

ITM BA 2. Sem. 8035: Special Tourism Management

- Tourism Politics, Globalization, Sustainable and Responsible Tourism -

Tu 11.45 - 13.15 h, Audimax II

Responsible Tourism since Cape Town Declaration 2002

"Responsible tourism" has been the buzzword in tourism development discussions in recent years:

In 2002, 280 representatives from all sectors of tourism from 20 countries attended the Cape Town Conference on Responsible Tourism in Destinations, preceding the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg.

A declaration on responsible tourism was agreed.

A Second International Conference on Responsible Tourism in Destinations with 500 delegates from 29 countries took place in Kerala (India) in March 2008, which adopted the Kerala Declaration.



Cape Town Declaration

The 2002 Cape Town declaration agreed that responsible tourism:

- minimises negative economic, environmental and social impacts
- generates greater economic benefits for local people and enhances the well being of host communities; improves working conditions and access to the industry
- involves local people in decisions that affect their lives and life chances
- makes positive contributions to the conservation of natural and cultural heritage embracing diversity
- provides more enjoyable experiences for tourists through more meaningful connections with local people, and a greater understanding of local cultural, social and environmental issues
- provides access for physically challenged people

- is culturally sensitive, encourages respect between tourists and hosts, and builds local pride and confidence

The Kerala declaration 2008 ends with the observation:

There is a danger that Responsible Tourism will be undermined by businesses, communities or governments which **use the rhetoric but cannot substantiate the claims**. We call upon those committed to the aspirations of Responsible Tourism to challenge those who pay only lip service to the cause and we call on those who are making a difference to report their contribution in a transparent, honest and robust way so that Responsible Tourism can be identified by the consumer and expectations can be raised to the benefit of those who practise Responsible Tourism and to the detriment of those who do not.

Five and a half years on from Cape Town we recognise that there has **not been as much progress as we would have hoped**, nor as much progress as is needed if the travel and tourism industry is to contribute its share of the action required to achieve sustainable development.

The declaration identifies necessary actions in the following fields:

EDUCATION AND LEARNING
CAMPAIGNING AND AWARENESS RAISING
MEDIA
EMPOWERMENT
TAKING RESPONSIBILITY FOR SUSTAINABLE LOCAL SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
GOVERNANCE
MULTI-STAKEHOLDER PROCESSES
PARTNERSHIPS
COMMUNITY-BASED TOURISM
MARKETS
DISABILITY AND INCLUSION
COMMERCIAL SUSTAINABILITY
ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY
MONITORING, MEASUREMENT AND REPORTING
AWARDS

See: <http://www.responsibletourism2008.org/>

The first "World Responsible Tourism Day" was held during the WTM 2007 in November 2007 in London and was - unlike Kerala - seen as a big success measured by the number and quality of participants.

Since 2004, the "Responsible Tourism Award" is given, since 2007 sponsored by Virgin Holidays.

Categories:

Best Responsible Tour Operator

Best Large Accommodation

Best Small Accommodation

Best in a Mountain Environment

Best in a Marine Environment

Best Responsible Cruise Operator

Best for low carbon transport or technology

Best for Conservation of endangered species or protected area

Best for Conservation of Cultural Heritage

Best for poverty reduction

Best Volunteering Organisation

Best Destination

Best personal contribution



THE RESPONSIBLE TOURIST AND TRAVELLER.

Part of Code of Tourism Ethics from UNWTO (2005)

Travel and tourism should be planned and practiced as a means of individual and collective fulfilment. When practiced with an open mind, it is an irreplaceable factor of self education, mutual tolerance and for learning about the legitimate differences between peoples and cultures and their diversity.

Everyone has a role to play creating responsible travel and tourism. Governments, business and communities must do all they can, but as a guest you can support this in many ways to make a difference:

1. Open your mind to other cultures and traditions – it will transform your experience, you will earn respect and be more readily welcomed by local people. Be tolerant and respect diversity – observe social and cultural traditions and practices.
2. Respect human rights. Exploitation in any form conflicts with the fundamental aims of tourism. The sexual exploitation of children is a crime punishable in the destination or at the offender's home country.
3. Help preserve natural environments. Protect wildlife and habitats and do not purchase products made from endangered plants or animals.
4. Respect cultural resources. Activities should be conducted with respect for the artistic, archaeological and cultural heritage.

5. Your trip can contribute to economic and social development. Purchase local handicrafts and products to support the local economy using the principles of fair trade. Bargaining for goods should reflect an understanding of a fair wage.
6. Inform yourself about the destination's current health situation and access to emergency and consular services prior to departure and be assured that your health and personal security will not be compromised. Make sure that your specific requirements (diet, accessibility, medical care) can be fulfilled before you decide to travel this destination.
7. Learn as much as possible about your destination and take time to understand the customs, norms and traditions. Avoid behaviour that could offend the local population.
8. Familiarize yourself with the laws so that you do not commit any act considered criminal by the law of the country visited. Refrain from all trafficking in illicit drugs, arms, antiques, protected species and products or substances that are dangerous or prohibited by national regulations.

SO: WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN SUSTAINABLE TOURISM AND RESPONSIBLE TOURISM?

An answer by Ron Mader of Responsible Tourism Forum:

Responsible tourism is treating others the way they wish to be treated.

While tourism campaigns have long touted 'destinations' -- in fact we are simply entering a place that is someone else's home. Said Transitions Abroad founder Clay Hubbs in a 2004 interview: "The golden rule is more and more recognized as the first rule of travel and adventure travel and I'm told that group organizers are rewarded by their customers for observing it."

Perhaps responsible tourism goes a step further, to what is called the Platinum Rule - treating others the way they wish to be treated. The work ahead lies in connecting top-down and grassroots efforts. Responsible travel means extending solidarity over

time. Efforts that lack continuity, even if developed with good intentions, can make situations worse.

We ask a lot of tourism these days ... that it be eco, that it be sustainable and that it be responsible. Global tourism has changed in the past decade. A growing number of travelers want their journeys to be less invasive and more beneficial to the local community. They want to better understand the culture of the places they visit.

Travelers and locals are seeking ways of building constituencies with the shared goal of making tourism more responsible.

Says noted author and activist Deborah McLaren: "An umbrella term that encompasses this new mindset and mode of travel is 'responsible tourism' which is based on ethics and human rights. It also means support for community-based travelers' programs -- homestays, guest cottages, ethno-museums, and educational programs that bring tourist dollars directly into communities."

And what does Wikipedia say?

The pillars of responsible tourism are therefore the same as those of sustainable tourism – environmental integrity, social justice and economic development. The major difference between the two is that, in responsible tourism, individuals, organisations and businesses are asked to take responsibility for their actions and the impacts of their actions. This shift in emphasis has taken place because some stakeholders feel that insufficient progress towards realising sustainable tourism has been made since the Earth Summit in Rio. This is partly because everyone has been expecting others to behave in a sustainable manner. The emphasis on responsibility in responsible tourism means that everyone involved in tourism – government, product owners and operators, transport operators, community services, NGO's and CBO's, tourists, local communities, industry associations – are responsible for achieving the goals of responsible tourism.^[citation needed]

And the industry?

InterContinental Hotel Group already starts watering down the term:

Responsible tourism

Responsible tourism takes into account the interconnected environmental, socio-cultural and economic aspects of tourism.

Tourism brings economic wellbeing to host communities. It creates stable sources of income that benefit local business and provides employment opportunities for the community.

Sustainable operations are characterised, at least in part, by local employment, the training opportunities they offer and their local sourcing policies.

Environmental aspects related to responsible tourism focus on minimising climate change. These include using resources such as energy and water wisely, minimising waste and conserving ecosystems and biodiversity.

Responsible tourism also respects the culture and people of local communities, conserving cultural sites and traditions and supporting human rights.

See: <http://www.ihgplc.com/innovation/index.asp?pageid=36>

And a positive example from www.wildasia.net:

Many outfits that classify themselves using the 'eco' prefix continue to actively practise conservation, however the majority do not, rendering the phrase 'eco-tourism' for the most part meaningless and at best ambiguous.

Responsible Tourism, then, is the next attempt at reining in the destructive side of the tourism industry. **This is another approach, with the focus being on the bigger picture; conservation of, not only the environment, but the people and cultures within it. The responsibility is shared by tourists, operators and the local community alike.**

Responsible Tourism operators follow guidelines which are designed to help their businesses cause as little damage as possible to the area in which they operate. More than that, they actively seek to provide benefits to the environment and people there. This means that as well as more common practices like, for example, reducing and recycling waste, the company buys produce and recruits staff locally in order to ensure that the local economy also gains from tourist revenue, not just the resort or tour company.

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