

BOOK REVIEW

Coastal Mass Tourism: Diversification and Sustainable Development in Southern Europe

Bill Bramwell, editor (2004). Channel View Publications, Clevedon, United Kingdom

Anxiety regarding the economic health of mass tourism in southern Europe's coastlands has urged many destinations and enterprises to diversify in light of sustaining or penetrating markets while turning to environmentally sustainable practices. One policy response to the above has involved developing new products (e.g. golf courses etc) without, unfortunately, sparing the mass tourism characteristics. Similarly, attempting to diversify has involved developing alternative tourism products to be offered on a small scale (e.g. history, culture etc). Combining the aforementioned with the fact that many destination guests no longer accept poor environmental standards thus urging the need to significantly improve on environmental quality. The environmental upgrade of products, enterprises or destinations can be achieved through enhancement schemes in major resorts, tougher land use planning controls, improvements in water quality and beach cleaning and initiatives to reduce energy use and recycle waste in the accommodation sector.

To date only a limited number of published books have focused on the development and planning of coastal mass tourism and there has only been a limited critical assessment of the strategies of product diversification and environmental enhancement used in coastal regions. Issues of this sort are described, analyzed and discussed within a collection of 17 chapters representing the work of researchers from the United Kingdom, Greece, Turkey, United States of America, Australia, Spain, N. Ireland and Malta and offers a detailed and scientifically justified account of the development of coastal destinations of Southern Europe. It examines the interactions between market demands and pressures, evolving value systems and policy contexts, and new policies and planning techniques affecting tourism and sustainable development. Provides a commentary on how the implementation of policies affecting tourism and sustainability is a multifaceted and often fraught process



while lacks depth on issues such as managing the scale or quantity of tourism development and efforts to involve local actors in tourism policy making.

Taking a closer look at each chapter of this a rich selection of methodological strategies that have been deployed to research cutting edge research questions which lead to future research propositions and scientific inferences while justified by sound scientific arguments and past research findings. Chapter 1 & 2 by Bill Bramwell (Mass tourism, diversification and sustainability in southern Europe's coastal regions), researches the context to policies for tourism and sustainable development in southern Europe's coastal regions; Chapter 3 by Helen Briassoulis (Crete: endowed by nature, privileged by geography, threatened by tourism?), offers a broad brush, integrated analysis of tourism and local development in Crete in three time periods since the late 1960s by presenting its impacts, evaluates them with a consistent set of sustainability criteria and probes into the essential requirements for securing the sustainability of development of the island and of its tourist sector; Chapter 4 by Paris Tsartas (Tourism development in Greek insular and coastal areas: socio-cultural changes and crucial policy issues), analyses two issues that have characterized tourism development in Greek insular and coastal areas in during the period of 1970 until 2000. Firstly the socioeconomic and cultural changes that have taken place in these areas and led to rapid tourism development. Secondly the policies for tourism and tourism development at local, regional and national level; Chapter 5 by Cevat Tosun, Dallen Timothy, Yuksel Ozturk (Tourism growth, national development and regional inequality in turkey), examines the impacts of intensive coastal tourism growth on the development of rural regions in particular and national development in general on Turkey; Chapter 6, by Konstantinos Andriotis (Problems of island tourism development: the Greek insular regions), reviews the difficulties resulting from the insular character and the uncontrolled tourism development; Chapter 7, by Jon Sadler (Sustainable tourism planning in northern Cyprus), identifies the problems of planning and environmental assessment for tourism in the developing country of northern Cyprus, an area politically unrecognized and largely unknown state with the argument that politically and geographically isolated areas can have advantageous natural resource based objectives providing politics and the economy favour and foster sustainable planning; Chapter 8, by Michael Barke and John Towner (Learning from experience? Progress towards a sustainable future for tourism in the central and eastern Andalusian littoral), examines the recent development of tourism

on the coast of Andalusia to the east of Malaga in light of explicit assertions of the adoption of sustainability principles by the Spanish tourism authorities; Chapter 9, Fernando Vera Rebollo, Josep Ivars Baidal (Measuring sustainability in a mass tourist destination: pressures, perceptions and policy responses in Torrevieja, Spain), affirms the need to incorporate the principles of sustainable development within the planning and management of mature tourism destinations while uses an operative definition of sustainable tourism development that makes possible the effective application of its principles; Chapter 10, by Gonzalo Malvarez Garcia and John Pollard (The planning and practice of coastal zone management in southern Spain), examines coastal management policies in southern Spain in the context of the states role in the promotion of sustainable development practices; Chapter 11, by Xavier Campillo Beses, Gerda K. Priestley and Francesc Romagosa (Using EMAS and local agenda 21 as tools towards sustainability: the case of a Catalan coastal resort), examines the objectives underlying principles, methodology and controls involved in the application of two environmental planning tools – local agenda 21 and the European eco-management and audit scheme (EMAS) to local administrations, in an attempt to identify their strengths and weaknesses; Chapter 12, by Artemios Chatziathanasiou, Daphne Mavrogiorgos and Konstantinos Sioulas (Environmental initiatives in the hotel sector in Greece: case study of the green flags project), assesses the environmental performance of 35 hotels in Greece in the context of a LIFE project titled “green flags” the aim of which was to define a labelling award within the European union eco-labelling scheme; Chapter 13, by Ioannis Spilanis and Helen Vayanni (Sustainable tourism: utopia or necessity? The role of new forms of tourism in the Aegean islands), develops a framework for the appraisal of tourism sustainability in the Greek islands and it is concluded that the conventional tourist model (3s) has failed to promote sustainability due to the limited economic benefits for host communities and growing environmental pressures. The purpose of the paper is to identify types of new forms of tourism that are being developed in the Aegean islands and to evaluate their impact; Chapter 14, by Nadia Theuma (Tourism, culture and cultural tourism in Malta: the revival of Valletta), examines Valletta as a tourist attraction, identifying the current cultural product, and it discusses the recent initiatives to revive the city; Chapter 15, by Julie Scott (Coffee shop meets casino: cultural responses to casino tourism in northern Cyprus), goes beyond a social impact approach to casino tourism to focus on how the rapidly growing global casino industry connects with, mediates and is mediated by the existing local gambling culture; Chapter

16, by Richard Sharpley (Tourism, modernisation and development on the island of Cyprus: challenges and policy responses), through a case study it demonstrates that despite Cyprus' inherent dependency tourism has proved to be an effective vehicle of development; Chapter 17, by Derek Hall (Rejuvenation, diversification and imagery: sustainability conflicts for tourism policy in the eastern Adriatic), provides a critical evaluation of the post conflict tourism policies of the former Yugoslav republics bordering on the eastern Adriatic.

All in all, this is a well written, easy to read book that offers a scientifically sound discussion on the topics of environmental and destination sustainability from the lens of different geographical areas; issues soon to occupy both the practitioners and the academic community. All researchers and chapters found within the book lay the ground through well researched and presented literature review thus introducing the all kinds of readers, irrespective of their awareness and knowledge, on the issues of tourism development. From a methodological perspective the healthy balance of quantitative and qualitative research instruments and techniques the quantification of research parameters coupled with the inner – qualitative findings offer an insightful account and justification on these issues. Moreover there is a plethora of proposed future research directions for other researchers to embark upon. In this vein this book can be used by faculty staff, tourism professionals, governmental bodies, students or researchers in the sense of providing a head start through a rich list of references while setting the scene on the topic of tourism development through an explicit focus to Southern Europe and its coastal zone.

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