and to minimise adverse environmental impacts.

**Assessment and Monitoring**

- to ensure that environmental assessment becomes an integral step
in the consideration of any site as a tourist development
to ensure that community attitudes and feelings are incorporated from the earliest stages of planning for a tourist development
to encourage the review of current environmental management practices throughout the tourist industry and the modification of these practices where necessary
to ensure that an ongoing responsibility for environmental care and protection and community concerns is adopted.

Liaison
* to co-operate with relevant local, regional and national authorities and communities in order to integrate environmental requirements into resource management
* to ensure that those involved in the tourist industry contribute to discussions on environmental planning and management issues as they affect tourism
* to provide the opportunity for the wider community to be involved in discussions and consultations on tourism and environmental management issues.

Education and Information
* to promote and to reward environmentally responsible tourist organisations and businesses
* to foster in both management and staff, environmental awareness and conservation principles
* to enhance visitors' appreciation and understanding of the natural environment through the provision of accurate interpretation and information
to encourage an understanding of the Maori lifestyle, customs, beliefs and traditions as they relate to the environment.

One of the great misconceptions about the tourist industry and "eco" or "green" or "adventure" tourism is that the great bulk of future visitors to New Zealand are going to pour into environmentally sensitive areas and literally love them to death.

Some commentators are now linking the target of 3 million visitors by 2000 directly to environmental degradation. But that is the wrong debate. We will have three million international visitors to New Zealand. The potential growth reminds me of the game of hide and seek when the seeker calls out "Coming ready or not."

Our challenge is to be ready with development and management strategies to ensure that that number of visitors won't degrade our environment.

In any case most of them won't be a problem.

To go back to my sheep analogy, the majority of visitors will basically stay on the beaten track, or as the Westpac Bank says "ant trail" and not strike out on their own into environmentally sensitive areas.

But a growing number will take advantage of the specialist tour operators such as the Rodney Russ's or Doug Johansen's or Gerry McSweeney's. These sort of people are very familiar with the damage that can be caused and will accordingly ensure that their visitors are managed in a way which will minimise any damage.

And many of these types of attractions are like the White Heron Colony at Okarito. Self limiting by the facilities which are provided or the small area of the activities.

In the more popular areas then Non-Government organisation will continue to agitate for suitable development and management techniques to ensure a quality visitor experience without damaging the environment.

That raises the question of funding and this may be the most critical issue to be faced.

Although we believe that Government, as the only representative of the future generations, must bear the prime responsibility for funding the Department of Conservation, we are very much aware of the necessary restrictions which are being placed on Government spending.

But at some stage Government's commitment to marketing NZ overseas through the Tourism Board must be matched by funding development to cater for those visitors on land the Government owns and manages.

This lobbying exercise is also a natural activity for the Federation. I refer back to our code "To
recognise that both development and conservation can be valid and complementary uses of New Zealand's resources."

We must continually seek new and innovative ways to allow our visitors to participate in and appreciate the scenery of New Zealand in a manner that they can afford, in time, in money and in physical effort! An example. I have been opposed, for years, to the proposal to build a road through the Greenstone Valley to provide access to Milford Sound on the basis that the destruction of the area just wasn't justified in terms of the benefits it would provide. However, that limits the area to people who have plenty of time, are reasonably fit and like tramping - not the majority!

But the concept of a monorail or cableway link through the Greenstone Valley has tremendous potential. It could become one of the great journeys of the world and create little environmental desecration or pollution and allow people who would normally not venture into such an area on foot to see some spectacular scenery.

One of the Federation's major activities over the last few years has been Quality. New Zealand needs to concentrate on providing a quality experience and value for money. The environment is no exception.

We will never be overrun by people, as some Northern Hemisphere countries are, simply because we are just too far away. That means we will not have to physically limit the number of visitors we accept as Bermuda and the Seychelles do.

We have the opportunity to plan and develop our industry to cater for three million visitors in a way which protects and even enhances the environment and provides our visitor with a high quality experience which can be repeated and repeated.

The Federation's role is to continually promote this concept to its members, the industry at large, Government and the general public.

In the tourist industry we tend to speak as if international visitors are the be and end all of tourism. Nothing could be further from the truth. Domestic tourism accounts for about 75% of all tourism activity in New Zealand. But international tourism is growing faster and will be the major area of growth in the future preserving our population basis and economic growth remain basically static.
The Role of Government and the Work of the Ministry of Tourism

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Abstract
The Ministry of Tourism functions as a unit within the Ministry of Commerce dealing with government policy issues affecting tourism. It provides independent advice and develops proposals for the Minister of Tourism and Cabinet, works with other agencies in areas such as conservation, education and transport where policies have a significant impact on tourism, and deals with a range of other government and intergovernmental activities relevant to the tourism sector. The Ministry is working on an industry-wide interpretation of tourism sustainability, consistent with the Resource Management Act. Key components include sustainability, eco-efficiency and economic instruments. The project proposes a need to move away from a focus on protecting the environment by keeping people out, or excluding particular uses. It suggests the need for a more adaptable system to achieve better solutions in managing people and their effects on the environment, and meeting the needs for increased resources to manage the growth of visitor numbers.

The Role of Government and the Work of the Ministry of Tourism

I welcome the opportunity to speak to you today, even though I have been given the rather dry subject “THE ROLE OF GOVERNMENT” and asked to tell you about the Ministry of Tourism.

I want to first, briefly describe the Ministry and then discuss three fundamental components of a project we are involved in that directly relates to the subject of this conference.

The Ministry of Tourism

How many of you here today know of the Ministry of Tourism?

The fact that it doesn't have such a high profile, and can therefore offer neutral advice, is perhaps its strength.

A good deal of our time goes into comment and input on other people's initiatives. We have our "successes" but they are not the stuff that headlines are made of. Many result in improved co-ordination of policy impacting on tourism. They are achieved by participation in a broad band of policy debate. Our chief objective is to provide some consistency for tourism in the formulation of wider government policy and to offer informed independent advice to the Minister and Government.

The Ministry of Tourism's main functions include:

The provision of tourism policy advice to Government, unless it is related to the Tourism Board's strategies for tourism marketing and development; this is the prime responsibility of the Ministry of Tourism.

It advises the Government on the outputs it purchases from the Tourism Board.

The Ministry is the main coordinator of interdepartmental positions affecting tourism.

It deals with tourism content on
issues and committees which have a high degree of Government confidentiality about them.

The Ministry is the main participant in international tourism dealings between governments.

As well, the Ministry is responsible for the administration of a small grants fund and land holding inherited from days past when the government's tourism interests included land acquisition and other assets.

The task of making sure tourism growth is achieved, and is sustainable, inevitably involves a number of portfolios and public sector agencies as well as the private sector. You will have heard from many representing these groups already and will hear from others in this particular session of the conference.

The Government sees its role as creating a regulatory framework in which much more reliance could be placed on self management instead of direct regulation of business activity.

As many policy and expenditure areas affect tourism's performance, it needs to have a voice in the Government's overall growth strategy for New Zealand. Where policies are made that will affect tourism, we in the Ministry are there to see that tourism implications are not overlooked. In the last couple of months this has included comments on the New Zealand Coastal Policy Statement, depreciation, visa abolition agreements and immigration policy, Civil Aviation Authority funding, Asia-Pacific aviation, Single Aviation Market with Australia, Tourist Scenic Flying Safety Review and the Wairakei Tourist Park.

There are eleven people in the Ministry, each with our own subject responsibilities, spread thinly over many issues. While we are called a Ministry, technically we are part of the wider Ministry of Commerce.

Why part of the Ministry of Commerce? It makes sense really; even the Americans operate in this way. Commerce are involved in industry issues, competition policy and removing the impediments to industry.

This, you may feel, will flavour the way we view things, especially things environmental. In fact we are quite free to take an independent line on any aspect of our work, and often do.

However, increasingly we find common points of concern between us and our parent body. Commerce itself is involved in natural resource policy and is embracing the notion of the greening of business. This is in keeping with international trends and commitments such as Agenda 21, that all important outcome of the Earth Summit in Rio in June of this year.

Agenda 21, for those of you too busy to catch up with such events, is a guide for implementing the 27 Principles set out in the Rio Declaration and provides an international framework for sustainable development into the 21st century. It offers directions for economic, social and environmental policies.

It is also in keeping with an earlier influential international report, called "Our Common Future" (known to many of us as the Brundtland Report) and with New Zealand's own Resource Management law reforms. The broad framework provided by Agenda 21, and indeed the Resource Management Act as some of you may have heard yesterday, requires an integrated and coordinated approach towards sustainable tourism development in New Zealand.

Tourism Sustainability as a Work Programme

As a step towards sustainable tourism, the Ministry of Tourism is actively working on an industry-wide interpretation of tourism sustainability.

Through this work we are exploring ways of helping visitors to experience the environment while at the same time enabling the environment to absorb the visitors.

Before I go on to outline the Ministry's thoughts on this subject, I want to quickly describe what I see as two important starting points.

a) No Obvious General "Threat" At Present

Unlike most other foreign exchange earning sectors, tourism brings its customers to New Zealand, rather than exporting its products overseas. This means it has the potential for complex social, cultural and environmental interaction.

At present visitor levels, there is no obvious general "threat" neither to future visitors' enjoyment of their experiences, nor to host
communities’ ability to cater for tourism, nor to
the natural resources that make up much of the
tourism product sought and used by visitors in
New Zealand.

b) Adaptable Resource Management The
Key Component

A popularly held view is that the greater the
number of people seeking a particular tourism
experience, the more that experience and the
resources on which it is based become depleted. More often than not this view is
based on the belief that the natural resources
on which tourism is based are over used.

The reality is that with adaptable management
techniques and appropriate facilities, the
resource could sustain considerably more use.
The geyser affectionately known as Old Faithful
in Wyoming’s Yellowstone National Park is
seen by most of the park’s 2.9 million visitors
each year. This is three times the number to
visit the whole of New Zealand last year, or a
similar figure to the Tourism Board’s target for
New Zealand by the year 2000.

While not wanting to get into a debate over the
quality of visitor experience at Old Faithful, the
example reflects an obvious need for us to
move away from a focus on protecting the
environment by keeping people out, or
excluding particular uses. We need a new
more adaptable system that better manages
people and their effects on the environment
and meets the need for increased resources to
manage the growth in visitor numbers.

Which brings me back to the point I made
earlier. It is vital that resources be available for
the development and management of our
natural environment to keep pace with visitor
demand, and to avoid environmental damage.

The Ministry of Tourism is looking at this issue.
I would like to discuss three fundamental
components of our work programme on
establishing an agreed interpretation of tourism
sustainability consistent with the Resource
Management Act.

Three Fundamental Components

1 Sustainability
2 Eco-efficiency
3 Economic Instruments

Let us look at each in turn.

1 Sustainability

With the introduction of the Resource
Management Act in 1991, a new era in
environmental management has begun. The
integration of all New Zealand’s major resource
laws with a view towards sustainable
management is a world first.

For tourism, sustainability means achieving
growth at a level which does not deplete the
resource, cheat the visitor or exploit the local
population.

Put another way, it means New Zealand’s
natural and physical resources should be used
but not exhausted, and the build-up of negative
effects and irreversible damage should be
prevented.

On the face of it, tourism and the concept of
sustainability appear to be comfortable and
compatible bedfellows. A key ingredient of
much of the world’s tourism is the natural
environment. New Zealand’s tourism is no
exception.

Linked to the increasing development of
specialist tourism markets is the concept of
"Ecotourism" - tourism which is especially
concerned with the appreciation of nature as
the primary motive to participate.

In practice, ecotourism is itself a major
contributor in promoting sustainable
management - there are social and economic
reasons for looking after natural attractions like
the whales off the Kaikoura Coast. They
promise employment and income to local
communities and welcome foreign exchange to
the nation. But perhaps more importantly from
a viewpoint of sustainability, ecotourism cannot
survive unless the resources on which it is
based are protected.

The industry therefore needs to recognise this
potential, - identify - additional ecological
resources that are likely to be of interest to
visitors, and develop these and their markets in
a sustainable manner.

2 Eco-efficiency

Here is a new buzzword for the nineties. The
term has been coined to describe those
companies - and nations - which are able to
add maximum value with minimum resource
use and minimum pollution.

To practice eco-efficiency, tourism developers need to creatively consider the environment in their project design. Failure to do so could be costly and cause adverse public attention. They are responsible for delivering products and services to the visitor, and the industry must examine its operations to see how they stack up against sustainable resource management. This may involve any of the following actions:

- protecting the biosphere
- reducing and disposing of waste
- adopting energy efficient practices
- minimising environmental risks
- undertaking "green" marketing
- mitigating environmental damage
- providing complete and credible environmental information for visitors
- incorporating environmental values in the management of operations
- conducting regular environmental audits.

The environment, and environmental consciousness, is now an important marketing component. Sound environmental practices improve bottom line profits and offer a new source of competitive advantage.

New Zealand tourism is beginning to grasp this opportunity. The New Zealand Tourist Industry Federation and the Pacific Asia Travel Association have both published environmental codes of good practice and are encouraging their members to become more environmentally aware.

Within the industry, those who recognise that environmental values offer the critical success factor have a distinct competitive advantage. If they can demonstrate a track record of incorporating eco-efficient values into business practice they will outstrip those competitors who have yet to recognise the need to be seen as environmentally pro-active.

3 Economic Instruments

Although it is only one component in the overall picture, the Resource Management Act does provide New Zealand with a vehicle for achieving tourism sustainability. It gives central and local government tools to bring about sustainable management of natural and physical resources in New Zealand.

The Ministry believes the intent of section 32 of the Resource Management Act - the duty to consider alternatives, assess benefits and costs etc., supports a raft of exciting alternatives - if it was made to apply to tourist facilities and services on public land.

While there is a good case for government management and funding of tourism facilities on public land, we all know that there are competing priorities for public funds. I believe we are all realistic enough to accept that in the current political climate the Department of Conservation, for example, is unlikely to receive an increase in its vote for managing the conservation estate.

So we have to consider alternatives. The right of free and unrestricted access for all on public land is fast becoming a notion that New Zealand cannot afford to sustain.

As Neil Plimmer mentioned yesterday, economic instruments are likely to become increasingly important as a mechanism for controlling tourism sustainability. An economic instrument is described as one that uses a pricing mechanism to achieve an agreed resource management objective.

The establishment of tradeable property rights is one way of managing competition for the use of resources on publicly owned land.

While commercial activity based on full freehold rights would not be politically acceptable or legally sustainable, there are alternatives which would leave ownership of rights with the state (at least in the long term) but which could introduce many of the advantages of private capital and management into the way public land is managed. These would include joint ventures, franchising, and the tendering of rights of access.

Under any new system, the control of public land use needs to become more effects oriented, in keeping with the Resource Management Act. It would then be up to the...
licensure holder to seek ways of minimising the impact so that greater numbers of people could use the resource. At the moment limits are being imposed from the outside.

Some of these ideas are foreign and even offensive to many who hold dear to the doctrines of free access and use of public goods. But it is worthwhile keeping an open mind on this and looking for imaginative solutions to age-old problems.

**A Document to Stimulate Debate**

Towards the end of the year the Ministry will publish a discussion document on these main points:

- sustainability,
- eco-efficiency,
- economic instruments.

We would like to hear how you see this issue in your role as part of the tourist industry.

Finally, ecotourism should have us all rethinking the way we look at tourism growth. The general measure of success for the industry as a whole has been the number of overseas visitors arriving in the country in any one year. However, as the world becomes more cluttered and polluted, people are looking more closely at the environmental quality of a destination when they make their travel choices. Therefore, it can be argued that the measure of success is not the annual number of visitors to New Zealand, but the potential for long term visitor satisfaction in an intact environment.

Can I leave you with what I would call the ecotourism equation?

If the environment suffers, ultimately tourism suffers. If tourism is weakened, its positive force for sustaining and developing the resource is lost.

Clearly it is in the interest of all - the visitor, the place, the host community, the industry and the country as a whole - to foster the positive force. Environmental values in tourism are a recipe for success.
THE ROLE OF THE DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION IN NZ ECOTOURISM

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Abstract

This paper describes the mission and objectives of the Department of Conservation (DOC), its role in the New Zealand tourist industry and its role in authorising, monitoring and working in partnership with ecotourism businesses on public conservation lands. DOC's approach towards managing the special natural areas and species visitors increasingly wish to visit is outlined.

Introduction

Ecotourism businesses on the public conservation estate operate on concessions from DOC. DOC is increasingly becoming proactive by identifying, in draft plans and strategies, areas where appropriate types of ecotourism businesses can operate. DOC believes that sensitively run ecotourism businesses can increase awareness of, and support for conservation. Such businesses can also increase the range of appropriate opportunities for recreation on public conservation lands.

DOC will be taking a cautious approach to ecotourism business proposals in sensitive areas with threatened species (such as island nature reserves). Limits on numbers visiting may be set, but each proposal will be considered on its merits.

The case of Kaikoura whale-watching is offered as an example of DOC's role with respect to a very successful ecotourism business.

Not long ago, tourists could go to the uninhabited Galapagos Islands to see the very special iguanas, tortoises and other rare animals and plants that thrived there. They came in such numbers and their activities were so uncontrolled that the fragile environment became threatened. Today you need a special permit and a very good reason just to get onto the islands.

At Glacier Bay in Alaska large ships bringing tourists to watch the humpback whales have had a significant effect on the animals' behaviour. In Hawaii, jet ski activity appears to have upset the humpbacks' normal breeding patterns.

These unfortunate scenarios and others like them are the result of a phenomenon unprecedented in the history of tourism. Nature, or "ecotourism" as it has become known, has boomed in recent years, creating enormous opportunities for the tourist industry, but also enormous challenges for agencies charged with safeguarding the world's diminishing natural and historical resources.

Ecotourism was born of greatly increased appreciation of these resources, prompted by awareness of just how precious and how scarce they are becoming. But it is a two-edged sword. As the Galapagos near-tragedy shows us, good intentions are rarely enough.

The Department of Conservation has a mandate to preserve New Zealand's natural resources for future generations. We are also charged with ensuring that as many people as possible have the opportunity right now to enjoy our natural heritage. But we don't want a Galapagos here. Our "clean, green" image has been much touted in recent years. What price our credibility and future ecotourism prospects if we fail to maintain it?
So how do we go about creating the right balance - providing the widest possible number of opportunities for the greatest possible numbers of visitors while ensuring what they have come to see is still there when their children's children come?

It's a fine line and all those involved in this dynamic area are on a learning curve. But there are some things we do know. One of these is that the future of ecotourism in this country depends on us being very careful now.

The Ecotourism Equation

DOC and ecotourism should make good bedfellows. Ecotourism operators, if they are to succeed, need to be heavily dependent on conservation land and ethics. In turn, conservation can benefit immensely from ecotourism. A well managed ecotourism venture provides the ideal vehicle for delivering the conservation message to visitors. By working closely with ecotourism operators, I see exciting possibilities and immense benefits for the cause of conservation.

The challenge is to make it work. Operators have the flair and initiative to set up the commercial operations. DOC's job is largely regulatory - to protect the land, culture, flora, fauna and ensure quality standards are met.

The Department's first duty is to look after what we have. However, I want to assure you that we also have a very positive approach towards proper public use of the lands we manage. We protect these assets, not just because of their intrinsic values, but because of the educational and recreational opportunities conservation areas give New Zealanders and their importance for international tourism.

The Department of Conservation looks after almost one-third of the country's land area. This includes world heritage areas, national, maritime and forest parks, farm parks, wilderness areas and more than 1000 reserves of different kinds, including marine reserves and marginal strips around lakes and rivers. These places give New Zealand its unique character and provide the scenic backdrop to many towns and highways.

DOC manages just under 1000 public huts, 250 campsites, many thousands of kilometres of walking tracks, numerous roads, some airstrips and jetties. It manages more than 60 visitor and information centres, many interpretive displays, summer holiday programmes and provides extensive information on recreation opportunities.

Many of these things are done in partnership with members of the public, organisations or businesses. For instance, the Department for the first time last year contracted out its summer visitor programmes on the West Coast. This was an acknowledgement of the enhanced ability of private enterprise, particularly in the ecotourism area, to provide the kinds of quality experiences and education we want to encourage. Another example is the involvement of iwi in the development of interpretative material.

Trends in Tourism

While numbers of domestic tourists are expected to remain fairly static, each year brings more international visitors onto conservation lands.

Trends over recent years are towards more:

- participatory experiences (active pursuits)
- adventure tourism (outdoor pursuits)
- nature tourism (or ecotourism)

More and more visitors want to do things which include learning about the natural and cultural aspects of an area, such as guided walks and educational tours.

In particular, they want:

- close up experiences with wildlife
- visits to islands

Many city dwellers have never experienced the wilderness and their only glimpses of wildlife may be on television programmes or at a zoo. Being close to wild animals in their natural habitats is a once-in-a-lifetime experience. People like to visit islands because they are seen as special. Where there are few or no introduced predators or browsers, islands, such as Kapiti, seethe with life by comparison with the mainland.

Ecotourism is not about thrill-seeking. That's the business of adventure tourism, an entirely different market altogether. Nor is it the macho bushwhacking outdoors man model popularised
in the 1950s. Ecotourism is about quality experiences and service delivered according to clients' needs and timetables.

**Good Service Sells**

Speaking about service reminds us that New Zealand has not excelled in this area. The good news is that while we still have a way to go, things are getting better.

Local folklore has it that at Lake Moeraki in South Westland, the local motelier used to put a chain across the gate and go whitebaiting at the drop of a hat. Dinner was off when the 'bait were running. These days the new owners do things differently. They greet guests on arrival, join them for a drink and a chat and provide a choice of recreational and ecotourism experiences at the doorstep.

How many tourists have had the experience of arriving somewhere in New Zealand by bus or train, tired and hungry, to be offered a choice of beige coloured mutton or fish, with watery veg all cling-wrapped and ready for the warmer? These days, while this still happens, it happens less often. The message of service is getting through and more and more we are getting it right. It is up to us all to keep working at it.

The Department is developing a set of competencies - things it expects its staff to be able to do well. A major component of this will be service. Many staff have already completed KiwiHost training, particularly on the West Coast where we have a KiwiHost trainer on our staff. It is likely all DOC's front line staff will complete this programme or something like it.

It follows then that we will be expecting concessionaires to demonstrate ability to deliver quality service to their clients. I cannot stress strongly enough the benefits for New Zealand of making improvements in this area. Visitors who take a favourable impression away with them will not only pass it on - and ask any salesman about the power of word-of-mouth as a sales tool - they will also 'roll it over into positive attitudes towards other New Zealand produced goods and services.

A major benefit of the ecotourism market is its tremendous potential to influence for the better the image of New Zealand overseas.

**DOC's Management Role**

Anyone wanting to run a trade or business within a national park, reserve or conservation area must have the Department's permission to do so. This is done by way of a concession, or in the case of marine mammals, a permit. I will come back to whale watching later.

There are numerous DOC concessionaires - offering everything from skiing and bungy jumping to accommodation, tearooms and hire services. The growing importance of ecotourism is reflected in the enormous increase in applications for recreation and tourism concessions in the past year.

Last year the Department managed 370 concessions. This year there are 500. Many of them are for guided activities and the main focus for an increasing number of operators is to introduce and interpret New Zealand's natural heritage to their clients.

The Department treats ecotourism businesses just like any other - if paying clients are involved, then the operator must have a DOC concession. If there are guided trips or tours to protected areas covering several of the Department's regional conservancies, there are procedures to co-ordinate concession activities across the boundaries. This will considerably reduce paperwork and make life a lot easier for such operators.

All concession applications are subject to very thorough vetting to make sure they meet the Department's criteria. These are stringent in terms of the quality of activity and service. Other requirements can include advertising for public comment and possible consideration by a conservation board. Conservation boards are composed of people who represent their local communities in the management of conservation lands.

At the end of the day, by far the majority of applications are approved. Sometimes there may be conditions requiring certain standards of protection or interpretation. For instance, at the Waitangiroto Nature Reserve, South Westland's famous 'white heron breeding colony, the concession places limits on the number of boat trips (and therefore visitors) each day. The tourist season there does not begin until the birds have settled in to breed. Visitors to the sub-Antarctic Islands are not allowed to smoke, to minimise the fire risk. Nor are they allowed to take any egg food products onto the islands to prevent disease being spread to birds.
The point is, when it comes to setting conditions to ensure protection of natural values or species the Department will always err on the side of caution.

We believe it will be ecotourism businesses with the best reputations for environmentally sound practices that will succeed. After all, the customers they seek are becoming increasingly "green" in outlook. They will be very critical of businesses which fail to deliver in terms of conservation and protection of the environment. Nor will they be impressed by those which fail to offer professionally presented interpretation and other services.

In summary, I am insisting that the Department meets the highest standards of professionalism and I make no apologies to my staff for that. Equally I make no apologies for saying that only those willing to meet the highest standards of professionalism should apply for concessions in public conservation areas.

What's In It For Us All?

One of the most positive aspects of ecotourism is the spin-off it has for conservation in general. It is probably not too far fetched to say that a memorable experience in New Zealand could save a whale or dolphin on the other side of the world. It is up to us all to ensure we provide the kinds of experiences that leave indelible impressions on the hearts and minds of visitors.

Whatever the method - story, film, hand-out, drama etc - interpretation must be accurate, informative and educational. It must fit in with the whole experience. By providing clients with something that goes well beyond mere sightseeing, ecotourism businesses are advocates for conservation.

A further positive aspect of ecotourism - and one that is often overlooked - is the recreational dimension. The Department is charged with encouraging recreation on the areas it manages, but it cannot be all things to all people.

Ecotourism businesses can help by increasing the range of suitable activities in conservation areas, allowing people to enjoy experiences they might miss out on if left to their own devices. Sometimes this involves taking people to remote or normally inaccessible locations, thus providing a unique experience. A good example is visiting one of New Zealand's sub-Antarctic Islands.

Many ecotourism businesses involve guiding. The Department's draft concessions policy is positive about this. Guided tours are an alternative to independent recreation, suited to people who want enhanced comfort and interpretation. They also ensure a high level of safety and environmental protection.

"Special" Areas

Ecotourism businesses can operate in most areas managed by the Department. There are, however, some "no go" areas where any human activity threatens fragile environments.

Ecotourism operators are becoming more and more interested in taking their clients into especially protected nature and scientific reserves containing threatened species or other special natural features. Many, but not all of these, are offshore islands.

The Department has established policies for ecotourism businesses visiting some of these (e.g. the sub-Antarctic Islands). The public can visit others under controlled conditions. For instance, people can get a permit from the Department to visit Kapiti Island. This is strictly controlled in terms of limiting numbers and the days on which people can visit.

In still other cases, where there are as yet no management plans to guide ecotourism policies, the Department is taking a very cautious approach. This means some of these special areas are off-limits to visitors for the time being.

Always, uppermost in our minds, is the need to put nature first when making decisions about where people can and cannot go. It may be useful to outline some of the factors the Department will consider when preparing plans or strategies for ecotourism on special, but currently off-limits, places.

Generally, DOC wants to protect the following qualities:

- remoteness
- largely unmodified and natural habitats
- uncommon or unique natural and historic features
- undisturbed wildlife, especially during breeding
- endemic or threatened species
- dense seabird populations
domination of natural setting over
human activity
absence (or close to it) of introduced
pests

Special places offer special challenges. On
some islands you cannot take a step without
crushing the burrow of a seabird. On others, a
stray seed attached to a visitor's clothing or a
strong swimming rodent coming ashore from a
boat could threaten an entire ecosystem. Some
species are on the brink of extinction - human
impact could push them over the edge. It may
not be safe to land visitors in high seas on a
rocky coastline. Fire and rubbish are other
dangers.

There can be few natural phenomena which
compare to the dusk return each day of
thousands of seabirds to the Snares Islands. It
is one of the wonders of the natural world and
it is being preserved by a ban on tourist
landings there. However, people can share the
experience by watching films.

While the intensity of concerns may vary over
time, meaning current restrictions may ease,
the Department's main focus must remain the
protection and survival of protected species,
especially threatened ones.

People who visit special areas may be
motivated by the desire to go to an exotic place
or to see some unusual feature. The
Department expects more of ecotourism
businesses.

Ecotourism operators wanting to take clients to
areas with threatened species, where such
operations are possible, must be able to show
an understanding of the area and sensitivity to
the effects of their clients' actions.

DOC may limit the number of clients an
operator can take, or restrict visits to certain
times of the year to minimise disturbance to
wildlife by avoiding main breeding times. This
happens at Taiaroa Head near Dunedin, New
Zealand's only mainland breeding colony of
Royal albatrosses. Nowhere else in the world
do these magnificent birds nest so close to a
city and it is vital their breeding privacy is
respected. There are limits on the number of
people who can visit the colony at one time and
the number of groups per day.

A Proactive Approach

To date, the Department has generally taken a
reactive approach to applications by ecotourism
operators to take clients to particular areas.
Applications have been processed as they have
been received.

We will increasingly be taking a more proactive
approach. Conservation Management
Strategies (CMS) are being prepared in every
conservancy at present. These will, where
possible, identify areas where ecotourism
businesses may be appropriate. They will take
recreation and tourism opportunities and
demands into account and will identify in a
general way what types of concessionaire
services could satisfy them.

CMS are being prepared in full consultation
with the public. The Department hopes that,
when approved, these strategies will give
people wanting to run ecotourism businesses a
better idea of where they can go and what they
can do on the public conservation estate.

Kaikoura Case Study

I would like to finish by focusing on an
ecotourism operation which, in many ways
illustrates the things I have been talking about.
Since 1988, visitors to the small seaside town
of Kaikoura, on the north-eastern coast of the
South Island, have been able to see something
possibly unique among whale watching
experiences - sperm whales at close quarters.
These animals, which prefer the depths, are
very rarely seen close to the mainland
anywhere else in the world.

It would be a great temptation to plunge in and
make the most of this great opportunity. That
happened quite a bit overseas and some
countries are having tremendous problems
trying to push through retroactive legislation to
"mop up" the results. We are fortunate to be
able to learn from those experiences.

To take people whale watching, you must have
a permit under the Marine Mammals Protection
Act, which is administered by the Department.

In addition, the Marine Mammals Protection
Regulations provide a comprehensive, legally
based set of guidelines for operators. They
ensure that if what is happening is upsetting
the whales, the permit can be immediately
revoked.

As with all such ecotourism operations with
which the Department is involved, the focus is
firmly on what's best for the animals.
Regardless of the spin-offs for the community,
and these have been impressive in terms of visitor numbers and employment opportunities, the Department has to look at the big picture. After all, there would be little future benefit for Kaikoura if the whales became stressed by human pressure and moved on.

To make sure we don't kill the golden goose we are keeping a close eye on Kaikoura. Some of the best people in the world are helping us with the research and results so far are looking good for the whales and everyone else involved.

If we look beyond our own narrow horizons, we can see enormous conservation benefits arising from this type of operation. Ecotourism of this kind changes lives. It is global advocacy at its best.

Conclusion
The Department of Conservation has a key role in the development of ecotourism businesses on New Zealand's public conservation estate. Ecotourism is a growth industry here, one which brings with it great benefits and responsibilities.

We are sometimes impatient with our progress in New Zealand. We feel we are behind the times, missing out, not up to scratch. This criticism has sometimes been levelled at our tourist industry and even at some government departments!

How ironic, then, that it should be these very qualities which have protected us from the mistakes of some of our larger neighbours and paved the way for sustainable ecotourism in New Zealand.

We have a wonderful resource in our conservation lands, one which growing numbers of New Zealanders and overseas visitors are going to want to enjoy. We also have the ability to sustain it long term.

The Department of Conservation has a mission - to ensure that sustainability is not threatened, that the resource remains intact for future generations to enjoy. Partnership with carefully managed eco-tourism businesses offers great hope that this mission can be fulfilled.
MARKETING NEW ZEALAND’S NATURAL HERITAGE TO THE INTERNATIONAL VISITOR

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Abstract

The paper outlines the importance of the environment to New Zealand tourism. Three case studies are featured to demonstrate how tourism’s impact on the environment can be managed.

New Zealand’s international visitors’ markets and the demand for natural heritage product is documented. New product development initiatives in natural heritage, Maori cultural experiences and trekking are featured.

The paper concludes that the prospects for ecotourism in New Zealand are bright, with growing international demand and a good emerging product base. The challenge will be to develop the industry while maintaining environmental quality and cultural integrity.

Introduction

The New Zealand Tourism Board is a Crown Agency, taxpayer funded, but run by a nine member private sector board.

We are primarily a marketing organisation. Our mission is to market New Zealand as a competitive international tourism destination, and to maximise the long term benefits of tourism to New Zealand.

These benefits are substantial - 150,000 fulltime job equivalents today, which could almost be doubled by the year 2000 (270,000 jobs) if we meet targeted growth.

Visitor spending in New Zealand totals $17 million per day.

We receive just over 1 million overseas visitors per year and expect 1.6 million by 1995.

We also want - longer length of stay, increased visitor expenditure and industry profitability to enhance future investment and jobs.

I am responsible for the product development activities of the Board. In partnership with the NZ tourism industry we try to ensure our market offer, (or product) meets the market demand. This product is essentially the clean, green environment of New Zealand, the friendly people and the exciting array of interesting and stimulating attractions which bring New Zealand alive.

A satisfied customer is of course excellent word of mouth promotion. Broadly speaking our customer satisfaction research tells us that our international customers are satisfied with the experience - particularly with the quality of the environment and what it has to offer.

We have undertaken extensive market research and detailed market planning in all of our main international markets. This has told us that there is further international demand for the New Zealand experience and for what we currently offer. In addition there is demand for new products and experiences.

We see growth potential in the following broad products - natural heritage or ecotourism, trekking, authentic Maori culture, soft adventure, events, character accommodation, conventions and incentive travel, educational tourism and better shopping opportunities, especially for the Asian market.

In this presentation, I would like to concentrate
on the natural heritage opportunities, and then
tell you a little about our work in the Maori
cultural and trekking product areas.

Firstly let's put this in the wider context.

**Background**

We have all seen the global trend for things
"Green". Well it also applies to holiday
destinations. Travellers are increasingly
expressing an interest in the environment.

Many travellers to New Zealand come from
relatively polluted overcrowded countries. Here
we have a competitive advantage that helps to
overcome our distance from most markets.
Though distance also has its advantages - we
have not been overrun. And quality, value
added tourism suits us much better than
quantity, mass tourism.

Our environment is our greatest asset. It is the
base for our outdoor adventure, sightseeing
and natural heritage product. We as an
organisation are committed to environmentally
sensitive tourism development. We would be
extremely foolish to do otherwise.

I will not go into our tourism and environmental
policies now as Albert Stafford presented those
in some detail yesterday. But I would like to
talk about tourism and the environment from a
personal perspective.

**Good Management**

After some 12 years experience both in
resource management and planning, and in
tourism development, I have come to the
conclusion that the key to solving the
environmental impact of tourism is good
management.

Now what I mean by good management applies
to all levels of the tourism experience, from the
individual operator and how his or her
experience impacts on the environment, all the
way to the national level.

I have also concluded that the argument
between the so called low impact, sensitive
"anti-tourist" type of development, versus the
mass tourism development approach, is far too
simplistic.

I believe we can take more visitors in New
Zealand. I believe we can give them a quality
experience and I believe we can manage their
impact so that the environment doesn't suffer.

In 1991 the then New Zealand Tourism
Department prepared a report on the impact of
tourism and how it had been managed in three
of our key natural attractions.

These were:

**The Waitomo Caves**

Too many people in the caves at one time were
lowering the cave humidity, and warming the
atmosphere. The glow worms could not
survive and the limestone formations were
eroding.

The cave was closed to allow their recovery
and on re-opening tours were restructured into
smaller, more frequent groups, which reduced
the number of people in the cave at any one
time.

Humidifiers were also installed to solve the
humidity problem. The glow-worms now thrive
and visitors have an enhanced experience.

**The Whakarewarewa Geysers at Rotorua.**

Natural geothermal surface activity was
declining. This was due to the extensive draw-off
of geothermal water for commercial and
domestic energy.

A management plan was devised. All wells
within a 1.5km radius of the geysers were
closed. Water levels rose and the geysers
have recovered.

**Milford Sound**

This magnificent area attracts over 200,000
visitors per year. Nearly all take a launch trip.
The facilities were congested, especially at the
transit point between coaches and boats.

New berthing, parking, toilet and visitor facilities
were built which doubled peak capacity.
Environmental impacts were minimised, even
though some additional land was reclaimed.
The Milford experience is much more
comfortable and welcoming for the visitor.

That work has been published and it was
presented to the Pacific Asia Travel Association
Annual Conference in Bali in 1991. Copies are
available from the New Zealand Tourism Board,
P O Box 95, Wellington.
This work applies more to the major attraction at the national level, rather than the individual operator, but the principles and management techniques apply equally.

Now I must say that I am heartened and impressed by the increasing professionalism and responsibility shown to the environment by many operators in the tourism industry.

In New Zealand we now have operators who began as conservationists, who through their love of the environment decided to combine their passion with their livelihood.

You have already heard from some of these operators at this conference, people like Rodney Russ and Dr Gerry McSweeney.

This level of responsibility and management care is reassuring to me and I believe it augers well for the future.

Sure we have some problems, but by working closely with conservation agencies, like the Department of Conservation, and by jointly participating in the planning process I believe we can achieve environmentally responsible tourism growth in this country.

Product Development and Marketing

Let us return to what we are doing about product development and marketing in the natural heritage area.

What we are doing is of course not new. In terms of natural wonders New Zealand has always been a "green" destination. The first tourists over 100 years ago were drawn by the thermal wonders of Rotorua, the Whanganui River, Mt Cook, Milford and Lake Te Anau.

Today's visitor to New Zealand enjoys our fresh, clean environment and dramatic scenery. An ideal place for outdoor adventure, white water rafting, 4WD trips, trekking, flightseeing and that essential activity of the modern tourist, photography. They enjoy our unique natural history, sailing on "Moa's Ark" as David Bellamy called it. Our long and diverse coastline and coastal waters have such popular attractions as penguins on Otago's Peninsula, gannets at Cape Kidnappers and Kaikoura's whales and dolphins.

So how do we fulfill the market demands?

Well of course the tourism operators provide the product and it must be of excellent quality if we are to successfully compete with overseas destinations. That quality must be consistently high, not good one day and indifferent the next. The New Zealand Tourism Board then markets that product overseas.

We target all our markets very carefully. Research identifies the market segments wanting our offer and with the ability to come here. Except for the Australians we are a long haul destination.

For example, North America was our second biggest market at 168,000 visitors for the year ended July 1992.

Here our first target group is the independent adventurers, 30-45 years old who prefer to make their own travel arrangements. They want outdoor experiences, physical activity, to meet real people, experience Maori culture and try our food.

Our second major target group in North America are "Package Travellers". They are experienced travellers, older, more conservative. They like security and comfort, shopping and sightseeing. They prefer pre-packaged coach travel.

In Germany and German speaking Switzerland we target independent travellers, well educated, well travelled, good incomes even by German standards. They like outdoor experiences and our natural heritage.

A second target group is the culture seekers. They are a little older and more interested in Maori culture and the natural unspoiled and uncrowded New Zealand.

A joint NZTB/Australian Tourist Commission study revealed German long haul travellers want to see and do as much as possible when travelling to far off holiday destinations. They also want to find out as much as possible before travelling to their chosen destination and they seek value for money experiences. They want to escape their own overcrowded environment and learn of a different way of life.

In Asia, for example, we have targeted a "promising independent culture seekers' segment out of Taiwan. They want to travel independently but are a little reticent going to a country they know little about. However, that will come with good marketing and word of mouth advertising. These people are of all
ages, well educated, have a good knowledge of English and a large income.

They have a strong interest in culture, unusual wildlife, Maori culture and nature related outdoor activities.

There are other growing Asian markets that want this sort of experience. It could be called “soft adventure” which has great potential across all markets. Only the minority are hardy adventurers, even if we all think we are.

So what are we doing in the broadly described "green tourism" field to satisfy the demands of our markets?

Our first major project is the production of a New Zealand Natural Heritage Tourism guide. 40,000 copies will be out in November. It will be aimed at the unstructured FIT consumer. Our sales and marketing team off-shore will also use it to encourage tour operators and wholesalers to include more natural heritage product in their tours and to develop niche marketing opportunities. On-shore it will be distributed from our offices overseas and visitor information centres in New Zealand.

It begins with a 600 word introduction to New Zealand’s unique and wonderful natural heritage, written by Les Malloy of DOC, then followed by 40-50 operator listings, all supported by quality photos and on recycled paper.

The main criteria for inclusion were:

- having a focus on nature, but also including New Zealand history and Maori heritage
- being strongly educational and interactive
- being conservation minded; holding relevant DOC concession licences and operational safety were also considered.

Some examples of the product that will be in the Guide are as follows:

Paparoa Nature Guides run by Bruce Stuart-Menteith. He is located on the South Island's West Coast amid the wonderful limestone, bush and coastal scenery of this area. His natural history tours specialise in rainforest ecology, Westland Black Petrels, karst landscapes, canoeing and birdwatching.

Catlins Wildlife Treks run by Fergus and Mary Sutherland. They operate south of Dunedin in a beautiful coastal bush setting. His eco tours specialise in Yellow-Eyed Penguins, Hooker’s Sealion, forest ecology, geology and conservation.

Finally Vulcan Helicopters run by Robert Fleming from Whakatane. He flies you by helicopter to an active volcano - White Island, where you land for a guided walk. The specialities are, live volcanic action, history - an abandoned sulphur works, marinelife and birdlife.

We also have many new natural heritage or eco-tourism operators starting up. And there are some very exciting ideas coming through, such as rainforest walks on the South Island's West Coast, boat trips to the marine life off Stewart Island and a canoe trip on the Whanganui river that concentrates on Maori heritage. They are not in the present guide as we want to see them get a bit of a track record first, but I can see us promoting them in the future.

Our second project is a Maori Cultural Experiences guide. It will be a smaller companion to the Natural Heritage guide. We aim to have it out before Christmas. Once again it will begin with an authoritative introduction, this time describing the unique elements and context of Maori culture, followed by short operator listings -probably numbering about 20.

We are working very closely with Arihia Carrington of the Aotearoa Maori Tourism Federation on this. They have the knowledge of the Maori scene and the credibility amongst their people.

Thirdly we are also working with the New Zealand Adventure Tourism Council, chaired by David Beattie of Venturetreks, to produce a directory of New Zealand Adventure
Tourism Operators. This will be distributed to consumers and the trade in New Zealand and overseas. We expect about 300 to 400 operators to be included. It will be out early in the New Year.

Fourthly along with DOC and local interests we are identifying alternative walking tracks (existing and potential new ones) to try and relieve pressure on tracks near or at peak capacity.

One initial finding is the popularity of the bush and beach type coastal track with overseas visitors. We have concluded there is a lack of this product when compared to inland or sub alpine tracks.

We are now investigating some potential coastal track product and we have some promising leads - eg. the Banks Peninsula track near Christchurch, Queen Charlotte Sound Track near Picton, a Kauri and coastal walk near Waipoua Kauri Forest and some other opportunities in the Coromandel, Northland and in the South Island.

Fifthly we are one of the sponsors of the inaugural New Zealand Ecotourism Awards announced at this conference this morning. These Awards will set the gold standard in this field.

NZTB enters into joint ventures with tourism companies and organisations. JV's, as we call them, must be a new marketing initiative offshore. The funding is split 50/50 and the JV must result in increased visitor arrivals to New Zealand. A few JVs are in the eco-tourism or natural heritage field.

One example is New Zealand Heritage and Environmental Tours from NZTP Travel and TravelMarvel in Australia. It includes tour opportunities in Maori culture, natural history cruises and trips to the great southern fiords.

Where to From Here?

So what of the future?

The natural heritage and Maori cultural guides described earlier are a first attempt, a market tester.

We don't think we have the perfect answer, but our intention is to boost Natural Heritage or Ecotourism by highlighting good product. The overseas FIT visitor is looking for this information. As a trade tool we hope it leads to new packaging opportunities.

New Zealand has so many natural advantages and the international visitor market is there and is growing.

We would like to see our actions lead to more co-operative or collective marketing in the future. If enough operators agree we would like to see a "green tourism marketing group" formed. We would certainly welcome it and work with it.

There is a joint marketing opportunity in The Philippines in early January next year. The PATA Ecotourism Conference and Mart.

Depending on the interest from operators, NZTB will look to coordinate the New Zealand presence and take a booth. This represents an opportunity for New Zealand operators to sell their product to the growing Asian market.

Conclusion

In conclusion, I think the future is bright. We have a marvellous product and excellent, knowledgeable operators on the whole.

The New Zealand Tourism Board will continue to assist the development of this sector and we will provide leadership.

The challenge, however, is to continue to offer an excellent product delivered with professionalism and quality service. And in doing so we must respect the environment and maintain both environmental quality and cultural integrity.

Footnote

All research references are to New Zealand Tourism Board Market Research.

New Zealand Tourism and the Environment.
New Zealand Tourism Department 1991.
ROLE OF LOCAL AND REGIONAL GOVERNMENT

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Introduction

Tourism can assist in the wise use as well as the exploitation of natural scenic resources and local councils have powers to direct tourism within their communities. Local council roles are growing into being a promoter as well as a regulator of tourism activity. Regional councils now have a reduced role in tourism but in Auckland the regional parks, which represent the diverse natural resources in the region, are facing increased tourist demands.

An ecotourism philosophy is needed within both local and regional councils, to assist in developing a balance between use and protection. This can be achieved through greater community involvement and increased education, especially relating to the marketing and promotion of tourist attractions.

The tourist industry has two dilemmas. “The first is to solve the Faustian scenario in which tourism feeds on and exhausts the very stuff which attracts it and then goes away and the second and more important, is our obligation to guard and enhance the quality of life of our people and to preserve and enrich our heritage” (Brown, 1991).

Most tourist attractions in New Zealand like elsewhere in the Pacific are based around nature - the sea, beaches, coastline, islands, forests and unique flora and fauna as well as clean air and water. Many of these attractions are public and community spaces under the control of local territorial or regional councils. In Auckland many of the volcanic cones, remnant native forests and beaches are public parks or reserves, with many administered by these councils.

Responsibilities

Local Government reform over the last few years has resulted in great changes with increased emphasis on accountability, efficiency, effectiveness and pursuing market business orientated philosophies. Many territorial local councils are appointing business executives to operate at a high level within their organisations to generate increased commercial development and employment within their cities and districts. Tourism in all its forms is seen as an answer to New Zealand’s economic ills.

At the same time these councils have to protect the amenities of their communities and manage the natural environment in a sustainable way.

Legislation such as the Reserves Act, Resource Management Act and Local Government Act ensure that natural heritage lands are provided for all people, including tourists, and a balance has to be reached between use and protection. For example;

Auckland Regional Parkland is to "be held in perpetuity for the purpose of protecting and preserving its intrinsic worth or for the benefit, enjoyment, and use of the public (and, in particular, the public of the region)" (Auckland Regional Council, 1991; 1992).

Reserves Act - "An Act to consolidate and amend certain enactments of the General Assembly relating to public reserves, to make further provision for their acquisition, control, management, maintenance, preservation (including the protection of the natural environment), development, and use, and to make provision for public access to the coastline and countryside" (Reserves Act,
Recent changes in local government legislation have decreased the involvement of regional councils in tourism unless it directly relates to a core function as in the case of regional parks. In Auckland this has reinforced the independent marketing approach being taken by the cities and districts making up the Auckland region. "Tourism Auckland", an organisation responsible for coordinating the marketing of attractions and encouraging increased tourism in the region, has recently managed to increase its financial commitment from some of the cities and districts under the new arrangement but there is still progress to make in coordinating planning and marketing across the region.

Other locations in New Zealand, such as Rotorua and Queenstown, have successful tourism marketing systems. This success is partly due to a greater community acceptance that the tourist dollar contributes towards jobs and economic growth as well as the cohesive management gained from a single territorial local authority. In addition to local and regional initiatives, the New Zealand Tourism Board and private operators market and promote tourism throughout New Zealand. In this climate of pure market forces one must wonder what is the role of the democratic process and how much say the local community have in marketing and promoting tourism.

As has occurred in some countries, tourism can become a neo-colonialist force and public attractions including parks can be taken over by the foreign traveller. Already in Auckland the top of Maungawhau (Mt Eden) has become dominated by four buses, and similar pressures are developing at the lookouts in the gannet colony at Muriwai Regional Park. What are the limits of use and who sets them: the market, the community or both?

Some councils, as well as the Auckland Regional Council's Parks Service, have faced local community opposition when suggestions are made to develop and promote tourist/visitor services such as campsites, events and increased vehicle parking. These developments are seen as an increased threat to the lifestyle of small communities. An example is Karekare on the west coast in the Waitakere Ranges Regional Parkland where residents have actively objected to increased parking and large events. There is general community concern over the degree of commercialisation in public parks, and in the case of regional parks this concern has resulted in management plan policies tightly controlling tourist and other commercial activity. The management plan process involves considerable public input and community consultation resulting in policies governing the management of regional parks.

**Challenges**

Already an analysis of the Auckland Regional Park management plans reveals the following common principles:

- Tourists in the parks will be treated as any other visitor.
- Should tourist activity generate any additional impact or services on the park environment that will be a cost on the tourist industry and may have to undergo additional management plan approval.
- Information, merchandising and permitted activities will be focussed on promoting the conservation values and natural features in the parks so travellers may undergo an education experience.
- Setting carry capacities for activities (establishing limits on use), environmental impact assessments and monitoring of visitor impacts. These are going to become hallmarks of tourism management in the future.

I believe it is essential to involve the local community in the development of tourism policy based on an ecotourism philosophy. This philosophy is the process of developing a social and environmental conscience amongst the travellers or tourists. Such a philosophy is also based on a personal respect for the culture and natural environment being visited. In essence an ecotourism philosophy is not solely based around market forces and on a "client or customer" but "a visitor" with a desire to learn and appreciate the values and traditions of the place being visited.

It is important these values are incorporated into the marketing and promotion of tourist attractions so the tourist is prepared for the visit and expectations are not extended to the long term detriment of the land and culture. Limits have to be established and incorporated into the marketing process and promotional messages.

Limits on use and behaviour can only occur...
through long term community consultation involving education. There is also a need to improve community education. For example the new national school curriculum (Ministry of Education, 1991) does cover environmental and social education but individual responsibility towards local community decision making is not fully covered and this is essential to a healthy society.

Conclusions

The above matters have yet to be considered fully by local and regional councils but I believe they are essential for the protection of our parks and cultural attractions. Local community involvement and education is necessary to give direction to tourism and to ensure the impacts of this major industry do not damage the physical environment and culture. For this to happen all tourists of the future need to be ecotourists with an ecoconscience.

References


ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES FACING ECOTOURISM IN NEW ZEALAND

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Background

All tourism operations have some environmental impact. Ecotourism’s environmental impact is perceived as likely to be low. Negative impact from ecotourism may be compensated for by positive impacts such as awareness creation, development of greater resource knowledge and restoration programmes.

However, many ecotourism operations are likely to visit particularly sensitive ecosystems (e.g. peat lands, mountains, wetlands, ice-free Antarctic areas), or sites of particular strategic or biological interest (e.g. bird nesting areas, accessible landing areas on islands used by wildlife, marine mammal feeding or breeding grounds). The potential for problems with ecotourism operations may therefore be correspondingly greater than with existing sightseeing tourist operations.

It is crucial to recognise that “nature-based” tourism (as opposed to more specific “ecotourism”) has already played an important role in conservation campaigns to save the following areas, amongst many others:

- Lake Manapouri from flooding.
- Rainforests from logging in West Taupo - Pureroa, Whirinaki, Paparoa, Okarito and Southern South Westland.
- Wild Rivers such as the Motu, Rakaia, Ahuriri and Kawarau from hydro dams and irrigation abstraction.

In hindsight it is all too easy to analyse any one of these conservation campaigns and argue that the promised tourism benefits have not completely materialised or that the preservation campaigns ignored community or traditional lifestyle concerns or that the tourism development that has subsequently taken place threatens to jeopardise the social or natural features of the area.

We should be sensitive to such comments, but they are in many ways a luxury that it is easy to indulge in hindsight. The reality is that had those warriors not fought those battles of modern New Zealand, the wild rivers would have gone forever. Ancient rainforests, millions of years in evolution, would have been rotted sawdust or scorched earth or hidden away framing someone’s house in New Zealand or Japan. At Bluff, Comalco may have already installed several more potlines to further monopolise this country’s lowest-cost electricity.

The reality too is that those battles are still not over. Nature protection in New Zealand desperately needs the active support of the New Zealand tourist industry to avoid further degradation of our natural heritage and resources.

Some Examples

Native forests alongside many of our most scenic highways continue to be logged. There are four such clear felling operations on private land in the Haast Valley next to Mt Aspiring National Park. These are located immediately alongside the State Highway 6 World Heritage Highway. Alongside the Catlins State Highway in Eastern Southland many areas of native forest are still threatened with clear felling; so too is forest on the Southern Scenic route into Fiordland. Publicly-owned native rimu rainforest...
in Central Westland is being clear felled at a massive rate. Logging trucks from this operation pose a major traffic safety threat to tourists and are appalling advertising for our clean green image.

Half New Zealand's kiwis, our national bird are believed to have been killed in the last 10 years, primarily through predation by dogs taken in to the forest for recreation, human companionship or hunting. Dog control is not being taken seriously by the Conservation Department or anyone else for that matter.

The 1992 Electricity crisis has rekindled efforts to develop more hydro electric capacity at the expense of wild rivers and spectacular natural areas. An alternative would be the promotion of a realistic programme of energy conservation far beyond the "hot water blankets and light bulbs" campaign underway at the moment. The magnificent Ngakawau river basin forests in the Buller region, the mighty Mohaka, mecca to rafters and fly fishers and the recently restored water of the Wanganui catchment are amongst the many natural areas threatened by the ambitious dreams of the power planners.

New Zealand's marine environments are the victim of our rapacious fishing industry. Spurred by the promise of ever increasing export sales and massive personal profit, the industry has almost eliminated our commercial inshore fisheries. It seems likely to repeat this with our offshore deep sea species such as orange roughy, hoki and hake. Resulting from these fishing operations is a substantial kill of New Zealand fur seal, Hookers sea lion, Hector's and other dolphin species and the disruption of whole food chains. We have also lost many ocean recreational sports fishing opportunities. These could have been far more financially lucrative than large scale fish commodity production. If ever these was a case for Air New Zealand's "ocean campaign" funded by international visitors to help New Zealand's future, it is here, now, out there fighting for the fish against the most exploitative and destructive industry that remains today in New Zealand.

Regardless of who owns the fish, every fishery scientist tells us that the catch levels have got to be drastically reduced. Consequently it seems strange to me to correct historic injustices with a resource that simply isn't there. The Government persists in sanctioning catch levels far above those that are biologically sustainable. Even then hardly a day goes by when the fishing industry is not before the courts for exceeding even that grossly generous level.

**Environmental Impacts**

I now want to turn to the environmental impacts of tourism in general and ecotourism in particular. Despite the daunting list of environmental challenges described above, I think it is a credit to everybody who is involved in tourism that we have a flourishing tourist industry and have so far maintained our clean green image.

1. Ideally, environmental values and sensitivities should be identified before sanctioning any ecotourism operation.

The rocky floor of a glacial valley at Mt Cook, Franz Joseph or Fox Glacier can sustain an almost unlimited amount of foot traffic. The limitations are more likely to be the social carrying capacity of the area. However, the fragile peat lands and swamps of most of Stewart Island cannot sustain much human pressure unless there is massive investment in board walks and track metal.

High productivity systems such as most farmland, valley floors or lowland rainforests can usually recover quickly from visitor impacts. Low productivity, marginal ecosystems such as dunelands, alpine areas, forest margins and peat lands cannot recover quickly.

Before undertaking any tourist visits to sensitive areas such as whale or dolphin feeding grounds, bird nesting grounds or alpine herb fields, there should ideally be a monitoring period over several years to establish a population or condition baseline against which to measure human impact.

2. In practice such environmental evaluation rarely occurs. Once underway political, economic and community pressures make it almost impossible to place controls on established operations.

3. New Zealand agencies charged with regulating ecotourism generally have conflicting political and financial
pressures that encourage them to maximise the number of ecotourism operations or force these operations to complete with less sensitive high volume operations.

Some examples are:

A. **New Zealand Tourism Board**

The New Zealand Tourism Board (NZTB) is sponsoring excellent initiatives such as its nature tourism guide, and its guide to exclusive lodges and sporting retreats (high quality, low volume tourism). However, inevitably the Board is the victim of politicians' obsession with increasing numbers of visitors rather than the benefits from a smaller volume, more sensitive, higher spending market who may also stay longer and hence spread the economic benefits throughout the country.

B. **Department of Conservation**

This department has the central role as Managers of most ecotourism areas. Generally it does an excellent job. However, it is charged by Government with the major task of recovering a substantial proportion of its costs from revenues from the conservation estate. Facing a dwindling financial core allocation from Government, the message to Department of Conservation (DoC) is clear. License more operations and you will have a better future. By charging DoC with this mission the Government has reinstated the internal conflict between a regulatory and commercial function.

The whole purpose of the restructuring of Government Departments over the period 1985-1992 was to specifically avoid this conflict. As the decision to ignore all conservation advisory bodies and sanction the Milford Marathon in 1993 also shows, DoC is also enormously vulnerable to ministerial intervention. Remember the Minister of Conservation is only ranked No 17 in cabinet!

C. **Regional and Local Government**

Unfortunately these agencies have identical conflicts inherent within their structure to that of DoC and NZTB. Both these levels of Government see their role to be one of tourism promotion. Tourism Councils are often actually located within regional government offices. In such a climate regulatory responsibilities are almost always secondary to the fostering of new business and employment.

The Mt Cavendish Gondola issue in Christchurch illustrates the conflict. Local Government (Christchurch City Council) was charged with the protection of the Mt Cavendish scenic reserve. Instead it saw its primary role being to promote a new tourist development. Recent published information shows that the City Council, charged with regulating the proposal, actually committed substantial council finance to the promotion and development of the Gondola project.

Agencies such as DoC, Regional Councils and NZTB have limited time to work in partnership with ecotourism operators to develop cooperative monitoring and education programmes. Consequently a great opportunity of synergy is lost.

Put simply, we are not putting enough resource into tourism. The tax take from this $3.5 billion industry is massive. GST alone accounts for approximately $380 million. If a third of those earnings are spent in wages at an average of 23% income tax rate, there is a further $270 million going into the Government coffers. That totals $650 million and add to that any company tax on profits (which is probably unlikely!) and you have a potentially huge fund. The Conservation Department desperately needs more staff to work with ecotourism operators so that these become partners with the department in monitoring and managing the conservation estate. For the entire West Coast region with its $100 million dollar tourist industry there are about 80 different conservation concessions. These are the part-time responsibility of a single conservation officer. As a consequence most concessionaires
have little meaningful interaction with this person.

5. There is little evidence of an ecological basis to much of New Zealand's nature-based tourism. There is heavy dependence on fossil fuels for boats, vehicles and aerial operations. Rubbish recycling is in a primitive stage as in all New Zealand. Energy conservation has been almost non-existent in many of our overheated, overlit hotel rooms where air conditioners substitute for open window ventilation. In part architects and planners are to blame. Ultimately we are all to blame because we have not ranked conservation as a priority.

There are exceptions. One of our greatest strengths has been to foster the concept of active physical participation by non-motorised means. Walking, tramping, sea kayaking, dive trips, slow ocean trips that use less fuel and give time to experience the marine environment and some rafting operations show that it is possible to run successful tourist operations without the need for massive energy consumption. However, other operations such as Queenstown's "Awesome Foursome" I believe will by future generations be regarded in much the same light as we now regard the shooting of Bengal tigers by Pukka Sahibs in India in the 1800's. The linking of helicopters, the most energy intensive form of transportation short of space rockets and empty jet planes, to otherwise ecologically sensitive operations such as canoeing of rafting exemplifies this "live for today like there is no tomorrow" mentality. Frankly I find much of it sickening in a world where Somalis are starving for the want of a few basics and where we know the oil is almost certain to run out in the next century. The-Japanese may want it but that is not good enough reason why we should pander to a nation whose environmental insensitivity is legendary.

6. Career training for ecotourism seems largely focused on the training of central and local government managers rather than the ecotourism entrepreneurs.

The ecotourism pioneers that I encounter throughout New Zealand are predominantly self-taught and almost without exception express frustration at the difficulties they face in recruiting staff who can combine business entrepreneurial skills and application and nature awareness. For too long a career in Government has been regarded as a goal to strive for by those keen on nature conservation and nature based or ecotourism. Consequently the nature based tourism field has been left wide open to aspiring small town business people and existing companies keen to exploit any commercial opportunities. The cultural and environmental insensitivity associated with many of these operations has already been commented on at this conference. It is often not something that is deliberate. It often arises simply because the training, the business support and advice networks are woefully inadequate for these business people. The talent and the training that the nation has expended on its parks, recreation and tourism university training often sees these graduates become the adversaries of entrepreneurs rather than their partners. Equally I see little evidence of polytechnics broadening their tourism training to incorporate more environment awareness.

7. Little formal conservation or environmental education activity is being carried out by New Zealand ecotourism operators. Because ecotourism is in its infancy in New Zealand, survival is the highest priority for most ecotourism operators. Survival means getting clients, building up facilities, perhaps partially compromising your original ideals and a tremendous amount of hard work. The temptation is enormous to cut corners and to postpone formal conservation or environmental education programmes until you are better established. Consequently most conservation education and management work remains the responsibility of the DoC. Informally, however, I sense that a lot is going on.

In many cases simply the presence of nature lovers in a conservation area
deters others from actions harmful to the environment. Boat owners diversifying into nature tourism or diving trips are likely to do their best to prevent others landing without consent or taking dogs or pets onto rat-free islands.

The information passed on by guides on trips is of immense interest to visitors and inevitably a lot of conservation education and concern is being relayed through this.

There is a major opportunity for DoC to work in partnership with operators in developing conservation monitoring and management programmes.

Unfortunately, the tourism agenda in New Zealand is still dominantly being set by large operators selling instant thrills to large numbers of people and setting ridiculously high tourist volume targets which create a range of environmental problems and conflicts.

However, as this conference demonstrates and as do small operators throughout the country, there is an emerging trend of sensitive ecotourism development. This is influenced by overseas demands for small-scale activities by new operators filling the vacuum created by the virtual withdrawal of the Conservation Department from nature activities programmes in its parks and reserves and by the partnership that has developed between environmental organisations and ecotourism entrepreneurs.

I hope this prospers because there are still a lot of battles for all of us to fight.
Background

The environment and the effects of pollution on our planet are very topical issues which have come into focus over the last few years. It is a subject which touches all of us in some way - it can affect our health, wellbeing and economy and, if not correctly managed, could ultimately affect our very existence. Because of these factors, it is often very emotional and at times the real issues are clouded with emotion and verbosity. Pollution can be very simple, like the person who litters our shoreline, our streams, forests and other places people congregate to the more complex problem of industrial and urban waste disposal. There is one basic theme that is at the centre of all pollution and the protection of our environment and that is man himself. Man in his striving to develop his economy may cause pollution problems which are costly to solve and waste products that present a long term threat to his wellbeing. In searching for comfort and security, we pollute the air with smoke from our factories and homes. We use vast quantities of water, much of which is returned to our rivers and streams or underground aquifers in a polluted form. We dispose, either into the ground or into the sea, hundreds of thousands of tons of toxic waste, the by products of our industry and chemical factors and our nuclear power stations. We pursue land use policies which affect the very soil on which we depend and in many cases we do not appear to have the knowledge, or more importantly, the will to mend our ways.

In recent years we have heard of mercury pollution in fish, the threat to the world’s wildlife and to man himself, caused by the dumping of industrial wastes.

New Zealand’s Assets

The greatest assets that New Zealand has to offer to the overseas tourist, are our clean air and water, our pristine forests and nature, uncrowded beaches, lack of large polluting industries and our low population.

Twenty years ago everyone in tourism was saying, if only we were closer to Europe or U.S.A. Today this is one of our best advantages. The fact we are so far from these giant population bases helps us to retain our clean green image.

For many people from Europe and America, a trip to New Zealand is a nostalgic trip, they are looking for something they have lost in their own countries. I hear many comments from tourists that "our country was like this once”, and "we used to be able to drink water from our creeks when we were children."

New Zealand can capitalise on this thinking with ads like "Remember when you were young, the wildlife, the untouched forests, clean beaches and water you can drink. You can still find all this in Beautiful New Zealand. Come and see for yourself."

Ecotourism is in the mind of the participant. For instance for a tourist from the crowded cities of Hongkong or Bangkok to walk on an uncrowded beach, or a European to walk amongst the giant treeferm and Nikau palms, deep in the Coromandel’s rain forest can be a real adventure. Though even a walk through the Auckland domain or a stroll on a well formed track in the Waitakeres can also be a real adventure to some people.
Tourists often have high expectations about a country like ours or about an activity and it is so important to match or better that expectation.

I often hear comments like "We knew New Zealand was beautiful but not this beautiful." So our country is usually better than they expected and, as I tell them when I do my shows in America, "You are going to come down to Australia but you will go home in love with New Zealand."

Most importantly we must treat everyone as a V.I.P. I hate this word, as everyone is a V.I.P., from the backpacker to the multi-millionaire. If you do your best, that is all anyone can expect, but give your best all of the time. Really look after our overseas guests because it is good for your business and good for New Zealand. So if you are ever going to make a fool of yourself for God's sake tell them you're an Australian!

I must admit I get a great kick out of seeing the excitement build in people when they are trekking through our beautiful forest, which to the overseas tourist is like a jungle, and to see them getting in touch with nature, something many have not experienced for years.

A trek or tour does not have to be overly strenuous for people to have that experience, although some people are definitely looking for more difficult treks to get away from it all, and to experience remoteness which even in New Zealand on some of the better known tracks is becoming very difficult.

I have one trek that I set up for elderly Americans which covers all the essentials of nature tourism with beautiful forest, crystal clear creek, element of danger, goldmines, glowworms, underground jail, which you and I would walk in 20 minutes. But with the Americans I take 2 hours and they just love it as for them it is the first chance to get off the coach in New Zealand. These people are not young, between 70 years and 80 years, but even at that age people want to experience our nature first hand. In fact the oldest person I have had on that walk was 96 years old. He is still up there somewhere!

Marketing our Nature

New Zealand should be marketed as a clean, green, distant visitor destination aiming, not so much at the mass market, but more at the middle income market who have the money and the time to spend longer here.

Environmental interests should be a major theme, aiming at the free independent travellers who have more flexibility and a greater range of travel options than groups.

Because of insufficient resources New Zealand has struggled to penetrate the world market to any degree.

Most people you meet have a very good feeling for New Zealand and for New Zealanders, our image, I find, is of a very beautiful country but may be a bit boring. There should be more concentration on short, high impact advertisements showing our scenery as well as an activity with a bit of humour, perhaps running in a series instead of the same advertisement for weeks on end. Also to save money, they could all be shot in the Coromandel Peninsula!

"New Zealand is a great place but where the hell is it"?!! A comment I hear a lot and I tell them "catch an Air New Zealand flight to Hawaii, and turn left."

Most of our tourism growth will come from the northern hemisphere, from countries such as Germany, Austria, Switzerland, France, Italy, Spain, Canada and U.S.A., which are all vast markets, but tough competition so our resources must be used wisely. I still feel we should be expanding our offices in these areas, instead of pulling them out as has been done over the past few years.

I also feel, along with most other tour operators, that New Zealand does not have the ability to host 3 million tourists by the year 2000. We should be aiming at around 1.6 million as I feel mass tourism will ruin what people are coming to New Zealand for. New Zealand is a unique destination which we have to keep intact. It becomes no longer unique if we go the mass market way.

As well I think we would find a rejection of tourists from New Zealand citizens, who feel their way of life threatened by vast numbers of overseas tourist, and rightly so.

By this rejection we would lose the image we now have as a very friendly open people. So I feel tourism growth cannot be at the cost of our natural resources and pristine environment, which are our greatest assets, "We have every right to enjoy it, but have no right to destroy it".
There are many new trends appearing in tourism and New Zealand must be placed to take advantage of them as they appear. There are many government agencies, both local and central who engage in activities which affect tourism. Most of these do not have the mandate to consider tourism, so we should leave it to the experts.

We as operators all have a big role to play in the development of our tourism, but most importantly we must give our best all the time and give the overseas visitor an experience and adventure he will talk about when he goes home, as word of mouth is still our best advertising.
Introduction

I am General Manager of Ruapehu Alpine Lifts Ltd., a position I have held for six years. Our business is the operation of Whakapapa Ski Area located on the northern slopes of Mt Ruapehu within Tongariro National Park.

Prior to this I spent 10 years as a Ranger working in Reserves, Maritime Parks and National parks in New Zealand. My final position was Assistant Chief Ranger of Tongariro National Park.

I intend to provide comments on "concessions" within protected lands in New Zealand and raise several consequent issues that are topical within our country.

Legislation

The Conservation Act, which provides the legislative baseline for management of protected lands in New Zealand, requires the Department of Conservation to

"foster the use of natural and historic resources for recreation and to allow their use for tourism.....

.....to the extent that the use of any natural or historic resource for recreation or tourism is not inconsistent with its conservation".

I have never been comfortable with the wording used here. Why "foster" recreation and "allow" tourism? There is an implication, in this key document, that tourism is very much a secondary activity. Recreation and tourism are totally interlinked; why differentiate?

The legislation allows for concessions which may be granted for up to 60 years. They cannot be granted unless a Management Plan is in effect and the concession has to comply with the plan. Rent is to be set at a "market price" and must be reviewed at a maximum 3 yearly interval. There is provision whereby concessions for educational, scientific or health purposes may have rent set at below market prices.

Determining a "market rent" is extremely difficult. In most situations there is not a "market" in the accepted sense of the word; there is rarely a free market. The Department of Conservation is normally the sole controller of land. There is not an alternative location where the concessionaire could operate a business in that particular area.

In my experience rent is set by negotiation. It should reflect a "fair and reasonable" fee for the right to operate a business in a protected area. The concessionaire must acknowledge they are receiving a right that has a value and the controlling authority must accept the concessionaire should be given the opportunity to receive a commercial return on their investment and for their time.

In recent years I was involved in negotiating a new license to operate Whakapapa Ski Area. In the early stages of negotiation the Department had the opinion that our company generated "excessive profits" and believed they should receive a major share of them. In initial discussions they indicated we should be able to pay a concession fee of up to 20% of gross revenue. This would have effectively caused us to show a loss on most years. The issue took a long time to resolve. It is fair to say that we
settled on a rate that, I think, is regarded as fair and reasonable by both parties. I know of no businesses operating within protected lands in New Zealand that consistently generate "excessive profits". Most concessions could be regarded as risk ventures.

Concession Types

Concessions can be categorised into three broad types:

Major, where the concessionaire is constructing a facility requiring a large capital investment e.g. hotel, ski area.

Minor, where the concessionaire does not necessarily invest capital within the land but uses it to conduct business e.g. guiding concession

Event, where a concession is required to conduct a short term event within the land e.g. endurance race, TV commercial.

Major concessionaires are making a long term commitment to the protected land. To finance this scale of investment, on land that cannot be freeholded, it is essential that a long term concession is offered. In New Zealand the maximum allowable term is 60 years and I believe that is very appropriate. In many situations exclusive rights should also be offered, especially in the initial years of the concession period.

The business I am involved in was first set up in 1953. It would be fair to say that the company "survived" for the first 20 to 25 years and it is only in the past 10 years that we have started to show a commercial return on our asset value or shareholder funds.

Minor concessions do not necessarily require fixed capital investment within the concession areas. They may, though, require capital investment outside the concession area and this should be recognised when negotiating a concession document. The period can be shorter and rights of exclusivity may not be as critical.

Business Partnership

Public use (either for recreation or tourism) is a legitimate activity within protected lands anywhere in the world. The greatest protection we can give natural landscapes and historical feature is to have an informed public.

I have never believed there are any long term benefits in excluding use. One of the prime reasons for preserving something is to allow for public appreciation of use.

Use requires provision of facilities and services. Land controlling agencies do not necessarily have the capital nor the management expertise to provide adequate facilities. In my experience they rarely have access to capital resources to respond to changes in demand.

I believe the land controlling agency should have as its prime mandate the preservation of the resource. It should provide for access and provide information services. Commercial facilities and services are more effectively provided under a concession agreement. At times we get concerns expressed that private organisations will not provide the required standard of facility or services.

It is a competitive world out there. Commercial pressures and the availability of alternate activities and services will require any concessionaire to maintain the highest standards both in their maintenance and service levels. A satisfied customer is necessary for the survival of any business and in this day and age satisfied customers only result from good service.

In a number of locations in New Zealand we have had conflict where the Department of Conservation is providing services that compete directly with the business of its own concessionaires. This can easily cause a conflict between the controlling agency and the concessionaire.

The relationship between the concessionaire and the land controlling agency should be a partnership. Both require the preservation of the natural landscape. The concessionaire will not survive if the prime reason for public wishing to use the facility or service (i.e. to experience that land) is lost.

Summary

We are all involved in the conservation or preservation of our natural landscapes. It is in our personal and business interest to maintain and even enhance these landscapes and features.

Use is a legitimate activity. An enlightened and
Appreciative public is the most effective way to ensure long term sustainable preservation. Public use requires facilities and services.

A concession system should:

- allow for provision of compatible facilities and services that enhance the users' enjoyment;
- minimise the impacts of public use;
- allow for capital investment that responds to and caters for changes in demand.
SUMMING UP: 
THE FUTURE OF ECOTOURISM IN NEW ZEALAND

Hugh Logan 
Regional Conservator 
Department of Conservation 
Nelson, New Zealand

The worst job in a conference is summing up.

It is difficult to do justice to the many excellent presentations we have heard. Nonetheless, I will try to pull together what I think have been some of the major themes.

There have been many definitions of ecotourism offered. These have included some, or all, of the following elements:

- it is based on relatively undisturbed natural areas;
- it is non-damaging, non-degrading, and ecologically sustainable;
- it is a direct contributor the continued protection and management of natural areas used;
- it is subject to an adequate and appropriate management regime; and
- it is of clear benefit to local people.

A further, and very important element is that it acknowledges and involves the inter-relationship of local culture and the environment.

Thus ecotourism is involved with sensitivity to and protection of ecological and cultural values and the creation of an activist public to enhance environmental protection.

Issues raised by ecotourism are many. There is, of course, the natural tension between the objective of environmental protection and desires to reap a livelihood from tourism. A number of speakers have emphasised that New Zealand has a competitive advantage in tourism based on its natural environment. We have spectacular scenery, friendly people, open space, low population and a relatively unspoiled and unpolluted country. Our tourism competitors have some, but not all of these elements, especially not the close proximity of such a range of natural attractions.

We need to acknowledge and protect our competitive advantage, not squander it. As one speaker has said, we cannot afford to kill the goose that has laid our golden eggs.

In order to protect this advantage we need to be cautious about the extent to which we promote profitless volume and lowest common denominator tourism, we need to ensure that industry standards are high and sincere (that we don't merely adopt a "green veneer") and we need to have a monitoring system which warns us when environmental degradation has begun to turn tourists off, be it through overcrowding, poor standards of service or experience, or physical environmental deterioration; indeed there is a concern that if ecotourism booms it may result in a dispersal of a large number of impacts everywhere, whereas it may be better to concentrate activities to a limited number of locations.

Another question raised during this conference is what is the appropriate business and regulatory environment for ecotourism in New Zealand. There has been a strong debate between the use of regulation versus the price mechanisms. I think tacitly there has been support for a mix of mechanisms to both regulate and promote the industry. Nevertheless, I have detected strong opposition to unfettered use of pricing, especially if it means that the New Zealand public's right of free access to public lands is jeopardised, as one speaker suggested. The tourist industry stands to lose public support if, in promoting
tourist activities, New Zealanders' enjoyment of their own country is perceived to be put at risk. Speakers have sounded notes of caution at this conference, but the major undercurrent has been that there are enormous opportunities in New Zealand for ecotourism, be it in visiting a white heron colony, tourism in the Coromandel Peninsula, staying at wilderness lodges, whale watching, or nature tourism to the sub-Antarctic islands. The future of ecotourism, indeed all tourism, in New Zealand lies in close personal attention to client - not just processing them.

The future needs:
- an attention to quality;
- training and education for operators;
- a high level of owner-operator involvement (how else do you get the personal commitment needed for successful tourist ventures?);
- low level capital investment ventures (suited to New Zealand conditions);
- a stable predictable regulatory environment;
- a partnership of operators, promoters and land owners and managers;
- public support and understanding;

and above all else, we need an unspoiled resource - our natural environment.
ECOTOURISM IN INDONESIA:
A NEW SOURCE OF FOREIGN EXCHANGE EARNINGS

Indonesian Wildlife Tourism Association
Jakarta, Indonesia

Introduction

The immense geographical spread of the Indonesian archipelago has always made travel difficult, in particular to and within the islands outside Java. It is only since the 1980s, with the rapid development of transportation and telecommunication, that the large part of the country has been accessible to both Indonesian and International travellers. At present, during most of daytime, practically all parts of Indonesia are accessible to air transportation of all categories, utilising the complex network of hubs and spokes. With an increasing number of airports open to regional and international airlines, more routing alternatives are now available to travellers to avoid the costly and time-consuming backtracking. Most importantly, an even more complex network of land transportation is also available, supported by an expanding ferry system, in particular in the long stretch of the land transportation system starting in Banda Aceh - in the northernmost tip of Sumatera - and going all the way to the island of Madura, Bali Lombok and even Sumbawa in the Nusa Tenggara chain. Also starting in the second half of the 1980s the Government introduced a sea passenger transportation system connecting the major ports in the western as well as eastern part of Indonesia, to provide a reliable regular service in support of the on-going traditional system. This combination of sea, land, ferry and air transportation networks has made more areas of Indonesia accessible to travellers, including an increasing number of international tourists.

Furthermore, accommodation is no more a problem. More hotels of higher categories are springing up in practically all provincial capitals and major or potential tourist destinations in all part of Indonesia. Taxis and rent-a-car service are also available in support of the accommodation network. All this parallels the rapidly growing chains of restaurants and shopping centres.

Tourism Indonesia

For the first time since the end of World War II, the supply-side of Indonesia's travel industry is now ready to meet the rising demand for travel coming not only from the international but also the domestic side. This condition of supply-side readiness in fact emerges as a direct consequence of the government policies - implemented since mid 1980s - to boost the tourism industry as a way to compensate for the loss of foreign exchange earnings from the deteriorating oil and gas exports. Following the oil market crash in the early years of the 1980s the government executed daring economic reforms to create a wider base of foreign exchange earning activities. In the tourism sector, as a result, visa free entry system, the open air policy, the debureaucratisation of tourism services activities - most notably of hotels and resort development, and the freedom extended to all sorts of tourism foreign investment - were implemented with earnest.

By 1991 - in an accelerated growth pattern following that of ASEAN in general - the visitor arrivals to Indonesia have reached the unexpected 2.6 million figure (see Table 1). This is definitely an upward surge from the 500,000-600,000 arrivals noted in the 1980-83 period, i.e. the last years before reforms were
implemented in the tourist sector. And it is based on this record; as well as the supply-side readiness, that the Government of Indonesia dares to project an exponential growth pattern for international arrivals to Indonesia to reach 7.7 million by the year 2000.

Table 1
Visitors Arrivals to Indonesia in the Period of 1980-1991 and the Projections to Year 2000 (in thousand of persons)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>ASEAN (WTO)</th>
<th>ASEAN (GOI)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>561</td>
<td>8.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981</td>
<td>600</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1982</td>
<td>592</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1983</td>
<td>639</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1984</td>
<td>701</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1985</td>
<td>749</td>
<td>10.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1986</td>
<td>825</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1987</td>
<td>1,060</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1988</td>
<td>1,301</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1989</td>
<td>1,626</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>2,178</td>
<td>21.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>2,570</td>
<td>20.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PROJECTIONS:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1995</td>
<td>3,575</td>
<td>4,172</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td>4,600</td>
<td>6,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>5,400</td>
<td>7,700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(% change per annum)</td>
<td>(8.6)</td>
<td>(13.0)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Government of Indonesia, Department of Tourism, Post and Telecommunication.

Table 2
Visitors Arrivals to Indonesia by Country of Residence in 1991 (in persons and %)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Persons</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total ASEAN</td>
<td>1,082,149</td>
<td>42.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Malaysia)</td>
<td>(318,475)</td>
<td>(12.39)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Singapore)</td>
<td>(710,709)</td>
<td>(27.66)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Asia</td>
<td>626,294</td>
<td>24.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Japan)</td>
<td>(290,907)</td>
<td>(11.32)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Taiwan)</td>
<td>(164,556)</td>
<td>(6.40)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Europe</td>
<td>481,684</td>
<td>18.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Germany)</td>
<td>(94,596)</td>
<td>(3.68)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Netherlands)</td>
<td>(85,882)</td>
<td>(3.34)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(UK)</td>
<td>(101,062)</td>
<td>(3.93)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total America</td>
<td>129,335</td>
<td>5.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(USA)</td>
<td>(101,344)</td>
<td>(3.94)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Oceania</td>
<td>427,061</td>
<td>9.61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Australia)</td>
<td>(219,306)</td>
<td>(8.53)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grand Total</td>
<td>2,569,870</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: As for Table 1.
This is definitely much higher than the projection of the World Tourist Organisation (WTO), which envisages a growth pattern in Indonesia similar to that of ASEAN as a while.

From the 1991 data of the country of residence of international tourists visiting Indonesia (see Table 2), we observed that most of the visitors came from the neighbouring countries of Singapore, Malaysia, Australia, Japan and Taiwan. However, the rapid growth of visitors coming from the far side of the globe - from Europe and USA - convinced many in Indonesia that countries in these two rich regions are going to contribute more visitors in the coming years.

By 1991 Indonesia obtained an estimated revenue of $US2,518.1 million from international tourism - a jump from the revenue of $US439.5 million of 1983. The projection for 1993 is a figure of around $US3,150.0 million. This is definitely going to be the number three earner for foreign exchange in the 'non-oil and gas' sector.

Wildlife Conservation in Indonesia

Indonesia is said to comprise 13,667 islands: even on a tourist guide map there are hundreds, and the larger the scale of the map the more little islands one discovers, many of them uninhabited, and uninhabitable for want of fresh water and shelter. The country is dominated, however, by just five islands: Sumatera, Kalimantan (Indonesian Borneo), Java, Sulawesi and Irian Jaya (Indonesian New Guinea). These are the cultural, economic, development and political centres for the world's largest archipelago.

Indonesia is well known for its low land forests and the varied wildlife they contain, but the archipelago straddles the equator for 5,000 km, and there is much more to it than just tropical rain forest. There is a great variety of physical conditions to which plants and animals have adapted in myriad ways.

In addition to these, there are habitats which bear the obvious mark of humans, such as scrubby bush and grasslands, as well as the agricultural ecosystems of wet or dry rice fields, plantations, or mosaics of shifting agriculture.

Indonesia's great diversity is also seen in the different patterns of land use among the different islands. One of the most dramatic contrasts between the main islands is found in the percentage of land covered by forest. The two extremes are Irian Jaya with 84% forest and less than 1% intensively-used land, and Java and Bali with less then 10% forest, and 73% intensively-used land.

Indonesia is enormously rich in both animal and plant life. Although it is an extensive country, it covers only just over 1% of the world's land surface. Despite this, it is possible to find within its boundaries:
- 10% of the world's plant species;
- 12% of the world's mammal species;
- 16% of the world's reptile and amphibian species; and
- 17% of the world's bird species.

Not only are the percentages impressive, but many of the species concerned are endemic - that is, found here and nowhere else. This applies to about 430 of the roughly 1,500 birds, 200 or the 500 mammal species, and over half of 350 species of the economically important dipterocarp trees, with 155 species endemic to the island of Borneo alone! Although some countries have more species than Indonesia, it is unlikely that any has a more diverse and unique wildlife than Indonesia, because diversity measures not just quantity but variety. The spread of Indonesia across from Asia to Australia, and from torrid coastal swamps to glaciers, gives it a unique place among the superlatives of the planet.

The species living today are only a snapshot of the life that has adorned the Earth through the millennia. About 700,000 years ago, when the woolly Rhinoceros and Mammoth roamed northern Europe, the forests and plains of Java were inhabited at different times by eight species of elephants, as many as three living at one time. There were also three species of rhinoceros, three species of pig, large sabre-toothed cats and a giant pangolin or scaly anteater two metres long. Try to picture also in this unlikely community groups of hippopotamuses and hyaenas, animals which are now strictly African.

Conservation

One of the backbones of any country's conservation efforts is a well-managed system of protected areas containing large, representative areas of all the natural ecosystems. To this must be wedded a constant programme of public awareness and full attention must be given to the problems and
needs of the people surrounding the protected areas. Allowance has to be made for traditional needs of the people, particularly in tribal areas, so that human suffering does not result from the protection policies.

Even the well-tried argument that tropical forests are needed to protect watersheds and so protect water supplies is now becoming somewhat threadbare, as scientists evaluate long-term data and discover that in certain situations a good grass cover is just as effective as forest soil protection and recharging under ground water sources.

It is our conclusion that the only absolute arguments for conservation are in the realms of ethics, morals and religion. The economic arguments for saving the rain forest are best left alone, because an even better economic argument may be forthcoming for an industrial conurbation. There are, however, no ethical, moral or religious grounds for causing extinctions, or for depriving future generations of the spiritual uplift afforded by a walk in a forest or the view of a coral reef. These are absolutes.

At the same time steps must be taken against perpetrators of misdemeanours regarding protected areas and protected species, which require the enactment and enforcement of laws and the understanding and support of the judiciary. Much of this infrastructure is already in place in Indonesia under the authority of the Directorate General of Forest Protection and Nature Conservation in the Department of Forestry.

Ecotourism

There are some who point to "ecotourism" as a source of salvation for the richest wildlife areas, based on the model of East African safari parks. Unfortunately the model is inappropriate for a number of reasons, not least the total discrepancy in the visibility of the animal life. You cannot drive up to a Sumatran or Java rhino and take its photograph. The main exception to this is probably Komodo, where travellers (sometimes hundred a day) come to see and photograph the huge wild Komodo Dragon (Varanus komodoensis), and the Orang Utan Rehabilitation Centres in central Kalimantan and North Sumatra. Interestingly, the most visited national parks and nature reserves reflect much more the importance of geo-tourism, since they tend to be centred on the attractions of dramatic volcanoes, waterfalls and rugged coastline rather than biological interests. Foreign tourists are more inclined to enter forest than are domestic tourists, but the volume of the latter is slowly increasing.
FORMAL CLOSING OF CONFERENCE

Hon Denis Marshall
Minister of Conservation
Government of New Zealand

E nga mana
E nga reo
Tena Koutou, Tena Koutou, Tena Koutou
Katoa.

Greetings to you all.

Thank you for the opportunity to give the closing address to this conference on Ecotourism. It is a bit of a graveyard shift so I propose to enliven it a little by offering some personal reflections of where I stand as Minister of Conservation.

But first may I congratulate the promoters of this conference on getting such a wide representation of Pacific Peoples here to share their knowledge with us. Just as we have worked in well on the big environmental issues of drift-net fishing, so I am certain we can learn from each other on the small but perfectly formed issues surrounding ecotourism.

It will not be lost on you that about a quarter of New Zealand is Conservation estate so I am in the curious position of being one of the largest landlords in New Zealand. This in a sense also makes me the largest tourist operator in the country. We are in partnership with a lot of people including our concessionaires and I’d like to tell you how I interpret that relationship.

I have a great respect for entrepreneurs and a special affection of ecotourist operators so long as they work with us to maintain and enhance the conservation estate.

One of the big contributions of this conference has been the appreciation that ecotourism is a distinct entity. It must not be lost in the mists of mass tourism with a green tinge. To me ecotourism is about a system of values.

Television presenter, Peter Hayden, summed this up well yesterday when he talked about ecotourism requiring a rock solid commitment to conservation and a contract with the environment. It could only succeed if people breathed and believed in it. The only area I would take issue with Peter is when he used the words ‘quarrying’ and ‘mining’ of the natural heritage. The exploitive technology of the gravel pit is hardly appropriate in discussing appreciation of nature.

My legal obligation as Minister of Conservation leans primarily towards the protection of conservation values, with the relevant legislation “allowing tourism” but fostering recreation. The salient point is that any economic activity must fit into the framework of the protection of conservation values.

Many of you as ecotourism operators may take this as read, but it is amazing how much nibbling there is at the edges, and once you start compromising your conservation standards you are on the slippery road to wreckage, if not ruin.

A classic example of this was touched on yesterday by Lou Sanson in discussing the success of ecotourism in the subantarctic islands. He talked about demands from operators to have overnight stays and helicopter visiting. Both of these would appear to be inappropriate if we are genuinely talking about the protection of conservation values first, and running a tourist operation second.

I am firmly of the view that the conservation estate must be properly and actively managed.
to achieve the best outcomes. I am besieged on one side by those who seek to preserve the conservation estate largely for themselves and who rather scorn tourists of all types. On the other side are those free market cum frontier advocates who are confident that the conservation estate will manage fine if we leave it to their own devices! I am happy to say that I am something of a raging moderate as I straddle these extremes and end up in the middle.

There are some fascinating debates which go on and one in particular is over the wilderness area concept which I am a strong supporter of. It is an issue of considerable significance for ecotourism.

I have been engaged in constructive dialogue for about two years with a friend of mine who has a view of the conservation estate which is still very much back in the frontier mode. He believes tourist operators should be able to fly anywhere the choose without hint of restraint. He is not the only one; even some ecotourist operators nibble away and find it hard to come to terms with restrictions.

To me wilderness areas offer a challenge to experience the peace and quiet of a landscape in its original condition where human intrusion is restricted so that conservation values can be properly appreciated.

One of the best defences ever offered of wilderness in New Zealand was given by Les Molloy as far back as 1981 at the FMC conference on wilderness recreation in New Zealand. In terms of the human experience, he offered four values for wilderness recreation. These are solitude, freedom, romance and challenge. Solitude, because they are regions preserved inviolate as hunting grounds for the imagination and as reminders that we are caretakers not creators of our universe (Les was quoting R.J. Hay here).

Freedom, being the ability to travel at will but on nature's terms and the freedom to make mistakes and pay the price. Aldo Leopold remarked: "Wilderness can give rewards and penalties for wise and foolish acts against which civilization has built a thousand buffers."

The third value of romance is often the raison d'être of exploration, and the fourth value of challenge is being to satisfy the deep urge to gamble and probe the limits of one's level of endurance.

I think these values also make up the core identity of many ecotourists, the romance of sitting up at night to hear the call of the great spotted kiwi or the boom of the mating kakapo male, and the challenge of accepting the conservation estate and its experiences on nature's terms.

I also want to stress that ecotourism operators must not see the state as the soft touch, always ready to crumble and make every possible accommodation in pursuit of any easy dollar. There is a curious morality at work here. Businesses happily make provision for paying for raw materials and rent for space when they deal with each other. But they seem to feel the public purse can be, if not plundered then at least ignored or at best belittled, when they move on to the public estate.

Some start to demand all sorts of privileges which they wouldn't dare try and pull in the private sector. We had a classic case last year of a skifield operator who had built up an apparently successful business and wanted to buy conservation land in order to borrow against a secure title.

The fact that thousands of private businesses, including my own, borrow easily while permanently existing in rented property seems to have eluded this operator. Because there were no gains for conservation in such a purchase, I declined the application. This provoked howls of outrage and claims they have to bring in foreign capital. Seeing as much of the tourist industry relies heavily on foreign capital, be it human or financial, it seemed to me a peculiar defence mechanism to adopt such a xenophobic stance.

On the other side, some hard-nosed recreationalists see even tourism concessions as creeping commercialism and semi privatisation. Some of them get quite paranoid about it. Last year the Director-General of the Department of Conservation issued instructions to staff on the need for professionalism in all our dealings. This was interpreted by some recreators as giving in to the tourism industry. What it meant was a continuing commitment to improve our performance. It does not necessarily mean saying 'yes' more often, it might even mean saying 'no' more quickly. What it does do is provide a more business-like approach to dealings with the clients of DOC. Let me make it quite clear that so long as I am Minister of Conservation the public estate will not be privatised, it will not be sold off either to
Maori or pakeha. There will continue to be full rights of public access and the Crown will retain control over tourist concessions. It doesn't matter how often one reiterates this view, there will still be those who refuse to believe it. But it will be their credibility at stake, not the Government's.

There is a lovely quote dating back from the 1760's in England and relevant to the enclosure movement which transferred the commons into private hands.

"The law doth punish man or woman that steals the goose from off the common. But lets the greater felon loose that steals the common off the goose."

We must ensure that our national park heritage is not plucked in the same manner.

I want to congratulate the East-West Center Association and the Environmental Science Department of Auckland University for organising this conference. It has been a splendid start but we cannot judge the final success of this conference immediately.

You have worked very hard over the course of the conference to reach agreement on practical outcomes.

If these outcomes, and the idea of ecotourism as a distinct entity, can find a general acceptance amongst the wider public, then you will have gone beyond preaching to the converted and achieved something of lasting value.
Conference Programme

Sunday, October 11

9:00 a.m.  Tour of the Auckland region hosted by Auckland Regional Council
         Bus departs from University of Auckland Conference Center, 22 Symonds Street
         (returns at approximately 4:30 p.m.)

3:00 p.m.  Registration for Conference
         University of Auckland Conference Center, 22 Symonds Street

5:00 p.m.  Opening Reception
         Seminar Room (ends at 6:30 p.m.)

Monday, October 12

8:30 a.m.  Opening Session
          Moderator Sir Colin Maiden Vice Chancellor, University of Auckland
          Welcoming by Tangata Whenua

8:30 a.m.  Welcoming Remarks
          Sir Colin Maiden, Vice Chancellor, University of Auckland
          Mr. Les Mills, Mayor, Auckland City
          Mr. Gary Larsen, Chair, East-West Center Association
          Mr. Kara Puketapu, East-West Center Board of Governors
          Welcoming on behalf of Governor John Waihee, Hawaii

9:00 a.m.  Opening of Conference
          Her Excellency Dame Catherine Tizard Governor General of New Zealand

9:20 a.m.  Observing Nature in Action in the Pacific
          Dr. Gerry McSweeney, Lake Moeraki Wilderness Lodge

10:00 a.m.  Morning Refreshments

10:30 a.m.  Mid Morning Session
          Moderator John Gilbert, Deputy Secretary, Ministry for the Environment and Vice Chair for Planning, EWCA Executive Board

10:30 a.m.  Protecting the Goose and Her Golden Eggs
          Mr. Barry Manley, Saatchi & Saatchi Advertising

10:50 a.m.  Ecotourism and Survival
          Mr. Francis Toribiong, President, Fish n Fins, Belau

11:15 a.m.  Critical Issues for Ecotourism Business
          Dr. Peter Valentine, Professor of Geography, James Cook University
          Mr. Ian Oelrichs, Director, Vaux Oelrichs Partners
          Dr. Konai Helu-Thaman, Pro Vice Chancellor, University of South Pacific

12:15 noon  Luncheon and Talk on "Tourism: Keeper of the Culture"
           (Function Room, Students' Union Building)
           Dr. George Kanahele, President WAIAHA Foundation, Hawaii

1:45 p.m.  Afternoon Session
           Moderator Dr. John Hay, Director of Environmental Science, University of Auckland

1:45 p.m.  Resource Managers: Cultural Perspective on Ecotourism
           John Marsh, New Zealand Maori Arts & Crafts Institute

-242
2:05 p.m. Resource Managers: Pacific Island Perspective on Ecotourism  
Mr. Josefatu Reti, Biodiversity Project, SPREP, Western Samoa

2:25 p.m. Resource Managers: Meeting Ecotourism Demands for Large Urban Populations  
Mr. Philip J. Jew, General Manager, Parks & Botanic Gardens, Auckland Regional Council

2:45 p.m. Large Tour Operators’ Perspective on Ecotourism  
Ms. Glenys Coughlan, Manager of Strategic Planning, Air New Zealand and President, New Zealand PATA Chapter

3:05 p.m. Afternoon Refreshments

3:30 p.m. How to Approach the Client to Effectively Promote Ecotourism  
Dr. Joachim Fischer, Travel Writer, Germany

3:50 p.m. Ecotourism - Profitable Conservation  
Ms. Marguerite Young, World Wide Fund for Nature, Sydney

4:10 p.m. Ecotourism - Restraining the Big Promise  
Ms. Annette Lees, Maruia Society, New Zealand

4:30 p.m. Panel Discussion: Review of Day One  
Glenys Coughlan, Dr. Joachim Fischer, Ms. Marguerite Young, Ms. Annette Lees, Mr. Isoefatu Reti, Mr. Philip Jew

5:00 p.m. Day One Session Concludes

6:20 p.m. Assemble at Entrance to Marae
6:30 p.m. Welcome to Marae  
Shane Jones, Manager, Marawhenua, Ministry for the Environment
7:30 p.m. Dinner (Hangi Buffet)  
Master of Ceremonies Dr. Pat Hohepa
8:30 p.m. Addresses  
Mr. Gary Larsen, Chair, East-West Center Association  
Mr. M. McCulley, Associate Minister for Tourism, New Zealand
9:00 p.m. Maori Concert Party
10:00 p.m. Conclusion

Tuesday, October 13 Two Concurrent Sessions

CONCURRENT WORKSHOP ONE - CASE STUDIES (Conference Center Auditorium)

8:30 a.m. Morning Session Introduction

8:30 a.m. Ecotourism and Natural Heritage Conservation: A-Global Perspective  
Mr. Bing Lucas, IUNC Commission on National Parks

9:05 a.m. Educational Travel - A Growth Business  
Dr. Terry O’Brien, Australis Pty Ltd.  
Mr. Roger Grant, Department of Conservation and Environment, Victoria

9:40 a.m. A Niche Operation in a Maritime Park  
Ms. Dee Pigneguy, Adventure Cruising Co., Auckland

10:15 a.m. Morning Refreshments
10:45 a.m. Assessment of Coastal Resources for Nature Conservation and Nature Tourism
Mr. Madison Nena, Director of Tourism, Kosrae, FSM
Dr. Larry Hamilton, Research Associate, East-West Center

11:15 a.m. Cultural Impacts of Ecotourism: The Role of Community Colleges/Bridging Cultural and Economic Transitions
Ms. Jane Yamashiro, Community Colleges and Special Projects Coordinator, University of Hawaii
Dr. Lois Greenwood-Audant, Director of Visitor Industry Training and Education Center, Maui Community College, Hawaii
Dr. Konai Helu-Thaman, Pro Vice Chancellor, University of South Pacific

11:45 a.m. The Guadalcanal Track Ecotourism Project in the Solomon Islands
Dr. Trevor Sofield, Senior Lecturer in Tourism, James Cook University, Australia

12:15 p.m. Luncheon (For paid participants - Old Government House, University Campus)

1:30 p.m. Afternoon Session Moderator Dr. Larry Hamilton, Research Associate, East-West Center

1:30 p.m. Ecotourism - A Solution to Part of the Problem
Mr. Frank King, King Tours, Vanuatu

2:00 p.m. Earth First can be Good Business
Mr. John Gray, Sea Canoe International, Phuket, Thailand

2:30 p.m. Impact of Tourism Development in the Pacific Islands - Greenpeace Perspective
Mr. David Rapaport, Greenpeace Pacific Campaign, San Francisco

3:00 p.m. Ecotourism - Building a Sense of Place
Mr. Francis Oda, Chairman, Group 70 International Architects, Hawaii

3:30 p.m. Afternoon Refreshments

TUESDAY CONCURRENT WORKSHOP TWO - LAW, POLICY, AND GUIDELINES
(Conference Seminar Room)

8:30 a.m. Morning Session Moderator, Dr. Roger Blakeley, Secretary for the Environment, New Zealand

8:30 a.m. Managing for Growth: Regulation vs. Market
Mr. Neil Plimmer, Executive Director, Ministry of Tourism, New Zealand

Ms. Sue Veart, Manager, Resource Management Directorate, Ministry for the Environment, New Zealand
Mr. Shane Jones, Manager, Maruwhenua, Ministry for the Environment

9:45 a.m. Ecotourism - Saving or Sinking Noah's Ark
Mr. Jim Sharp, Department of Conservation and Land Management, Western Australia

10:15 a.m. Morning Refreshments

10:45 a.m. Ecotourism and Threatened Species
Mr. Dick Veitch, Planning Coordinator Threatened Species Unit, Department of Conservation, Auckland
11:30 a.m. Policy Adoption - Sub Antarctic Islands  
*Mr. Lou Sanson, Operations Manager, Department of Conservation, Invercargill*

12:15 p.m. Luncheon (For paid participants, Old Government House, University Campus)

1:30 p.m. *Afternoon Session Moderator: Gregory Trifonovitch, Cross-Cultural Consultant and Member, EWCA Executive Board*

1:30 p.m. Operating within Natural/Policy/Legal Environments  
*Dr. Vili Fuavao, Director of SPREP, Western Samoa*

2:10 p.m. The Role of the Tourism Council of the South Pacific in Ecotourism  
*Mr. Donald Kudu, Head of Planning and Development, Tourism Council of the South Pacific*

2:50 p.m. Investment and Ecotourism  
*Mr. Albert Stafford, Manager of Policy, Planning & Investment, New Zealand Tourism Board*

3:30 p.m. Afternoon Refreshments

**TUESDAY AFTERNOON PLENARY SESSION (Conference Center Auditorium)**

4:00 p.m. Ecotourism on Film  
*Mr. Peter Hayden, Consultant, TV New Zealand Natural History Unit.*

4:45 p.m. Developing Ecotourism Guidelines  
*Dr. Peter Valentine, Mr. Peter Thomas, Mr. Ian Oelrichs, Mr. Jim Sharp*

5:15 p.m. Open

**Wednesday, October 14 Two Concurrent Sessions**

**WEDNESDAY CONCURRENT SESSION ONE - (Conference Center Seminar Room)**

8:30 a.m. Ecotourism in the Pacific Workshop  
*Organizers and Facilitators*

Dr. Terry Lawhead, Assistant Director, Pacific Business Center, Hawaii
Dr. Peter Veglak, Business Development Specialist, Pacific Business Center
Mr. Peter Thomas, Nature Conservancy, Hawaii
Dr. Peter Valentine, James Cook University, Australia
Dr. Trevor Sofield, Australia

*Resource Persons*

Ms. Marsha Berman, Director of Programs, West New Britain Provincial Tourist Board, Papua New Guinea
Dr. Vili A. Fuavao, Director of South Pacific Regional Environment Program
Dr. Konai Helu-Thaman, Pro-Vice-Chancellor, University of South Pacific
Mr. Gerson Jackson, Director of Planning and Budget, Kosrae, FSM
Mr. Frank King, Frank King Tours, Vanuatu
Mr. Donald Kudu, Head of Planning, Tourism Council of South Pacific
Mr. Wilson Liligeto, Director of Tourism, Solomon Islands
Mr. Madison Nena, Director of Tourism, Kosrae, FSM
Mr. Birandra Singh, Director, National Trust of Fiji
Mr. Francis Toribiong, Owner Fish n Fins, Palau
Mr. Yasuo Yamada, Director of Land, Pohnpei, FSM
This interactive discussion session will focus on a case study of a hypothetical Pacific Island where there is an interest in ecotourism development. Issues that will be covered during this workshop include:

- Facilitating input for an ecotourism plan
- Reviewing the resources of the island
- Determining land use potential
- Cultural and environmental impacts
- Starting an ecotourism business,
- Business planning and business skills
- Training requirements, marketing, and monitoring success and failure

WEDNESDAY CONCURRENT SESSION TWO - ECOTOURISM IN NEW ZEALAND

(Conference Center Auditorium)

8:30 a.m. Opening of New Zealand Day. Presentation of New Zealand Ecotourism Awards
   Title: Honorable Rob Storey, Minister for the Environment
   Introductory Comments
   Mr. Shane Jones, Manager, Maruwhenua, Ministry for the Environment

9:20 a.m. New Zealand Ecotourism: The Private Sector - Player and Referee
   Title: Mr. Rodney Russ, Managing Director, Southern Heritage Tours

9:40 a.m. New Zealand Ecotourism: Role of Non-Government Organizations
   Title: Mr. Tony Staniford, Chief Executive, New Zealand Tourist Industry Federation

10:00 a.m. Morning Refreshments

10:30 a.m. The Role of Government
   Title: Mr. Robert Sowman, Senior Advisor, New Zealand Tourism Department

10:45 a.m. Role of the Department of Conservation in New Zealand Ecotourism
   Title: Mr. Bill Mansfield, Director General, Department of Conservation

11:00 a.m. Marketing New Zealand's Natural Heritage to International Visitors
   Title: Mr. David Burt, Manager Product Development, New Zealand Tourism Board

11:15 a.m. The Role of Local and Regional Government
   Title: Mr. Chris Howden, Manager Visitor Services, Auckland Regional Council

11:30 a.m. Panel Discussion
   Title: Mr. Rodney Russ, Mr. Tony Staniford, Mr. Robert Sowman, Mr. Brian Dobbie, Mr. David Burt, Mr. Chris Howden

12 noon Luncheon (For paid participants, Old Government House, University Campus)

1:15 p.m. Environmental Issues
   Title: Dr. Gerry McSweeney, Co-Director, Lake Moeraki Lodge

1:30 p.m. How to Market our Greatest Assets
   Title: Mr. Doug Johansen, Scenic Treks and Tours

1:45 p.m. Concessions
   Title: Dave Mazey, General Manager, Ruapehu Alpine Lifts

2:00 p.m. Panel Discussion
   Title: Dr. Gerry McSweeney, Mr. Doug Johansen, Mr. Dave Mazey

2:30 p.m. The Future of Ecotourism in New Zealand
   Title: Mr. Hugh Logan, Regional Conservator, Department of Conservation

3:30 p.m. Afternoon Refreshments
WEDNESDAY AFTERNOON PLENARY SESSION (Conference Center Auditorium)
Moderator, John Gilbert, Deputy Secretary, Ministry for the Environment

4:00 p.m.  Conference Review - Where do we go from here?
John Gilbert, Peter Valentine, Peter Thomas, Ian Oelrichs

4:30 p.m.  Formal Closing of Conference
Honorable Denis Marshall, Minister of Conservation, New Zealand
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257
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