

Introduction

If tourism is 'for the millions' – meaning for all people – as Thomas Cook argued, we have a long way to. The large majority of the world's population are not international tourists, able to avail themselves of the pleasures of leisurely travel. Even if every one of the 1.4 billion international trips currently taken annually was taken by a different individual (in practice this is of course nowhere near to being true) it would still represent just 17% of the world's 8.2 billion population. It is a statistic worth pondering in the light of fears of both global and local overtourism.

Yet idealistic niches that claim a degree of moral authority in debates over tourism's future – ecotourism, community-based tourism, volunteer tourism, regenerative tourism – often cater for the few, not the many.

Many such niches and perspectives lay claim to being inclusive on the basis that they involve participation from the host community, and therefore are less of an unwanted imposition upon the local way of life. This begs the question as to what is meant by inclusivity? The range of apparent alternatives to mainstream mass tourism often seem exclusive due to cost and lack of prospect of being scaled up for mass consumption.

'Community' is both ubiquitous and disputed. Different communities, and individuals within communities, want different things in different contexts. Often advocates for small scale tourism, whilst critical of growth and the assumptions that accompany it, make their own questionable assumptions about what is good for the community or, more importantly, what members of the community themselves actually desire.

Overtourism is, in part, a criticism of the impact of mass tourism on community. Equally communities are mostly, on balance, favourable to mass tourism, and those that rely on the industry for jobs may see 'undertourism' (yet to catch on amongst the commentariat and expert opinion!) as a bigger problem. That's not to say that tourism is not a