



## A REVIEW OF GROWTH AND PROSPECTS OF RESPONSIBLE TOURISM DEVELOPMENT

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### **Abstract**

*Responsible tourism reduces negative social, economic, and environmental impacts, increases economic benefits for locals and improves host community well-being. This paper examines the development of the concept of responsible tourism, from its origins as a uncontrolled tourism development in the 1970s and 1980s, to basic responsible tourism research in the late 1980s, and then to a more proactive and sophisticated second generation research phase after 2010. Following COVID-19, tourist recovery usually begins at a local level. Before there is a strong demand for foreign travel, tourists opt to travel responsibly and stay closer to home for a weekend escape or travel locally. Road trips may become more popular. Drive-ins are more likely to be chosen by families and children, especially on weekends and during short vacations. The article says that entrepreneurs and policymakers must implement responsible tourism for it to have a future. This requires the establishment of multi-disciplinary institutes and international research teams, as well as a greater involvement of academics in industry and policy activity. The paper focuses on the key tasks and challenges in managing responsible tourism in a sustainable way.*

**Keywords:** *Implementing Responsible Tourism, Sustainable Research, Multidisciplinary Research Institutes, Tourism Development.*

### **Introduction**

Any sort of tourism that can be consumed in a more responsible manner is considered responsible tourism. "Responsible tourism is defined as tourism that has fewer negative social, economic, and environmental consequences. Promotes the well-being of host communities and delivers higher economic benefits for local people.

Since World War II, tourism has grown dramatically, initially in the Western world and, more recently, globally. Most readers of this journal are aware that international tourism arrivals increased from a low of 25 million in 1950 to 1235 million in 2016, with many more expected in coming years. Growth was fueled in part by advancements in communications and transportation, and in part by private sector investment backed by substantial public sector investment, which was often financed indirectly by the government. However, changes in developed world civilizations, such as rising disposable incomes, increased levels of formal and informal education, and increased awareness of the globe's attractions, have been critical to tourism's postwar expansion.

In the 1960s, tourism as an academic topic grew with the rise in tourist numbers. Then came the tourism research. Charles R. Goeldner, the inaugural editor of The Journal of Travel Research (JTR), launched the first major tourism research journal in 1968. He edited JTR for 35 years. Its first paper, written by consultant Robert A. Peattie, was on tourism advertising. The Journal of Tourism Research (JTR) is still one of the Big Three tourism research journals. Annals of Tourism Research and Tourism Management joined it in 1973 and 1980, respectively (until 1982, Tourism Management was known as the International Journal of Tourism Management). There are presently over 200 tourism research journals,



and many other publications accept tourism-related research papers (McKercher, 2005; McKercher, Law and Lam, 2006).

Tourism growth, on the other hand, has come at a high cost to host populations, cultures, and habitats, with the processes and consequences widely documented since the 1970s (Krippendorf, 1975, 1987; Briassoulis, 2013; Briassoulis and van der Straaten, 2013). And, just as increasing levels of awareness and education have aided tourism, they have also aided aware and educated communities in questioning the costs of progress and change brought on by tourism's expansion. This inquisitiveness isn't limited to changes brought on by tourism. People began to be concerned about the effects of economic growth and change across the entire economy many years ago, in the late 1960s and 1970s. Those were exciting and invigorating years for radical ideas in general: the war was finished, we had enough food, and many of us wanted to make the world a better place. The founding of the Club of Rome in 1968, "a community of world citizens, sharing a similar concern for the future of humanity," is often credited with sparking widespread skepticism of economic growth and the emergence of counter-growth movements. *Limits to Growth* was first published in 1972. (Meadows, Meadows, Randers and Behrens, 1972). This divisive book has sold more than 16 million copies worldwide and has been updated and republished numerous times. Friends of the Earth (1969) and Greenpeace (1972) were both founded at the same time as the Club, however both were originally anti-nuclear as well as pro-environmental organisations. *Limits to Growth* sparked a movement that led to the notion of Responsible Development, which was first recognised internationally by the Brundtland Report (WCED, 1987).

### **Tourism research**

The concept of sustainable tourism may be traced all the way back to the 1970s. The consequences of uncontrolled and irresponsible tourism expansion in the European Alps and surrounding the Mediterranean Sea have caused widespread alarm, particularly among academics and other thinkers and commentators in Central Europe, Italy, and France. *Die Landschaftsfresser* (The Scenery Eaters) was written by Jost Krippendorf in 1975 to describe the effects of tourism on the Alpine landscape. It aimed for a change in lifestyle and behaviour from all parties concerned, rather than regulation. It sought a new type of tourism that would employ more informed and responsible marketing, a holistic and balanced approach to development, and better trained tourism personnel of all types; host populations prepared to manage tourism; and research into the drivers and issues that could lead to more responsible tourism. These early talks were useful, but they were mostly based on beliefs and opinions. There has been little rigorous research into how responsible tourism may be developed, implemented, and evaluated. In a 1992 interview, Jost Krippendorf (1938-2003) recognised the challenges facing the concept's execution and defined them as follows: There is always the strain of short-term economic interest (with tourism development), especially from the construction business, the building industry, because many individuals make their living by building second homes or infrastructure. They will say that if we order them to stop or slow down now, we would lose our jobs. Employment is usually used to justify why growth is still required. The specific issue, is that we need to take action, and action that is measurable, in the sphere of responsible tourism. We need to establish a genuinely practical and straightforward approach of gauging sustainability, and researchers should collaborate with industry and government on this. Not overly complicated carrying capacities, targets, or anything like that, but five or six indicators with which those in charge of the business, in local communities, regions, and even on a national scale, could track progress in areas like lower energy consumption, surface (area) used for tourism infrastructure, CO2 emissions, or whatever.



The argument for a specialised research journal to stimulate peer-reviewed research was thus made, reinforcing the decision to launch the Journal of sustainable Tourism (JOST) in 1993, which had been tentatively taken by the forerunners of Channel View Publications. JOST was not the first tourism research publication to publish studies on responsible tourism, and it still isn't. Responsible tourism also strives to improve visitor satisfaction, for good measure. This is not a frivolous point. Visitors who are satisfied are more likely to become concerned and caring about the locations they visit. They are frequently long-term and repeat customers" (Bramwell and Lane, 1993, p. 2). Since 1993, responsible tourism has grown in complexity, testing, and refinement, with several definitions developed, but its essence has remained the same. It aims to improve the connection between tourism and the world – natural, man-made, and cultural– for all parties involved. Responsible tourism has been mostly explored and generated by academics since its inception. Many attempts have been made to include the tourism "business" in talks and implementation, as well as public sector policymakers. There have also been attempts to pique the interest of the market – the tourists themselves– in responsible tourism, primarily through media conversations. However, only a few have achieved significant outcomes.

### **Responsible tourism research 1990-2010**

Responsible tourism has long been a contentious issue since it presents both practical and ideological concerns, making it inherently debatable (McCool, Butler, Buckley, Weaver and Wheeller, 2013). Perhaps most crucially, the tourism industry is a relatively conservative growth sector: if innovations go wrong, there can be serious financial and reputational consequences. A common watch phrase is "business as usual" (see Dwyer, 2018). However, responsible tourism research has progressed, with thousands of research articles submitted and nearly 2,000 published in the last 30 years. Responsible tourism began as a strictly reactive notion, aimed at reducing or eliminating the negative effects of tourism and tourists. Early outlines merely enumerated the negative consequences on the left side of the page, followed by a wish list of their opposites, ostensibly favourable results, on the right side. Responsible tourism has just recently become proactive, attempting to effect good change (Lane, 2009). Some critics and experts appear to love criticising tourism to this day. After all, academics are taught to analyse and criticise. The key to achieving responsible tourism, however, is to go even further: to conduct an analytical review and criticism, to design and implement product innovation and effective tourism management techniques, and to conduct a continuous review, evaluation, criticism, and management improvement process.

### **In the early years of sustainable tourism research, the focus was on:**

- Definitions and discussions, as well as developing basic assessment / evaluation programmes for small-scale sites;
- Assessment of local residents' perceptions of and attitudes toward tourism development. Nunkoo, Smith, and Ramkissoon (2013) reviewed over 140 studies on the topic published between 1984 and 2010; since then, even more have been published.
- Community-based tourism and community empowerment research. Community tourism was considered as a potentially responsible alternative to outside-of-the-host-area company-based developments. Some examples are: (Jamal and Getz, 1995; Okazaki, 2008). Salazar (2012) offers a different perspective on this often-conflicting topic.
- Putting a variety of management techniques to the test, such as visitor management programmes (e.g. Dowling, 1993), particularly for protected areas, more sustainable lodging provision (e.g. Chan, 2005; Kasim, 2009), transportation-centered research (Lumsdon, 2000), and the creation of partnership programmes (McCool, 2009).



- Small-scale and individual projects, some of which are creative and others which are quite short-term (e.g. Hobson and Mak, 1995; Barke and Newton, 1995).
- Local tourist strategies, which are usually prepared by or for local governments (e.g. Human, 1994; Wray, 2011).
- Certification programmes of various types and quality, largely voluntary membership programmes with the inherent problems that membership programmes have: such programmes, as urged in Krippendorf's interview above, are often essentially prisoners of their members, succeeding or failing if their members dilute their aims or leave the programmes (Hawkins, 1995; Medina, 2005; Zielinski and Botero, 2015).
- Deliberation and testing of indicators to track success (or lack thereof) in the implementation of responsible tourism (e.g. Crotts and Holland, 1993). Overall, indicators have been challenging to develop and apply.
- Discussion of the "subject's" ethics and key concepts – work by authors such as Farrell and Twining Ward (2005), Shultis and Way (2006), and McKercher and Chen (2014) is one of the most important examples of this–, which introduced fashion trends, uncertainty, risk, chaos, and organic change into the previously linear, inevitable progression development scenario.
- Work on research and case studies: On some topics, there is currently a wealth of information available. We now know more about the importance of providing and interpreting information in the implementation of responsible tourism, for example (Bramwell and Lane, 1993; Tubb, 2003).

Responsible tourism, on the other hand, gradually expanded its scope and became a global, rather than just Western, idea. And responsible tourism has evolved into something more than an environmentally friendly mode of travel. It has evolved into the conscience of a formerly guilt-free activity, a path to product development, marketing, and accommodation creation, as well as a source of new sorts of destination planning. Responsible tourism, as well as sustainable tourism research, has evolved into a proactive and inventive endeavour (Bramwell and Lane, 2012). In the last ten years, a succession of new study topics known as "second generation" have arisen. They were usually regions that the subject's forefathers had not considered or expected to emerge. They were frequently far more challenging and demanding research subjects that necessitated a multi-disciplinary and comprehensive approach.

### **Second generation tourism research 2011 onwards**

1) The Journal of sustainable Tourism's 1999 Special Issue on this topic, Volume 7, Issues 3 and 4, focused the formation and administration of partnerships for responsible tourism (Bramwell and Lane, 1999, 2000). Almost all tourism activities necessitate some type of collaboration to bring together the many and disparate stakeholders involved, including marketing, information, product creation, lodging, hospitality, catering, and transportation. However, most locations rely on haphazard, ad hoc collaborations that aren't concerned with sustainability. Stanford and Guiver (2016) offer a useful example of a successful responsible transportation partnership within a protected area; Scuttari, Volgger, and Pechlaner (2016) also provide much food for thought, but more and deeper analysis of how partnerships work and could work better to produce more responsible results is needed.

2) In Bramwell (2011) and Bramwell and Lane (2011), as well as in the collection of articles published alongside those papers in the JOST Special Issue, Volume 19 (4 and 5) released in 2011, governance issues emerged as a major area in the implementation of responsible tourism. Tourism is remarkably ungoverned, and perhaps ungovernable in some ways, in part due to the fragmented ownership of its



private sector components, and in part due to the changing and complex nature of the public sector components, which both control infrastructure and have some governance powers through planning permissions and some marketing activities. Tourism's international features make governance problematic as well. At all levels, much more multidisciplinary work on tourist governance is required. Dredge and Whitford (2011) raise some interesting points.

Except for lobbying, tourism is also a mostly leaderless industry. At the municipal, regional, national, and international levels, responsible tourism leadership is critical. Although there isn't much research on the subject, McGehee, Knollenberg, and Komorowski (2015) have made a good start.

3) Protected areas as models for governance. National Parks and other protected areas have had an interesting relationship with tourism. Originally established to conserve natural regions, they had a negative attitude toward tourism in the past and a lack of awareness of how responsible tourism might be a helpful conservation strategy (Sharpley and Pearce, 2007). The interaction between protected places and responsible tourism, on the other hand, is rapidly improving (see Eagles (2002) and (2014); Job, Becken, and Lane) (2017). Getzner, Lange Vik, Brendehaug, and Lane (2014) look at how protected areas, with their legal and political power, might be used as prospective models for responsible tourist governance. In this regard, Slocum (2017) is relevant.

4) Destination management is a complicated topic that is intertwined with governance, and it has the ability to play a critical role in the implementation of responsible tourism. The sun/sea/sand tourism era's centralised resorts are giving way to decentralised, niche market destinations with balanced multi-activity economies, which now include large cities of all kinds (see Lane and Kastenholz, 2015; Anton Clavé and Wilson, 2017). More and better study on the mechanics, politics, and outcomes of responsible destination management is urgently needed.

5) Indigenous tourism puts many responsible tourist management practises to the test in a unique and difficult way. Although it is a small tourism sector, the Journal of Responsible Tourism released a Special Issue on Responsible Tourism and Indigenous Peoples in 2016. Its first work (Carr, Ruhanen, and Whitford, 2016) had been downloaded 8,000 times and cited 12 times in less than a year, a remarkable feat. There is clearly a lot of interest in research that links ethical tourism to indigenous peoples' futures.

6) Outside of tourism, financial and taxation techniques are frequently employed to govern and control markets and market suppliers. The resentment generated by the government of the Balearic Islands' "tourist tax" introduced in 2002 and 2016 is worth highlighting. However, as neoliberalism grows, financial and taxes issues are likely to become more important. Eagles (2002) was the first to examine this topic in the context of responsible tourism, while Whitelaw, King, and Tolkach (2014), as well as Dinica, have proposed a variety of proposals (2017).

7) In 1994, climate change issues were first considered in the context of responsible tourism (Wall and Badke, 1994). In 2006 and 2010, the Journal of Responsible Tourism published Special Issues on the topic, as well as contrasting Opinion Pieces in 2011 on the relationship between responsible tourism and climate change (Weaver, 2011 and Scott, 2011). Climate change and its implications for responsible tourism have sparked debate and inquiry, and will continue to do so for many years to come. However, basic research articles on climate change have been joined by expanding research on possibly the most



important subject for responsible tourism's future – how to modify tourists' and tourism firms' and managers' behaviour to lessen tourism's contribution to climate change.

8) Since the release of Cohen, Higham, and Cavaliere's study on binge flying, behavioural modification has become a hot topic in responsible tourism research (2011). There have been a number of recent studies, one of which being Higham, Cohen, Peeters, and Gössling (2013). It shifts the conversation to the psychology of tourism and change, drawing parallels with the psychology of health and way of life. Interestingly, while describing behavioural change, the early fathers of responsible tourism did not use those words or link it to the study of psychology and addictions. It is contextualised by Bramwell and Lane (2013).

9) Scenario planning and futures research were similarly infrequently acknowledged in the beginning, but have grown in importance for both industry and government policy. In 2012, the Journal of Responsible Tourism (see Gössling and Scott, 2012) released a special issue on this topic. A handful of recent publications have looked to the future, but none have yet connected tourism to the larger futures debates that intellectuals and researchers are debating (see for example Landry and Bianchini, 1995; Lanier, 2017; Thaler and Sunstein, 2008; Sunstein, 2017). More multidisciplinary research is needed in this area.

10) Early responsible tourism experts debated transformational tourism, which they envisioned as a tourism that would inspire, uplift, and educate travellers rather than simply provide them with vacations. The concept of transformative tourism was subsequently forgotten as adventure, cultural, and heritage tourism gained popularity, as well as volunteer tourism, which many young people claimed to be transformational. The topic has recently resurfaced, as both physical and mental health issues have risen to prominence on national expenditure agendas, and the concept of tourism as part of the experience economy has gained traction (see Wolf, Ainsworth and Crowley, 2017; Pine and Gilmore, 1999).

11) The concepts of Slow Tourism, or at least some of them, were considered in the 1980s, although they were never referred to as such. In recent years, it has returned to the discussion of responsible tourism, which is linked to climate change, emissions reductions, and behavioural change. It aims to provide/give access to other modes of transportation, with a focus on avoiding flying. Dickinson and Lumsdon (2010) and Fullagar, Markwell, and Wilson (2010) examine the agenda and issues of Slow Tourism (2012). Slow tourism has yet to be thoroughly tested on the ground, nor have its ideas been fully integrated into a destination management programme, despite a strong desire to do so (Lane, 2016).

12) In the last 50 years, city tourism, also known as urban tourism, has risen quickly as cultural and heritage tourism has successfully competed with traditional resorts. It used to be limited to capital cities and a few notable historic cities, but it has now expanded far and wide. Tourism is employed as a means of attracting start-ups by life style entrepreneurs, as well as a means of regeneration for industrial cities. Small cities have grown in popularity as weekend getaway destinations, aided by the growth of low-cost flights and low-/medium-cost national and international hotel chains like the Accor Group and the Best Western brand. Melbourne, Australia, is at the forefront of the eco-city movement. Construction of new museums and galleries has been essential, as has the expansion of niche market festivals and events. However, city-based tourism has surprised responsible tourism academics because many of the major principles and management practises in responsible tourism apply to rural / natural settings. Cities were assumed to be large and resilient enough to not require specific administration. However, the continued rise of tourism, as well as new innovations like as Airbnb, drinking, and drug use, has necessitated the



creation of a Responsible Tourism Charter tailored specifically for cities. Miller, Merrilees, and Coghlan (2015), Maxim (2016), Anton Clavé, and Wilson (2015) are all important papers in this field (2017). Markets and marketing are number 13 on the list. The first paper published in the Journal of Travel Research was on tourism marketing in 1968. Responsible tourism's forerunners yearned for responsible marketing. However, marketing was nearly a taboo subject for many academics working in the field of responsible tourism. The majority of the marketing papers submitted to JOST were focused with determining who and how many people were interested in the environment, as well as the size of the responsible tourist market, lead by Sara Dolnicar, whose first of several papers was published in 2004. (although Eagles, 1995, was a very early researcher in this area). Despite its links to behavioural change, marketing received little attention until the JOST Special Issue in 2017. (Volume 25). Font and McCabe (2017) point out the numerous areas in which more research is needed.

14) Data collection and management. For many years, Dolnicar's papers have emphasised the importance of collecting and analysing data about tourist intentions, drivers, and the realities of tourist actions, with Babakhani, Ritchie, and Dolnicar (2017) testing radical new data collection methods and pointing out social bias issues in many earlier market assessment papers. Smart Tourism, with its ties to Big Data and other novel technologies, is also a promising field for development (Gretzel, Sigala, Xiang and Koo, 2015).

15) It is commonly recognised that social media is a new, rapidly rising industry with tremendous implications for many economic activities. However, Gössling (2017) and Sigala and Gretzel (2017) have done detailed work on its ties and value to responsible tourism (2017).

16) The print and broadcast media's duties. While IT and social media are essential topics for future research, print and broadcast media continue to play an important role in the propagation of responsible tourism. Although McWha, Frost, and Laing (2017) released ground-breaking study on travel writing, further research is needed on newspapers, radio, and television travel programmes, their editors and writers, and their possible ties to behavioural change in particular and responsible tourism in general.

17) De-growth is a concept that many proponents of responsible development see as a means to relieve pressure on the world's resources. It is a political, economic, and social movement that seeks to address the problem of growth constraints. The Worldwatch Institute (<http://www.worldwatch.org/>) in Washington, DC, is behind it.

Hall (2009) gives an outline of tourist de-growth and a related notion called steady-state tourism. De-marketing as a regional route to tourist de-growth is examined by Beeton and Benfield (2002). In the Isle of Man, Canavan (2014) investigates de-growth as a regional tourist strategy. Degrowth research may expand in the future. In practise, many issues have been discovered (see Koutsouris (2009), Salazar (2012), Idziak, Majewski, and Zmylony) (2015). However, a variety of new small business prospects are emerging, one of which, social enterprise, appears to be particularly worthy of investigation (see von der Weppen and Cochrane, 2012).

19) While academics may have developed and examined the notion of responsible tourism, they have not been successful in putting it into practise. Part of the reason for this is that corporations have been sceptical of the concept, as demonstrated in Font, Elgammal, and Lamond (2017)'s paper on greenhushing. Based on the Canary Islands, a groundbreaking book on how tourism businesses grow and think was published in 2017. (Aguiar Quintana and Batista Canino, 2017). While the book was developed with tourism undergraduates in mind, it also provides academics with some useful information.



## Conclusion

The true future of responsible tourism, lies in its implementation. For businesses, collaborating with academics can yield a number of benefits, including improved public relations, new marketing opportunities, new and productive partnerships, positive connections to protected areas and pressure groups, access to innovative product development ideas, constructive business analysis, better market knowledge, and potentially better trained graduate employees. Better public-sector collaboration with academics would also pay off politically and in terms of innovation. Benefits for academics could be just as plentiful. They'd be perceived as having a growing impact on society, nature, heritage, and the economy. More research funds should be available. Beyond research, close collaboration with industry could boost undergraduate and postgraduate education, as well as job chances for graduates. While responsible tourism academics have been sceptical of corporations, businesses have been wary of responsible tourism academics. Some academics are concerned about the profit incentive, while others are concerned about the idea of consulting, or working for a client. Some are also aware that tourist journal reviewers and editors prefer to see “pure” research rather than consultancy outcomes (see Lane, 2018).

Higuchi and Yamanaka (2017) produced a seminal piece on how academics and tourism firms may collaborate. They saw consultancy as a way for scholars and enterprises to share information, emphasising the importance of long-termism, embeddedness, trust, and co-creation.

Lane (2018) identifies five obstacles for academics who want to assist take responsible tourism from concept to reality. Two of the five are particularly significant. The first is the requirement for multidisciplinary research teams to be formed that understand each other and collaborate on long-term projects rather than short-term projects. In 2010, the University of Las Palmas in the Canary Islands established the transdisciplinary Institute of Tourism and sustainable Economic Development (TIDES), which brings together 45 researchers from nine different departments. The Griffith Institute of Tourism at Griffith University in Australia was established in 2014, bringing together around 30 staff members. One of its specialties is sustainable tourism. Responsible tourism has been slammed as a utopian fantasy (McCool, Butler, Buckley, Weaver and Wheeller, 2013). The same may be said for democracy. However, Winston Churchill (1874-1965) is claimed to have stated that democracy must be preserved since the alternatives are far worse. Responsible tourism is a good example of this.

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