Chapter 3
Key Decisionmakers Regarding Tourism and Biodiversity Conservation

In order to effect changes in the tourism industry toward more conservation-friendly processes in biodiversity hotspots, it is important to identify the key players whose decisions will ultimately affect biodiversity. Furthermore, recommendations to public and private planners and policymakers at various levels of decisionmaking have to take into consideration the limits imposed by their sphere of influence and immediate objectives. Key-player analysis allows policymakers and practitioners to understand the concerns and interests of different parties and the means by which each agent contributes to tourism development and to biodiversity conservation or loss.

The tourism industry can be seen as a network of economic and political agents, processes, and resources. The interactions between these elements will ultimately define whether the impacts on biodiversity will be positive or negative. For this study, we have identified governments, the private sector, development agencies, and local residents as key players, given their central influence regarding the impacts of tourism on biodiversity. Other stakeholders, such as tourists, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), intergovernmental agencies and experts, academics, and consultants, also have important roles, but their actual contribution depends on their ability to influence the central players. This chapter will identify the roles and interests of various stakeholders related to conservation in the biodiversity hotspots.

Tourism impacts biodiversity hotspots through

• infrastructure-related development, which is primarily financed and managed at the governmental level. This includes methods of access (roads, trails, airports, and transportation); water sourcing and treatment facilities; energy production and distribution; and waste processing. Private investment in infrastructure development, and interpretation and visitor-management structures, often results in landscaping and construction-related impacts on biodiversity;
• construction of facilities directly related to tourism (accommodation and meeting structures, catering, shopping centers, marinas, and administrative facilities);
• indirect developments from tourism, such as urban development for employee housing; secondary real estate, such

Above: Scarlet macaw, Brazil.
Left: Exploring the Inca ruins of Machu Picchu, Peru.
as tourist homes; and urban sprawl; and
• indirect influences on economic and trade policies and strategies related to tourism development (changes in local traditional economic practices due to transition to tourism-oriented activities; changes in management practices due to globalization; changes in conservation-related investments, such as park management, and in environmental management due to financial burdens from tourism-related loans, etc.).

The different phases of tourism development have different impacts on biodiversity conservation. Decisionmaking on siting, design, and planning have different effects than technological decisions on management and operations of tourism, including water and waste pollution, resource consumption, and supply chain management. Similarly, biodiversity is affected by choices made by tourists regarding their activities such as hiking, boating, and sports.

Trends in the tourism marketplace also determine effects on biodiversity. Often, an attractive tourism destination in a biodiversity-rich area may experience a pronounced growth phase in accommodation development, ultimately leading to overdevelopment, with serious negative impacts on biodiversity. Heavy price discounting in tourism resorts, with low-margin, high-volume vacation packages and uncontrolled competition, can lead to loss of economic feasibility. In these cases, environmental management costs are not covered, and environmental degradation ensues, ultimately causing a crisis or even the collapse of a tourism destination, again with serious effects on local biodiversity.

Ideally a timely assessment of this negative trend will lead to a multistakeholder process that ensures proper oversight. Tourism development can be contained and better management systems can be provided for natural resources. In addition, financial mechanisms can be set up to use a small percentage of tourism revenues for environmental management. For instance, the municipalities of Calvia, in Spain, and Rimini in Italy, both located in the Mediterranean hotspot and heavily dependent on tourism, experienced overdevelopment and environmental degradation throughout the 1970 and 1980s. These tourism destinations faced such challenges by implementing several radical measures. In the case of Calvia, a Local Agenda 21 process led to the closing and even deliberate destruction of hotels, landscape renovation, the creation of additional protected areas, and the establishment of an environmental levy on hotel room sales, with extensive public awareness and marketing campaigns (UNEP 2003b).

In Rimini, coastal eutrophication of the Adriatic Sea led to algal blooms and heavy fish mortality in 1985, with ensuing odors and pollution causing tourism losses. The tourism industry pressured local authorities to engage agribusinesses and hotel chains to reduce use of fertilizers and improve waste and sewage management. The environmental improvements were accompanied by public awareness and marketing campaigns to improve the city’s image, and visitor numbers increased.

3.1 The Decisionmaking Process for Tourism Development

In 2001, UNEP reviewed 12 case studies of tourism resort development in various ecosystems in order to investigate how decisionmaking affects biodiversity (Hawkins et al. 2002). On the basis of this analysis, the process can be simplified as follows:

1. A group of local investors, often owning biodiversity-rich land, team up with potential resort builders and hire professional intermediaries called developers, whose role it is to bring together all resources and players that will determine the feasibility of the resort.

2. The developers look for outside private investors and examine the interest of partners such as tour operators and air and cruise carriers, based on perceived market potentials.

3. The group contacts local and national government, looking for support such as

• infrastructure (free land, airports, roads, water supply, and sewage/waste management, etc.);
• flexible land-use regulations (appropriate for clusters of resorts);
• tax breaks and incentives;
• soft and subsidized loans; and
• attractive public land or parks
that could be the base for tour
products.
The process can also be initiated
by local politicians and/or inves-
tors who pressure the government
to offer support and then attract
outside investors. Trade associa-
tions (representing tour operators,
hotel chains, and air carriers, etc.)
are often partners in lobbying gov-
ernment, whose driving interests
are job generation and future tax
revenue. In some cases, tourism
development is financed by multi-
and bilateral development agen-
cies, under subsidized development
aid loans. The terms of these loans
may or may not be supportive of
biodiversity conservation.
4. Once funding is in place the resort
is built. This can occur with or
without an environmental impact
assessment, depending on local reg-
ulations. Unfortunately, the UNEP
report points out that decisions
about siting, design, technology,
and product development are often
made only from the perspective of
corporate efficiency and customer
relations; community expectations
and conservation of local and
regional biodiversity are not usually
considered.
The sections below review the roles
of the different stakeholders in influ-
encing this process and ensuring that
tourism is developed in a manner
that supports biodiversity conser-
vation and benefits local people.
These descriptions are followed by
recommendations for each group of
stakeholders.

3.2 Governments
National governments set the frame-
work for tourism development and
biodiversity conservation through
policy and legislation. Different
government departments may be
responsible for determining policy
and associated instruments for tour-
ism development and biodiversity
conservation. Some examples of
these include
• laws and regulations defining
standards for tourism facilities,
access to biodiversity resources, and
land-use regulation and zoning;
• design, development, and regula-
tion of supporting infrastructure
(water, energy, roads, airports, etc.);
• economic instruments defined in
policy, such as incentives for sus-
tainable tourism investment and
the creation of private reserves;
• standards for health and safety,
quality controls and regulation of
business activities; these are aimed
at protecting consumers and at
meeting the needs of residents—includ-
ing traditional communities
and indigenous people—and
protecting their lifestyles;
• establishment and maintenance of
protected areas and conservation
corridors of interest to tourism.
Managers of public protected areas
often are the most effective players
for conservation benefits from
tourism development;
• allocation of tax revenues for the
protection of biodiversity-based
tourism attractions, such as
national parks and reserves.
In many biodiversity hotspot coun-
tries, tourism destinations are under
the influence of various governmen-
tal agencies, whose mandates include
culture, historical heritage, parks, and forestry. Smooth coordination among these departments and coherence between tourism policy and other government policies, including biodiversity conservation, are not always the rule, and therefore different policies may undermine rather than support each other.

Although tourism may be driven by the private sector, government policy instruments, such as requirements for environmental impact assessments (EIAs) and management plans, can be extraordinarily effective in ensuring that development takes place in an appropriate manner. In Cancun, Mexico, for example, the Mexican government was criticized for “overlooking” zoning regulations and other development control mechanisms. Recently, however, with considerable pressure from outside sources, the government halted the construction of a resort complex on land owned by the developer because of its proximity to a sea turtle nesting area (Weiner 2001).

At the destination level, local authorities are often responsible for implementing policies regarding tourism and biodiversity conservation. Local authorities are well placed to negotiate between the various interests of local and outside entrepreneurs, civil society, and national government agencies, and they hold essential regulatory and zoning mandates that allow for the enforcement of guidelines and standards. On the other hand, the capacity of local authorities to manage this complex and fragmented industry effectively and to ensure its positive contribution to local strategies for sustainable development (for example, Local Agenda 21 processes) is dependent on whether local policymaking is coherent with national policy instruments and agencies.

Finally, it is noteworthy that in many economies in transitional and developing countries, national and regional governments often play the role of tour operators and hotel managers, either to try to jump-start quality standards or to generate revenue (for example, METS is a government-run tour operator in Suriname, and there are similar state-run operators in China and Vietnam). In many destinations, therefore, effects on biodiversity are crucially related to public policymaking and strategies.

Recommendations for governments:

1. Use a multistakeholder participatory planning process to develop national and local tourism strategies, policies, and master plans that reflect concerns about biodiversity conservation and poverty reduction. Integrate these into broader sustainable development strategies and processes, including trade-related policies, investment promotion, economic incentives for the use of environmentally sound technologies, land-use planning, and taxation.

2. Support private sector voluntary initiatives in conservation and provide opportunities.
for the private tourism sector to contribute to sustainable tourism management initiatives (community awareness and training, protected areas, etc.) through direct donations, in-kind services, and the establishment and maintenance of private reserves.

3. Enforce existing laws and regulations to avoid inappropriate development of tourism in core conservation areas, and avoid perverse incentives for tourism development to be environmentally damaging (such as reduced land taxes for cleared land).

4. Control the planning, siting, design, and construction of tourism facilities and infrastructure according to biodiversity conservation principles and guidelines.

5. Improve awareness and exchange of knowledge between those responsible for and affected by tourism and nature conservation at a national, subnational, and local level.

6. Undertake carrying capacity and limits to acceptable change assessments for sensitive areas and implement visitor-management plans based on assessment results.

7. Develop or adopt certification schemes, reflecting national and local priorities that include biodiversity criteria, and provide appropriate incentives for their adoption.

8. Earmark adequate sources of funding for the management of natural areas. These funds should cover activities including protection of vulnerable ecosystems, management of visitor numbers, and support for surrounding communities.

9. Develop management strategies, pilot projects, and mechanisms for sharing revenue from tourist visitation with the management authorities of protected areas, while keeping main management expenses covered by appropriate budgetary allotments.

10. Promote and develop educational programs to enhance awareness about nature conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity.

11. Conduct market-assessment studies to avoid tourism facility construction in sensitive ecosystems that proves to be unfeasible and unnecessary.

### 3.3 Private Sector

The tourism industry is characterized by a large number of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). At the same time, a significant amount of control within the industry rests in the hands of a very few, increasingly vertically integrated, multinational corporations. In Europe, for example, five companies control over 60 percent of organized outbound travel from the region (International Federation of Tour Operators, in UNEP Industry Report series for WSSD, 2002). Few of these big companies have any long-term investments in particular destinations—even large hotel chain properties are often franchises rather than freehold properties. As such, their influence on tourism in a particular location may be much greater than their long-term commitment to that destination. If environmental conditions worsen beyond a certain degree, these players potentially have the option of moving elsewhere. Furthermore, only a limited number of tourism companies have integrated biodiversity considerations into their day-to-day management practices, and many remain unaware of the potential (and actual) impacts of their activities. However, some major travel companies recognize the importance of managing their businesses to minimize their negative impacts and to find ways to help promote conservation and sustainable development (see Box 6). These companies realize that by helping to maintain the cultural and biological integrity of the places they visit, they can both enhance the quality of the product they are selling and improve their business reputation.

A significant development in the last few years is the establishment of voluntary environmental initiatives by hotel chains, tour operators, and ground handlers, including green certification systems, conservation awards, and ecolabels. While some of these initiatives are supported by governments and NGOs, all voluntary performance standard-setting depends essentially on private sector commitment and consumer awareness. Initiatives such as the World Legacy Awards
by Conservation International and National Geographic Society, British Airways’ Tourism for Tomorrow Awards, the Green Globe 21 certification system, Australia’s National Ecotourism Accreditation Program, Cooperative Research Center’s International Ecotourism Standard, and the International Hotels Environment Initiative’s benchmarking tool all provide guidance and added incentives for corporate responsibility toward biodiversity conservation.

3.3.1 Outbound tour operators and ground handlers
Assembling the component parts of holidays and managing significant numbers of tourists, outbound tour operators play a significant role in making a destination successful. Their capacity to manage their supply chains, their ability to ensure steady flows of tourists, and their ability to influence consumer choices make them key players in tourism development and biodiversity conservation. It is often the tour operators working in a specific destination that influence what type of tourism will develop there, what products will be available to the tourist, and even, in some cases, how much tourists will pay for these products. Ground handlers often have a strong commitment to protect their destination because they are permanently based there, but their primary business concern is responding to the demands of the outbound tour operators they service. Therefore, there is a vital role that international tour operators can play in encouraging their suppliers to adopt environmentally and socially responsible management practices. The work of the Tour Operators’ Initiative (TOI) for Sustainable Tourism Development noted below is a good example of how tour operators can work together to support biodiversity conservation efforts in the destinations where they operate.

3.3.2 Accommodation providers
Hotels, resorts, and other accommodation facilities are both the tourism industry’s main job generators and the main resource users (water, energy, land) affecting biodiversity in hotspot destinations. They also require a significant amount of infrastructure, such as roads and facilities for water supply and treatment, which if improperly developed can cause significant harm to biodiversity. However, hoteliers are increasingly recognizing the importance of maintaining the ecological integrity of the areas in which they operate.

CI estimates that approximately 8 percent of major hotel chain properties are located within the biodiversity hotspots (Reiter 2000). Maps 11 and 12, however, illustrate the actual and potential growth of the hotel industry in hotspot countries. Larger resorts are significant to conservation because they control large land properties and contribute significantly to tourism-related employment. Their decisionmaking is influenced by their complex ownership and management structure, involving asset owners, holding companies, and franchise/management corpo-

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Box 6: The Tour Operators’ Initiative (TOI) for Sustainable Tourism Development

The TOI is a network of 25 tour operators that have committed to incorporating sustainability principles into their business operations and working together to promote and disseminate practices compatible with sustainable development.

TOI members are taking action in three key areas:

- Supply chain management—to develop a common approach and tools for assessing suppliers.
- Cooperation with destinations—to exert a positive influence and speak with a collective voice on the actions of all partners, tourist boards, customers, suppliers, governments, and developers.
- Sustainability reporting—to develop and test reporting guidelines and performance indicators on sustainable development.

The TOI was developed by UNEP, UNESCO, and WTO, with technical and financial assistance provided by CELB. TOI is coordinated by a secretariat and hosted by UNEP, which ensures the implementation of the program of activities and continuous support to the members.
TOURISM AND BIODIVERSITY: MAPPING TOURISM’S GLOBAL FOOTPRINT

3.3.3 Cruise ships
Since 1980, the cruise ship industry has had an annual growth rate of 8.4 percent and has grown nearly twice as fast as world international tourist arrivals over the past decade. Much of this growth is occurring in destinations that are located in the biodiversity hotspots. About 70 percent of cruise destinations are in the hotspots, including the Caribbean, the Mediterranean, Mexico, the Panama Canal Zone, and the South Pacific. Visits by cruise ships generate financial benefits to attractions, restaurants, retail shops, shore excursion operators, and other businesses at ports of call. However, some cruise lines have had a past record of illegal waste discharge at sea. With predictions of further rapid growth over the next few decades, it will be increasingly important to understand and address the environmental impacts of cruising. The cruise industry faces a number of key environmental challenges related to its activities and operations in the world’s oceans, particularly in and around priority conservation areas. There is significant potential for wide-ranging negative environmental impacts from such hazzards as mishandled waste and pollutants to poorly planned and implemented management processes. Several major cruise companies have done much to respond to the challenge of preserving the environment on which their business depends and are implementing leadership practices, testing and refining new technologies, and...
developing management programs to address environmental impacts. (Sweeting & Wayne 2003).

The Caribbean, one of the most biodiversity-rich marine hotspots, accounts for 47 percent of the global yearly total of 54 million cruise ship bed days. The Mediterranean, another hotspot, is second as a cruise destination, with 12 percent of all cruise ship bed days (CLIA 2001).

Construction of cruise ship ports and related infrastructure has a significant impact on coastal areas, and the building and maintenance costs are often borne by local governments with little means to design conservation-friendly facilities.

The Center for Environmental Leadership in Business (www.celb.org) at CI has launched a Cruise Ship Initiative to work with the cruise industry to reduce their environmental footprint and contribute to conservation in these key biodiversity hotspots.

3.3.4 Air travel

Air carriers and related industry sectors affect biodiversity through their influence on airport siting and design and on destination-development decisionmaking (major tourism destinations are clearly dependent on the availability of an airport). Arguably, though, the biggest threat is their contribution to climate change: around 5 percent of global carbon emissions are attributed to air travel, according to the UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (GRID ARENDAL, IPCC, 2003).

Climate change, in turn, through its impact on biodiversity—for example, recent coral reef bleaching episodes have been linked to changing weather patterns (UNEP Atlas on Coral Reefs 2002)—indirectly affects biodiversity-based tourism. Some impacts are more direct, such as the potential loss of prime coastal sites and small islands associated with sea-level rise.

3.3.5 Trade associations

Much of the private sector is organized into professional associations—at the global level, for example, the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC), the International Federation of Tour Operators (IFTO), the International Hotel and Restaurant Association...
(IHRA), and the International Council of Cruise Lines (ICCL), with scores of others at regional and national levels. These associations have a significant ability to influence biodiversity impacts, and changes here are likely to result in a steep change across the industry. Several associations, including those mentioned above, have already launched sustainability initiatives, some of which include limited support to biodiversity conservation. At the regional level, the Pacific Area Travel Association (PATA), the Caribbean Tourism Organization (CTO), and the Caribbean Hotel Association (CHA) have demonstrated a proactive attitude toward sustainability and conservation of natural resources.

**Recommendations for the private sector:**
1. Incorporate biodiversity conservation practices and principles into the design, planning, development, and management of tourism products and services and into supply chain management.
2. Commit to industry-led, voluntary initiatives that include criteria for biodiversity conservation and socioeconomic benefits.
3. Innovate processes and applications through new technologies and partnerships to minimize impacts on sensitive ecosystems and to contribute effectively to the conservation of biodiversity.
4. Make a commitment to educate staff and customers about the impacts of tourism on biodiversity and on local, traditional, and indigenous people.
5. Cooperate with governmental and nongovernmental organizations in charge of protected natural areas and the conservation of biodiversity. Ensure that tourism operations are practiced according to the management plan and other regulations prevailing in those areas, so as to minimize negative impacts while enhancing the quality of the tourism experience and contributing financially to the conservation of biodiversity.
6. Support destination-management efforts that seek to minimize the environmental footprint of the tourism industry and contribute to ongoing conservation initiatives.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Project</th>
<th>Latin Amer. &amp; Caribbean</th>
<th>Europe &amp; Eurasia</th>
<th>Africa</th>
<th>Asia &amp; Near East</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tourism in Title</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accommodation</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Environmental Protection</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>83</td>
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<tr>
<td>Urban Development</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>16</td>
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<tr>
<td>Water Supply &amp; Sanitation</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Agriculture</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>2</td>
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<td>Multisector</td>
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<tr>
<td>Social Protection</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td>Education</td>
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<td>Transportation</td>
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<td>Microenterprises</td>
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<td>Science &amp; Technology</td>
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<tr>
<td>Private Sector</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
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<tr>
<td>Industry</td>
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<td>1</td>
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<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
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<td><strong>17</strong></td>
<td><strong>45</strong></td>
<td><strong>45</strong></td>
<td><strong>178</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3.4 Development Agencies

Governments set the rules or frameworks under which tourism is developed. The private sector drives the development process itself. The missing link between the two is the financing of tourism planning and development. Financing can come from private sources, from governments, or from multilateral and bilateral donor agencies and development banks (sometimes directly, sometimes channeled through governments).

3.4.1 The role of development agencies

A survey of 55 development agencies conducted in 2002 for UNEP found that although private investments are driven by economic incentives, donor interventions in tourism are motivated by longer-term development objectives, including alternative local income, natural resource management, community participation, employment generation, and coastal zone management (see Figure 1).

The George Washington University, CI, and UNEP have developed a database including details of over 320 tourism-related projects to determine the amount of donor funds that have been channeled into tourism development at a regional level and the types of projects being funded. Investment of those projects totaled over US$7 billion over 5 years. Table 3 examines 178 projects, either active in 2002 or at various stages of implementation after initial approval on this date (in pipeline). It shows that of projects with significant tourism components, those related to environmental protection are most prevalent. It is noteworthy that only 17 percent of the projects surveyed actually include tourism in their title, although all have important tourism components. This seems to indicate either that development agencies do not fully recognize the importance of tourism as a sustainable development tool or that they are concerned about criticism resulting from the poor environmental and social track record of tourism development projects in the 1970s and 1980s. This lack of definition makes it more difficult to study the scope and volume of tourism-related environmental conservation projects.

Two additional responses to the same survey bolster the conclusion that development agencies do not view themselves as important in setting the stage for sustainable tourism development:

1. A selected group of 35 key experts in sustainable tourism were asked to say which types of organizations were most likely to fund projects dealing with sustainable tourism in the future. Figure 2, next page, indicates the experts’ opinion that bilateral and multilateral aid agencies and government entities will most likely take the lead on this subject.

2. However, the survey also asked the experts, as well as officers from development agencies, about the relative importance of key decisionmakers (Table 4). The results show that although both experts and development agency officers thought that the private sector was the most important, the experts thought development agencies were much more important than the officers themselves did.

These results suggest that although others may recognize their importance, development agencies may themselves be unaware of their role in influencing actors on the ground during the critical phase of siting, land-use planning, design, and choice of technologies and materials. The strength of this influence is evident in an example from Brazil (Box 7), where experience is now shaping future projects of the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 4: Importance of Stakeholders as Drivers of Sustainable Tourism (percentage of evaluations as “extremely important”)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Experts</td>
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<tr>
<td>--------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dev. Agency Officers</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Recommendations for development agencies:
1. Redesign project portfolio on tourism as a carefully planned tool for biodiversity conservation and poverty reduction, and incorporate monitoring, evaluation, and reporting procedures based on relevant indicators for biodiversity conservation results from tourism development.
2. Support long-term public education and awareness-raising about the impacts of tourism on biological diversity; collect and disseminate lessons learned and best practices from existing project portfolio.
3. Develop, adopt, adapt, or apply, as appropriate, conservation guidelines when preparing, approving, and funding tourism development projects having potential implications for biological diversity.
4. Invest in training and capacity-building to enable local people to benefit from tourism development.

3.5 Local Residents in Tourism Destinations
The negative environmental, cultural, and social impacts of unsustainable tourism development have affected local people most acutely. Traditional communities and indigenous people can play a major role in conserving biodiversity, but this has been acknowledged only recently, and important issues relating to participation, land and resource use, and democracy still need to be addressed in the context of tourism development. Local authorities have an essential role as moderators and facilitators of empowerment for local communities. Experience with top-down approaches to protected area management has demonstrated that, if they are excluded, local people can undermine biodiversity conservation efforts (for example, the Maasai spearing of wildlife in Kenya's Amboseli National Park to protest removal of their grazing and watering rights within the park). Likewise, approaches to tourism development that do not take local people’s priorities into account can be undermined by civil unrest and insecurity. On the other hand, some of the successful examples of sustainable tourism development arresting or reversing biodiversity losses come from destinations where local authorities led feasible, multistakeholder governance systems (Calvia in Spain, Puerto Princesa in Philippines, Bonito in Brazil).

Local people often make up a large part of the workforce in the tourism industry, and labor organizations in the tourism sector have contributed to the debate on sustainable uses of biodiversity. The International Confederation of Free Trade Unions and the International Union of Food, Agricultural, Hotel, Restaurant, Catering, Tobacco, and Allied Workers’ Association (IUF) address sustainable agriculture in rural areas and biotechnology. Overall, the role of tourism employees in biodiversity conservation is very important and should

Figure 2: Projected Funding Sources for Sustainable Tourism Development

| Source: Hawkins, et al. 2002 |
be considered in any global action plan.

Finally, local landowners play a crucial role in conservation, especially in buffer zones of core protected areas and in conservation corridors. The long-term survival of key ecosystems and species in a hotspot destination is often dependent on the land-use patterns around relatively pristine forests and coral reefs. Many biodiversity hotspot countries, such as Brazil, Costa Rica, and South Africa, have already established regulations, fiscal and economic incentives, and other policy tools to encourage landowners to declare private reserves for direct or indirect use. Costa Rica’s association of private reserve owners facilitates information exchange, promotes economies of scale, and lobbies government for additional support.

**Recommendations for local residents in tourism destinations:**

1. Establish representative governance systems that allow local people to be accountable and assume responsibilities in tourism and conservation partnership, and take action to fulfill them within the duration of the partnership.
2. Identify, prioritize, and manage critical conservation area networks with direct and indirect tourism use at the local level, using tools such as impact assessment, market studies, zoning, and sustainable use plans.
3. Be actively involved in and benefit from community capacity-building efforts relating to local sustainable tourism and ecotourism initiatives, in accordance with the principles of prior informed consent.
4. Support local tourism contributions, such as traditional building techniques and materials; modes of transport; traditional foods, medicines, and handicrafts; and respect access to cultural sites.
5. Collaborate with visitor-awareness campaigns on biodiversity conservation, educating tourists on the significance of natural resources for the local culture and the economy.

**3.6 Other Major Players**

**3.6.1 Consumers/tourists**

Tourism businesses, like all other businesses, are dependent on consumers wanting to buy their products. A 1997 survey by the German association Studienkreis für Tourismus and Entwicklung found that 40 percent of German holidaymakers would spend an additional dollar to help save the environment in their destination—an estimated potential US$750 million. In 2000, Tearfund, a U.K.-based NGO, commissioned market research into consumer attitudes toward responsible tourism. The results showed that the U.K. tourist wants to relax on holiday, but not at the expense of local people or their environment. In practice, however, consumers have brought little pressure to bear on tourism companies.

Travel guides, magazines, and newspapers can make huge
contributions to raising consumer awareness about critical issues facing the tourism industry and help to stimulate a demand for change. For example, *National Geographic Traveler* magazine routinely highlights issues of sustainable tourism and often profiles tourism businesses that are leading the way in implementing responsible travel practices. In 2000, the International Ecotourism Society (TIES) launched a travel media/tourist campaign, “Your Travel Choice Makes a Difference,” which calls upon travel consumers to support tourism businesses that adhere to ecotourism principles and practices. At the same time, *Audubon* magazine developed a “Tread Lightly” code of conduct for travel in natural areas.

**Recommendations for consumers/tourists:**

1. Respect local codes of conduct and visitor-management plans in sensitive areas.
2. Ask tourism companies about their environmental and social standards and ensure they understand that your choice is determined by those standards.
3. Actively support tourism businesses and NGOs that are biodiversity friendly and seek to benefit local people.
4. Recognize the cultural and natural diversity associated with many natural areas, particularly regarding local and indigenous communities.

**3.6.2 Nongovernmental organizations**

Tourism has attracted considerable attention from international and local NGOs. Both conservation and development organizations have intervened in tourism with different, although often overlapping, objectives. At the international level, development organizations such as Tearfund and the International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED) see the potential for tourism to contribute to sustainable development and poverty reduction. Conservation organizations, including CI, the World Wildlife Fund (WWF), The Nature Conservancy (TNC), and the World Conservation Union (IUCN) are interested in tourism as a mechanism for biodiversity conservation, particularly using priority-setting criteria such as hotspots and ecoregions. These objectives are not mutually exclusive: Biodiversity conservation is part of sustainable development, and sustainable local livelihoods are critical to the success of biodiversity conservation.

In other cases, NGOs such as Tourism Concern in the United Kingdom, Equations in India, and the Instituto de Hospitalidade in Brazil have been developed solely to focus on tourism and to promote a more responsible approach by the industry.

Local NGOs are at work throughout the developing world assisting communities to diversify their income through sustainable tourism and to protect the natural resource base. They play an essen-

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**Box 7: Inter-American Development Bank Lessons on Tourism Development With Conservation**

The Brazilian state of Bahia harbors one of the most threatened conservation hotspots, the Atlantic rain forest. The US$400-million PRODETUR I project, funded by the IDB from 1994 to 2001, improved and expanded eight international airports, built and improved over 800 kilometers of highways and access roads, provided water and sewage infrastructure, and attracted over US$4 billion in private tourism investment.

Its negative impacts on the environment, though, became clear to the bank officers: uncontrolled settlement of people looking for jobs, private building in environmentally sensitive areas, encroachment on rain forests and mangroves, and impacts on coastal reefs and other coastal ecosystems. Intense pressure from local and international NGOs and community groups, supported by bank officials, ultimately overcame the initial resistance from investor groups and development-oriented government officers to allocate funds for conservation. The result was the conservation of 22 historical heritage sites and the beginning of efforts to conserve over 70,000 hectares of coastal ecosystems and protected areas, including the creation of the new Serra do Conduru State Park. These lessons are being applied to new IDB projects in the region.
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Facilitational role in pressuring governments and donors, raising awareness, mediating negotiations, building local capacity to deal with impacts of tourism, and implementing sustainable tourism projects on the ground. During the International Year of Ecotourism, UNEP identified 35 NGOs in the South that had been active in the field of tourism and biodiversity for at least 3 years. Some expressed concerns about tourism and its role in economic development—specifically about the expansion of nature and adventure travel into new (previously untouched) areas and the risk of damaging natural resources and the livelihood of indigenous communities as a result of poorly planned tourism growth. They say that for tourism to significantly contribute to sustainable development there must be proper management and monitoring of such activities.

Recommendations for nongovernmental organizations:
1. Facilitate and mediate innovative, conservation-friendly tourism partnerships.
2. Play a role in the capacity building, technology transfer, and training of local communities to participate in and benefit from sustainable tourism development.
3. Monitor impacts of tourism developments related to all stakeholders, and report independently and openly on results.
4. Work with governments to integrate sustainable tourism as a biodiversity conservation strategy in national biodiversity agendas.
5. Work with the private sector to transform practices to more directly contribute to biodiversity conservation and benefit local and indigenous communities.
6. Raise awareness among tourists as to the potential impacts—positive and negative—of tourism activities.
7. Encourage informed decision-making among all stakeholders regarding tourism development in or near local and indigenous communities.
8. Fill research gaps on the dynamics of the relationship between tourism development and biodiversity conservation at both local and regional levels, and share best practices.

3.6.3 Intergovernmental organizations

Through their influence on national governments, donors and lenders, and the secretariats of multilateral agreements related to tourism and environment, intergovernmental organizations such as UNEP, WTO, and UNCTAD play an important role in shaping tourism development by providing technical assistance and information, guidelines, facilitating negotiations, mediating agreements, and providing financial and logistical resources. Regional bodies such as the Organization of American States (OAS), the Caribbean Tourism Organization (CTO), and the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) have also developed guidelines, codes of ethics, and sets of principles.
Recommendations for intergovernmental organizations:
1. Assess and monitor biodiversity impacts of tourism development (and their social and economic determinants)—from supply through production to consumption; this assessment should assist in identifying effective intervention areas.
2. Develop pilot projects (and research existing ones) to establish guidelines to support development and implementation of conservation-friendly tourism policies by governments and local authorities. These policies should address how to balance conflicting economic, social, and environmental priorities.
3. Encourage transparent reporting of conservation issues by tourism corporations, support the development of certification and accreditation programs that consider conservation, and establish sector-specific sustainability reporting guidelines and performance indicators for biodiversity conservation.
4. Work with key players and intermediaries to develop and implement customer awareness campaigns addressing conservation of biodiversity.
5. Raise awareness of intermediaries on their key role in catalyzing change in the tourism supply chain, and build their capacity to improve conservation of biodiversity through networks and management tools (for example, screening indicators or environmentally sound technologies).

3.6.4 Experts (academics, consulting firms)
Caught between the development agencies and the private sector, experts and consulting firms (including the international accountancy and auditing companies) often serve as the implementing bodies for tourism development projects in developing countries—for example, in master planning and other national tourism development projects. In this sense, they often affect how and when tourism is implemented. Most strategies aimed at the private sector still overlook the potential role this sector can play in helping the industry become more biodiversity-friendly.

Recommendations for experts:
1. Incorporate biodiversity and socioeconomic considerations into tourism master plans and other development strategies.
2. Ensure widespread participation in tourism planning exercises, including biodiversity-focused stakeholders such as protected-area managers, NGOs, and traditional communities.

Endnotes
1A Local Agenda 21 is a planning approach based on the international Agenda 21 crafted in Rio in 1992 at the Earth Summit. A local authority initiates and provides leadership to define a sustainable development strategy and an action program to implement it. Success hinges on close cooperation between the population, NGOs, and economic and social players. The International Council of Local Environmental Initiatives estimates that over 8,500 local communities worldwide, many of which are major tourism destinations, are now implementing a Local Agenda 21 (UNEP 2003b).
2Tourism in the Title refers to stand-alone tourism projects—the others being projects that include tourism as a component rather than the primary focus.