

# Ecotourism trend environmental management tourism essay

[Sport & Tourism](#), [Ecotourism](#)



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Environmental management and sustainable development is one of the most recent ecotourism trends. The term environmental management first surfaced in the 1980s describing the importance of organizations, populations, and communities to practice and handle their environmental impacts. Conservation of resources and sustainable developments are the key components to protecting and managing the environment, as well as addressing the effects of the tourism industry and other various sectors. Tourist areas such as Costa Rica, Brazil, the Dominican Republic and other various destinations are in desperate need of implementation of the ecotourism trend environmental management. All tourist destinations suffer from the lasting impacts of their visitors, continuous construction of infrastructures, deforestation and finally pollution affects. Government laws and regulations alongside with community, professional and personal concerns, when combined, may lead to significant improvements in environmental management.

The article, A methodology for creating greenways through multidisciplinary sustainable landscape planning, by Selma Beatriz Pena and other colleagues (2010), discusses a precise method in particular to greenways by sustaining tourism areas. “ Greenways are networks of linear elements that are planned, designed and managed for multiple purposes, including ecological, recreational, cultural, aesthetic or other purposes compatible with the concept of sustainable land use” (p. 971). By using landscapes in a cultural and natural process that does not have detrimental environmental effects, interpretation, knowledge and understanding is required for the sustainment of tourism areas. Landscape is a complex concept and system that is the result of the combination of natural and human force factors. The cultural and natural elements were incorporated through an ecological structure that is the product of natural and fundamental systems. “ The comprehension of environmental sensitivity can give way to sustainable development by supporting decisions regarding interventions from ecological, economic and social perspectives.” (p. 971) By the positive and helpful use of landscape alongside with steady use, the management of the environment will continue to become known and more effective.

The discussed methodology envelops three phases of criteria including eco-cultural analysis, synthesis and diagnosis, and the proposal. The approach consists of landscape structures and dynamics consisting of biophysical, dynamic, vegetation and other various cultural characteristics. The eco-cultural analysis was used by searching and gathering valid information collected solely from field data and cartography. “ The study of habitats is

critical to acquire knowledge of the territory and sustain the foreseeable correct management measures.” (p. 978) Many other analyses such as the biophysical component, geomorphologic dynamics, the vegetation analysis, cultural landscape, and the cultural and natural analysis, compiled together the information needed to make a successful proposal in identifying the necessary steps towards environmental management and the sustainment of landscapes. Preserving natural areas such as fields, meadows and forests leads to the sustainable maintenance of ecosystems and is the principle of managing the environment. “ Once the priority actions and the management measures for habitats that ensure ecological equilibrium of landscape have been implemented, it is then possible to propose sustainable greenways.” (p. 980)

## **Article 2**

The use of choice experiments in the analysis of tourist preferences for ecotourism development in Costa Rica, Robert R. Hearne (2002) explains, “ During the past decade Costa Rica has successfully promoted its tourist industry...” (p. 154). Hearne also addresses the dynamic aspects and advances of sustainable infrastructures and their extreme efforts towards protecting their natural areas via nature-based tourism. Nature-based tourism is used “ to promote the dual goals of nature conservation and income generation.” (p. 153) To further make an environmental management impact, Costa Rica must combine within the tourists an appreciation for the nature, sustainable infrastructures, specified and defined restrictions, as well as the acknowledgement of national parks and

protected areas. An increase of tourists in any area immediately generates revenue, a positive effect. While “ tourist dollars can generate income for local populations and contribute to the financial self-sufficiency of protected areas” (p. 153), they also propose harmful possibilities on the environment including leaving their imprints on the land, loss of resources and creating a large volume of pollution.

Chosen experiments appear as means to evaluate the impacts on the Braulio Carrillo National Park due to a major increase of tourist visitations in the area. The experiments and tests are a comprehensive and accumulative evaluation that analyzes “ direct links with economic theory of derived utility that consumers’ utilities are defined over a bundle of attributes or characteristics of a purchased good or service.” (p. 156) A large majority of the park aims its’ focus on the protection and conservation of wildlife habitats including pumas, jaguars, tapirs, quetzals, and eagles. Along with the variety of species, the park is located among five different climate zones. Therefore, an environmental management plan and experimental assessment is key to the preservation of the National Park and to inform the park rangers the essential needs of the area. “ This study demonstrates that choice experiments are a feasible mechanism to analyze user preferences for the management of protected areas in developing countries.” (p. 161)

### **Article 3**

The third article, Sustainable Strategies for the Brazilian Amazon Region: An Ecotourism Perspective, Raul Gouvea (2008) discusses the importance of implementing an ecotourism industry along the Amazon region due to the

influx of tourists and the lack of sustainable development accommodations. The Brazilian government has become aware of the environmental dangers that may occur because of the growth in the tourism industry. Each year Brazil becomes a more known tourism destination with the continued expansion of hotels, theme parks and convention centers. With the developments of new infrastructures, the environment will suffer from deforestation and major disturbances among the wildlife animals and surrounding habitats. Taking action now and considering the needs of an ecotourism trend such as environmental management will ensure the sustainment of the country. “ Ecotourism offers an avenue for translating sustainable development strategies into profits and a feasible alternative to finance the conservation of ecosystems.” (p. 89)

The Brazilian government has tried various perspectives of environmental management regulations since 1987. With the establishment of their ecotourism industry, the “ protection and conservation of the visited areas, and efforts to generate benefits to the local communities as a way to promote the conservation of local habitats” (p. 91), are their two main focuses on tackling this problem. Collectively, with their focuses, The Brazilian Tourism agency and the Ecotourism Poles Project and the Brazilian Ecotourism Institute, works towards a successful program of devising, identifying and promoting poles for ecotourism development. However, a major problem that Brazil faces is the lack of educated professionals appointing the ecotourism advances. The three corporations that are working so hard to develop and implement the ecotourism trend of

environmental management are having a serious problem with acknowledging where to begin, finding the manpower needed for the necessary changes of infrastructures and difficulties with their communication and transportation efforts. The only answer towards lasting environmental management in Brazil is that “ several steps need to be taken to establish a persuasive eco-mindset in the Amazon region. The creation of an ‘ ecological triple-helix,’ bringing together the local private sector, local educational institutions and local and federal governmental agencies is of paramount importance to move the ecological agenda forward in the region.” (p. 93)

## **Article 4**

Leida Mercado and James P. Lassoie, wrote the article, Assessing Tourist's Preferences for Recreational and Environmental Management Programs Central to the Sustainable Development of a Tourism Area in the Dominican Republic (2002). Sustainable development, conservation of natural resources and preservation of the environment from the affects of the tourism industry was an important emphasis in the paper. “ The link between market competitiveness and sustainable tourism is very reasonable, especially when the tourism industry depends on the uniqueness of environmental resources, as in the Dominican Republic.” (p. 255) The tourism industry is known to be a major affliction in the goal towards and eco-friendly environment. The appropriate way to assess that problem is to first incorporate the specifications such as regulations and policies of a tourism area to sustainable developments. Also, to further help the ecotourism trend of

environmental management, recognizing the interests in sustainable developments of tourists and other communities will help aid in creating awareness and add extra support to environmental management. This article first handedly reports “ how important it is to elicit tourists’ preferences of programs central to the sustainable development of tourism areas since these preferences can drive managers’ development decisions in more sustainable directions.” (p. 253)

To further pinpoint the interests of tourists regarding where they like to vacation, a considerable amount of nearly two hundred people were interviewed. The importance of containing this information is because then the resort of Punta Cana in the Dominican Republic, as well as surrounding areas, will be aware which areas will need extra help in environmental management and sustainable developments. “ The main factors that they considered when deciding where to go on a beach vacation were evaluated, as well as their preferences regarding four programs designed to improve recreational and environmental management of the area.” (p. 253) The tourists expressed their opinions in financial terms. Of the results that they gathered, certain preferences expected of the tourists where cleanliness of the ocean and beach areas, prestige of services, and the overall price when going on a vacation. Also, they responded particularly to two of the four sustainable development programs. The outdoor aquarium and the Water Management Program were the main interests of the interviewed tourists as they showed a substantial willingness to pay. “ From the study of tourist



preferences, it is possible to draw conclusions with implications for both sustainable tourism development and environmental policy.” (p. 265)

## **Article 5**

The final article that showed the growing ecotourism trend of environmental management, *A Conceptual Framework to Develop Long-Term Ecological Research and Management Objectives in the Wider Caribbean Region*, (2004) was written by Victor H. Rivera-Monroy. Tourism is the main source of income for the Caribbean region. With the constant flows of tourists entering the region, it puts a lot of stress on the fragile ecosystems. The environment experiences signs of deprivation in most common areas such as the surrounding sea and watersheds. Tourists are also responsible for the damages they leave behind, the extra amounts of pollution in the area, the disruptiveness of wildlife habitats and the need of lodging accommodations. Because the Caribbean cannot do without tourists generating revenue, ecotourism is becoming a very well known trend because of the need for environmental management strategies and support for sustainable developments. A problem when assessing the development of the ecotourism trend is that “ there are few, explicit, long-term, comprehensive studies describing the structure and function of Caribbean ecosystems.” (p. 843)

To address the problem of the fragile ecosystems, “ a conceptual framework using environmental signature hypothesis of tropical coastal settings to develop a series of research questions for the reef-sea-grass-wetland seascape” (p. 843) was created. A total of thirteen locations of different

atmospheres and tolerance levels of environmental impacts from both natural situations and external ones were documented with the conceptual framework approach. “ This approach follows the strategy developed by the Long Term Ecological Research program of the National Science Foundation to establish ecological research questions best studied over decades and large spatial areas.” (p. 843) The thirteen selections showcased different stages of tolerance from possible human impact of the ecosystems. The destruction of coral reefs were the main concern found in the research approaches. Effects of damages made to the coral reefs may be from “ sedimentation, destructive fishing, poorly regulated mining and construction and anthropogenic nutrient inputs.” (p. 850) The causes that lead to the destruction of the coral reefs solely comes from the tourism industry. The Caribbean region constantly maintains accommodations for their visitors by participating in deforestation, infrastructures of hotels and other facilities, mining and the construction of the coast and beach areas. All in all, the Caribbean has successfully centered some main environmental damages made by tourists. The next step is to further implement the ecotourism trend of environmental management full force in the region to protect the natural areas.

## **Conclusion**

The main reasons how tourism negatively affects the environmental management approaches is through the adjustments that ecosystems and wildlife areas have to modify because of the “ human ecological footprints” of tourists, secondly, deforestation by construction of both general

infrastructure and tourism related facilities, and finally pollution of noise, water, and air. However, because of all the harmful contacts that tourism has with the environment, it does raise a lot of probable concerns to create awareness to the environmental management protection and conservation organizations.

Physical impacts on the environment primarily come from the construction of tourism and leisure related facilities such as roads, railroads, paths, airports, marinas, hotels and resorts, and stadiums for sporting events such as the Olympics, National Football League, and NASCAR. With the constant increase in demand for tourism and recreational service areas, deforestation is the main cause to the negative impacts in the environment. Land resources such as forests, fields, and the countryside are being used for building materials, accommodation of the land, and minerals and soils. With the decrease of natural regions, wetlands and wildlife is also experiencing the detrimental shocks.

In closing, all of the above articles discuss the important ecotourism trend of acquiring environmental management procedures and tactics. The common theme among the articles is acknowledging the positive and negative effects of tourism. A positive effect for the Costa Rica National Park was increased revenue that was essentially used to help protect their natural areas. Other positives include new methodologies and advanced approaches for protection and sustainable developments. However, despite the many positives, tourism also has negative impacts on specific areas resulting in the

desperate need for new ecotourism trends which includes environmental management and sustainable developments.