



## TOURISM AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN CHINA

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<p><b>Received:</b> 7<sup>th</sup> May 2021 <b>Accepted:</b> 30<sup>th</sup> May 2021 <b>Published:</b> 30<sup>th</sup> June 2021</p>	<p>This article discusses the advantages and disadvantages of tourism from different angles. It is riskless possible to say that tourism brings in benefits but also has its drawbacks at the same time. In the twenty-first century, consumers of tourism are demanding greater quality, variety and more flexibility in their travels. With increasing rapid advancements globally, sustainability becomes a growing concern for all. With sustainable tourism, the importance of environmental, social and economic impacts has entered the decision-making process and will change the way tourism grow throughout the world and in general, protect resources for future generations. In this article introduction and explanation about the components related to Sustainable Tourism (ST): Ecotourism, Geo tourism, Responsible Tourism and Cultural Tourism (Edgell, 2016) will be discussed, as well as assessing existing literatures. Literature Review on Sustainable Tourism. Sustainable development requires meeting the basic needs of all and extending to all the opportunities to fulfil their aspirations for a better life, yet it is not a fixed state of harmony but rather a process of change that are made consistent with future as well as present needs.</p>
<p><b>Keywords:</b> Sustainable Tourism, Ecotourism, Geo tourism, Responsible Tourism and Cultural Tourism</p>	

Recent modifications of the open-up reform policies in China has brought up an economic transformation of which the tourism sector has equally witnessed fast development. Therefore, the essence of this article is to review the evolution and expansion of the tourism industry in China and its obligation to observing international sustainable development policies and practices. Indications of the current policy regime, establishment, and institutions, sustainable development strategies to ensure continuity and availability of resources for future use, environmental sustainability laws and regulations, and promotional events for the development of the tourism industry are made available in this article. In effect, this article reviews how the activities of the tourism sector impacts on the environment. The findings show that China in its quest to be a world leader of tourists' destination has impacted negatively on the environment which by extension affect the economy and society at large. On the other hand, as a leading nation in the United Nations, China has in contemporary times adapted sustainable development strategies to help safeguard the environment. However, more needs to be done in the area of advanced technology and renewable energy.

**Sustainable development** requires meeting the basic needs of all and extending to all the opportunities to fulfil their aspirations for a better life, yet it is not a fixed state of harmony but rather a process of change that are made consistent with future as well as present needs<sup>1</sup>. Built upon the principles of sustainable development, the consideration of three impacts were taken in. Economic, Social and Environmental impacts. These are also known as, The Triple Bottom Line (TBL). The TBL is a concept that expands the notion of organizational performance evaluation to include not only the traditional financial bottom line to one which also includes environmental quality and social justice<sup>2</sup>. The elements of the TBL can be combined in pairs resulting in some of the popular terms used to describe sustainable projects.

<sup>1</sup> Brundtland, Gro Harlem, 1987, Report on Sustainable Development, p 2.

<sup>2</sup> Elkington, John, 1999, Triple Bottom Line of 21<sup>st</sup> century Business, Oxford: Capstone Publishing, p 10.

**Ecotourism** focuses on socially responsible travel, appreciation of natural habitats, environmental sustainability, cultural appreciation, and the creation of economic opportunities for local communities<sup>3</sup>. According to Picard (2015), he mentioned how ecotourism dealt with the TBL and how it helped sustainable development but at the same time it does not mean it is a sustainable tourism. As he argued that sustainable development is conditioned by strategic planning, if strategic planning is ineffective, ecotourism products have little chance to contribute to sustainable development. He gave some example on how some ecotourism products were marketed in a way that it did not benefit or involve the local communities socially and even preserving the environment, their resources were provided by pursuing in a short term and profitable way regardless of the environment. Alternatively, many hotels have implemented ecotourism and contributed to having sustainable development. Furthermore, they hire the locals and engaged with community programs and went through trainings to learn more about how they can change and shape up their hospitality and accommodations. An example was whale or dolphin watching. Although it benefits the tourists and the local economy, it brings harm to the environment and the marine life which causes the dolphins or whales to migrate and even caused their deaths.

**Cultural Tourism** is a form of travelling to a destination and have an authentic experience of the history, heritage, and culture<sup>4</sup>. Culture and heritage are often linked together as it forms a sense of national identity in places, and it serves and contributes to the economy and social identification. Cultural tourism development currently presents some very definite unbalances. On one side, it depends on localized and hardly reproducible resources. On the other, it is governed by an industry that is increasingly both global in nature and disconnected from the sources of cultural capital<sup>5</sup>. Sustainable cultural heritage of tourism is the key element in the development, and how TBL is a key strategy that was implemented in order to develop the destination and to prevent unsustainable practices. There should be also mentioned that the social and ethical dimension of the destinations have been overshadowed by the economic dimension, which may lead to a lack of sustainability. The arrival of large numbers of incoming tourists, in combination with the local people's lack of tourism management skills, has caused the community to experience several challenging situations. The degradation of the Mon cultural heritage and changes in Mon cultural heritage resources can be seen in many areas of life, such as their clothing, beliefs and faith, customs and manners, food preparation wisdom, and language and naming. Unequal income distribution is another factor that was found, as some of the local people do not appreciate the tourism industry because they do not receive any income from it, while their shares of resources have been overused and are in decline.

**Responsible tourism** is a tourism that promotes responsibility to the environment through its sustainable use, responsibility to involve local communities in the tourism industry, responsibility for the safety and security of visitors and responsible government, employees, employers, unions and local communities<sup>6</sup>. Mindful minimizing, conscious advocating, educational empathy, and instrumental opportunism, are four constructions of responsible tourism involved in positioning of relative involvement in responsible tourism as a type of tourism activity and tourist's expressed goals<sup>7</sup>. An example would be by Frey & George (2010), they mentioned about the current attitudes and perceptions of tourism business owners in Cape Town, South Africa towards responsible tourism management (RTM) practices. Despite having positive attitudes towards RTM, businesses are not investing time and money into changing management practices, and resource constraints negatively impact the relationship between what businesses would like to do and what actually gets done. While responsible tourism is not yet universally accepted, it continues to gain adherents as more information becomes available. According to Edgell (2016), **Geo tourism** is a tourism that sustains or enhances the geographical character of a place, its environment, culture, aesthetics, heritage, and the well-being of its residents. The National Geographic Society has developed a "National Geographic Geo Tourism Charter," based on 13 principles that can be utilized by destinations and countries: Integrity of place, International codes, Market selectivity, Market diversity, Tourist satisfaction, Community involvement, Community benefit, Protection and Enhancement of destination appeal, Land use, Conservation of resources, Planning, Interactive interpretation, and Evaluation.

Sustainable tourism development is a broad concept that has been widely accepted. When applying this concept to research with the aim to develop an area, its adaptation must be achieved prior to implementation, but sustainable tourism is not a concise theory, the development of any tourist attraction requires a profound understanding of the proposed area. While qualitative methodology is the best method to apply, it is found that this methodology still had some limitations to it too. All and all, there is no right or wrong answer to it. It all leads or voice down to what the local communities sees, wants and hope for, and how the local government work towards to compromise and settle with the communities and people, to work together and benefit the country by having a sustainable tourism development. Although bringing in and boosting tourism might or will largely benefit, there are still many factors to think and look into that will affect and cause them afterwards. Whether it is Mass Tourism or Small-scale Tourism, there are still no right or wrong or correct ones as everything have pros and cons in it.

<sup>3</sup> Edgell, D.L., 2016, Ten Important World Tourism Issues for 2017, East Carolina University, p 13.

<sup>4</sup> Edgell, D.L., 2016, Ten Important World Tourism Issues for 2017, East Carolina University, p 13.

<sup>5</sup> Valcic Marija & Domsic Lana, 2012, Information Technology for Management and Promotion of Sustainable Cultural Tourism, African Journal of Hospitality, Tourism and Leisure, volume 7, p 25.

<sup>6</sup> Edgell, D.L., 2016, Ten Important World Tourism Issues for 2017, East Carolina University, p 13.

<sup>7</sup> Caruana, Glozer, Crane & McCabe, 2014, Tourist's accounts of responsible tourism. Annals of Tourism Research, p 46.

Therefore, currently the best solution to sustainable tourism development will be by bringing in the four components to deal with the TBL. After all, balancing and sustaining the tourism itself will not be an easy task as it seems, it requires lots of planning and efforts to be achievable, and by achieving it might be one thing, but sustaining it will be another. Furthermore, it is still critical that sustaining tourism continues to develop for greater benefits and for the future generations.

### REFERENCES:

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