

Resource Dependency of Tourists



Tourism is dependent upon the attractive power of the destination's primary resources:

- Natural resources (climate, landscape, ecosystems);
- Cultural resources (urban heritage, arts, archaeological values, traditions, science values, folk crafts and sub-cultural formations);
- Social resources (potential tourism developers with socio-demographic characteristics, abilities, financial capital, knowledge, health - environment - property security system, local community interests etc.).

Moreover tourist destinations provide secondary resources:

- Accommodation sector (hotel, motel, camping, guest house etc.);
- Catering sector (café, restaurants, bistro etc.);
- Travel organization sector (agencies, tour operators etc.);
- Transportation sector (air, boat, train, bus, etc.);
- Entertainment sector (gambling, disco, etc.);
- Information sector (tourism information network);
- Supplementary services, facilities and service infrastructure

There is no tourist activity that does not rely on environmental resources in some way. For example, natural resources are used to supply tourists with heat, power, food, sanitation and drinking water. The environment is called upon to absorb the waste that is generated (e.g. household waste dumps). Tourism often neglects this resource dependency. The pressures, exerted as a result of tourism, may be so great that the activity can become unsustainable and leads to a decline of the resources in the long-term.

Sustainable Tourism Development meets the needs of present tourists, host regions while protecting and enhancing opportunity for the future. Some factors can be seen as "drivers", pushing the tourism industry towards a sustainable development approach. These are:

- Increasing regulatory pressure;
- Growing awareness of cost savings from sensible resource consumption;
- Tourism professionals and operators recognize that environmental quality is essential for a competitive product;
- The awareness by governments and operators that the growth of tourism can have a negative impact on the environment;
- A growing awareness of communities about their potential to influence tourism policy

Consumers in Europe, for example in Germany, the United Kingdom or the Netherlands are aware of the environmental impacts that can be caused by tourism. They expect a high environmental quality in their destination, prefer eco-labelled accommodation services, look for certified products in the travel catalogues and have access to all "green" tourism products in Europe. In 2002, Germans were asked the following question in an opinion poll: When thinking about your next holiday, which of the following environmental factors is most important for you? The answers were as follows:

- 64.5 %: Clean beaches and water
- 59.1 %: No rubbish in the resort or in the surrounding area
- 50.0 %: No urbanization of rural areas
- 45.8 %: Good nature protection in the holiday destination
- 51.0 %: No noise pollution from traffic or discothèques
- 35.1 %: Little traffic and good public transport in the destination
- 29.0 %: Possibility of reaching the destination easily by bus or train
- 41.8 %: Environmentally-friendly accommodation
- 18.7 %: Finding environmentally-friendly accommodation in tour operators or travel agents' catalogues
- 14.2 %: Easy access to information on offers with verified environmental-friendly accommodation (eco-labels)