Research Report

Special Conference 1: Security and Globalization

Reducing the impact of mass tourism in developing countries

MUNISH '14

Forum	Special Conference 1: Security and Globalization
Issue:	Reducing the impact of mass tourism in developing countries
Student Officer:	Abhash Bhattacharya
Position:	Deputy President

Introduction

Tourism is a form of travel carried out for a variety of reasons including recreation, leisure and business. Travelling to other cities in the same country can also be considered a form of tourism, however with the question at hand, only international travel will be considered.

With the current trend of globalisation in today's world, expatriate employees and emigrants are groups of people who tend to have friend groups in a variety of places internationally. Many jobs require personnel to travel frequently, and of course, everyone enjoys a holiday once in a while. As a result, there is a lot of international travel, which has further increased a large tourism industry. While this has typically resulted in a significant influx of income and capital in tourist destinations, it comes with a fair amount of criticism and concern. One of the main issues predominantly concerning Less Economically Developed Countries (LEDCs) is the phenomenon of mass tourism where large groups of tourists jointly visit, bringing havoc to the infrastructure and environment.

Moreover, the issue has to do with wealth disparity. The large tourism industries in LEDCs are normally run by companies based in More Economically Developed Countries (MEDCs). This results in the profits going to MEDCs, whilst the LEDCs do not get any financial benefit, though they arguably need it the most. The resulting misuse of resources, overuse of scarce resources, investment in infrastructure to support such tourism - while ignoring essential development for the less privileged population – in addition to the misuse of development funds to support commercially driven objectives, makes mass tourism a subject of recent debate. The issue of mass tourism is clearly one with a large-scale international impact, calling for more UN involvement to govern the industry and settle cross border disputes.

Definition of Key Terms

Tourism

A form of travel carried out for a variety of reasons including recreation, leisure, and business. For the sake of this issue, the scope of tourism will be limited to international travel.

Ecotourism

A form of tourism directed towards exotic and natural environments, such as Safari or Rainforest excursions

E-Tourism

The implementation of tourism services online.

Mass Tourism

A form of tourism that involves a large number tourists going to the same area in a given time period.

Sustainable Tourism

A form of tourism that can be sustained for a long period of time without having negative effects on the environment or society.

Developing Countries

Countries seeking to become more advanced with respect to infrastructure, industry and agriculture. They tend to have lower living standards and a lower Human Development Index.

Human Development Index (HDI)

This is a global index used to compare the development of a nation to itself and others over time. It is an index that takes into account multiple components: average life expectancy at birth, level and access of education, and the GNI per capita.

Gross Domestic Product (GDP)

This is a representation of the value of a country's total output. Developing countries tend to have lowers GDPs than developed countries. In economics, an expenditure method can be used to calculate GDP, which has the following formula: GDP =

Consumer expenditure + Investments + Government spending + (Exports – Imports) (C+I+G+(X-M)).

Gross National Income (GNI)

This is the total income earned by a country's factors of production (Land, Labour, Capital and Entrepreneurship) regardless of where they are located. According to Article 1 of the EC Eurotom, GNI represents total primary income receivable by resident institutional units: compensation of employees, taxes on production and imports less subsidies, property income (interest, dividends and reinvested earnings from foreign direct investment receivable less payable), gross operating surplus and gross mixed income.

General Overview

Tourism is a significant source of income in many countries. In the case of LEDCs, governments have been seen to encourage inward-tourism because of the contributions to foreign exchange generation and the increase in the livelihoods of many. Tourists who visit spend money on their stay, food by sightseeing, shopping and travelling, which increases the Gross National Income (GNI) of the country visited. In the case of international visitors (as defined by this report) this brings into the LEDC (country visited) foreign exchange as do export industries. In the case of LEDCs, this is an important factor in balancing the trade payments since most LEDCS are heavily dependent on imports which spend foreign exchange. In fact, in many LEDCs', foreign exchange income is dependent on tourism.

However, mass tourism is seen today as a serious cause for concern in developing countries that do not have the infrastructure capable of dealing with the growing demand of tourist activities. This results in governments investing in infrastructure to support tourist activities which may not improve the lives of ordinary citizens. The hosting of the World Cup football in Brazil has given rise to much debate on this topic. It is alleged that the benefits of such an event leaves no positive impact on the economy of the host nation. On the one hand, hosting the world event will have a positive effect because of the revenue it generates, but the benefits of this are less likely to reach the bulk of the population. Furthermore, the investment or the government expenditure on such an event is not seen as a positive move for the economy as a whole, since there are far more important issues to be dealt with. The HDI, Per Capita Income, and other economic indicators of the population demand

government investment and expenditure in core areas such as sanitation, health and education rather than tourist infrastructure.

When analysing the impact of mass tourism, it is assumed that this form of tourism largely consists of tourists travelling from MEDCs to LEDCs. The question at hand and the ensuing debate therefore ignore any impact of tourists from LEDCs visiting MEDCs.

Benefit to LEDCs

Tourists bring in valuable foreign exchange by spending in the country being visited. Typically, LEDCs suffer from economic stress with large import bills and typically low export capabilities. LEDCs typically import staple items and are less capable of exporting goods to other countries since they are less competitive. The balance of payments situation in LEDCs is typically poor with foreign exchange deficits. There is a need to boost exports or encourage incoming foreign exchange as in the case of incoming tourists who spend their foreign money in the LEDCs when they visit. This income from foreign tourists benefits the countries' economies, particularly when this income is earned with little or no investment. Natural resources like sightseeing spots or historic sites cost relatively little in maintenance and can yield a lot by way of tourist interest and spending. Further commercialisations of such sites also yield livelihoods to many parties, such as hotels, sport and spa facilities and transport companies, who may begin to invest. New jobs are created by the tourism industry, effectively reducing unemployment. The taxes acquired from tourists' spending can also be used for government investment, benefitting the LEDCs. In order to accommodate tourists, general infrastructural changes may need to be made. Governments may need to invest in areas such as public services, public transport systems, and airports to accommodate the tourists, which will also benefit the local people.

There can be a secondary impact of tourism: the beginning of new joint ventures, between foreign countries. This mainly occurs between MEDCs, who have more advanced technology or expertise or sophisticated products to offer, and LEDCs, who can possibly produce more cheaply with local raw materials or lower wage rates. Possibilities for investment in trade and industry and opportunities for the LEDCs to improve their image onn the international platform are possible positive effects of mass tourism.

Conservation of natural resources, wildlife and environmentally friendly initiatives have been seen to flourish as a result of mass tourism in some places. In some places, nature is destroyed to facilitate mass tourism, whilst in others the flora and fauna are the main reason for tourism, so extra initiative is used to preserve and protect the environment.

The hosting of world events is often undertaken by governments to improve the international profile and relations of the country and is expected to have long lasting positive benefits to the economy such as: improved infrastructure and commercial relations; the possibility to attract foreign investment as well as participation in international politics and lobbies.

On the other hand, there are a number of disadvantages, or proven pitfalls which occur as a result of mass tourism. These have given rise to the current debates on sustainable tourism and the role of governments, and international bodies such as the UN. These have also called for regulation and protection of LEDCs

Negative effects upon LEDCs

Large multinationals often based in MEDCs seem to gain from most of the commercial advantages of mass tourism. Airline companies, tour operators and hotel chains end up benefitting the most from mass tourism; aggressively marketing the sites and capturing the mass markets with competitive prices. LEDCs' local companies and tourist facilities often do not have the reach or the standards required by MEDC tourists to avail of the commercial advantages of mass tourism.

LEDCs generally have a lower level of education and a less educated population than MEDCs, so the labour can often be underqualified and poorly paid. To add to this, the proficiency of an international language such as English is rare with the locals. This means that tourism companies employ educated workers from MEDCs instead, which therefore does not have a positive impact on local economy or result in the advancement of the local population. Similarly, travel agents and holiday planners often work in collaboration with facilities owned by companies based in MEDCs, which again does not support the local people in terms of employment or support the LEDCs' government.

Given that tourism is a temporary phenomenon, it does not provide steady, year round employment to the locals. The seasonal demand causes imbalances and has a negative impact on the locals, the infrastructure and the economy, due to an exploding "high" season and little or no activity in the "low" season.

There are also environmental implications of mass tourism. In order to facilitate tourism, hotels and resorts are built in natural habitats. This often is done without proper consideration to the displacement of wildlife or even poor locals. The crowding of tourists in peak periods creates environmental problems such as increased CO_2 emissions, depletion and misuse of natural resources, with little attention paid to the maintenance and sustainability of the sites.

The above factors show that mass tourism can lead to the exploitation of LEDCs at the hands of the MECDs unless monitored and controlled by a global code which respects the needs and available resources of the LEDCs while encouraging MECDs to use the facilities and sites that the LEDCS have to offer.

Major Parties Involved and Their Views

United Nations Conference on Trade And Development (UNCTAD)

The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) has been involved with E-Tourism, with special respect to LEDCs. UNCTAD explains that "The E-Tourism Initiative is the electronic component of UNCTAD's Task Force on Sustainable Tourism for Development, established in June 2003. The Task Force aims to design and implement an UNCTAD-wide integrated programme on tourism as an engine for development, particularly focused on the needs of LEDCs."

The work of the task force is to:

• "Coordinate UNCTAD's activities in the field of tourism as a tool for development, particularly focused on the needs of the LEDCs;

• Promote partnerships with international organizations, NGOs and private or public institutions."

United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO)

The UNWTO is a United Nations agency that looks after various aspects of tourism such as responsibility, sustainability and accessibility. The UNWTO supports tourism, as it believes tourism drives "economic growth, inclusive development, and environmental sustainability". Members include 156 countries, 6 associate members and over 400 affiliate members. The UNWTO has set several goals with respect to making tourism sustainable in LEDCs, and aims to achieve them in the near future.

United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation takes an optimistic stance on tourism. They stand for education, and aim to implement methods of educating tourists, hosts, and even governments about the dangers of tourism, and how to achieve sustainable tourism. Currently, this organisation hosts the World Heritage Convention, which aims to safeguard the world's natural and cultural heritage. Natural and

cultural heritage is a key resource for tourism in some countries; hence the preservation of it is vital.

Brazil

Brazil is an excellent example demonstrating the pros and cons of tourism in developing countries. The country has unique tourist attractions and sights to see, and as a result tourism has become a major industry in Brazil. The economy benefits from the tourism; however there is a lot of wealth disparity, as the rich earn the money whilst the poor remain unemployed. In order to experience certain parts of Brazil, nature and wildlife need to be sacrificed. The same sacrifice needs to be made to provide for the accommodation of the tourists. Recently there have been many protests for the 2014 FIFA World Cup, as there is a lot of wealth disparity, and many do not see the benefits of hosting the World Cup.

Thailand

Mass tourism in Thailand also has its pros and cons. In the 1960s when the tourism industry started to grow, the nation benefitted significantly. Roads and air transportation improved thoroughly, as well as the hotel industry and the retail industry due to the increase in demand. However, along with the advantages came several disadvantages. In the city of Phuket, "land and beach encroachment increased, as well as air and water pollution".

Timeline of Events

Date	Description of event
1998	GA proclaims 2002 as the International Year of Ecotourism, reiterated by the ECOSOC resolution 1998/40
2001	The Global Code of Ethics for Tourism is officially recognised by the UN General Assembly.
2002	World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg which addressed the issue of Sustainable Tourism in Paragraph 43 of Chapter IV of the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation
March 2004	UNCTAD XI Meeting on sustainable tourism for development
2004	World Committee on Tourism Ethics established
2011	UNESCO World Heritage and Substantial Tourism Programme started
June 2012	United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (UNCSD). Several heads of state attended the conference, and this resulted in a political document

on mass tourism.

UN involvement, Relevant Resolutions, Treaties and Events

Resolutions:

- International Year of Ecotourism, 15 December 1998, **(A/RES/53/200)**

- Promotion of ecotourism for poverty eradication and environmental protection, 20 December 2010, **(A/RES/65/173)**

Global Code of Ethics for Tourism:

According to the Secretary General of the UNWTO (1998-2008), "The Global Code of Ethics for Tourism sets a frame of reference for the responsible and sustainable development of world tourism. It draws inspiration from many similar declarations and industry codes that have come before and it adds new thinking that reflects our changing society at the beginning of the 21st century."

"The Code's 10 principles amply cover the economic, social, cultural and environmental components of travel and tourism:

Article 1: Tourism's contribution to mutual understanding and respect between peoples and societies
Article 2: Tourism as a vehicle for individual and collective fulfilment
Article 3: Tourism, a factor of sustainable development
Article 4: Tourism, a user of the cultural heritage of mankind and contributor to its enhancement
Article 5: Tourism, a beneficial activity for host countries and communities
Article 6: Obligations of stakeholders in tourism development
Article 7: Right to tourism
Article 8: Liberty of tourist movements
Article 9: Rights of the workers and entrepreneurs in the tourism industry
Article 10: Implementation of the principles of the Global Code of Ethics for Tourism"

Mauritius Strategy

According to SIDSnet, The "Outcome document of the High-level Review Meeting on the implementation of the Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States",

was an important event with respect to tourism in developing countries, held on 24 and 25 September 2010. This "identified tourism as one of the major areas of development endeavour for the sustainable development of the SIDS". In essence, this strategy aims to develop small islands to make them capable of supporting sustainable infrastructure and tourism, by trying to alleviate poverty and improve healthcare.

Evaluation of Previous Attempts to Resolve the Issue

Promoting sustainable tourism has been the main attempt to resolve the issue. By having a solid, sustainable infrastructure capable of dealing with the implications of mass tourism, many of the negative effects are already removed. The issue with this approach is the implementation. Many resolutions propose the implementation of sustainable tourism based infrastructure, however in practice this has not been accomplished due to high costs. Due to the high costs, LEDCs spend less money on sustainable forms of tourism, which is a vicious cycle as this price has to be paid more frequently than if sustainable tourism were to be implemented.

The first attempt at evolving a set of standards for tourism, "The Global Code of Ethics for Tourism" marks a positive milestone in the efforts to govern tourism and regulate mass tourism. The debates and discussions on the formation of policies for sustainable tourism including but not limited to eco-tourism have set the trend towards combating the ills of mass tourism.

Possible Solutions

The need for the implementation and adoption of these policies particularly by MEDCs will be a critical factor for success. The LEDCs on the other hand have shown relatively less resistance to mass tourism, as governments are drawn to the generation of foreign exchange and the positive impact initially to the image of the country. The efforts to improve the economy by promoting mass tourism need to be coupled with clear guidelines to combat the disadvantages and to enhance the adoption of the global code towards sustainable tourism.

In order to stop the environmental issues caused by mass tourism, sustainable tourism is highly recommended. Building infrastructure capable of handling the large number of tourists is important, as is implementing the infrastructure sustainably. The key to the

implementation of this is finding ways to generate funds, as LEDCs do not always have enough funds to implement sustainable tourism. Stewardship, defined by Geography LWC as: "the personal responsibility for looking after the environment", must be adhered to. No harm should be permitted to the environment, and all forms of development and resource exploitation must be carried out sustainably. Furthermore, everyone needs to be wary of the resources they use and the cost to the environment thereof, and should be careful when planning to prevent wasting.

A major issue of mass tourism is the sheer number of tourists. More often than not, places are popular tourist attractions for certain periods during the year, and during the 'empty' times there is seasonal unemployment. If the number of tourists could be controlled so the economy could function smoothly, so as to avoid seasonal unemployment, numerous issues would be alleviated such as wealth disparity and unemployment.

The UN and its related bodies need to help with the adoption of the suggested policies and ethical codes by increasing the implementation of sustainable tourism and limiting the increase of mass tourism, whilst ensuring environmental protection, as well as ensuring benefits for the local people, economy and government.

Mass tourism can be a very powerful tool to help LEDCs improve their economic situation, better connect with the world and use their natural resources including man power to enhance sustainable development. This can be made possible only with the intervention of internally acclaimed bodies such as the UN, the leadership of powerful member states and the co-operation of LEDCs in looking at the long term impact and benefits versus the short term gains.

Bibliography

"Brazil Tourism." *Brazil Tourism*. N.p., 2011. Web. 19 June 2014. <http://www.brazil.org.za/tourism.html>.

"Resolutions Adopted by the General Assembly at Its 53rd Session:." *UN News Center*. UN, n.d. Web. 19 June 2014. <http://www.un.org/depts/dhl/resguide/r53_en.shtml>.

"UN General Assembly Acknowledges Role of Tourism for Sustainable Development and Poverty Eradication." *Global Code Of Ethics For Tourism UN General Assembly Acknowledges Role of Tourism for Sustainable ...* **TN Global News, n.d. Web. 19 June**

2014. <http://www.eturbonews.com/20143/un-general-assembly-acknowledges-role-tourism-sustainable-develo>.

"UNWTO technical manual: Collection of Tourism Expenditure Statistics". World Tourism Organization. 1995. p. 10. Retrieved 26 March 2009.

Council Regulation (EC, Euratom) 1287/2003 of 15 July 2003 on the harmonisation of gross national income at market prices, Article 1(3)

LWC. "Sustainable Tourism." *Sustainable Tourism*. LWC, n.d. Web. 19 June 2014. <http://www.geographylwc.org.uk/GCSE/Year5/tourism/sustour.html>.

LWC. "Tourism in LEDC." *Tourism in LEDC*. LWC, n.d. Web. 19 June 2014. <http://www.geographylwc.org.uk/GCSE/Year5/tourism/tourledc.html>.

Mueanhawong, Kritsada. "Mass Tourism Market Blamed for Degradation of Phuket." *Mass Tourism Market Blamed for Degradation of Phuket*. Phucket Gazette, 14 June 2013. Web. 19 June 2013. <http://www.phuketgazette.net/phuket-news/Mass-tourism-market-blamed-for-degradation-of-Phuket/21327>.

Risi, Marcelo. "World Tourism Organization UNWTO." *UN General Assembly: Ecotourism Key to Eradicating Poverty and Protecting Environment*. N.p., 03 Jan. 2013. Web. 19 June 2014. <http://media.unwto.org/press-release/2013-01-03/un-general-assembly-ecotourism-key-eradicating-poverty-and-protecting-envir>.

Tjolle, Valere. "Tourism Role in Sustainable Development and Poverty Eradication Recognized by UN (TravelMole)." *GH NETwork*. N.p., 2011. Web. 19 June 2014. <http://www.ghnet.it/tourism-role-in-sustainable-development-and-poverty-eradication-recognized-by-un-travelmole/>.

Travel Industry Wire. "United Nations General Assembly Acknowledges Role of Tourism for Sustainable Development and Poverty Eradication." *:: Travel Industry Wire*. Travel Industry Wire, n.d. Web. 19 June 2014. <http://www.travelindustrywire.com/article51149United_Nations_General_Assembly_Acknowledges_Role_of_Tourism_for_Sustainable_Development_and_Poverty_Eradication.html>.

UNCTAD. "E-Tourism | Tourism in UNCTAD." *E-Tourism | Tourism in UNCTAD*. UNCTAD, n.d. Web. 19 June 2014. <http://www.unctadxi.org/templates/Startpage____1330.aspx>.

UNESCO. "UNESCO Implementing Mauritius Strategy - Brochure." *UNESCO Implementing Mauritius Strategy - Brochure*. **N.p., n.d. Web. 19 June 2014. <http://www.unesco.org/csi/B10/msibroch2.htm>.**

UNESCO. "World Heritage | United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization." *World Heritage | United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization*. N.p., n.d. Web. 19 June 2014. <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/santiago/culture/world-heritage/>.

UNESD. "Sustainable Tourism .:. Sustainable Development Knowledge Platform."*Sustainable Tourism .:. Sustainable Development Knowledge Platform*. UNESD, n.d. Web. 19 June 2014. <http://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/index.php?menu=243>.

UNWTO. "Ethics and Social Responsibility." *Global Code of Ethics for Tourism*. UNWTO, n.d. Web. 19 June 2014. <http://ethics.unwto.org/en/content/global-code-ethics-tourism>.

UNWTO. "UNWTO World Tourism Organization." *UNWTO World Tourism Organization*. UNWTO, n.d. Web. 19 June 2014. <http://www.unwto.org/ethics/background/en/background.php?subop=1>.

UNWTO. "World Tourism Organization UNWTO." *Who We Are*. **UNWTO, n.d. Web. 19 June 2014. <http://www2.unwto.org/content/who-we-are-0>.**

Wikipedia. "Tourism." *Wikipedia*. Wikimedia Foundation, 07 Apr. 2014. Web. 19 June 2014. <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tourism>.