

Island Tourism Sustainability

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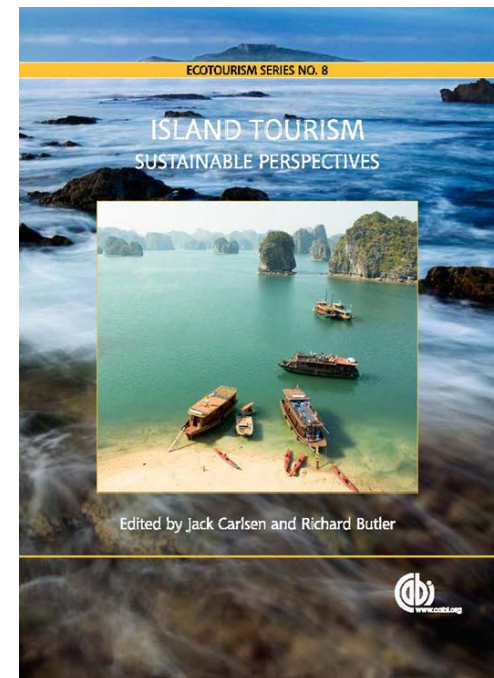
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Topics

- Islands and Tourism
- Islands, Sustainability and the false trichotomy
- Island tourism environments
- Island tourism communities
- Island tourism economies
- Island tourism politics
- Review Questions
- Further readings



Islands and Tourism

- Despite the idyllic images, islands are in a constant state of change and evolution
- Subject to environmental, social and economic forces
- Tourism is the catalyst of change, both positive and negative simultaneously
- Need to understand islands and tourism from a sustainability perspective
- ‘Living laboratories’ where systemic change and adaptation can be examined and understood.

Islands, Sustainability and the False Trichotomy

- Economic and social *and* ecological sustainability
- Sustainability an holistic, not partial concept – not a trichotomy
- Sustainability is a process of economic, social and ecological transformation
- All islands face common problems of economic dependency, social insularity and ecological fragility

Tourism and Environments

- Historical land use (mining, logging, farming, hunting, loss of biodiversity, invasive species)
- Natural resource loss (water, agriculture, ecosystem services, over-fishing)
- Physical impacts (dredging, construction, waste disposal, habitat destruction)
- Global impacts (Climate events, coral bleaching, global warming, ASLR, ocean acidification, extreme weather events, natural and man-made disasters)

Tourism and Communities

- Historical colonisation and alienation of traditional social systems
- Political pressures and tension
- Loss of local control in the face of globalisation
- Host-guest relations and cultural tensions
- Crime, exploitation and marginalisation of ethnic and cultural groups

Tourism and Economies

- Limited options for development
- Increased dependency on external economies and governments
- High costs and economic leakage
- Subject to market forces and trends
- Scale and pace of tourism development
- Limited infrastructure and capacity
- Need for research, education and training

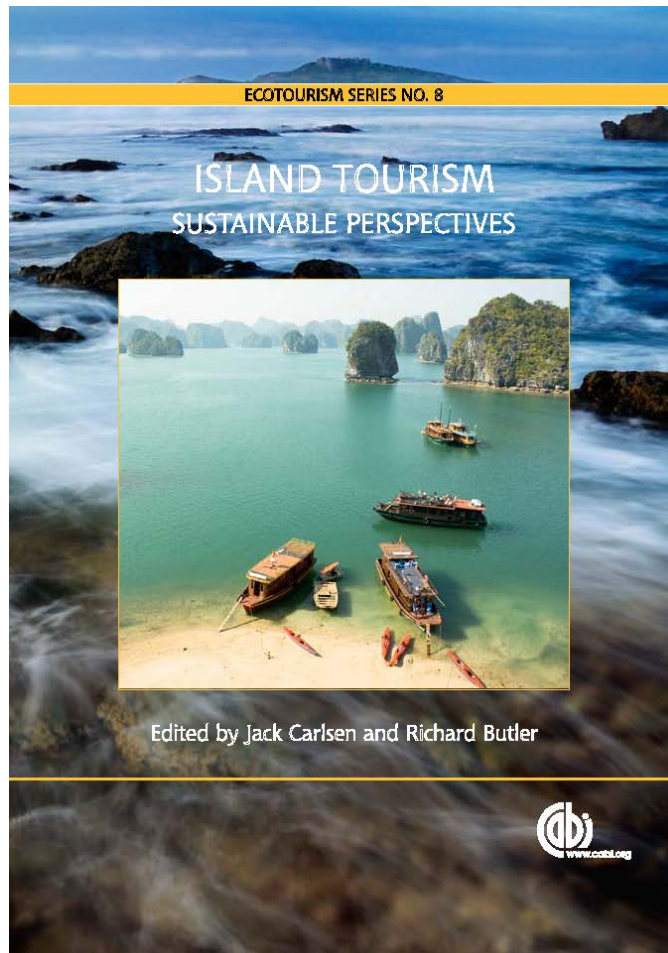
Island Tourism and Politics

- Political commitment to sustainable tourism principles, policies and programs
- Sustainable development is an oxymoron
- Economic development cannot be at the expense of environmental degradation or socio/cultural destruction
- Triple, or quadruple bottom line applies
- Finite limits to growth and environmental and social carrying capacity
- Local input into planning and policy is essential

Summary

- Islands are sensitive in terms of their ecology, culture and economy
- Internal and external forces of change are primarily felt on islands first (e.g. climate change)
- Understanding sustainable island tourism requires multiple perspectives
- Seek a balanced approach in finding economic prosperity, social cohesion and environmental conservation

Further Reading



- Carlsen, J and Butler, R. [Eds.] (2011) *Island Tourism: Sustainable Perspectives*. CABI Publishing: UK.

Review Questions

- Chapter 2: How can tourism's ecological impacts be managed in the absence of any empirical data and scientific evidence?
- Chapter 4: Are National Parks agencies endowed with sufficient resources to manage the multiple impacts of tourism on fragile islands?
- Chapter 5: Is segregation the most effective means of insulating culturally sensitive communities from the undesirable social effects of tourism?

Review Questions

- Chapter 6: Who should take the leadership in terms of climate change adaptation and what partnerships would be most effective to reduce vulnerability as part of the wider goal of sustainable tourism development?
- Chapter 7: What is the most effective means of communicating cultural and environmental values to hosts and guests in an island tourism setting?

Review Questions

- Chapter 8: Is island casino development compatible with socially sustainable island tourism development?
- Chapter 9: How can sustainable island tourism replace other non-sustainable economic activities (such as oil production)?
- Chapter 11: To what extent does geographical isolation and limited transport and seasonal access afford islands some level of protection from unsustainable rates of growth in tourism arrivals?

Review Questions

- Chapter 12: How can islands diversify their visitor markets and move towards economically sustainable tourism development?
- Chapter 14: How can increased co-operation between islands facilitate economically sustainable island tourism?
- Chapter 16: How can political and legal systems inculcate a sustainable perspective into the development of sustainable island tourism?