

MANAGEMENT OF TOURISM AND HUMAN RECREATION PRESSURE

Ermanno Bonomi

Agenzia per il Turismo di Firenze (APT – the Florence Tourism Board), Italy

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Summary

The purpose of this chapter is to introduce the concept of sustainable tourism, which is regarded as a new opportunity for development. The subject is dealt with in the light of the changes that international tourism has undergone as a result of globalization. Special attention is given to the role of consumers, i.e. tourists, who play an increasingly active role in shaping the market by way of their choices.

A particular type of tourist, the so-called ‘ecotourist’, or ‘responsible tourist’, is still in the minority compared to the phenomenon of mass tourism, but is a much better example of this new type of consumer. These tourists are in search of new possibilities and, more importantly, are seeking to give a renewed **ethical sense** to their way of living.

Globalization seems poised to bring us back to ‘savage’, less regulated societies. As a reaction, the individual feels a need for authenticity, unchanging and reliable values, and behavioural rules to go by. The tourist trip as an experience will play a key role in the identification of these values.

There is a demand for a trusted relation not only with other people, but also with the brand of one’s clothes and food. Since society and the world are becoming increasingly fuzzy, the role of trust, which often spreads through the grapevine, is bound to increase. Trust is also a way of making a complex world simpler. This will give rise to new forms of communication, and the choice of media, products and services will tend to rely less on advertising than on recommendations, advice and personal experience.

Leading communications experts are envisaging a forthcoming ‘era’ characterized by greater cooperation instead of harsh competition, transversality instead of linearity, and gradually experimented values instead of absolute ones.

If the concept of sustainable development takes due account of the needs of the new tourist, it will become good practice for increasing numbers of individuals.

1. Tourism and the Processes of Globalisation

Technological development, especially in the sector of communications and transport, has set the conditions for the globalisation of the economy and of culture. This is an “inexorable” process which has already had a dynamic and complex impact upon the individual economies and the social systems themselves.

The process of globalisation also has a noticeable influence on the phenomenon of tourism. Economic development and increase in free time will make tourism the most important economic sector during the coming century. As the tourist market expands and new destinations are created, the forms of competition between the different geographical areas change (see Figure 1). Even the modes of being of the individual entities will change.

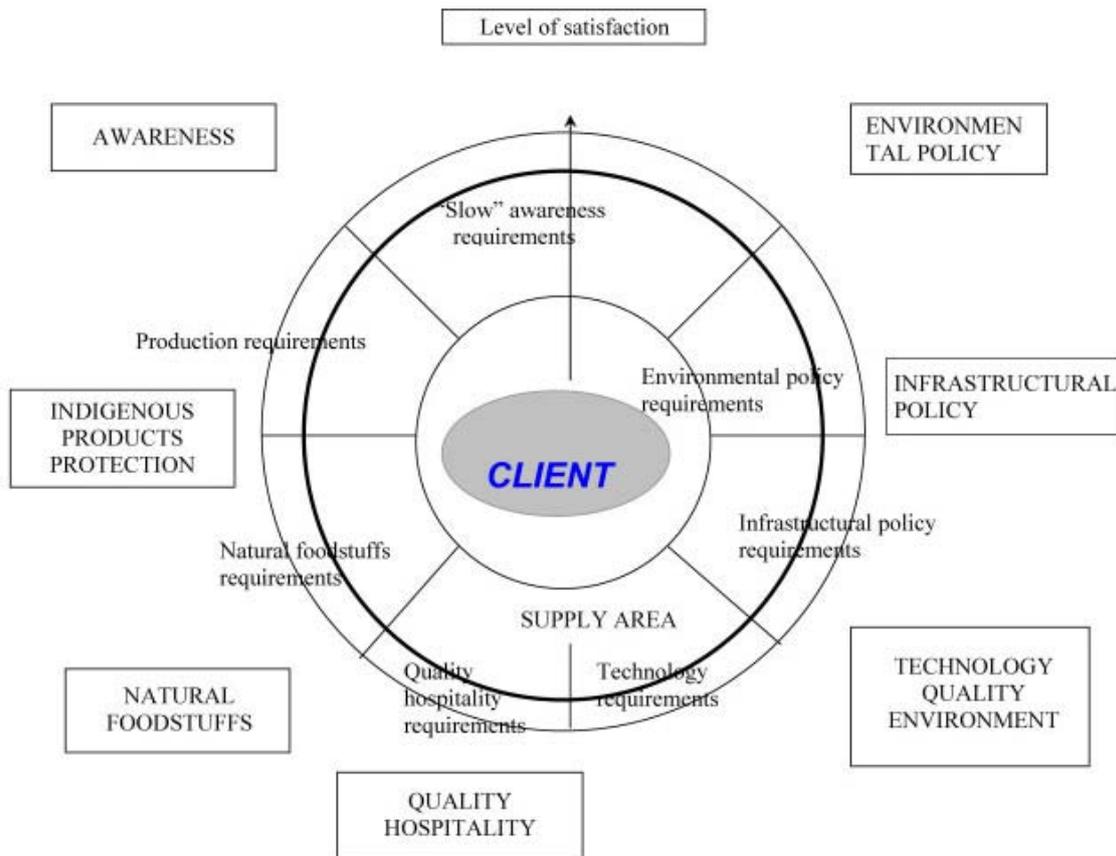


Figure 1. Tourism and the process of globalisation

At world level the tourist industry already accounts for 10.2% of GDP, with a total turnover of US\$3400 billion, and over 650 billion in fiscal income flowing into the national budgets of the various nations.

Tourism accounts for 13% of total consumer expenditure, and generates about 112 million jobs; accommodation tourism represents over 8% of the market of world exports.

International arrivals have passed from about 100 million in 1960, to 325 million in 1980 and 564 million in 1995, and the WTO (World Travel Organization) see the figure going over the billion mark before 2010, with an average annual growth of 4.3%.

As confirmed by the statistics of the WTO, tourism involves only 8% of the world's population, and 80% of tourist flows originate from the 20 countries with the highest rates of development. The principal tourist destinations are in the northern countries, accounting for 70% of the tourists and 72% of the global revenue.

Globalisation provokes rapid changes in the behaviour of tourists, and this is one of the most important and least analysed aspects. More specifically, the rapidity of global communications enables:

- easier information,
- ample possibilities for choice and comparison (price - quality), and
- the possibility of booking tourist services directly.

Globalisation offers the consumer greater freedom, more information and more opportunities, enhancing the independence of the tourist-consumer in relation to the world of supply: it is the demand which increasingly directs, especially in the sphere of leisure, the choices of the tourist companies and services.

Another effect of globalisation is represented by the birth of new multinational economic entities which are organising their service activities without depending on any nation in particular, and with offices all over the world which are able to offer the market:

- -homogenous products,
- -products suited to different types of market, and
- -products which comply with international “quality” standards.

Tourism will become one of the top three sectors in the global economy, representing the “motor” of other economic activities, in view of its capacity to trigger a significant movement of domestic and international consumers interested in various economic sectors (hotels, oeno-gastronomy, craft, commerce, etc.) and to involve various development policies (e.g. schools, transport, environment.).

The central nucleus of globalisation is represented by a number of developing countries, particularly those of the Pacific region, China, India and certain areas of Latin America. The effects of the development of these countries as tourist destinations are already evident:

- 564 million tourists (18 to 20% represented by youth tourism, with 105 million young people),
- 360 million airline passengers,
- Asia has witnessed the greatest increase (the Pacific, south-east Asia) accounting for 17.4% of international tourist arrivals as against the 6.2% of 20 years ago.

Eastern Asia and the Pacific generate 90 million trips, 70% of which are outside the region; in 1995 15 million Japanese left the country for tourist purposes (an increase of 10% over the previous year)

- In 1995 Europe accounted for 59.6% of the market, but with an increment of only 2%. This was 1.5% less than the world average. In 1996 there was a greater increment of 4.52%, but with a slight decrease in the market share (59.22%).
- In 2010 the WTO estimates a share of arrivals equivalent to 51% of the total, but with a further gradual drop in position (see Table 1).

	Intra-regional	Intercontinental	Total	Intercontinental (%)
1990	239.3	31.6	270.9	11.7
1995	266.6	35.9	302.5	11.9
2000	311.4	43.2	354.6	12.2
2010	396.4	58.6	455.0	12.9

source: World Travel Organization

Table 1. International arrivals in Europe

According to the forecasts of the WTO, at both quantitative and qualitative levels, the trends in tourist flows at international level can be summarised as in Table 2.

	1995 to 2000 (%)	2000 to 2005 (%)
Short-medium distance trips	4.8	3.6
Long distance trips	6.8	6.1
Total trips	5.1	4.0
Total nights	4.7	3.9

Table 2. Predicted trends in tourism

It is predicted that the number of cultural trips will increase more than that of seaside holidays. The greatest predicted increases are in spheres such as nature tourism (rural tourism) and those related to sports and health. Within these categories there has been an increase in sporting activities carried out in close contact with the natural environment: a big increase in trekking, and in bicycle tourism (a veritable boom of the mountain bike), orienteering, cross-country and mountain skiing, equestrian tourism and fishing. Here we are dealing with a population of enthusiasts, 51% of whom (Sports Tourism Watchdog, Sports Tourism Fair, Montecatini, 1996) belong to a medium-high income bracket. This latter factor, combined with the high percentage of such tourists who do not identify themselves with traditional forms of organised activities (sports

clubs, promotional bodies etc.) makes the group in question an extremely interesting target for the tour operators themselves, who are under increasing pressure to diversify their basic offers.

Ecotourism

The WTO Ceballos-Lascuràin report (1993) estimates that ecotourism generates 7% of all tourist consumption (Lindberg, 1997). The World Resources Institute (1990) confirms that while the overall annual growth of tourism is 4%, the ecotourism sector reveals a growth rate of between 10 and 30%. More specifically, in the Asia-Pacific area the annual growth is between 10 and 25%.

A further segmentation can be made within the natural resources travel sector. Between 40 and 60% of international tourists practice ecotourism, and between 20 and 40% are tourists interested in wildlife tours, for example birdwatchers. In 1994 in the USA 54 million people took part in birdwatching.

Ecotourism is considered as a segment of tourism, while sustainable tourism represents a system of regulations and standards which are applied to all tourist projects.

The development of tourism, of new ways of travelling, and in particular, the dramatic increase in ecotourism convinced the United Nations to designate 2002 as the International Year of Ecotourism (IYE) and the Commission for Sustainable Development has requested the governments and the private sector to make every effort to guarantee the initiative. The WTO and the United Nations Environment Programme acted in a co-ordinated manner in the preparation for the event.

Identikit of the ecotourist:

age: 35-54

sex: 50% female and 50% male

level of education: secondary school diploma

60% travel in couples, 15% with the family, 13% alone

duration of trip: 50% prefer trips of between 8 and 14 days

Fishing tourism

In the past, when rural residence was more prevalent, fishing was a favourite activity, signifying, beyond the sport itself, a culture, knowledge, and a capacity to observe nature. The processes of urbanisation have profoundly changed the culture and practice of this activity. Nowadays fishing is dependent upon urban consumers, and is increasingly linked to the culture of hobby-leisure, of recreation.

The environment continues to be a factor of attraction, and its unspoilt quality stimulates the movements of thousands of enthusiasts.

Conditioning factors:

- More free time.

- The spread of a health-conscious culture (“keeping fit and physical-psychological well-being” are the predominant reasons for fishing activities).
- Increase in the opportunities to practice sports beyond the traditional contexts such as schools and sports federations.
- Increased importance given to ways of doing sports: quality, comfort.
- The replacement of the group by the individual or, at the outside, the family, in the making of sports choices.
- The possibility of taking advantage of longer week-ends, along with the habit of concentrating the individual holidays in shorter, more frequent breaks divided over the year: all this seems compatible with the affirmation of individual sports with a low competitive content, that are easy to practice (in terms of times, access to premises, etc.), and enjoyed in the open air, possibly along with the family and in an informal manner.

Data sheet: fishing tourism in Italy

There are 21 million people in Italy who practice some kind of sport (39% of the population aged over 4), of whom 46% of men and 31.7% of women. Of these, 44.5% are in northern Italy, 46.2% are in central Italy and 27.5% are in southern Italy. The propensity towards sports activities in general tends to increase with the rise in family income and the level of education. The most sportive categories are those of managers and businessmen. The most widespread activities are:

- athletics, practised by 3.9 million,
- swimming by 3.3 million,
- tennis 2.6 million,
- skiing 2.5 million,
- fishing 2 million,
- hunting 1.7 million,
- volleyball 1.3 million,
- mountain biking 1.2 million, and
- cycling, 1 million.

Data (1995) registered members (and percentage of all sports federations)

Football Federation	987,438	27.8%
Hunting Federation	477,632	13.4%
Amateur Fishing Federation	279,924	7.9%

Percentage of competitors among all sports practitioners:

fishing	20.3%
football	42.6%

Among holiday sports, the percentage of Italians who practice sports less than once a week is subdivided as follows:

Fishing	63%
mountain biking	61%

trekking 82%
horse-riding 71%

Motivation and behaviour:

The majority of Italian anglers prefer rivers, followed by lakes (lakes are preferred by the 46-65 and the 21-30 age groups) and by mountain streams.

57% of anglers are dependent employees, and 23% self-employed.

65% of anglers come from within the province itself (44% from the regional capital), 35% from other provinces.

As regards the duration of trips, 91% are day trips.

Length of stay in the fishing locality: 95% of trips up to 3 days, 3.35% over 7 days, 1.65% from 4 to 7 days.

35% of Italian anglers travel with their families, with a distinct tourist interest towards the area of destination.

Trips per year: 46.8% of anglers spend over 20 days, and 25.8% between 11 and 20 days.

Days of fishing beyond the province of residence: 64.56% over 20 days, 19.34% between 11 and 20 days.

Days of fishing in Italy: 94.18%, abroad 5.82%.

Among the motivations: 78.67% go just for the fishing (for the contact with the environment, to relax concentration and to experience emotions), and 21.33% for other reasons. Of these other reasons: 39.80% are for other recreational activities, 28.83% are family reasons, 28.12% for tourist interests and 3.25% for cultural. As regards satisfaction, 56.48% declare themselves fairly satisfied, 24.73% not very satisfied, and 18.79% very satisfied.

Among the most commonly shared attractions of this type of activity are the development of observational capacities (the reasons why a fish has not taken the bait, tips on how not to lose one's grip) reflection, immediate pleasure, the continual search to improve one's technique, the development of curiosity and imagination, the possibilities for exchanging ideas and advice and for socialising, and respect for the environment.

These essential values tend to define a type of non-mass activity for an upper consumer bracket. But it is above all the nature-related aspects (the silence, the uncontaminated waters, the wide open spaces) which make this sport one of the ideal ways of enjoying the natural environment.

Rural Tourism

Rural tourism has become particularly popular in recent years in many European countries, responding to the growing desire among tourists to enjoy life in the rural

environment.

In the 1970s there still existed a romantic concept of rural tourism, directly linked to the idea of “participating” in the life of the peasants, their activities and their rhythms. The first agricultural estates, usually small-scale activities, discovered the potential utility of offering tourist accommodation on their farms, as a way of boosting the agricultural income.

In France, Ireland, Germany, Austria, Great Britain and Italy various forms of rural tourism developed, including *agritourism* (farm holidays) understood as accommodation on farms and estates where agriculture continues to be the predominant activity.

The phenomenon of farm holidays in Europe features an annual growth rate of around 6%, double that of seaside tourism. Recognising the importance of farm holiday tourism as a way for the farmer to increase income, the European Commission promoted a series of initiatives to stimulate activities in this sector and to contribute to putting a brake on the depopulation of the countryside.

Farm holidays, along with other forms of rural tourism, have enabled the conservation and ecological restoration, also expanding the concept of agriculture which has shifted from “product agriculture” to “service agriculture”. The agricultural estate itself has become a business producing goods and services, and the farm holiday is one of the estate products. These estates offer their guests typical, genuine produce, accommodation in rural dwellings, and the chance to enjoy open-air activities such as pony trekking, cycling, trekking and wildlife watching.

The location becomes the decisive element in rural tourism, not only as a landscape modelled by man over the centuries, but also because of the connections existing between the dialects and gastronomy, between the beliefs and the traditional customs, and between the wisdom of today and that of yesterday.

In order to enhance the cultural, historic and natural resources present within the territory, we have to intervene to recuperate the rural residential heritage, that of the small villages, to recover the woodland areas, to create an efficient road network, and to reclaim the landscape in a global sense. Rural tourism therefore becomes an opportunity for the recovery of the entire environmental and architectural heritage, favouring a process of architectural restoration which now characterises a large part of the territory of the European countryside.

Identikit of the rural tourist:

- The majority of visitors belong to the age-group of 31 to 40.
- Middle-upper social class. Between 70 and 84% have secondary school qualifications.
- Employment sectors are dominated by freelance professionals, followed by clerical and office workers.

- Farm holidaymakers normally travel in couples, or with groups of friends and family.
- Motivations: the search above all for relaxation and nature, combined with various recreational and sports activities, the authenticity of the estate, the typical nature of the products and the local cuisine, the rural quality of the environment and the possibility of visiting social and cultural centres.

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Biographical Sketch

Ermanno Bonomi was born in Modena in October 1948. He lives in Florence (Tuscany). He graduated in sociology, and has worked as a teacher in schools specialized in the tourism field, as well as in universities.

From 1989 until 2001 he was director of Centro Studi Turistici (Center for Tourist Studies), a non-profit association created by public citizens and private firms to conduct scientific research in national and international tourism.

In September 2001 he was appointed by the Province of Florence as Director of Agenzia per il Turismo di Firenze (APT – the Florence Tourism Board), a public organization devoted to tourist promotion and to incoming services.

In the school year 2001/02, he was gave lectures on tourism at the University of Florence, Faculty of Economics, as part of the degree course in tourism economics.

He has published various works on sociology, economics of tourism, marketing, hotel and tourist techniques, and transport.