

The Demand for, and Participation in Corporate Social Responsibility and Sustainable Tourism – Implications for the Caribbean

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Abstract

■ There is no shortage of literature on the need for sustainable tourism, yet relatively few authors have examined how this is being achieved in practice and its implications for specific regions of the world. This study aims to identify and assess tourism corporate social responsibility practices and codes of conduct, whether put out by international or non-government organizations or self-imposed by corporations. The study also set out to determine demand for sustainable tourism. By identifying the current status of sustainability within the tourism industry, it is possible to determine what actions are needed to further this agenda, especially in areas such as the Caribbean. The question first arose as part of a larger study, conducted for the World Bank/International Finance Corporation (Dodds & Joppe, 2005), however, this study provided a larger scope regarding access to tourism markets by lesser developed countries.

Key Words:

Tourism CSR, codes of conduct, certification, sustainable tourism market share

Resumen

■ Existe abundante literatura sobre la necesidad de un turismo sostenible, pero existen relativamente pocos autores que hayan examinando su aplicación práctica y sus implicaciones en regiones específicas del mundo. Este estudio tiene como finalidad identificar y evaluar las prácticas de responsabilidad social corporativa en el sector turístico y los códigos de conducta, tanto los publicados por organizaciones internacionales o no gubernamentales, como los incorporados por las propias empresas. El estudio también intenta determinar la demanda de turismo sostenible. Al identificar la situación actual de la sostenibilidad dentro de la industria del turismo, es posible determinar cuáles son las acciones necesarias para promover el programa, especialmente en regiones tales como el Caribe. La cuestión surge por primera vez como parte de un estudio más extenso, realizado para el Banco Mundial/Corporación Financiera Internacional (Dodds & Joppe, 2005), sin embargo, este estudio tenía mayor alcance con respecto al acceso a los mercados turísticos de los países menos desarrollados.

Palabras clave:

Responsabilidad social corporativa, códigos de conducta, certificación, cuota de mercado del turismo sostenible

Introduction

■ Within the Caribbean as well as the tourism industry overall, it is generally agreed that there are increasing overall societal and environmental concerns, and that this will heighten the demand for more sustainable destinations and travel preferences. These, in turn, will exert more pressure for destination management policies and tour operator responsibility (Bramwell & Lane, 1993; Budeanu, 2005; Butler, 1993; Muller, 1994; Swarbrooke, 1999; Wall, 1997).

While there is much research pertaining to Corporate

Social Responsibility (CSR) in general business literature, there is little examination of CSR initiatives within the tourism industry with a few notable exceptions (Miller, 2001; Kalisch, 2002; Kasim, 2006.). This study aims to identify perceived demand for sustainable tourism and CSR practices within tourism corporations, and to discuss how the agenda to achieve more sustainable tourism can be moved forward, especially in areas, such as the Caribbean which have suffered from both the positive and negative aspects of tourism.

Sustainable tourism and corporate social responsibility

■ There is no debate that tourism needs to be sustainable (Butler, 1993; Wall, 1997; Hunter & Green, 1995) and the objective of this paper is not to focus on the need for sustainability, but rather on ascertaining what role can or should be played by the tourism industry and individual businesses in furthering sustainable tourism development. Sustainable development has been defined as “development that meets the needs of present generations without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs” (WCED, 1987, p.43). Sustainable tourism, in addition to the criteria of sustainable development, requires a holistic, integrated perspective that takes into account all the industries and resources upon which tourism relies. According to the UNWTO definition (WTO, 2004), it makes optimal use of environmental resources, respects the socio-cultural authenticity of communities, and provides socio-economic benefits to all stakeholders. While it is not the purpose of this paper to debate definitions of sustainable tourism as there are few right answers and a plurality of perspectives that need to be considered, complexity of this issue is further discussed by authors such as Twining-Ward and Farrell (2005), Hunter & Green, (1995), Butler (1993), etc..

While sustainable tourism examines tourism from a multi-stakeholder perspective, CSR is the corporation's role in achieving more sustainable development. Numerous definitions exist for CSR; according to the World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD), CSR is a “business commitment to contribute to sustainable economic development, working with employees, their families, the local community, and society at large to improve their quality of life” (WBCSD as quoted in Kotler & Lee, 2005, p. 3).

Numerous reasons for doing good have been suggested. Kotler & Lee (2005) define benefits of CSR in terms similar to how the tourism industry defines responsible tourism.

The definition of CSR has many similar elements to sustainable tourism in that both focus on how stakeholders

should be identified and engaged, and agree that initiatives should be measured to determine their impact on others. Whereas CSR relates to a company's obligation to be accountable to all of its stakeholders in all its operations and activities with the aim of achieving sustainable development not only in the economic dimension, but also in the social and environmental dimensions (Carroll, 1991; Rondinelli & Berry, 2000; Miller, 2001; Kalisch, 2002), sustainable tourism was first seen mainly from an environmental perspective and has only in the past fifteen years incorporated social and community aspects (Butler, 1993; Conlin & Baum, 1994; Hunter & Green, 1995). There have been many academic contributions since the 1980s and multiple authors have discussed themes or trends emerging in sustainable tourism's development, including debates such as the argument between development and conservation (Eber, 1992; Sharpley, 2000), tourism's place within sustainable development (Butler, 1993; Stabler & Goodall, 1996), and the operationalization of the concept of sustainability (Butler, 1998; Clarke, 1999). Today, it is commonly recognized that sustainable tourism is more than just environmental conservation of a natural area, but that it must also address the quality of experience of those visiting it and the quality of life of those being visited.

Sustainable tourism development is about making all tourism more compatible with the needs and resources of a destination area (IFC, 2004; Honey & Rome, 2001). Tourism therefore needs to take a holistic and comprehensive approach that takes into consideration its development with other activities and values. Yet tourism is made up of many sectors and is very fragmented, therefore monitoring effects and processes through one company or mechanism has been difficult. The supply chain of product to end user is rarely controlled by one party or individual; the various products and services that constitute a tourism experience are most often delivered by a variety of businesses and individuals. Indeed, a World Bank Group report (Foley Hoag, LLP, 2003, 2004; PricewaterhouseCoopers, 2004) states that there is virtually no effective monitoring or implementation mecha-

nism yet in place for CSR practices, and that even defining sustainable tourism can be difficult as criteria are interpreted differently by different stakeholders. There are, however, a growing number of guidelines and charters on sustainable tourism which have been put forth by both government and industry. Yet Font and Harris

(2004) go so far as to suggest that not only are social sustainability standards ambiguous, assessment methodologies inconsistent and open to interpretation, and considerable variation exists on what is understood as sustainable, but that they do not work at all well in a climate of trade liberalization and globalization.

Tourism in the Caribbean

■ The Caribbean is one of the most tourism dependent regions in the world. According to the Caribbean Tourist Organization (CTO, 2008), the Caribbean received 22.7 million visitors plus a further 19.2 million cruise visitors in 2007, an increase of 19.4% and 20.7%, respectively, over 2002. Tourism was the number one export business (ahead of automotive products, chemicals, petroleum and food) with international tourism receipts combined with passenger transport currently total more than US\$ 800 billion. The Caribbean region's tourism arrivals and receipts command a disproportional share of the global tourism market. "CTO member countries with only 1% of the world's population consistently attract about 3%

of global tourism arrivals and world tourism expenditure" (Dodds, 2006).

With the rapid development of this region, as well as its predominant reliance on sun, sea and sand vacations, the Caribbean is facing high competition and less than satisfactory environmental and social reports. Issues such as over-development of the built environment, increasing dependency on host communities, pollution and disregard for natural resources as well as competition and inflation has strained this region (Wilkinson, 1989, 1997; Weaver, 2001). The need for its suppliers to adopt practices for CSR is clear.

Methodology

■ This study was undertaken in response to the World Bank's research on CSR codes of conduct and social and environmental guidelines. Its CSR Practice Investment Climate Department commissioned research to determine both the level of CSR of tourism businesses and consumer demand for sustainable tourism.

This paper builds on the in-depth interviews with key informants conducted in 2005. Interviews with four directors of travel associations, six directors of research centers who focus on various aspects of sustainability, seven tour operators and ten travel providers were carried out to assess demand for sustainable tourism, the consumers' willingness to pay and what is needed to further sustainable tourism within the industry. Companies approached to be interviewed included the world's largest tour operators, specialty operators and hotel associations, government bodies and NGOs who have led sustainable tourism initiatives as well as key industry experts. Questions asked included whether respondents felt there was a demand for sustainable tourism from consumers, what current practices were

being undertaken to address sustainable tourism such as certification, codes of conduct, reporting, etc., issues and implications and recommendations to move forward. Further extensive secondary research has expanded particularly the literature on consumer demand for sustainable tourism.

As the majority of the large tour operators are based in Europe, it could be suggested that this study provides mainly a European perspective. However, as they operate in most countries of the world, especially the Caribbean, results of this study not only have global implications, but also for many of the mass tourism destinations such as the Caribbean. In addition, interviewees included both mainstream hotel and tour operators as well as specialty responsible tourism operators. In the interest of obtaining as much information as possible from interviewees, assurances were given that no direct quotes would be used to identify them or their company. Therefore, all statements are those of the authors' and should not be attributed to any particular interviewee.

Findings

Sustainable Tourism: Under-demand or Oversupply?

■ Although consumers may expect to see social or environmental considerations addressed in the brochure or

on the website of an operator or travel provider, they do not currently demand these when booking travel pack-

ages. From interviews with large and specialty operators it was found that no consumer requests for specific environmental or social criteria were made when booking their holidays. The only customer issues or questions were regarding stray animals or if there was an animal protection group to look after stray dogs or donkeys clients had encountered. Specialty and adventure operators found that consumers focused upon quality and trip inclusions (number of guides, accommodation type, etc.). Additionally, environmental and social criteria do not affect most tour operators' choice when selecting their package components as their primary focus is on price followed by quality (personal interviews with tour operators and travel companies). This confirms the findings of a 2003 study (Font & Epler-Wood, 2007), which suggested that almost 70 percent of tour operator clients expressed *no* concern or interest in eco-social issues when selecting their products, and only eight percent expressed a specific interest when selecting their tour. Overall, less than 10 percent of the market booking ecotours in the U.S. is requesting information from their operators on eco-social standards (Epler-Wood International, *et al.*, 2005).

Examining the findings from operators and experts in the industry, there was no evidence that demand for sustainable tourism actually led to purchase behaviour. Based on the interviews conducted, there is no indication that consumers are willing to pay more for sustainable tourism products even though they may indicate so when questioned in research (Rainforest Alliance, 2002). As one industry leader noted, "In several surveys done in the last years, a considerable number of people always affirm they would be ready to pay for it. But unfortunately the reality shows that the customer's decisions are often dominated by other criteria, and mostly by price. There is obviously a contradiction or cognitive dissonance between intention and behaviour. However, in many destinations, it is common practice that tourists on an excursion in wildlife reserves pay an extra fee for nature protection activities and this is well accepted".

For example, TUI offered a program for holiday tourists to purchase a tree to reduce carbon emissions (£10 purchased a tree and a map of where it was planted). Only 1 in 20 bookings subscribed to the program even though it was listed on a full page of the holiday brochure. Specialty operators did not have much participation, either. Explore, the UK's largest adventure operator, encouraged clients to offset their carbon emissions through Climate Care. There has only been a three percent participation rate. By contrast, niche operators see environmental and social issues as part of their core business and often have programs to support such initiatives. These operators are more likely to search for accommodations or areas which are seen as 'green'; however, due to a lack of critical mass and awareness by operators, there are few examples of companies using only certified accommodations.

Sustainability issues are also not perceived to be a key factor in the tourist decision-making process. Tearfund (2000) noted that surveys have been unable to conclude that environmental, social or sustainability criteria are a key concern in holiday decision-making by tourists – even so-called ecotourists are not often motivated to travel because of interest in being 'responsible' or 'environmentally concerned'. More recent surveys have also concluded that environmental concerns are not translating into vacation purchasing behaviour (BLM Media, 2007, December 13). It is clear that marketers need to connect consumer motivations with actual purchasing. As one expert noted, "consumers are willing to make a greener choice if the product comes from a company [or destination] they already know and trust, it doesn't require (m)any behavioural changes to use, and it's at least as good as what they're already buying in terms of aesthetics, style, taste, etc."

The UNWTO now estimates that ecotourism is about five percent of the market and growing modestly at best. Furthermore, although a 2003 survey of successful ecotourism owners and regional ecotourism experts worldwide found that the U.S. market was cited to be the largest and most significant ecotourism market in the world (Epler-Wood International *et al.*, 2005), the Geo-Tourism study found that less than 10 percent of the 55 million that were classified as *geotourists* preferred to travel outside of the United States (TIA, 2003), therefore hardly contributing to tourism revenues in Caribbean countries.

The majority of travel globally is still volume tourism consisting mainly of sun, sea and sand tourism package holidays provided by large operators (e.g., TUI, Mytravel). Price, accommodation quality and personal security rank as the most important considerations when booking holidays (Anovo & STI, 2004; ABTA, 2002; Tearfund, 1999; WTO, 2001; informant interviews). Consumers are susceptible to health and safety issues, with cleanliness and quality being major factors in their destination choice. From existing research and interviews with tour operators and other experts, it can be concluded that consumers would change their destination choice as a result of bad press about health (e.g., dirty beaches) or safety issues, but not for lack of environmental or social responsibility on the part of suppliers. For instance, 80 percent of Mori respondents said their destination choice would be affected by sea pollution or dirty beaches, 50 percent by air or noise pollution, 80 percent by crime (ABTA, 2002). According to research conducted by the Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (2007), "[p]eople reward themselves through leisure and tourism and do not want to feel constrained in their enjoyment through making sacrifice for the sake of the environment. People would consider the environment if it made no difference to the rest of their experience." (p. 1)

If evidence suggests that consumers are looking for more

sustainable product in tourism (TripAdvisor, 2007, April 17) yet are driven mainly by price or health issues, there is a need to rethink the strategy to shift product and packaging so that product offered to the consumer integrates wider issues of sustainability.

This attitude may however be shifting when the subject centers around climate change. Research suggests that tourism stakeholders are becoming more concerned about climate change (Dodds & Leung, 2007; Downing & Ballantyne, 2007) and recent films and media have contributed to greater understanding of the issues. Climate change was considered “[the] *most serious threat to future wellbeing of the world*” by 45% of UK respondents in 2006, up 20% from 2004 (Downing & Ballantyne, 2007: 15). “... , the public is torn between competing and conflicting mindsets. As citizens they want to avert climate change but, at the same time, as consumers they want to go on holiday, own a second home, a big

car and the latest electronic goods. They acknowledge their collective responsibilities but guard jealously their personal rights and freedoms.” (Downing & Ballantyne, 2007: 6). This is also the case in the United States (Travel Industry Association of America, 2007, April 10).

The most frequent measure being taken to address such an issue is carbon offsetting – however this method does not assist the destination, nor actually mitigate any effects. In addition, although awareness is increasing, there also is confusion about what the consumer can do. Gössling *et al.* (2007) examined issues raised by the increase in organizations who are offering voluntary carbon offset schemes as a means of compensating for emissions. There are substantial differences in approaches to calculating emissions, and price levels, company structures and evaluation processes all radically differ and the authors suggested that increased clarity and regulation are required.

CSR in the tourism industry

Marketing of sustainable tourism

■ Although some companies report on CSR initiatives (e.g., First Choice, Hilton, Accor, TUI), many do not stress this to their consumer as responses from interviews showed that there is low brand loyalty as consumers make decisions primarily based on price. This is especially true in the Caribbean which is best known to their USA, Canada and European markets as a package holiday and last minute destination. As there is currently little consumer support or awareness, information databases need to be linked so that environmental and social criteria can be provided to the client when they are booking their holiday.

Respondents were asked what options would be most beneficial to further sustainable tourism development. They were asked if they participated in certification or used certified accommodations in their product choice as well as whether or not they had any type of reporting or supply chain management.

The most successful initiatives which have helped spread more sustainable practices are those for supply chain management (e.g., Hilton, Accor, TUI). Hotel chains have been addressing their environmental concerns for some years. A number of them set up the International Hotel Environmental Initiative in 1992 (now the International Tourism Partnership) which focused on environmental improvements and is now starting to address social and community issues. Most of the larger hotel chains comply with environmental standards and have environmental policies and standards ranging from in-house benchmarking systems (Accor, Hilton Group, etc.) to environmental standards manuals (Rezidor, Starwood, Fairmont, etc.). Although not widespread in adoption, some hotels are now promoting when they achieve international certification such as ISO 9001 and 14001 (some Taj, Delta Hotels, ITC Hotels, Sol Melia, Baja Inn Hotels). Of those that do, only Sol Melia operates in the Caribbean region.

Codes of conduct and industry initiatives in sustainable tourism

■ The International Hotel Environmental Initiative (now the International Tourism Partnership), created in 1992 under the Prince of Wales International Business Leaders Forum, aimed to foster the continual upgrading of environmental performance in the industry worldwide (International Tourism Partnership, 2008). In parallel, a number of large scale tour operators were developing sustainable supply-chain policies. European tour operators tend to be most active in this regard, possibly as a result of the initiatives by the British Federation of Tour

Operators (FTO) and the Association of Independent Tour Operators (AITO), and the fact that most of the larger ones are publicly traded companies.

Although becoming popular, there is a lack of uniformity of codes in spite of the growing number of associations that are making charters or codes mandatory or at least strongly recommended. For example, the Dutch association Algemene Nederlandse Vereniging van Reisonderningen (ANVR – a federation of three mem-

bership associations: Association Air and Business Travel Agents, Association Travel Agents and Association Travel Organizers) implemented a product oriented environmental management system as part of its responsible tourism program. The program is obligatory for all of its 200 members. It includes an action package with steps tour operators need to take: internal management and involvement of staff, purchasing, and contract management for the provision of transport, accommodation excursions and entertainment in the destination. The association believes that success factors for travel organizers depend on intact nature, clean beaches and

authenticity of destinations. FTO uses a different approach, focusing on helping suppliers “understand and manage the environmental and social issues that affect their businesses” (Federation of Tour Operators, 2006a) by providing them with sustainability guidelines that encourage businesses to “write an environmental and social policy or a responsible business statement, train staff to achieve the improvements recommended in the Code, [and] measure results” (Federation of Tour Operators, 2006b: 9) Individual hotel chains and tour operators also have their own guidelines that address their commitment to sustainability.

Certification

■ With regard to certification and the use by tour operators to use eco or green certified products, the results are not promising. Committed tour operations showed interest in working with certified products even though this cannot always be communicated effectively to clients. Most companies have set their own standards rather than use certification labels as these do not exist in all destinations where tour operators work and there is not enough certified product from which to choose. Tour operators also feel that the number and variety of different schemes makes it very difficult to educate their customers or their staff. Some hotels have subscribed to local certification systems (for example, Sandals in the Caribbean receiving Green Globe), however they are few in number. It is exactly for these reasons that the EU LIFE program funded the Tour Link Initiative, which now has an operationalized online matching service for tour operators and suppliers (Green Travel Market, 2008) in three pilot regions: Austria, Catalonia and Costa Rica. Initiatives of this kind are not, to date, widely operational in the Caribbean.

There are growing examples of hotel companies who have helped sustainability through backward linkages in lower income countries, but to date hotels and large tour companies are not pressured into having to receive a

social and/or environmental license to operate as most communities and developing destinations do not have awareness of tourism, let alone the negative issues which may surround it.

Currently most initiatives are voluntary and the tourism industry dictates demand. It is believed that once they start to offer more sustainable information, the consumer will follow suit. For example, TUI and First Choice (who have recently merged), put out CSR reports and are moving towards full transparency, while Hilton Hotels has changed its reporting to head office so that all managers must report on an environmental as well as an economic bottom line. Business reporting on social and environmental issues has potentially helped increase loyalty and a sense of distinctiveness. Some businesses ascertain that promoting their responsible/sustainable business practices can give them a better market position by distinguishing and differentiating their approach. Additionally, this may potentially help SMEs worldwide improve their access to market if they abide by these criteria and offer their services to these buyers (who will need to replace suppliers who are non-compliant if they are to uphold their commitment to their initiatives).

Reporting

■ The pressure to report on a company’s environmental and social performance, not just its financial results, comes from the investment community which sees sustainability reporting as “an integral part of good process control, product/process innovation, avoidance of liability, and enhancement of an organization’s intangible assets” (Slater & Gilbert, 2004: 41). A notable organization that is driving progress in this area is the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) whose vision is that “reporting on economic, environmental, and social performance by all organizations should become as routine and comparable as financial reporting develop this standard”

(Global Reporting Initiative, 2008).

Launched in 2000 under the auspices of UNEP, the Tour Operators Initiative (TOI), in cooperation with the GRI, developed a Sector Supplement to its Sustainability Reporting Guidelines, now in its third iteration, providing tour operators' performance indicators. Forty-seven indicators were developed to measure tour operators' performance in addressing the environmental, economic and social impacts of their business operations. To date, airports are the only other tourism industry-related sector that has its own supplement.

The World Council for Travel and Tourism (WTTC) issued a report 'Corporate Social Leadership in Travel and Tourism' which noted that 68% of CEO's agree that the proper exercise of corporate social responsibility is vital to company's profitability (WTTC, 2002). Some companies interviewed produce reports that are aimed at their own employees, (for example Fairmont, Kuoni) in order to help explain and support the roll-out of a company's new sustainability policy. Companies also report for reasons of reputation; such companies are keen to capture their leadership work and/or combat negative perceptions that may have arisen about their sector or brand. The larger companies such as TUI AG and First Choice are striving towards complete corporate transparency as well as the production of annual reports regarding their CSR practices. A social report can also be a useful communication tool to highlight responsible business practice across a company's worldwide operations. Publicly traded companies need to report on CSR initiatives as part of their investor relations and to demonstrate that they are proactive in reducing potential risks. Thus, larger hotel chains, for instance, have moved significantly towards CSR reporting and have been included in the Dow Jones Sustainability Indicator and FTSE4GOOD index

(Accor, Hilton and Intercontinental).

Initiatives must be industry led as labour standards and other elements of sustainability are not visible to the consumer but crucial nonetheless to the long-term well-being of the destination. At the same time, as Font and Harris (2004) point out, certain social standards can be challenged as anti-competitive barriers when it includes protective measures. For example, "most countries have legislation that prohibits giving preferential treatment to people from one particular region of the country, and commitments under the General Agreement on Trade in Services will reduce the chances of discrimination against foreign workers" (Font and Bendell 2002 as quoted in Font and Harris, 2004: 989).

CSR reporting means a company is more transparent and accountable to external stakeholders, enabling investors to avoid risk and consumers to support more sustainable businesses, therefore having a multiplier effect. Reporting was deemed essential by the corporate interviewees to ensure that efforts are maintained, and initiatives continued. It also makes it possible for others in the supply chain and at destinations to duplicate successful practices.

Implications and Conclusion

■ To further the CSR agenda within tourism, specifically in the Caribbean, there are a number of recommendations by industry. First, governments who wish to develop and promote tourism, should focus their capacity-building efforts on suppliers, using such methods as legislated compliance (e.g., environmental, reputation and business probity), ensuring that resources are available for training and learning by suppliers and, where needed, fill resource gaps. Governments must work with stakeholders to ensure such criteria are being met.

Second, there is a need to increase public-private partnerships of training for environmental and social awareness and mitigation strategies as well as offer incentives and reporting guidelines to the tourism sector distributed through industry associations. Governments as well as industry need to support training and sharing of best practices while encouraging industry associations to make adherence to sustainable or responsible tourism policies a condition of membership and to report on progress. This has started to take place in the Caribbean with bodies such as the Caribbean Tourism Organization and the former Caribbean Hotel Association working with organizations such as the UK's Travel Foundation and the Institute for Responsible Tourism to provide training as well as environmental and social programs.

Third, with greater consumer awareness of issues such as climate change, demand for more information is

growing. However, the confusion around the proliferation of logos, programs and information sources is making it difficult for potential visitors to know which products are better for society and the environment. It is clear that education is essential to help consumers make better choices and governments as well as suppliers have an important role to play in this process. Demand for sustainable tourism products and services may also grow, if the industry starts to offer more sustainable choices to clients. Businesses can diversify and gain a competitive advantage (e.g., First Choice's CSR led the way in terms of reporting and supporting organizations such as the UK's Travel Foundation). Businesses also need to provide such information to consumers so as to inform travel choices.

Finally, there is a need to encourage CSR reporting from tour operators, airlines, cruise lines, hotels and destinations so that they can understand the impact they themselves are having. Reporting will also provide measurable criteria to allow for comparison of companies and destinations.

To ensure a more sustainable form of tourism, there is a need for stricter legislation coupled with joined-up government. The need for joined-up government arises from poor coordination among authorities and ministries and may also point to the power struggles among these bodies for money and control. Those interviewed noted that joined-up government adopts a concerted

effort using all levels of government –central, regional and local government and public agencies– as well as the private and NGO organizations to form private/public partnerships. Integration into wider sustainable development plans as well as destination management plans is imperative, and a bottom-up as well as a top-down policy approach is needed. Pressure on governments to incorporate tourism into their wider development policies may help raise awareness about the need for sustainable tourism and the benefits of long-term planning approaches; however there is a strong need for training of employees and industry players at the local level. In many countries lack of monitoring and lack of governance in tourism is apparent, as there are often neither tourism master plans that incorporate sustainable tourism practices or measures, nor incentives for industry to adopt them on their own initiative. To date, few countries have imposed social or environmental criteria on foreign investors, seeing only short term economic gains instead of long-term, holistic, sustainable tourism development.

Recommendations to provide for a more sustainable industry include ensuring transparency through a multi-stakeholder process as well as including sustainable tourism in all levels of policy formulation from national tourism policy to local destination management plans. There is a need to recognize the difference between lo-

cal vs. international stakeholders and the incentives or encouragement they need to adopt more sustainable forms of tourism practices. Ensuring stakeholders are identified and consulted throughout the tourism development process and play an active role in decision-making can promote positive investment structures for integrated tourism master planning – focusing on risk mitigation through sustainable development and planning of tourism.

Sustainable tourism can help overcome many of the negative impacts associated with tourism development. Based on the interviews conducted, it is clear that guidelines and codes of conduct alone are not enough to overcome the short-term profit motive of many operators, governments and destinations. To date, CSR is largely driven by publicly traded European companies who see it as a way to reduce any potential risks that might negatively impact on the value of their stocks. Thus, they will work with their supply-chain partners to ensure that these, too, will be more environmentally –and increasingly, socially–, responsible in their operations. For transparency purposes, they expect annual reports from their partners that document improvements made, and will usually provide technical/structural assistance (ensure local participation, community involvement and stakeholder dialogue) and expertise to help them tackle improvements year over year.

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