



RESPONSIBLE TOURISM

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World Travel & Tourism

Responsible Tourism

*To my parents,
Jan and John Spenceley,
in thanks for their boundless
love and support*

Responsible Tourism

Critical Issues for Conservation and Development

Edited by
Anna Spenceley



publishing for a sustainable future

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For a full list of publications please contact:

Earthscan

Dunstan House

14a St Cross Street

London, EC1N 8XA, UK

Tel: +44 (0)20 7841 1930

Fax: +44 (0)20 7242 1474

Email: earthinfo@earthscan.co.uk

Web: www.earthscan.co.uk

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Contents

<i>List of Figures, Tables and Boxes</i>	<i>vii</i>
<i>List of Contributors</i>	<i>xiii</i>
<i>Foreword by UNWTO</i>	<i>xix</i>
<i>Preface</i>	<i>xxi</i>
<i>Acronyms and Abbreviations</i>	<i>xxv</i>
Introduction: Responsible Tourism in Southern Africa <i>Anna Spenceley</i>	1

Part I Policies, Institutional Interventions and Market Forces

1	Local Economic Development in Mozambique: An Assessment of the Implementation of Tourism Policy as a Means to Promote Local Economies <i>Andrew Rylance</i>	27
2	Ecotourism in Madagascar: How a Sleeping Beauty is Finally Awakening <i>Michaela Pawliczek and Hitesh Mehta</i>	41
3	Public–Private Partnerships in South African National Parks: The Rationale, Benefits and Lessons Learned <i>Giju Varghese</i>	69
4	A Perspective on Community-based Tourism from South Africa: The TRANSFORM Programme, 1996–2007 <i>Steve Collins and Herman Snel</i>	85
5	Responsible Tourism and the Tourism Industry: A Demand and Supply Perspective <i>Nicole Frey and Richard George</i>	107
6	The Development Impacts of Tourism Supply Chains: Increasing Impact on Poverty and Decreasing Our Ignorance <i>Caroline Ashley and Gareth Haysom</i>	129

Part 2 Responsible Nature-based Tourism

- 7 Impacts of Wildlife Tourism on Rural Livelihoods in Southern Africa 159
Anna Spenceley
- 8 Tourism in Transfrontier Conservation Areas:
The Kavango–Zambezi TFCA 187
Helen Suich
- 9 The Realities of Ecotourism Development in Botswana 205
Joseph E. Mbatwa
- 10 Citizen Participation in the Lodge Sector of the Okavango Delta 225
Peter John Massyn
- 11 The Impacts of Tourism Initiatives on Rural Livelihoods and
Poverty Reduction in South Africa: Mathenjwa and Mqobela 239
Murray C. Simpson
- 12 Madikwe Game Reserve, South Africa – Investment and Employment 267
Piers Relly

Part 3 Community-based Tourism

- 13 Local Impacts of Community-based Tourism in Southern Africa 285
Anna Spenceley
- 14 Livelihoods, Conservation and Community-based Tourism in Tanzania:
Potential and Performance 305
Fred Nelson
- 15 The Unsustainability of Community Tourism Donor Projects:
Lessons from Zambia 323
Louise M. Dixey
- 16 Community-based Tourism and Natural Resource Management in
Namibia: Local and National Economic Impacts 343
Jonathan I. Barnes

Part 4 Conclusions

- 17 Implications of Responsible Tourism for Conservation and
Development in Southern Africa 361
Anna Spenceley
- Index* 375

List of Figures, Tables and Boxes

Figures

2.1	Types of tourism projected for Madagascar until 2012	43
2.2	Map of Madagascar showing protected areas and major towns	47
3.1	Business architecture of SANParks	72
4.1	Location of Richtersveld National Park and other existing or potential multi-use conservation areas	89
4.2	Location of the Makuleke region of the Kruger National Park and the Makuleke Settlements	96
5.1	Product levels	114
5.2	Conceptual framework of the effect of management attitude on performance	116
5.3	Levels of actual responsible tourism management behaviour	117
5.4	Level of understanding of the Tourism BEE Charter and Scorecard	119
5.5	Government is helping us put in place responsible management processes	120
5.6	The FTTSA trademark	120
6.1	Strategic approach to procurement reform at Spier	135
6.2	Example for one company: calculating and representing scores	138
6.3	Spier Village Hotel supplier spend, Rand value per 20 companies (2005)	141
6.4	Health and safety compliance by size of company	142
6.5	Final scores on sustainable development categories for suppliers to Spier Leisure	143
6.6	Shift in local and regional procurement spend, 2003–2006	145
6.7	Shift in percentage of suppliers that are BEE or PDI, 2003–2006	145
7.1	Luangwa Safari Association personal employment contributions to the Mfuwe economy, 1990–2003	170
7.2	Luangwa Safari Association business contributions to the local economy, 1990–2003	171
7.3	Income directly attributable to CAMPFIRE	173
7.4	Summary of average household benefits from CAMPFIRE	174
9.1	Map of Botswana showing the Okavango Delta	206
9.2	Controlled Hunting Areas (CHAs) in the Okavango Delta	212

10.1	Ownership by business category	230
10.2	Employment survey (n = 646)	232
10.3	Comparative wage levels	232
10.4	Citizen participation (employment)	232
10.5	Citizen employment: wages by gender	233
10.6	Local benefits by category	234
11.1	Integrated assessment protocol for measuring and monitoring the impacts of tourism on community development and sustainable livelihoods	242
11.2	Map of Maputaland, Northern KwaZulu Natal	243
11.3	Participatory events in Maputaland, KwaZulu-Natal	247
11.4	Participatory events in Maputaland, KwaZulu-Natal	247
11.5	Potential roles of the private sector and the tourism industry in maximizing the delivery of benefits to communities	262
12.1	Location map of Madikwe Game Reserve	268
12.2	Madikwe cluster 2003 compared with clusters in four countries – employee numbers only	279
13.1	Room capacity of CBTEs	291
13.2	Number of overnight and day visitors during the past year at CBTEs	293
13.3	Limitations to tourism enterprise	294
13.4	Land ownership (left) and business ownership (right)	296
16.1	Total CBNRM programme spending compared with total economic benefits between 1990 and 2005	356

Tables

0.1	Significance of international tourism in countries with 80 per cent of the world's poor people	7
0.2	Potential economic effects of tourism	8
1.1	Tourist entries in Nampula province	35
2.1	MAP's tourism development indicators	58
3.1	Income from commercialization to SANParks	75
5.1	Definitions of sustainable tourism terms	109
5.2	Respondents' level of agreement with costs and benefits of RTM	118
5.3	Initiatives by various tourism industry associations	122
6.1	Earnings of the poor from supply chains and inter-sectoral linkages	131
6.2	Supplier characteristics investigated by the survey	137
6.3	Response rates and average scores to Leisure, Wine and Golf supplier surveys	140
6.4	Size of Spier suppliers by number of employees	141
6.5	Average supplier scores by category, by Spier business unit	144
6.6	Comparison of net benefits of the Enterprise Development laundry compared to an existing contract	146
6.7	Impacts of Spier's new procurement from small black and local suppliers, August 2004–August 2005	147

7.1	Nature tourism arrivals and income in southern Africa	160
7.2	Summary of benefits from community trusts and tourism ventures in Botswana	161
7.3	Physical characteristics and base case financial values for five Namibian conservancies in 2000 (US\$)	164
7.4	Income and disbursements in the Torra Conservancy 1999–2004 (US\$)	165
7.5	Average employment on private game reserves in Zululand in 2000, South Africa	167
7.6	Rural District Councils' annual income from CAMPFIRE activities (US\$)	174
7.7	Gairezi Community Eco-Tourism Project income from NDFFC 2004–2006	176
7.8	Benefits to local communities in southern Africa from different forms of tourism	177
8.1	Sample and population size of establishments open in 2004 surveyed, by region, 2004	189
8.2	Capacity of accommodation establishments, KAZA region, 2004	190
8.3	Revenue and operating expenditures, accommodation sector ('000s), KAZA region, 2004	191
8.4	Employment in accommodation establishments, KAZA region, 2004	191
8.5	Local financial impacts of accommodation establishments ('000s), KAZA region, 2004	192
8.6	Capacity of operators, KAZA region, 2004	192
8.7	Revenue and operating expenditures ('000s), KAZA region tour operators, 2004	193
8.8	Employment in KAZA region tour operators, 2004	193
8.9	Local financial impacts of tour operators ('000s), KAZA region, 2004	194
8.10	Share of tourism market by ownership type, KAZA region, 2004	194
8.11	Share of tourism market by owner residence and ethnicity, KAZA region, 2004	195
8.12	Total revenue and operating expenditures (US\$'000s), KAZA region, 2004	195
8.13	Total employment in KAZA region, 2004	195
8.14	Total local financial impacts ('000s), KAZA region, 2004	196
8.15	Total local employment and wages, KAZA region, 2004	196
8.16	Total non-wage operating expenditures, KAZA region, 2004	197
9.1	Employment in ecotourism projects and activities	209
9.2	Revenue generated from ecotourism projects	210
9.3	Income generated by ecotourism projects in different regions of Botswana	211
9.4	Social services provided by trusts to their villages	213
9.5	Assets owned by communities involved in ecotourism	214

9.6	Reported cases of illegal hunting in the Okavango Delta	215
9.7	Brief review on progress made by CBNRM Projects, 2000	219
10.1	Ownership of tourism businesses in Ngamiland (by number)	229
10.2	Ownership of tourism businesses in Ngamiland (by category)	229
11.1	Perception of future income and changes to infrastructure and the environment as a result of the tourism initiatives	246
11.2	Communities' likes, dislikes and desired changes summarized and organized into themes	249
11.3a	Positive and negative impacts of the tourism initiative on community and individual assets and livelihoods – financial	251
11.3b	Positive and negative impacts of the tourism initiative on community and individual assets and livelihoods – physical	253
11.3c	Positive and negative impacts of the tourism initiative on community and individual assets and livelihoods – human	254
11.3d	Positive and negative impacts of the tourism initiative on community and individual assets and livelihoods – natural	255
11.3e	Positive and negative impacts of the tourism initiative on community and individual assets and livelihoods – social	256
11.3f	Positive and negative impacts of the tourism initiative on community and individual assets and livelihoods – other livelihood issues	257
12.1	Madikwe – investment and employment summary	272
12.2	Madikwe – commercial lodge statistics	276
13.1	Room and bed capacity	291
13.2	Third-party support for CBTE	292
13.3	Accommodation prices	293
13.4	Sustainable tourism commitment and activities	295
13.5	Local benefits from the CBTE	297
13.6	Local products and services procured by CBTEs	298
15.1	Income generation of community tourism enterprises in 2004	333
16.1	Comparative physical characteristics of five Namibian conservancies in 2000	349
16.2	Base case financial and economic values for the five Namibian conservancies in 2000 (US\$)	350
16.3	The effect of donor grants (non-use values) on the financial rate of return to communities in the five Namibian conservancies in 2000	352
16.4	Economic cost–benefit analysis of Namibia's CBNRM programme (US\$)	354

Boxes

0.1	Examples of sustainable and responsible tourism initiatives from different stakeholders	12
1.1	Objectives of PARPA	29
6.1	Tri-partite win-win-win from alien vegetation clearing procurement approach	149

List of Contributors

Editor

Dr Anna Spenceley is an independent consultant and researcher based in South Africa who focuses on responsible tourism and sustainable development issues, mainly in emerging economies. Her doctoral research with the International Centre for Responsible Tourism led to the development of a multi-disciplinary Sustainable Nature-Based Tourism Assessment Toolkit, and her post-doctoral research fellowships at the University of the Witwatersrand focused on the economic impacts of the Great Limpopo Transfrontier Conservation Area. Anna is a member of a number of professional associations including two World Conservation Union (IUCN) World Commission on Protected Areas Task Forces, the IUCN's Southern African Sustainable Use Specialist Group (SASUSG), and is a director of the International Centre of Responsible Tourism – South Africa. She consults for a range of international and local agencies, including the World Bank, the International Finance Corporation, the International Trade Centre of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development and the UN World Tourism Organization. Contact details: annaspenceley@gmail.com. Website: www.anna.spenceley.co.uk.

Authors

Caroline Ashley is a senior research associate of the Overseas Development Institute. Her work for the Department for International Development (DFID) in 1999 coined the phrase 'Pro Poor Tourism' (PPT) and put PPT on the international agenda. She established and ran the Overseas Development Institute's (ODI) Tourism Programme until moving to Tunis in 2005. Her pioneering research into how the impacts of tourism on the poor can be enhanced has focused heavily on the role of the private sector and changing business practice. She is now developing methods for assessing and adapting tourism value chains, to enhance participation of the poor. Her numerous publications include guidelines both for businesses and government. Beyond tourism, she works with the African Development Bank and ODI on how big business can enhance the development of small enterprises. Contact details: c.ashley@odi.org.uk.

Dr Jonathan Barnes is a South African national, and specialist in environmental and resource economics based in Namibia. He is trained in both ecology and economics and has a PhD in economics from the University of London in the UK. His professional experience has embraced economic and policy analysis, land use and development planning, and natural resources assessment, mainly concerning wildlife, fisheries, forestry, rangelands and agriculture. Contact details: jibarnes@iafrica.com.na.

Steve Collins is a rural development facilitator and is currently the managing director of J&J Bioenergy, based in Johannesburg. Prior to this position he worked for GTZ for five years implementing Community-Based Natural Resource Management in South Africa. A part of his portfolio for GTZ involved facilitating the People and Parks process in South Africa, advising communities and government on how to implement progressive community based conservation policies. He is a board member of the African Safari Lodge Foundation and the National Project Coordinator for TRANSFORM from 2001 to 2007. Contact details: steve@jandjgroup.com.

Louise Dixey is a PhD researcher and associate staff member at the International Centre for Responsible Tourism in Leeds Metropolitan University. Her doctoral research focuses on economic informality, collective action and pro-poor tourism development in Africa through an examination of the developmental consequences of a trade association, the Association of Small-Scale Enterprises in Tourism (ASSET), in The Gambia. Louise has ten years' professional experience in tourism, mainly in community-based tourism development in east and southern Africa and the Caribbean. Contact details: L.Dixey@leedsmet.ac.uk.

Nicole Frey holds a Masters degree in Marketing from the University of Cape Town (UCT) School of Management Studies. Nicole is a lecturer, researcher and supervisor in marketing at UCT. She has also contributed to various tourism management books and has consulted on strategic marketing strategies in the public and private sector including Cape Town Tourism, Limpopo Tourism and Parks, Graham Paddock and Associates, the Unilever Institute and Viglietti Motors. Contact details: nicole.frey@uct.ac.za.

Dr Richard George is a senior lecturer in tourism management and services marketing at UCT. He holds a PhD in marketing from UCT. His research interests include safety and security issues in tourism and tourism marketing. He is the author of several academic books and articles related to these topics, in particular, *Marketing South African Tourism*, 3rd Edition, Oxford University Press Southern Africa and *Managing Tourism in South Africa*, Oxford University Press Southern Africa. He has consulted widely for a number of public and private sector tourism organizations in South Africa including Spier Wine Estate, Limpopo Tourism and Parks, Cape Town Tourism and Polokwane Municipality. Contact details: richard.george@uct.ac.za.

Gareth Haysom is employed by the Sustainability Institute as the programme coordinator of the Sustainable Agriculture Programme and is appointed by Stellenbosch University in the School of Public Management and Planning as an extra-ordinary lecturer. He has a Diploma in Hotel Management and spent many years managing various tourism and hotel facilities in various parts of South Africa. In 2007 he graduated cum laude with an MPhil in sustainable development planning and management from Stellenbosch University, with a research project that developed a strategic development planning framework for the Western Cape town of Grabouw. He has extensive experience in management, entrepreneurial development, project facilitation, research and more recently in educational facilitation in the sustainable agriculture field. Contact details: duffhaysom@mweb.co.za.

Peter John Massyn has extensive experience in tourism as a form of rural development. He has worked in the private sector as a tourism entrepreneur and a consultant in the fields of tourism, conservation, development and land reform. He is currently executive director of the African Safari Lodge Foundation, and an independent consultant to various clients including the International Finance Corporation. Contact details: pjm@global.co.za.

Joseph E. Mbaiwa is a senior research fellow in tourism studies at the Harry Oppenheimer Okavango Research Centre, University of Botswana. His research focus is on tourism development, rural livelihoods and conservation in the Okavango Delta, Botswana. He has so far co-authored a book on tourism and the environment in the Okavango Delta, published over 25 journal articles, 10 book chapters and several conference papers on tourism development, livelihoods and conservation in the Okavango Delta. His PhD was awarded by the Department of Recreation, Park and Tourism Sciences, Texas A&M University in April 2008. Contact details: JMbaiwa@orc.ub.bw.

Hitesh Mehta is one of the world's leading authorities, practitioners and researchers on ecotourism physical planning and both the landscape architectural and architectural aspects of ecolodges. He also has vast experience in protected area physical planning and has worked on sustainable tourism plans in 20 countries. After ten years of working with EDSA, (Florida) the world's largest landscape architecture and planning firm, Mr Mehta has re-started (January 2007) his firm HM Design, which began in Kenya in 1991. Mr Mehta is currently working on five ecolodge projects in Belize, Indonesia, Rwanda, Dominica and Uganda, and a Conceptual Tourism Master Plan in Costa Rica. He is the main editor of the *International Ecolodge Guidelines* and the author of the chapters on 'Site Planning' and 'Architectural Design'. Mr Mehta regularly conducts research on international trends in Ecolodges and is currently writing a new book – *Authentic Ecolodges*. He sits on the executive board of The International Ecotourism Society, advisory boards of Adventure Council, *Green Travel Magazine* and BIOSFERA (Brazilian Environmental Society), and is one of the founding members of Ecotourism Kenya. Mr Mehta is the international advisor

for the Japan Ecodge Association and the French Ecotourism Association. Contact details: mehta_h@bellsouth.net.

Fred Nelson has worked on community-based natural resource management, ecotourism and conservation policy in eastern Africa since 1998. From 2000–2005 he served as the first Tanzania programme director for the Sand County Foundation Community Based Conservation Network, working with a number of pastoralist communities in northern Tanzania and helping to establish the Tanzania Natural Resource Forum. In 2007 he founded Maliasili Initiatives, a consulting firm working to address biodiversity conservation and natural resource management challenges using innovative, collaborative and market-based strategies. He is a member of the IUCN Southern Africa Sustainable Use Specialist Group and IUCN Commission on Environmental, Economic, and Social Policy. Contact details: fnelson@habari.co.tz.

Michaela Pawliczek, based in Madagascar, is working as a tourism specialist for the World Bank/International Finance Corporation's ecotourism programme as well as managing the local green portfolio of the Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau (KfW). Both positions focus on ecotourism development in Madagascar (e.g. development and implementation of a concessioning policy to improve the viability of Madagascar's National Parks, and facilitation and promotion of opportunities for future ecotourism investors). Previously she was an advisor as a German Government official (CIM) to the National Malagasy Tourism Board (ONTM) on its promotion, marketing and ecotourism activities. She also assisted as a senior project manager on the development of the official Malagasy Tourism Masterplan and supported the tourism programme of the United Nation's Environment Programme (UNEP) as a consultant focusing on work for the Tour Operators' Initiative (TOI). Facilitated by Germany's second largest tour operator, Rewe Touristik GmbH, her PhD thesis was on the 'Development of an internal Environment-Benchmarking-System for tour operators' hotel suppliers'. Contact details: mp@michaela-pawliczek.de.

Piers Relly is an independent consultant specializing in the tourism sector. He has over 20 years experience in the private sector, playing roles in accounting and finance, investment, marketing and property development. He combines his background in these areas, offering services to the tourism sector in developing countries. With an MA in tourism studies, he assists government clients with macroeconomic policy issues through to single enterprises and community-based tourism projects. He is a member of three professional bodies and has held a number of directorships in private enterprises. Contact details: prelly@intekom.co.za.

Andrew Rylance is an independent consultant in local economic development with international experience. Based in South Africa, he specializes in small business development, monitoring and evaluating, strategic assessments and community-based enterprise management. Andrew has received an MA from the

University of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa. His dissertation identified the constraints that prevent the growth of market sellers and highlights possible opportunities that will strengthen their position within the value chain. He also facilitates workshops and participatory group forums with community groups and small business owners. Contact: andrewrylance@gmail.com. Website: <http://andrewrylance.googlepages.com/>.

Dr Murray C. Simpson is a senior research associate at Oxford University Centre for the Environment and is principal of Sustainable Solutions Worldwide tourism consultancy. He has extensive experience in sustainable development, responsible tourism, climate change and the environment and has worked at chief executive management level in the tourism industry and in the public sector at board level. Murray has worked with the public and the private sector on a range of tourism initiatives including sustainable tourism development, tourism strategy, tourism analysis and climate change adaptation, and mitigation projects in developed and developing countries, and in small island states; bridging the gap between research, policy and implementation. He has worked in Europe, UK, Australasia, South Africa, the US, Asia, South America and the Caribbean. International organizations he has worked with include the European Development Fund, the Association of Caribbean States, the European Union, UN agencies and the European Travel Commission. Among other committee positions and memberships, Murray is a fellow of the Royal Geographical Society and a member of the United Nations World Tourism Organization Panel of Tourism Experts. Contact details: murray.simpson@ouce.ox.ac.uk.

Herman Snel is an agro-ecologist and rural development anthropologist. He has been working on sustainable rural development, and environmental issues throughout Latin America and Africa as a researcher and development practitioner. His work centres on political ecology, socio-environmental conflict, land reform, migration and colonization, devolution and decentralization, poverty alleviation and local economic development, community-based natural resource management, community forestry and forestry certification, agroforestry, biological agriculture, co-management arrangements, management of biosphere reserves, national parks and buffer zones, organizational development and public-private partnerships related to natural resource management. He coordinates the work on 'Lessons Learned' for the TRANSFORM program. Contact details: herman.snel@gmail.com.

Helen Suich is a development and resource economist. She works on issues relating to poverty alleviation, sustainable economic development, natural resource management and valuation, primarily in southern Africa. Contact details: helensuich@yahoo.co.uk.

Giju Varghese is a trained hotelier and holds a bachelors degree in Hotel Management (Mangalore University, India). After several years of managing hotels and similar establishments in related fields, his expertise, interest and career

took a focus on organizational development and turnaround. He then went on to receive an MBA (De Montfort University, UK) and continued his career focus to a broader industry base. His technical understanding of the tourism industry has made him an authority in public–private partnerships in the nature based tourism environment. Giju’s career as the head of business development with the South African National Parks ensured the principles of responsible tourism were achieved through public–private partnerships arguably at a higher level than any other organization in the nature-based tourism field. He advises various public and private sector companies on tourism strategy development and execution. He also makes presentations at various forums. Contact details: GijuV@sanparks.org.

Independent reviewers

To enhance the quality of papers presented in this book, a number of academics and practitioners generously provided independent reviews and comments on the contributions, which authors used to strengthen their papers. The reviewers were:

Caroline Ashley, ODI
Sylvie Blangy, Carleton University
Dr Dan Brockington, University of Manchester
Dr Janet Cochrane, International Centre for Responsible Tourism
Richard Davies, Busico cc
Dr Xavier Font, International Centre for Responsible Tourism
Dr Nicole Häusler, Mas Contour
Dr Martha Honey, Center on Ecotourism and Sustainable Development
Brian Jones, Environment and development consultant
Dr David Leslie, Glasgow Caledonian University
Myles Mander, FutureWorks!
Shaun Mann, World Bank
Hitesh Mheta, HM Design
Dr Martin Mowforth, University of Plymouth
Dr Simon Munthali, African Wildlife Foundation
Paula Nimpuno, Ford Foundation
Dr Harry Wells, VU University Amsterdam

Foreword

Once I had the chance to talk with a woman from a poor and remote village, where she ran a small home-stay by renting out a room in her house for tourists. I asked her how many tourists she received last year, and she told me proudly that she had hosted eight people. At first I thought that this was only a few visitors, but then I thought I would find out what this meant in her context. Therefore, I asked her how the visit of eight tourists helped her and her family. She told me that it was very important because with the money received from the tourists she could send her kids to school. I was completely overwhelmed.

Tourism is perhaps the most remarkable socioeconomic phenomenon of modern times. It is an activity that has become an integral part of modern societies, both in developed and developing countries. According to the World Tourism Organization, there were almost 900 million international tourists recorded in 2007, and domestic tourism is similarly booming worldwide. While tourism is now a global activity propelled by technological development in communication, information and transportation, it is ultimately about providing local experiences and supporting local livelihoods in both urban and rural settings, and in developed and poor regions as well. The message to take from the anecdote above is that we should never underestimate the difference that tourism can make to people's lives, even at a very small scale. This shows clearly the importance of tourism in contributing towards development and poverty reduction efforts. Tourism has been formally recognized as a key contributing factor towards the Millennium Development Goals. There are many reasons to support this: tourism is an amalgam of various sectors, and therefore it can provide a wide range of employment and business opportunities – even in remote and poor areas where few other options exist. It is a labour-intensive activity providing jobs for the youth, elderly and women as well. The entry costs for tourism businesses are relatively low, therefore the industry can support many small enterprises.

Nevertheless, tourism can only fulfil its potential if it is developed in a planned and responsible manner, ensuring the long-term sustainability of the sector. Simply put, this means that tourism development needs to ensure the conservation of the natural and cultural environment of destinations, it needs to create viable business and economic benefits to host communities, and it has to provide a high quality tourist experience. To achieve these goals policy makers and managers should apply a range of tools and practices. To adopt an appropri-