Sustainable Tourism Principles, Practice & Prospects

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Panel: The Economy of ‘Old’ Culture: Re-Working Heritage and Tourism in the 4th Industrial Age
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A Little Background
Outline

Highlight some of the key principles associated with the concept of ‘sustainable tourism’

Identify some of the challenges faced when trying to turn principle into practice

Outline some of the institutional approaches which aim to support sustainable tourism in practice

Consider some of the prevailing factors which influence the prospects for sustainable cultural tourism development in emerging destinations such as Kazakhstan and the Great Silk Roads
Schema

Cultural Heritage & Cultural Landscapes

Cultural & Natural Resources

Tourism Demand

Sustainable Tourism

4th Industrial Age & Digital Media

- Development Aspirations, e.g.
  - Growth
  - Employment

- Development Threats, e.g.
  - Cultural
  - Social

- Distribution
- Income

Growth

Employment

Latent

Actual

Potential

Environmental

Disparity

Cultural

Social
Sustainable Tourism: Semantics

Tourism Development
Sustaining Tourism
Sustainable Tourism
Sustainable Tourism Development
Sustainable Tourism for Development

Sustainable Tourism as an Ethical Philosophy

“Making better places for people to live in and better places for people to visit”

Mobilise>Don’t Harm>Protect>Restore>Enhance
## Sustainable Tourism: Principles

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<td>Authenticity</td>
<td>Identify &amp; enforce carrying capacity</td>
<td>Holistic</td>
<td>Localisation</td>
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<td>Responsible tourism</td>
<td>Preserving diversity</td>
<td>Mitigation of cultural &amp; ecological impacts</td>
<td>Regulation for sustainability</td>
<td>Involve local communities</td>
<td>Combat exploitation in all forms</td>
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<td>Experiential tourism</td>
<td>Culturally-sensitive</td>
<td>Identify &amp; communicate best practice</td>
<td>Sustainability at the core of tourism planning</td>
<td>Build local pride</td>
<td>Brokers to facilitate meaningful encounters</td>
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<td>Slow Tourism/Post-Tourism</td>
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<td>Transparency &amp; accountability</td>
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<td>Engenders respect between guest &amp; host</td>
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<td>Special Interest Tourism</td>
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<td>Research &amp; data in support of sustainability</td>
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<td>Enhance capabilities of all stakeholders</td>
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### Economic
- Maximise developmental benefits
- Positive force for (esp. local) development
- Fair pricing
- Minimise economic leakages
- Strengthen tourism/non-tourism linkages
- Adopt equitable business practices
- Provide support for SMEs & micro-enterprises
- Build partnerships that minimize & share risk
- Challenge the ethos of overconsumption

### Tools & Approaches
- Holistic
- Sympathetic building & infrastructure

### Environmental
- Engender environmental responsibility in all
- Monitoring & evaluation; sustainability performance indicators
- Sustainability at all stages of the product life cycle
- Eco/culture-oriented marketing

### Localities
- Localisation
- Involve local communities
- Build local pride
- Local participation (including decision-making)

### Social
- Tourism as an inclusive enterprise
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### Sustainable Tourism: Principles

#### Tourism
- Ecotourism
- Responsible tourism
- Experiential tourism
- Slow Tourism/Post-Tourism
  - Special Interest Tourism
  - Activity > passivity
  - Destandardisation of consumer choices

#### Cultural
- Authenticity
- Preserving diversity
- Culturally-sensitive
- Slow Tourism/Post-Tourism

#### Tools & Approaches
- Identify & enforce carrying capacity
- Mitigation of cultural & ecological impacts
- Identify & communicate best practice
- Transparency & accountability
- Research & data in support of sustainability

#### Environmental
- Holistic
- Regulation for sustainability
- Sustainability at the core of tourism planning
- Collaboration > competition
- Sympathetic building & infrastructure
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#### Tools & Approaches
- Distribution & spread
- Build partnerships that minimize & share risk
- Challenge the ethos of overconsumption
Turning Principle into Practice: Challenges & Requirements

- Easier said than done
- Preaching to the converted
- So many conventions, so little progress
- Must contextualise best-practice
- Lip-service & greenwashing
- Path dependency: hard to change direction
- Is the shift to sustainability fast/profound enough?
- Must-see-ism, e.g. heritage (WHS)
- Loving heritage to death
- Contested histories; (self-)representation
- Tourism as competitive status-seeking
- Care-free ethos of tourism
- Pursuit of differentness, bringing sameness
- Important to disaggregate ‘tourism’
- Differentials & distribution of power
- Prevailing political landscape: local democracy?
- Top-down vs bottom-up
- ‘Experts know best’ mentality
- Sustainability: demand- or supply-driven?
- Differential dawning of the principles of sustainability
- Fair tourism in an unfair context
- Collaboration in a competitive market?
- Slow tourism philosophy, fast tourism motivations
- Short-termism
- Massification of the alternatives to mass tourism
- Nature tourism is not ecotourism
- We may assume too much about local capacities & capabilities
- Lack of tools for meaningful host-guest encounters
- Unequal encounters
- Spread: a double-edged sword
- Culture Vultures: champions or consumers
- Domestic or foreign tourists: who holds the key?
- Newcomers: advantage or disadvantage?
- Social media: bane or saviour
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- Different actors have different motivations: synergy?
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Important to disaggregate ‘tourism’
Sustainable Tourism: Practice (e.g.)

- European Charter for Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas, EUROPARC (1995)
- International Work Programme on Sustainable Tourism Development, under the UN Commission on Sustainable Development (1999)
- Cape Town Declaration on Responsible Tourism, linked to the Earth Summit (2002)
- Sustainable Travel International (non-profit organisation), harnessing the power of travel and tourism as a force for good (2002)
- The Travel Foundation (UK-based charity funded by the UK travel industry), facilitating sustainable tourism shifts ‘for those yet to come’ (2003)

- Global Sustainable Tourism Alliance, USAID (2006)
- Global Sustainable Tourism Council, Partnership for Global Sustainable Tourism Criteria, involving the UNEP, UNWTO, United Nations Foundation, Rainforest Alliance: accreditation body for sustainability in travel and tourism (2007)
- Travelife, web-based certification for tourism sustainability, run by UK trade association ABTA (2007)
- TripAdvisor Green Leaders (2013)
- Thessalia Charter for Sustainable Cultural Tourism, European Cultural Tourism Network (2014)
- International Year for Sustainable Tourism for Development (UN General Assembly) (2017)
- 2018: European Year of Cultural Heritage (2018)
| **Cultural tourism destinations impacts risk assessment** |
| **Climate change adaptation, mitigation & protection** |
| ‘Greening’ of the visitor experience |
| **Sustainable travel choices/sustainable mobility** |
| Improving intellectual, physical & financial accessibility to heritage; interpretation & signing of cultural assets; promoting virtual, perceptual & tangible access |
| Building effective partnerships at destinations between the cultural & tourism sectors, & relevant local authorities |
| Encourage visitors to stay longer & engage with local culture & heritage |
| Involve all stakeholders (public, private & voluntary sectors, tourism-related providers) in sustainability |
| Interregional/transnational cooperation & networking |
| Engage with host communities of tourism destinations |
| Foster civic pride & awareness |
| Maximise local benefits, minimize negative local impacts |
| Ensure mutual respect between tourists & residents |
| Preservation & promotion of traditional skills & trades |
| **Promote a commitment to responsible tourism, with ethical concerns, equality, long-term vision, certification and award schemes** |
| **Develop quality criteria to measure performance to enhance tourism sustainability – European Tourism Quality Label, European Tourism Indicator System, European Heritage Labels** |
| Create ‘emotional maps’ of visitors’ journeys through a destination, from planning to the recording of emotional experiences |
| **Enhanced visitor information; ICT applications, video documentaries, multimedia productions; new media tools, virtual reality, animation; innovations through social media, networking, web applications** |
| Place Marketing Innovative Strategies, based on cultural heritage, local distinctiveness & regional identity |
| Marketing actions for year-round sustainable cultural tourism development |
| Cultural routes; transnational tourism products. Intangible cultural heritage |
| Promotion of eno-gastronomy & regional identity |
Prospects: Challenges for Sustainable Tourism in Kazakhstan

- ‘Sustainable Tourism’ is not a widely used & understood concept in the CIS states. Ecotourism is more frequently used, but more in the context of tourism to ecological sites than the philosophical meaning of Ecotourism. NGOs introduced 15 ecosites in 2003. ‘Wild tourism’ continues to supersede genuine ecotourism.

- Lack of integrated or holistic planning & action for tourism development, & limited legal & regulatory frameworks which could support sustainable tourism development. 2006 Tourism Industry Development Concept for the Republic of Kazakhstan to 2020 contains some provision for ecotourism, but not in a coordinated manner which could promote sustainable tourism.

- The management body for natural areas (nature reserves, national parks, wildlife reserves) is the Committee on Forestry and Hunting, Ministry of Agriculture.

- Heritage assets are in need of substantial investment if they are to provide a resource for sustainable tourism development. Authenticity challenges of mobilization & restoration.

- Need to increase public awareness of conservation & protection of the environment, in Kazakhstan & CIS tourist source countries, to make sustainable tourism a realistic prospect. 89% of in-bound tourism was from CIS countries in 2012.
Prospects: Challenges for Sustainable Tourism in Kazakhstan

Kazakhstan engaged the fashionable concept of the ‘green economy’ in 2012, but largely as an independent sector rather than being integrated within the economy as a whole. Ecotourism is seen by the government as troublesome & costly, so has a low priority. Ecotourism sites lack green technologies. Construction spoils amenity value.

Tourism challenges: low country marketing; low international (and domestic – more Kazakhs travel abroad than within the country itself) attractiveness of tourism objects; poor state of repair of historical assets & challenges for authentic renovation; huge distances between sites, together with infrastructure deficiencies; a lagging service sector; and high prices for services & accommodation. Lack of a tourism supply chain, poor logistical facilities. All are impediments for tourism development and sustainability.

Locals benefit more from mass tourism than ecotourism, so where is the incentive to prioritise sustainable tourism?

Tourism Industry Development Plan 2020 focuses on 5 regional clusters, along with an investment of US$4 billion to support tourism development & mitigate impacts. Clustering may be an efficient way to support sustainability if it is given sufficient prominence, but it could also concentrate negative tourism impacts.
UNESCO Silk Roads Project: Silver Lining for Sustainability?


- UNESCO: comprehensive & sustainable Silk Roads Heritage Corridors Tourism Strategy, focused on 2 corridors crossing 5 countries, including Kazakhstan, which forms part of the Chang’an-Tianshan Corridor (given World Heritage Status in 2014: ‘The Routes Network of the Chang’an-Tianshan Corridor’). The Strategy Road Map emphasises: sustainable growth, community development, heritage management & conservation, and maximum stakeholder engagement. Aims to balance site promotion & site conservation.

- Workshop on “Sustainable Tourism Development along the Silk Road”, October 2017, Khiva, Uzbekistan; coinciding with the International Tourism Fair for the Silk Road.


A sign that international co-operation & collaboration may help Kazakhstan to accelerate efforts to achieve sustainable tourism development which may be more difficult based on its own resources & resourcefulness?
Thank You For Your Attention!

Рақмет сізге
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Рақмет сізге

And Thank You For Inviting Me!