


Understanding the Sustainable Development of Tourism

Edited by

Janne J. Liburd and Deborah Edwards



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About the editors

Janne J. Liburd is an Associate Professor and Director of the Centre for Tourism, Innovation and Culture at the University of Southern Denmark. She is a cultural anthropologist and her research interests are in the field of sustainable tourism development. She has published on national park development, open innovation and Web 2.0, tourism education, tourism crisis communication, events, NGOs and accountability. Janne has conducted a number of research projects relating to competence development for tourism practitioners and tourism educators. She is the chair of the BEST Education Network and steering committee member of the Tourism Education Futures Initiative.

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The logo for the BEST Education Network. The word "BEST" is in large, bold, grey capital letters. Below it, "Education" and "Network" are written in a smaller, grey, sans-serif font. To the right of "Education" and "Network", there is a stylized, grey, handwritten-style signature or monogram that appears to be "en".



Foreword

Sustainable development and the application of its principles to tourism are more important now than ever. Tourism industry leaders must be stewards over the environmental and socio-cultural resources upon which their institutions depend, and educating future tourism leaders with these principles is essential. To respond to this need, in 2000, a group of educators, researchers and industry leaders formed an international consortium to address this key philosophical shift in tourism development. This group, called Business Enterprises for Sustainable Tourism Education Network (BEST EN) is an innovative group committed to knowledge creation about sustainable tourism development and to disseminating that knowledge to students through a series of educational activities. The educational chapters presented in this volume are one representation of their collective work.

BEST EN meets for annual Think Tanks at consortium universities around the world. Think Tanks have been held in South Africa, Hawaii, Costa Rica, Girona, Spain, Esbjerg, Denmark, Arizona, US, Izmir, Turkey, Singapore and Vienna, Austria. Each chapter in this volume represents the outcome of one of these Think Tanks. BEST EN Think Tanks have two main objectives: 1) to develop knowledge outcomes on a specific aspect of sustainable tourism and 2) to develop a research agenda to expand the knowledge base of that particular aspect of sustainable tourism.

To create responsible future leaders for the tourism industry, one of BEST EN's co-founders, Professor Abraham Pizam, states that 'sustainability should be integrated into all aspects of the undergraduate tourism/hospitality curriculum, and sustainable tourism principles need to be practiced in all aspects of tourism operations'. Therefore, BEST EN chose to prepare knowledge outcomes relevant to existing subject matters rather than one comprehensive course on sustainable tourism. In this way, each tourism/hospitality student will be exposed to sustainable tourism practices applicable to the subject matter they are studying.

Each Think Tank extracted the collective wisdom of the group in such a way that the outcome reached beyond individual perspectives and program or temporal constraints. Each time about 40-50 participants were divided into groups led by facilitators. Groups engaged in discussion sessions on the chosen topic of sustainable tourism using the Nominal Group Technique (NGT). On the last day of each Think Tank a comprehensive report was drafted, which was then forwarded to a small sub-group of volunteers who produce the final knowledge outcomes.

Another important innovation is successfully woven into this book. Each chapter has carefully integrated recent work from the Tourism Education Futures Initiative (TEFI) to ensure that key values underlying responsible stewardship and tourism leadership are incorporated. TEFI identified five value sets that tourism

students must imbibe in order to be successful future leaders of a fragile industry in uncertain times. They are ethics, stewardship, professionalism, knowledge and mutual respect. The integration of these values into the chapters has given them a strong foundation upon which to build sustainable tourism curricula. It is our hope that the book will be a resource to inspire colleagues in tourism institutions around the world to advance the cause of sustainable tourism practices for generations to come.

Pauline J. Sheldon,
Former Chair, BESTEN
Co-founder with Daniel Fesenmaier of Tourism Education Futures Initiative
President, International Academy for the Study of Tourism

Chapter extract

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