



**Linking  
Communities,  
Tourism & Conservation**

A Tourism Assessment Process

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## Preface

*Linking Communities, Tourism and Conservation – A Tourism Assessment Process* has been designed by Conservation International (CI) and The George Washington University (GW) for field practitioners to perform a rapid assessment and analysis of tourism potential in a destination. The guidelines and tools provided are research-based and reflect accepted criteria and principles of sustainable and ecotourism development. It incorporates sustainability concepts that aim to optimize tourism development in an effort to protect natural and socio-cultural resources and improve the welfare of local people, while enhancing monetary gains and market access. This hands-on manual is also a tool for practitioners engaged in applying tourism as a strategy for biodiversity conservation and poverty reduction.

Conservation International and The George Washington University have successfully employed many of the concepts presented in *Linking Communities, Tourism and Conservation – A Tourism Assessment Process* in developing destinations around the globe. These concepts are based on a culmination of over 25 years of field experience in conservation and tourism development between both organizations and their partners.

The Tourism Assessment Process (TAP), outlined in this manual, addresses the complexities of tourism at both the national and local levels. While the authors acknowledge the importance of applying sustainable and ecotourism principles to all scales of tourism development, this assessment tool focuses primarily on tourism development at a destination or site rather than a specific business or venture.

**Assessment Teams** comprised of technical specialists working within or near high biodiversity areas and rural communities will guide this highly participative assessment process. These multidisciplinary teams should be joined by an experienced tourism development specialist and include community extensionists, economists and other development specialists, parks and protected area personnel, government officers, educators, non-governmental and private sector organizations. It is assumed that users have some basic knowledge of ecotourism and sustainable development, experience in conducting primary and secondary research, as well as experience working with a range of stakeholders on a coordinated effort. The TAP is also designed to involve local stakeholders with or without tourism experience.

The goal of *Linking Communities, Tourism and Conservation – A Tourism Assessment Process* is to help you determine whether a destination is suitable or unsuitable for sustainable tourism. Specifically, this hands-on manual will help you assess a destination's tourism potential, both negative and positive impacts to biodiversity, as well as impacts on social, cultural and resource needs. The key that opens the door to this clearer view of a destination's tourism potential is the Tourism Assessment Process (TAP).



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# Introduction

**WHAT MAKES** a destination suitable for ecotourism and sustainable tourism development? More importantly, how can tourism be developed to encompass sustainable and ecotourism principles and standards? This hands-on guide, developed by Conservation International and The George Washington University, will help you answer these questions and many others based on assessments of current and potential tourism situations at the destination-level.

## Relationship of Ecotourism to Sustainable Tourism



*Linking Communities, Tourism and Conservation – A Tourism Assessment Process* provides a planning framework and easy-to-use processes for:

- Conducting an inventory of attractions;
- Analyzing market demand and competitiveness;
- Investigating associated socio-cultural and natural resource issues.

The goal of this manual is to provide practitioners with a practical means of planning tourism that safeguards a destination’s cultural heritage and enhances its natural environment, while at the same time improves the welfare of people in the destination. Typically, sustainable tourism and ecotourism seek to achieve these goals.

### The Role of Sustainable Tourism and Ecotourism

Before proceeding, it is important to understand the concepts of sustainable tourism development and ecotourism. The International Ecotourism Society (TIES) defines ecotourism as “responsible travel to natural areas that conserves the environment and improves the welfare of local peoples.”<sup>1</sup>

Sustainable tourism, as outlined by the World Tourism Organization (WTO), should make optimal use of environmental resources that help conserve natural heritage and biodiversity, respect the socio-cultural authenticity of host communities and provide socio-economic benefits to all stakeholders.<sup>2</sup>

According to the World Tourism Organization<sup>3</sup>, “The development of sustainable tourism requires the informed participation of all relevant stakeholders, as well as strong political leadership to ensure wide participation and consensus building. Achieving sustainable tourism is a continuous process and it requires constant monitoring of impacts, introducing the necessary preventive and/or corrective measures whenever necessary.”

From the tourist’s perspective, sustainable tourism should maintain a high level of satisfaction and ensure a meaningful experience that raises awareness about sustainability issues and promotes sustainable tourism practices.

### Ecotourism Links Conservation and Communities

Within the tourism industry, ecotourism is often considered to be both a set of principles based on environmentally and socially responsible actions, as well as a specific market segment. According to the UNEP-WTO Quebec Declaration on Ecotourism<sup>4</sup>,



“ecotourism embraces the principles of sustainable tourism... and the following principles, which distinguish it from the wider concept of sustainable tourism:

- Contributes actively to the conservation of natural and cultural heritage.
- Includes local and indigenous communities in its planning, development, and operation, contributing to their well-being.
- Interprets the natural and cultural heritage of the destination to visitor(s).
- Lends itself better to independent travelers, as well as to organized tours for small size groups.”

Both ecotourism and sustainable tourism have the potential to link the conservation of nature with the well-being of local communities through a number of positive benefits including revenue generation, cultural preservation, and capacity building.

### Positive Outcomes

As a member of the **Assessment Team**, you play an important role in the development of tourism’s positive results:

- As a development strategy, tourism can provide economic opportunities, offer direct benefits to environmental conservation and empower local communities to manage their own resources in a sustainable way.
- Tourism enterprises can provide meaningful employment and increased income for community members. Tourism related employment opportunities include lodging, food service and tour operations, construction, agriculture and fishing, transportation, and many others.
- As a source of financing, tourism can generate revenues from entrance fees, concessionary fees and taxes to fund increased or improved protected area management, capacity building and education. In some areas, tourism can also influence voluntary financial contributions from visitors interested in achieving social and environmental goals.

### How to Maximize the Toolkit

This manual effectively combines standard market-based analyses with socio-cultural, natural resource use and environmental assessments. It not only gives you ready-to-use tools like worksheets and questionnaires, it clearly outlines how to use these tools and when to use them. Perhaps, more important, this guide reinforces why the assessment process is vital in determining if sustainable tourism is a realistic option in a given destination.

There is a wealth of insight at your fingertips – from thought-provoking questions to strategies for gaining valuable insight from stakeholders. The following resources have been developed specifically for the **Assessment Team**.

The Tourism Assessment Process (TAP) results will enable practitioners to guide future planning for the development of tourism ventures, projects, or destinations that can create needed jobs and income opportunities, while actively contributing to environmental conservation, community development and poverty reduction.

### TOOLS FOR SUCCESS

- Tourism Destination Visioning Exercise
- SWOT Analysis
- How to Design a Questionnaire
- Sample Visitor Questionnaire
- Conducting a Visitor Survey
- How to Analyze & Interpret Survey Results
- Sample Accommodation Facilities Survey
- Sample Tour Operator Survey
- Sample Arts & Crafts Enterprise Survey
- How to Conduct Community Mapping
- Sample Stakeholder Focus Group Questionnaire
- How to Conduct a Resident Survey
- Sample Resident Questionnaire
- Assessing Tourism’s Footprint Sample Interview

### READY-TO-USE WORKSHEETS

- 01: Natural Attractions
- 02: Cultural Attractions
- 03: Historic & Heritage Attractions
- 04: Recreational Activities
- 05: Inventory Evaluation Sheet
- 06: Transportation
- 07: Accessibility Summary
- 08: Public Services
- 09: Evaluation of Surroundings
- 10: Competitive Advantage Exercise
- 11: Labor Force Profile
- 12: Tourism Labor Demand
- 13: Environmental & Biodiversity Footprint Matrix
- 14: Economic Cost Benefit Analysis
- 15: Estimating Unmeasurable Costs & Benefits
- 16: Cost/Benefit Evaluation & Recommendations

These tools and worksheets are designed to be customized and adapted for use by the Assessment Team and are all available in MS word formats on the accompanying CD-ROM or can be downloaded from [www.gwutourism.org](http://www.gwutourism.org) or [www.conservation.org](http://www.conservation.org).

# Assessment Process Overview

**THE TOURISM** Assessment Process (TAP) has been designed to help you produce recommendations for tourism development that embrace the principles of ecotourism and sustainable tourism. This manual will guide a team of local and field practitioners to explore opportunities for developing tourism at a specific destination by assessing:

## Getting Started

This brief overview highlights the intent of each phase of the Tourism Assessment Process and its components. As you read the following three sections, it is important to focus on the purpose and potential outcomes of each phase that are described in detail. This understanding will help you to execute the necessary preparation, tools and action steps to successfully complete Assessment Preparation, Assessment and Recommendations.

1. Existing and potential attractions
2. Market demand
3. Supporting infrastructure and services
4. Overall competitiveness
5. Human resource and institutional capacity
6. Socio-cultural and economic considerations
7. Environmental and biodiversity considerations

## Integrating the Assessment Process

The success of tourism development relies on a myriad of factors that range from a healthy environment to socio-economic and political stability. With this in mind, it is important that the Tourism Assessment Process be carried out with reference to larger planning frameworks that may include:

- Integrated or rural development plans (including transportation and other major infrastructure);
- Community based natural resource management plans;
- Integrated coastal zone management plans;
- Conservation biodiversity and environmental management plans;
- Economic strategies;
- Tourism master planning (including destination marketing).

All of these factors can impact tourism development initiatives at the destination level. Planning documents often include useful information on the socio-economic situation, policy, or environmental issues which help determine whether tourism is a realistic option in a given area.

## Building the Tourism Assessment Team

Typically, a small team of people will lead the Tourism Assessment Process within a destination. Ideally, the team should be led by a tourism development specialist and include people familiar with:

- Business analysis and marketing research;
- Local cultural heritage and history;
- Local wildlife, plants and other natural resources;
- Environmental and biodiversity conservation;
- Socio-economic development in rural areas;
- Local, regional and/or international tourism.



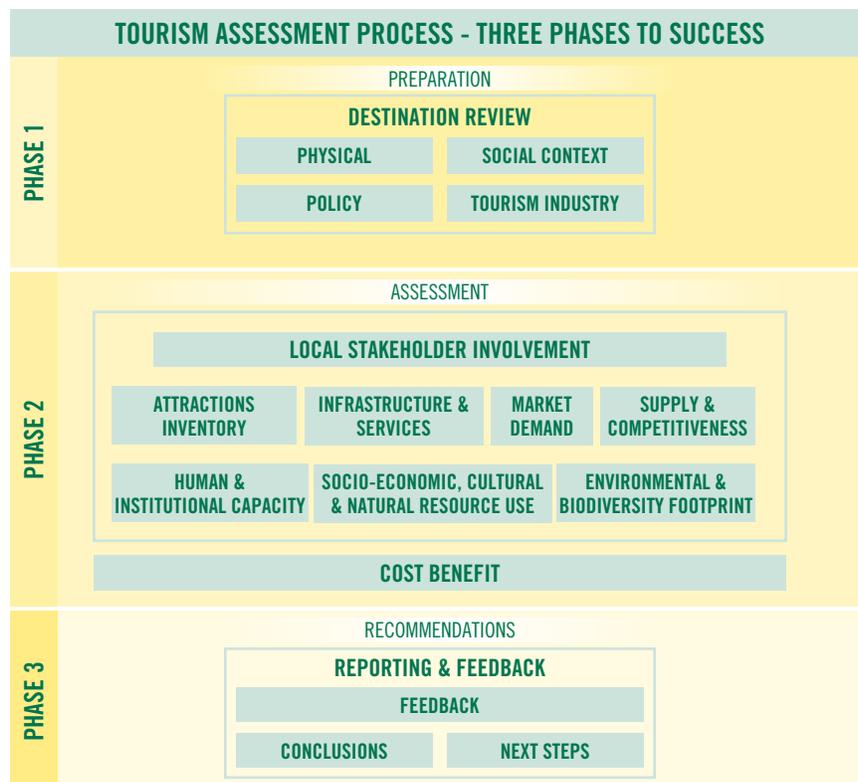
Due to the varied and fragmented nature of the tourism industry, the assessment relies on multidisciplinary tools and techniques to increase its reliability. In the same way, the assessment process attempts to minimize biases by encouraging perspectives from a cross-section of stakeholders.

### Importance of Local Community Participation

Successfully planning for tourism development requires the active support and involvement of the local community. It is important to recognize that host communities have a stake in ensuring that tourism does not compromise their quality of life. This can include issues such as over-crowding at traditionally local venues, rapid changes in social values, increased demand that raises the price of consumer commodities, and degradation of the natural environment. In addition, land tenure, indigenous people's rights, poverty, and lack of access to basic services are core community issues, which exist globally and may significantly impact the viability of tourism development.

By involving the local community in the highly participatory TAP, the **Assessment Team** can help ensure that the community's concerns and priorities are addressed. The TAP guides the **Assessment Team** on gathering stakeholders and getting them involved in the assessments prior to starting the process.

The following flow chart illustrates the three phases of the Tourism Assessment Process.



The assessment process attempts to minimize biases by encouraging perspectives from a multitude of stakeholders.

The success of tourism development relies on a myriad of factors that range from a healthy environment to socio-economic and political stability.

# “THE ASSESSMENT RELIES ON MULTIDISCIPLINARY TOOLS AND TECHNIQUES TO INCREASE ITS RELIABILITY.”



## Understanding Phase I: Assessment Preparation

To prepare for the assessment, the tourism **Assessment Team** should conduct an initial *Destination Review* to gain a basic understanding of the focus country and particular destination. This involves gathering baseline data in the following areas:

- Physical – Geography, environment, biodiversity, etc.;
- Social Context – Population profiles, history, cultural backgrounds, etc.;
- Policy – Political and economic climate;
- Tourism Industry – Known attractions, existing hotels and services, general trends in arrivals.

This insight is critical when making future recommendations for tourism development. Since tourism is often an important economic and political driver, a review of the government’s policy towards tourism is a necessary step during this phase.

## Understanding Phase II: Assessment

The **Assessment Phase** requires two steps:

1. Involving local stakeholders in the assessment process.
2. Conducting the actual assessment.

When local stakeholders are involved in the initial participatory process, it helps the team identify potential project partners and stakeholders, learn about community priorities and concerns and their capacity to work together, as well as leverage additional support for the assessment process. The TAP manual provides the **Assessment Team** with several approaches for involving local stakeholders in the assessment process.

## Seven Assessment Areas

Once community participation is secured, the assessments can be carried out in the order most appropriate to the team’s objectives. This manual provides guidelines on how to conduct seven different assessments in the following areas:

*Attractions Inventory*—Attractions are the magnets that draw visitors to the destination. The assessment examines both existing attractions and attractions that have the potential for future development. This includes wilderness, leisure, and recreational attractions such as camping and mountain biking; historic monuments and other human-made attractions; and special events such as festivals, rituals, ceremonies, sporting events, and music festivals. Each is evaluated for their potential using the following key criteria: potential draw, aesthetic or scenic value, biodiversity value, cultural value, historical value, uses and activities, community participation, control, access, and product development potential.

*Infrastructure and Services*—Inadequate infrastructure and basic services can hinder the development of a tourism destination, even those with



unique attractions. Accessibility, communications, transportation, and waste management are among the services essential to tourism. Among the issues assessed are accessibility; transportation infrastructure and services; available public services such as water, energy, health, and security; health of the surroundings; and general land use and availability.

**Market Demand**—Market potential for a destination is determined by the assessment of the tourism trends and visitor profiles. Based on tourist demographic profiles, this assessment analyzes travel interest in the destination and identifies existing and future travel markets. The markets can be identified by nationality/ country of origin and/or by segment. It is crucial to determine the potential demand in the focus destination and develop a strategy for meeting this demand. It will be equally important to collect information on tourist activities, as well as information on travel motivation and behavior.

**Supply and Competitiveness**—An assessment of the competition in the region can give the destination a clear idea of what competitors are doing and how to compete with other local destinations. It is also important to consider destinations around the globe that offer similar products and services because they are competing for the same travel markets. This section analyzes the current structure, size, and health of tourism facilities and services in the focus destination. It can also help to further identify additional potential markets and opportunities for partnerships and collaboration.

**Human and Institutional Capacity**—Tourism is a people-oriented business and depends on quality service from trained managers and employees. Understanding the actual and potential human resource base of a destination is critical in determining to what degree a community can meaningfully participate in the development of sustainable tourism. Institutional support is also be a factor. This assessment analyzes the available capacity of the destination to engage in tourism development.

**Socio-Economic, Cultural and Natural Resource Use Considerations** — This assessment gauges the community's attitudes and expectations, its developmental needs and priorities and its socio-economic situation in relation to biodiversity conservation. This process also explores tourism as an economic alternative and its potential to address conservation issues. Although tourism development often has a positive impact on a destination's economy, society and natural environment, it may also come at a price. It is important to assess the potential benefits and costs of tourism in terms of the social, cultural and economic dynamics that influence tourism development and its potential to benefit biodiversity conservation and poverty alleviation.

**Environmental and Biodiversity Footprint**—This step estimates the potential impacts, both negative and positive, of tourism development on biodiversity and the environment. This process relies on expert interviews to review issues regarding

By involving the local community in the highly participatory Assessment Process, the **Assessment Team** can help ensure that the community's concerns and priorities are addressed.

This manual provides guidelines on how to conduct seven different assessments:

- Attractions Inventory
- Infrastructure and Services
- Market Demand Analysis
- Supply and Competitiveness
- Human and Institutional Capacity
- Socio-Economic, Cultural and Natural Resource Use Considerations
- Environmental and Biodiversity Footprint

## “FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS WILL BE ENHANCED BY INTEGRATING ASSESSMENT RESULTS.”



flora and fauna, functioning ecosystems, physical landscapes, identified important biodiversity areas, water and energy sources, waste management systems, and other general environmental considerations.

Although each assessment is designed as an independent stand-alone module that addresses a specific thematic or technical area, the integration of the final results of each will enhance the overall recommendations for tourism potential in the region.

### Cost Benefit Analysis of Results

A final step in the Assessment Phase is the development of a *Cost Benefit Analysis* based on the results of each assessment. The process attempts to weigh both measurable benefits and costs such as market demand and necessary infrastructure investment costs, and unmeasurable benefits and costs such as potential socio-cultural conflicts and benefits or threats to high biodiversity areas. The cost benefit analysis allows the **Assessment Team** to objectively weigh positive and negative impacts before finalizing their recommendations.

### Understanding Phase III: Recommendations

Once the **Assessment Team** has defined preliminary conclusions based on each assessment and the overall Cost Benefit Analysis, this last phase consists of *Reporting* and *Feedback*. Based on this insight, the team is able to draw its final *Recommendations* and define *Next Steps*.

At this stage, the use of the iterative process is key in determining accuracy by:

- Sharing results.
- Assessing the results and recommendations by obtaining feedback from stakeholders.
- Revising recommendations as necessary.

By invoking a participatory process—whether through public meetings, workshops, or consultations—the team forms a critical base for determining next steps and assigning action items to responsible parties.



# Phase I

## Assessment Preparation

THE FIRST step for the **Assessment Team** is conducting a destination review. This process focuses on gathering relevant preliminary information about the proposed site or destination.

This beneficial information helps the team better plan and prepare for the assessment phase, where the fieldwork takes place. Tourism assessments are more successful when the team has a general understanding of the physical attributes, social and political context and general tourism trends in the focus country and destination.

### Initial Data Collection

Prior to initiating any fieldwork, the team should attempt to gather as much existing baseline data, logistical and general information as possible. Below is a useful list of generally available information that can be gathered by the **Assessment Team**. Gathering more destination or site specific information will be part of the actual assessments completed in the field.

GETTING STARTED		
INFORMATION NEEDED	USE	POTENTIAL SOURCE
Geography, Climate, and Topography	Planning logistics, and understanding of physical attributes that may relate to tourism attractions and activities	Internet, travel guide books, topographical maps, national or regional tourism offices
Socio-Economic, Political, and Cultural Context	Defining the general context within which the team will be working	Government websites, travel guide books, newspapers, economic, sociology, and anthropological journals and magazine articles, history books
Tourism Policies, Master Plans, and Marketing Strategies	Understanding of government strategic approach to tourism development	Government investment promotion websites, tourism board or economic development office websites
Environmental, Biodiversity, and Natural Resource Use Issues (see below for further information on the importance of this area)	Preliminary understanding of priority conservation, land and resource use issues	Local conservation organization publications and websites, international organizations i.e. Conservation International, World Wildlife Fund, and The Nature Conservancy; Natural Resource and Protected Area Management Plans – check National Park Administration, Forestry Dept. and Department of Interior websites
Market Structures	General understanding of existing tourism plant, key market segments, products offered, and overall trends	World Tourism Organization statistical references, government websites, travel guide books, tourism and hospitality management publications, local tourism association websites
General Institutional Support	List organizations currently involved in tourism development	Government, tourism boards or administration, investment promotion offices, park and wildlife services, local tourism association websites



## Understanding Environmental, Biodiversity and Natural Resource Use Issues

As one of the six areas of data collection, biodiversity is a common area of concern worldwide, but one that all team members may not fully understand. To better grasp its scope and implications, the following short primer of key concepts may help build a general understanding among all team members, as well as help guide research on these key issues.

Biodiversity is the sum of all the different species of animals, plants, fungi, and microbial organisms living on earth and the variety of habitats in which they live. Each species is adapted to its unique area in the environment – from mountain peaks to the deep sea and polar ice caps to tropical rainforests. The array of living organisms found in a particular environment, together with their interaction with physical and environmental factors, is called an ecosystem.

Healthy ecosystems are vital to life. For example, rainforests help cool the air and offset carbon dioxide, while wetland areas are often important water filters and sources of food for humans. Critical to healthy ecosystems is genetic diversity. It enables species to respond to environmental change and fulfill important functions such as birds, which pollinate native plants.

Throughout the data collection process, it's important to remember that each potential tourism destination is an ecosystem or collection of ecosystems. The following information will help the **Assessment Team** begin to identify important biodiversity areas and issues in a specific destination.

### Negative Impacts on Biodiversity

Both humans and natural processes influence biodiversity. Humans have a history of altering ecosystems, such as creating agricultural lands. Natural events have been known to cause species extinction. However, in the last 50 years, the rate of extinction has increased dramatically. Scientists estimate some 10,000 to 25,000 species are disappearing each year. The main cause is human activity, including:

- Exploitation of natural resources – such as fish stocks in the oceans or timber in tropical forests – faster than they can be renewed;
- Draining wetlands and clearing forests and grasslands for agriculture and towns;
- Introducing harmful, non-native species of plant or animal into ecosystems;
- Releasing pollutants;
- Poaching, unsustainable hunting, or illegal trade in wildlife.

The current rate of extinction is also affecting human society. As the earth's species and genetic diversity is reduced, the potential of ecosystems to produce food, medicines and industrial products decreases, while vital ecological functions are damaged. For example: successful agriculture depends on microorganisms in the soil. In many regions, polluted water supplies and air are threatening people's health. Economic systems are also affected; poorer agricultural returns can result in increased migration from rural areas to urban slums and increased economic migration between countries.

Prior to initiating any fieldwork, the team should attempt to gather as much existing information on the destination as possible.

Part of the challenge for an **Assessment Team** will be to define how tourism development may contribute to better protecting and managing biodiversity.

“IT WILL BE IMPORTANT TO KNOW IF THE DESTINATION IS LOCATED IN A KEY BIODIVERSITY AREA.”



### Identifying Key Biodiversity Areas in the Assessment Process

Biodiversity varies throughout the world. Some areas are higher in biodiversity than others. Just as some areas may be more highly threatened than others. It will be important to know if the destination is located in a key biodiversity area. Many of these have been researched and defined by scientists and organizations such as Conservation International. They may be referred to under the following names:

***Biodiversity Hotspots***—CI defines hotspots as regions that harbor a great diversity of endemic species – those that only naturally occur in that area – and at the same time, have been significantly impacted and altered by human activities. Hotspots have already lost at least 70% of their original vegetation. CI has identified 34 hotspots throughout the world. For more information, go to [www.biodiversityhotspots.org](http://www.biodiversityhotspots.org).

***High-biodiversity Wilderness Areas***—CI defines high-biodiversity wilderness areas to be vast regions of relatively undisturbed land with many species found nowhere else. These areas still claim at least 70% of original vegetation and have low human population densities<sup>5</sup>. Five high-biodiversity wilderness areas recognized by CI – Amazonia, the Congo Forests, the Miombo-Mopane Woodlands and Savannas of Southern Africa, New Guinea, and the North American Deserts – are critically important to climate regulation and watershed protection.

***Key Marine Areas***—“Oceans cover 71% of the earth’s surface and are treasure chests of life, supplying food, medicines, and raw materials for human use.”<sup>6</sup> Marine environments that tend to have high endemism and biodiversity include seamounts, shallow-water and deep-water reefs, continental slopes, caves, and blue holes. Conservation International has identified ten coral reefs have been identified as marine hotspots.

***Important Bird Areas***—Because birds occur in most habitats throughout the world, are sensitive to environmental change and have distributional patterns that match many other species, they are also good indicators of priorities for other animals and plants. BirdLife has identified IBAs throughout the world. For more information, go to <http://www.birdlife.org/action/science/sites>.

***Threatened Species***—The World Conservation Union (IUCN) provides a comprehensive list of threatened species called the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species, informally known as the Red List. This list contains over 5,000 animal species, which are threatened with extinction from around the world. The list can provide a quick reference to the **Assessment Team** regarding conservation priorities that may exist in a country or destination. For more information, including access to the lists and general information on the threatened species, go to [www.iucn.org](http://www.iucn.org) and [www.redlist.org](http://www.redlist.org).

***Protected Area Management***—Understanding the area protected and the type of protection that exists in a destination can help develop a preliminary understanding of the extent to which biodiversity is being conserved. Commonly accepted definitions of different types of protected areas, as put forth by the IUCN, include the following:<sup>7</sup>



- **Strict Nature Reserve:** An area protected and managed exclusively for scientific purposes. Often the area may include important or unique ecosystems, species, or physical features.
- **Wilderness Area:** Large areas of intact and relatively unspoiled land and sea that is protected to preserve its natural condition.
- **National Park:** Mainly managed for the protection of an ecosystem and recreational purposes.
- **Natural Monument:** Areas protected for their unique, rare and significant natural, or cultural features.
- **Habitat/Species Management Area:** An area that is protected and managed for a specific species habitat or needs.
- **Protected Landscape/Seascape:** Mainly managed for its scenic value and recreation; these areas may be of high biodiversity or cultural value.
- **Managed Resource Protected Area:** Areas where the sustainable use of natural resources is managed in order to provide long-term resources to benefit communities.

Other types of managed areas that can contribute to biodiversity conservation include concessions, community reserves, indigenous areas, and private reserves. The IUCN categories may not always apply to a given country and often high-biodiversity areas are not well protected or managed.

### Identifying Land Use Plans and Zoning

Protected areas and land areas may be zoned for specific uses. For protected areas, the most universally accepted is UNESCO's Biosphere Reserve zone classifications, which divide protected areas into:

- **Core/Intangible Zones:** No activity other than research can be implemented;
- **Extensive Use Areas:** Very limited activity is allowed, such as managed visitation and selective non-timber forest products harvest for native communities;
- **Buffer Zones:** Selected activities are allowed under close monitoring and strong regulations.

In addition, it will be important to gain an understanding of land ownership and tenure. This is one of the most common barriers to development efforts worldwide. In many regions, land tenure issues are often the result of a lack of records, unclear titles, or disputes over government control. Caution must be taken to respect existing land rights such as those of local indigenous populations. The team will likely discover this information when they conduct their fieldwork. Local authorities, or the land and survey division of the local government offices, typically hold this information.

The two-part challenge for an **Assessment Team** will be to: first, define how tourism development may contribute to better protecting and managing biodiversity; and second, how tourism will either complement or be impacted by existing or future land use practices in the area.

Tourism assessments are more successful when the team has a general understanding of the physical attributes, social and political context and general tourism trends in the focus country and destination.

# Phase II

## Assessment

THE ASSESSMENT Phase is essentially where most of the fieldwork gets done. Its three main components focus on:

- Involving local stakeholders.
- Conducting seven individual assessments:
  1. Attractions Inventory;
  2. Infrastructure and Services;
  3. Market Demand;
  4. Supply and Competitiveness;
  5. Human and Institutional Capacity;
  6. Socio-Economic, Cultural and Natural Resource Use Considerations;
  7. Environmental and Biodiversity Footprint.
- Reviewing assessments and identifying major impacts and opportunities.

While the second component often represents the most detailed portion of the assessment process, each individual assessment is crucial to ensuring the process' overall utility. To assist the **Assessment Team**, specific tools are provided at the end of each assessment chapter.



# Involving Local Stakeholders in the Assessment Process

**INVOLVING AS** many stakeholders as possible — including the local community, tourism industry and government — in the process of planning and implementing tourism development, greatly increases the chances of long-term success<sup>8</sup>.

## Getting Started

- Inform public and other key stakeholders of key objectives of the assessment — do this through the local host organization, local municipality, or other pre-determined contacts.
- Determine target local community stakeholders.

This is due in part to the fact that tourism is widely impacted by the following:

- Resident-tourist interactions;
- Availability of public and private infrastructure;
- Resident “buy-in” or ownership of the tourism plan;
- Potential for the development of varied tourism products.

## The Key to Success

In order to effect changes in the tourism industry that benefit communities and conservation, it is important to identify key stakeholders in or impacting on the destination; decisions by these key players will ultimately affect the potential for tourism to address human welfare and biodiversity issues. The key stakeholders may include public and private planners and policymakers at various levels of decision making, however the **Assessment Team** must take into consideration the limits imposed by their immediate objectives and the extent of their influence.

As the **Assessment Team** conducts the analysis of stakeholders, they will gain a greater understanding of the concerns and interests of different interest groups and the means by which each contributes to tourism development and to biodiversity conservation or loss.

The tourism industry often serves as a network of economic and political agents, processes and resources. The interactions among these elements will ultimately determine the level of positive or negative impacts tourism may have on the destination. Key stakeholder groups, given their central influence regarding the impacts of tourism on biodiversity, include government, the private sector, development agencies and local residents. Other stakeholders, such as tourists, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), intergovernmental agencies and experts, financial institutions, academics, and consultants, also have important roles, but their actual contribution depends on their ability to influence the central players.

## The Importance and Benefits of Engaging Local Stakeholders

Local stakeholder involvement presents a win-win communication opportunity. On one hand, the **Assessment Team** can raise awareness of the destination’s natural and cultural resources, and how to leverage these resources for sustainable development. On the other hand, involving stakeholders from the start of the assessment process gives stakeholders an opportunity to learn firsthand from the **Assessment Team** about the overall assessment, and provides a space for the **Assessment Team** to hear the community priorities and concerns first hand. In addition, engaging stakeholders early in the process will:



- Give opportunities to answer questions and explain details of the assessment.
- Engage in open discussions of concerns regarding any immediate concerns about tourism development.
- Allow communities to cite key issues that they think are important.
- Decide on the community's level of "general readiness" for tourism development.
- Decide if the assessment should proceed in full, in part, or not at all.

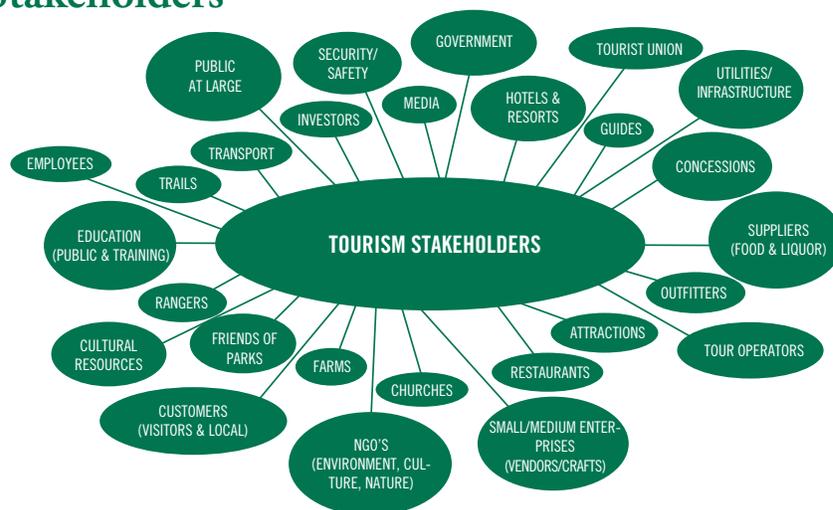
### The Scope of Local Community Stakeholder Representation

Tourism represents a myriad of different activities and industry sectors. In order to ensure adequate stakeholder representation, it is crucial to involve a broad selection of target stakeholders in the destination. Examples of initial target stakeholders to contact and involve may include:

- Members of the local municipality;
- Academic community;
- The tourism industry (tour operators, hotels, restaurants, park management, etc.);
- Local biodiversity conservation organizations;
- Community development organizations;
- Indigenous people's organizations;
- Farming community;
- Transportation authorities;
- Scientific community;
- Culture and arts associations;
- Parks and attraction management;

The following diagram demonstrates the multi-sectoral nature of tourism, and includes some of the previously mentioned stakeholders, as well as others who may have a stake in tourism development for a destination.

## Tourism Stakeholders



For a destination to be successful, a combination of complementary decisions must be made by many different stakeholders including tour operators, governments, communities, destination authorities, international agencies, financial institutions, tourists, and tourist generating countries.

“BY INVOLVING LOCAL STAKEHOLDERS, THE TEAM CAN RAISE AWARENESS OF THEIR OWN RESOURCES AND HOW TO LEVERAGE THESE FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT.”



The success of any tourism destination is contingent on collaboration among stakeholder groups. There are many tourism development activities that become feasible and more cost-effective to undertake as a joint tourism development activity among different stakeholder groups. Examples of these activities include marketing, quality control, capacity building, and small/medium sized business development assistance. A key concept related to stakeholder collaboration is “clustering.” Clustering refers to the physical planning of tourism so that services, facilities and attractions are within close proximity. This convenience factor connects different tourism products which makes the group of products more important than individual aspects. Stakeholders can use clustering to better plan and package tourism circuits that provide tourists with more attractions and activities available in a central location. Clustering and collaboration often drives the success of a destination.

### Methods for Involving Community Stakeholders

As an initial step, it is best for the **Assessment Team** to brainstorm with local contacts about who to specifically invite or consult with, and how to engage those individuals or groups. Once the key stakeholders have been identified, the team should determine the best means of engaging different stakeholders, based on their level of input and potential involvement in future tourism development. For example, it may be necessary to hold individual consultations or workshops with local business and conservation groups, while explaining the overall process to the general public might be more easily achieved with a large public meeting.

Depending on who the target audience is, the **Assessment Team** should decide which method or combination of methods would be most appropriate for engaging these stakeholders. Three options are discussed in this section:

- Public meetings;
- Workshops;
- Individual consultations.

### How to Host Public Meetings and Workshops

Review the advantages and disadvantages of each option in regard to the local context and scope of the assessment.

*Public meetings* are an excellent way to inform a large audience about the assessment, and may be a good approach if the **Assessment Team** is working in a large destination and across several communities. The disadvantage of hosting a public meeting is the time required for planning. In addition, larger meetings may not allow in-depth interactions and discussions with stakeholders.

*Workshops* may be appropriate if the **Assessment Team** is working in a smaller destination or has identified a core group within a larger destination to work with. Workshops may be easier to plan and organize, plus can allow for more structured



discussions and better opportunities for feedback. Unlike public meetings, workshops may only allow a limited representation of stakeholders.

The **Assessment Team** can organize a public meeting or workshop in a variety of ways; however, the following four points should be considered:

1. The meeting location must be neutral.
2. The time must work for the majority of the interested parties. When scheduling the meeting, take into account the work schedule of a variety of sectors. For example, farmers may be up at 5am and work until 7pm, whereas the owner and staff of a local nightclub may rise at 10am and work until 2am.
3. Be aware of local holidays and traditions that might impact the meeting. For example, religious customs such as saying a prayer to open a meeting, seating arrangements important in hierarchal societies, and dress codes.
4. Consider gender issues and make adjustments to promote balanced participation in discussions. For example, taking care to ensure everyone understands how he or she can voice his or her opinion.

### Setting the Meeting Agenda

Once the meeting time and location are set, the **Assessment Team** should consider the agenda and prepare their presentations. Engage existing local contacts to help provide a local perspective on the agenda. At a minimum, include the following:

- Introduction of the **Assessment Team**;
- Brief presentation regarding the assessment process;
- Observations from the destination review;
- Time for a “participatory dialogue,” which will engage the audience and reveal basic questions and concerns that the community has regarding tourism;
- Time for responding to questions from the audience;
- Flip charts or other devices to record and display important discussions.

### Generating Dialogue from a Visioning Exercise

*Participatory dialogue* essentially refers to a structured dialogue, which allows community members to voice their views on opportunities and concerns to the **Assessment Team**. A popular and effective method is a *Visioning Exercise* aimed at developing a shared view or common understanding of a preferred future among stakeholders.

For smaller workshops, the Visioning Exercise can be further extended to include an analysis of the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) perceived by the community. The results of the SWOT analysis should also be prioritized. Both the Visioning Exercise and SWOT are detailed at the end of this sections as tools.

The tourism industry can be seen as a network of economic and political agents, processes and resources. The interactions between these elements will ultimately define whether the impacts on biodiversity will be positive or negative.

“BY WORKING TOGETHER, THE DESTINATION  
WILL BE BETTER ABLE TO COMPETE IN THE GLOBAL MARKET.”



The Visioning Exercise and SWOT Analysis are both quick and effective tools for soliciting input from community representatives on tourism development and related issues such as biodiversity conservation, poverty reduction, local human resources, and capacity. Both the Visioning Exercise and SWOT can be used to launch the Tourism Assessment Process. It is recommended that the **Assessment Team** use these methodologies first, before the detailed assessment begins, as an effective way to garner initial input and participation from stakeholders.

### Using Individual Consultations

The **Assessment Team** may choose to conduct individual consultations with local community leaders, key experts and representatives of local organizations. These consultations will help the team to gain an understanding of community issues, priorities and concerns, as well as hear initial reactions to the potential of tourism development. The team will need to identify and make appointments with these key individuals. When preparing for consultations, tailor specific questions to each person's background or area of interest. Start interviews with introductions of the **Assessment Team** and a brief presentation on the assessment. Ensure ample time for individuals to ask questions and provide insights and inputs.

### Selecting Assessment Participants

The **Assessment Team** needs to target key stakeholder groups and representatives who are best suited to assist in the assessment process. Each of the suggested outreach methods affords the **Assessment Team** the opportunity to observe the stakeholder representatives and assess their willingness and ability to participate in assessment activities.

Identifying and including stakeholder representatives in the assessments reduces the time needed to assess the whole community and also reduces the possibility of duplicating ideas. These representatives can help the team to understand what the local community considers to be important in its tradition and how it has dealt with natural resource issues or tourism in the past.

### Criteria for Selecting Participants

Consider the participation of community members in conducting the following aspects of the assessment:

- *Attractions Inventory:* Representatives of the historical, cultural and environmental aspects of the destination who can provide guidance about the key attractions to be inventoried.
- *Infrastructure and Services Analysis:* Local government representatives, traditional leaders, institution leaders, business leaders, and natural



resource managers who can help determine current and planned infrastructure, capacities and major environmental considerations.

- *Market Demand:* Local representatives who can carry out visitor surveys.
- *Environmental and Biodiversity Footprint:* Individuals involved in environmental and biodiversity conservation in the community and who have good knowledge of flora and fauna and important biodiversity areas.

It is important to be aware of possible gender issues as the team assembles the local participant group. Note that some societies assign different roles and responsibilities depending on gender. While the **Assessment Team** will want to be respectful of traditions, here is the time to make sure that everyone has the opportunity to be heard in the discussion. For example, which issues could be gender sensitive and therefore who would be the best candidate to represent and address that issue? The **Assessment Team** should ultimately decide who the best candidates are and for which “locally-based” reasons, however, it is recommended that the selected candidates should have some or all of the following abilities and experiences<sup>9</sup>:

- Ability to interact easily with fellow residents and visitors.
- Ability to listen to people without bias and to understand and articulate their expressed values, concerns and viewpoints.
- Ability to build rapport easily and create an atmosphere of comfort and trust.
- Recognition as a respected or influential member of the community.

### **A Variety of Stakeholder Representatives is Best**

It is also important that these individuals represent a wide variety of the population’s interests, by sector, concerning the negative and positive aspects that tourism development may have.

The **Assessment Team** must fully explain to each selected stakeholder representative what the assessment will involve and the reward — monetary or not — that he or she should expect. The representatives must be introduced to the public or workshop attendees, along with an explanation of why these individuals were chosen (if culturally appropriate to do so). Transparency at this public meeting or workshop is very crucial for a successful assessment process. Watch for public response to the introductions. The confidence votes might not come in the form of a NO, but in disapproval sounds or body language.

If the public or workshop attendees agree that these chosen individuals represent the community, the **Assessment Team** can be confident that many of the issues that the stakeholder representatives will raise represent the view of the majority in the community.

Tourism has the potential to link the conservation of nature with the well-being of local communities through a number of positive benefits including revenue generation, cultural preservation and capacity building.

# Tourism Destination Visioning Exercise

An essential element in planning for tourism development is the correct use of what scholars of management and tourism call “visioning.” In tourism, “visioning” refers to a thought process that allows professionals and experts to develop a basis for the planning exercises. An easy way to understand “visioning” is to think of it as if it were an architectural term. Imagine that you saw nothing more than the shell of a building; then try to envision its possibilities after completion. In a like manner, community tourism visioning refers to the process of “gaining the most out of the possible.” Remember, visioning is not “planning.”

The visioning session should be centered on three questions.

- **Where are we now?** Discuss the current situation with regard to tourism and anything related (including economic, social and environmental factors) at this point.
- **Where do we want to be?** Ask all the visioning session participants to “dream” about what the ideal situation for tourism development would be in their community or destination. If funding, politics, market access, etc. weren’t an issue, what would the best-case scenario for tourism be in the future?
- **How do we get there?** Look at the present and the desired future during this question. Generate the action steps needed to get from the present to the desired future.

Depending on the assessment’s objectives and the context of tourism development in the area, the team might choose to focus on specific topics such as biodiversity issues and tourism, tourism development in general, or indigenous community issues and tourism. During each step the team may be asked to prioritize lists based on importance or impact.

Here are a few simple thoughts to follow when “visioning”:

- Create the “total picture” - It is important to think of all the potentially effected issues because tourism touches so many parts of a community’s social-life. Develop sub-visions for such things as:
  - Cultural benefits and issues;
  - Environmental quality issues;
  - Business and industry concerns;
  - Public service costs;
  - Access to parks and other public facilities;
  - Demographic make-up;
  - Housing costs;
  - Health services;
  - Traffic congestion.
- Do not get caught in the details - Often communities fail because they become so enmeshed in the small details involved in planning that they forget the direction in which they wish to go. When facilitating the visioning exercise, the **Assessment Team** should aim to stay focused on the big picture and try not to become bogged down in minute details.
- Leave room for change - When developing a Vision, permit a certain amount of creativity. As new details emerge, allow your mind to think of new possibilities. Fluidity is a key part of visioning; as situations and possibilities change so may your visions change.
- Listen to all views - Different stakeholders such as a community, or a business may have different visions of the future. The **Assessment Team** is tasked with synthesizing everyone’s individual ideas to create an overarching vision representative of the total community.

# Tourism Destination Visioning Exercise (continued)

## TOOL

- Be patient when starting a community on the road to visioning. It is a difficult task to get people to think about the type of future they wish to develop and not to get bogged down in personality clashes or details. Remember visions must be based in both creativity and in reality.
- Be aware and reach out to people who are not able to speak in public or are not participating because the discussion tools require the input of someone who can read and write. Use of visual tools like drawings and sketches can help to communicate to a larger segment of the community.

Here are some visioning guidelines to follow:

- Visions are always holistic and appeal to the community's spirit, never to the intellect.
- Visions have realistic goals.
- Plans react to data; visions react to creativity.
- A vision shows where you want to go; a plan tells you how to get there.

When visioning, develop a checklist that includes the following components:

- Nature of the destination and tourism's role.
- People who will participate in tourism at the destination.
- Vision's name – For example: If the vision includes cultural tourism, consider a name such as "Vision 21-Promoting pride and knowledge of our cultural heritage."
- Timeline – When should the stakeholders see the results of some of these visions?
- Try to determine what is really important to this project/goal.
- For the visioning exercise, focus on what the end result should be, and not on how it is going to happen.
- Concentrate on what is the desired outcome and not on what the current problems are.
- Don't criticize! Take a chance and dream about what can be.
- Identify strengths that unite the community rather than on what divide it.

# SWOT Analysis

SWOT	
STRENGTHS • INTERNAL	WEAKNESSES • INTERNAL
OPPORTUNITIES • EXTERNAL	THREATS • EXTERNAL

For smaller workshop groups, the team may want to invite community members to participate in an analysis of local Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats, also called SWOT. The SWOT analysis is one of the planning frameworks through which communities can articulate their socio-economic priorities, determine their interest in tourism as a potential income generation activity, and express their concerns about tourism development. It is recommended that this first be done before the detailed assessment begins. However, it can happen separately from the Visioning Exercise, if need be. This rapid situation analysis provides a framework to discuss the community’s knowledge and opinion of their destination and their perceived readiness for development. The results of the SWOT analysis are also easy to comprehend both visually and verbally; thus this exercise will not exclude certain factions of the community, such as those who cannot read and write (see below).

## How to Use the SWOT Analysis

Depending on the number of attendants, the **Assessment Team** can do a collective SWOT analysis of the destination area with all participants or they can break them up into focus groups. Using the above diagram, have the local community members illustrate the primary internal strengths, internal weaknesses, external opportunities, and external threats affecting or potentially affecting successful tourism development in their community. “Internal” strengths and weaknesses refer to realities that affect the community and that they have basic control over, such as the *strength* of a well managed national reserve or the *weakness* of a lack of communication between local tourism stakeholders. “External” opportunities and threats refer to the realities that affect their community, which they do not have immediate control over, such as the *opportunity* of reliable national transportation or the threat of national political instability.

Once the sections have been filled in, the **Assessment Team** can analyze the results and have the participants vote on their top three priorities per section. This will help filter out the minor issues and bring the major issues in each section to the forefront.

## Take the “Pulse” of the Community

When the key issues are identified and discussed through the SWOT analysis process, the **Assessment Team** will see how ready the community is to host and participate in tourism development. This decision should take the following into consideration:

- The key issues regarding strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats and how their impacts may balance or exceed each other.
- The community’s ability to voice their opinions and communicate with the **Assessment Team** and fellow residents.
- The overall attitude of the local participants. Are they generally positive or negative about existing and potential tourism development?
- Their cohesiveness and capacity to work together. Are they collaborative or individualistic? Is there a culture of partnering to achieve common goals?
- In order to get a realistic view of the general situation and local perception of tourism, did a range of community members do the SWOT analysis?

# SWOT Analysis (continued)

- A review of maps and guides helps to provide a sense of place in relationship to the community and the natural resources.
- The destination, government and political structure, to determine possible points and feasibility of negotiation between the community and national authorities.

The final decision will reflect the community's readiness for tourism development. It will be a recommendation for one of three actions:

- The rest of the assessment should not proceed;
- It may proceed in part;
- It may proceed in its entirety.

If the decision is to proceed, the **Assessment Team** will want to identify key local stakeholders who can help participate in the detailed assessments that will follow.

# Attractions Inventory

**DEMAND FOR** a destination is determined by a number of factors, but the number and draw of its attractions is a fundamental one. Attractions can take many forms. They can be tangible, such as wildlife or a historical monument, and they can be intangible, such as ‘telling the story’ of a people or their way-of-life.

## Getting Started

- Use five worksheets – **#1 Natural Attractions, #2 Cultural Attractions, #3 Historic and Heritage Attractions, #4 Recreational Activities, #5 Inventory Evaluation Sheet** – located directly after this section. Make several copies.
- Contract with local guides who have a good knowledge of area attractions – local tour guides, park management staff and other community members with intimate knowledge of the surrounding natural areas can help identify key nature-based attractions. Local historians, cultural experts, village elders, and other knowledgeable members of the community may help identify key cultural, historic and heritage attractions.
- Clarify all agreements for compensating guides or other help.
- Review travel guides and other tourism literature of the area.

The wide range of different types of attractions can include, but are not limited to:

**Natural Attractions:** Landscapes, lakes, forests, parks, beaches, caves, waterfalls, climates, unique and endangered species, birds, reptiles, and other animals. Biodiversity and nature in general can be big tourism attractions.

**Cultural Attractions:** Traditional lifestyles, rituals, religious ceremonies, festivals, large events, chieftaincies, arts and crafts, music, dances, traditional cuisine, and local economic activities such as fishing, farming and salt preparation. These attractions allow the visitor to learn about the culture of the destination.

**Historic and Heritage Attractions:** Forts, castles, museums, churches, mosques, temples, distinctive architecture, archaeological sites, monuments, memorials, burial grounds, birthplaces/homes of famous people, early settlements, historic town centers and districts, landmarks, missions, shrines, churches, historic tours, and interpretation. If culturally acceptable, sacred places can also be considered.

**Recreational Activities:** Boating, trekking, mountain climbing, hiking, camping, biking, river rafting, diving, snorkeling, wildlife viewing, bird watching, picnicking, sunbathing, relaxing, swimming, and playing sports and games.

## Components of the Attractions Inventory

To complete the Attractions Inventory the **Assessment Team** will compile a list of potential natural, cultural, historical, and heritage attractions, as well as related recreational activities. Each will be evaluated for their potential for supporting tourism development in the destination or region, using the following criteria:

- Potential draw;
- Aesthetic or scenic value;
- Biodiversity value;
- Cultural value;
- Historical value;
- Uses and activities;
- Community participation;
- Potential for control;
- Access;
- Product development potential.



## Conducting the Attractions Inventory

The attractions inventory consists of three basic steps. In the first two steps, the team will list the attractions that exist within the area and map them accordingly. Once that is completed, the team will evaluate and rank the existing attractions.

### Step 1: Listing Attractions

Use *Worksheets 1 – 4* to list and make observations about each attraction. Note: The worksheets are standard; however, slight modifications may need to be made to suit each destination.

### Step 2: Mapping Attractions

Physically located attractions need to be spatially analyzed, along with any existing tourism infrastructure. This means plotting each attraction on the map. The easiest approach may be to do this by hand in pencil and use highlighters for color-coding. Later, the maps can be scanned into electronic format for purposes of reporting. If the team has the capacity and resources to use GPS and GIS technology, a sequence will need to be created based on a description of each attraction.

### Step 3: Rank and Evaluate Attractions

Using *Worksheet 5*, evaluate and rank the attractions for their potential to attract and draw in tourists. Once this ranking exercise is complete, the team will have a preliminary idea of the tourism development potential based on attractions in the area. This information will be used to help assess how competitive the destination is compared to others, as well as the potential market demand for the destination. In addition, the **Assessment Team** will have done an initial analysis of the potential for community benefits and any product development issues. Use the following criteria to evaluate the attractions:

- **Uniqueness**—Overall how unique is the attraction? For instance, if it is a mountain lake or beach area, is it only found in the local area or region? Is there potential for it to draw international visitors or domestic visitors? Is it a primary or secondary attraction? Here the concept of “clustering” may apply. Essentially, the proximity of a primary attraction to a secondary attraction may greatly impact its potential draw. An example of this is Victoria Falls in Southern Africa, which is a major draw; however, once tourists arrive they might enjoy cultural events and safaris in the adjacent national park. The concept of identifying and “packaging” primary and secondary attractions together is important to consider, since it may result in tourists who lengthen their stay and therefore, have a greater economic impact on the destination.
- **Aesthetic or Scenic Value**—Is the attraction pleasing to the eye? Although this is a very subjective measure, one can attempt to be objective by

The concept of identifying and “packaging” primary and secondary attractions together is important to consider, since it may result in tourists who lengthen their stay and therefore, have a greater economic impact on the destination.

“DEMAND FOR A DESTINATION IS DETERMINED BY A NUMBER OF FACTORS, BUT THE NUMBER AND DRAW OF ITS ATTRACTIONS IS A FUNDAMENTAL ONE.”



considering cleanliness, vibrancy of colors, distinct architectural or artistic values, and uniformity or contrasts in geological formations or the built environment. For example, consider the rich greens of a healthy rainforest as opposed to the consistent patterns of agricultural fields, brightly colored traditional houses of red clay or paints versus gray concrete buildings, or mangrove lined lagoons with reflective waters versus brown-gray waters of a stagnant pond.

- **Biodiversity**—Rate both flora and fauna on their rarity and uniqueness, and evaluate the possibility of viewing species. If animals are difficult to see, their tracks and other signs of their presence will be interesting, although less so than actual sightings. Confirm with local experts and biologists the names of the species that exist in the area. To the nature tourist, rare and colorful birds, sea turtles, whales, and colorful reef fish also rate extremely high. However, check with experts and the World Conservation Union’s (IUCN) endangered species lists that any of the species are threatened. The **Assessment Team** must make considerations for potential harmful impacts from tourist visitation.
- **Cultural Value**—This is measured by the social and cultural importance of the attraction to people. For example, take into account:
  - The traditional lifestyle of a vibrant culture;
  - High quality arts and crafts considered unique to an area;
  - Traditional celebrations, dances and music.

The authenticity of a cultural attraction will also weigh heavily. Attention should be given to the potential disruptions that tourist access to sensitive places or activities, such as religious ceremonies or shrines, might cause.

- **Historical Value**—There are a few things to consider when gauging historical value including:
  - Age;
  - Maintenance;
  - The importance of the attraction in local, national, or international events;
  - Its artistic or architectural importance;
  - The magnitude of the attraction;
  - Its cultural importance.

The more intact the historical attraction, the more historical information known about the attraction and the more interpretive material available about the attraction, the more potential draw it will have to a variety of visitors. To accurately gauge historical value, research publications and consult with knowledgeable community members, history books, publications, experts, historians, and historical societies.



- **Uses and Activities**—How do the different uses or potential activities rate for each attraction? For example, a beach may rate high if it offers activities that are very attractive to the nature tourist, such as turtle watching, swimming, or scuba diving. Or, a certain trail may offer excellent opportunities for bird watching or wildlife viewing.
- **Community Participation**—What would be the potential for community members to benefit from this attraction? Among the factors to consider are whether it would provide more jobs. For instance, a lodge might be able to employ 30 people and implement a boat tour that employs one or two people. However, does the community have the capacity to participate? Does it have fishermen with boats equipped to transport passengers? For cultural attractions, are community traditions still widely practiced? When completing the socio-economic analysis, the team may begin to further define how tourism attractions can be leveraged to address conservation and social goals.
- **The Ability to Control Tourism at the Site**—Is the area largely public space? Are there populations who live near or on the site? Is there a potential for land tenure issues or clashes with local populations or interests? What permits are needed to use the land?
- **Access**—How easily can one get to the attraction? For example, if it takes a two hour hike to get to the entrance of a forest trail (trailhead), then access could be considered extremely difficult. By the time the average tourist reached the enjoyable part of the activity he or she would be too tired to enjoy it. If access to the trailhead was only ten minutes from a good road, then access can be considered very easy. In the case of cultural attractions, such as a traditional ceremony, consider how long one would have to travel to see the activity and how often the activity occurs.
- **Product Development**—How developed is the attraction? What would be involved in fully developing the attraction or product? For example, does the area need to be cleaned up? Is pollution an issue? What type of infrastructure might be needed such as accommodations, signage, access roads or trails? Perhaps the attraction is partially developed. For instance, an arts and crafts shop that already exists may simply need better inventory and an increased marketing effort.

When describing natural, cultural, historic and recreational attractions, express what is unique about the attraction and try to avoid general descriptions.

# Natural Attractions

## WORKSHEET 01

**Instructions:** Describe what is unique about the natural attractions in the area. Try to be specific and avoid general attraction descriptions such as “the tropical forest.”

*Note: The last column asks you to choose potential market draw. This means the type of visitation an attraction may draw and may be modified based on major markets in the destination.*

NATURAL ATTRACTIONS Name, Description, and Current Draw	DESCRIBE LOCATION (distance from central point or use GPS)	EASE OF ACCESS (from main entry way)	DESCRIBE POTENTIAL USES	ENVIRONMENTAL FRAGILITY (i.e. endangered spe- cies nesting area, rare plant, water source, over-crowding, waste mgmt)	SOCIO-CULTURAL CONCERNS (i.e. traditional uses and beliefs, taboos, potential disruption, land-tenure issues)	CHOOSE POTENTIAL MARKET DRAW
# __		Easy (up to 1 hr walk) Moderate (hills, 1-2hrs) Difficult (steep climbs, 2+hrs)				Daytrip Weekender Long Stay
# __		Easy Moderate Difficult				Daytrip Weekender Long Stay
# __		Easy Moderate Difficult				Daytrip Weekender Long Stay
# __		Easy Moderate Difficult				Daytrip Weekender Long Stay

# Cultural Attractions

## WORKSHEET 02

**Instructions:** When describing cultural attractions, express what is unique about the attractions and try to avoid general attraction descriptions such as “story telling.” Note: The last column asks you to choose potential “markets.” This means the type of visitation an attraction may draw and may be modified based on major markets in the destination.

<b>CULTURAL ATTRactions</b> Name, Description, and Current Draw	<b>LOCATION AND TIMING</b> (when and how often)	<b>DESCRIBE POTENTIAL ACTIVITIES</b>	<b>ENVIRONMENTAL FRAGILITY</b> (i.e. endangered species nesting area, rare plant, water source, over-crowding, waste mgmt)	<b>SOCIO-CULTURAL CONCERNS</b> (i.e. traditional uses and beliefs, taboos, potential disruption, land-tenure issues)	<b>CHOOSE POTENTIAL MARKET DRAW</b>
# __					Daytrip Weekender Long Stay
# __					Daytrip Weekender Long Stay
# __					Daytrip Weekender Long Stay
# __					Daytrip Weekender Long Stay

# Historic and Heritage Attractions

## WORKSHEET 03

**Instructions:** When describing historical and heritage attractions, express what is unique about them and try to avoid general attraction descriptions such as “monument.” Note: The last column asks you to choose potential “markets.” This means the type of visitation an attraction may draw and may be modified based on major markets in the destination.

<b>HERITAGE AND HISTORIC ATTRACTIONS</b> Name, Description, and Current Draw (historical context)	<b>DESCRIBE LOCATION AND ACCESS</b> (distance from central point or use GPS)	<b>DESCRIBE CONDITION OR RENOVATION WORK REQUIRED TO ACCOMMODATE VISITORS.</b>	<b>ENVIRONMENTAL FRAGILITY</b> (i.e. endangered species nesting area, rare plant, water source, over-crowding, waste mgmt)	<b>SOCIO-CULTURAL CONCERNS</b> (i.e. traditional uses and beliefs, taboos, potential disruption, land-tenure issues)	<b>CHOOSE POTENTIAL MARKET DRAW</b>
# __					Daytrip Weekender Long Stay
# __					Daytrip Weekender Long Stay
# __					Daytrip Weekender Long Stay
# __					Daytrip Weekender Long Stay

# Recreational Activities

## WORKSHEET 04

**Instructions:** Describe what is unique about potential recreational activities. Avoid general activity descriptions such as “hiking.” Note: The last column asks you to choose potential “markets.” This means the type of visitation an activity may draw and may be modified based on major markets in the destination.

RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES Name, Description, and Current Draw	DESCRIBE BEST AREAS FOR ACTIVITIES TO TAKE PLACE	LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY	PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT NEEDS	ENVIRONMENTAL FRAGILITY (i.e. endangered species nesting area, rare plant, water source, over-crowding, waste mgmt)	SOCIO-CULTURAL CONCERNS (i.e. traditional uses and beliefs, taboos, potential disruption, land-tenure issues)	CHOOSE POTENTIAL MARKET DRAW
# __		Easy (up to 1 hr walk) Moderate (hills, 1-2hrs) Difficult (steep climbs, 2+hrs)				Daytrip Weekender Long Stay
# __		Easy Moderate Difficult				Daytrip Weekender Long Stay
# __		Easy Moderate Difficult				Daytrip Weekender Long Stay
# __		Easy Moderate Difficult				Daytrip Weekender Long Stay

# Inventory Evaluation Sheet

## WORKSHEET 05

**Instructions:** For each attraction please refer to the list in the left hand column and rate each item 1-5, five being the most positive rating. Then add up the ratings for each attraction and total them in the designated box.

	ATTRACTION #1	ATTRACTION #2	ATTRACTION #3	ATTRACTION #4
SCENIC VALUE				
BIODIVERSITY				
CULTURAL VALUE				
HISTORICAL VALUE				
USES AND ACTIVITIES				
COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION				
SITE CONTROL				
ACCESS				
PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT				
<b>TOTALS</b>				
NOTES				



# Infrastructure and Services

THE INSIGHT revealed during the Infrastructure and Services analysis will form part of the basis for tourism development decisions. Besides attractions, several other factors become critical in supporting tourist visitation to an area.

The following factors all need to be evaluated:

- Quality of the surroundings;
- Availability of basic services such as electricity, water and sewage;
- Presence of adequate transportation to the destination;
- Assurance of a safe and secure environment.

During the Infrastructure and Services analysis the **Assessment Team** will examine these factors and determine any gaps that need to be addressed. Keep in mind that this information will form part of the basis for tourism development decisions. For instance, the team might propose a different type of product if they find that there is not enough water to supply tourist facilities.

## Identifying Opportunities and Overcoming Obstacles

A wealth of insight is waiting to be discovered from completing these tools.

*Transportation Worksheet 6*—Helps to verify information on transportation infrastructure and services available in the area that can be used to access the destination and major attractions from population and tourist centers. Connectivity, reliability, safety, and security factors are considered. For each mode of transportation or route of access there is an opportunity to explore improving environmental sustainability.

*Accessibility Summary Worksheet 7*—Guides the team in conducting an overall evaluation of accessibility and transportation modes and developing recommendations for addressing opportunities for improvement, such as sustainability, highway and road signs, provision of information, and alternative modes of transportation.

*Public Services Worksheet 8*—Helps verify information on standard public services such as local police, emergency services and water and sewage systems. This worksheet will help you identify any issues and recommendations regarding key factors in providing tourism services related to safety and security, health, communication, energy and water supplies, and waste disposal facilities.

*Evaluation of Surroundings Worksheet 9*—The quality of the physical environment is critical to tourism. This worksheet walks the **Assessment Team** through key considerations including: air quality; health risks; natural landscapes; clean water sources such as water catchment areas; and the environmental condition of major attraction areas such as beaches and rivers. Key issues and recommendations on achieving a healthy natural environment are documented on the worksheet.

## Getting Started

- Identify participants in each targeted local area.
- Review and compare copies of Worksheets #6 Transportation, #7 Accessibility Summary, #8 Public Services, #9 Evaluation of Surroundings with each participant.
- Plan logistics – ensure transportation and other resources are available to participants.



# Transportation<sup>10</sup>

## WORKSHEET 06

**Instructions:** Use this worksheet to list the road and transportation infrastructure and services available in the area that can be used to access the destination and major attractions from popular and tourist centers. Include planned infrastructure as well. The **Assessment Team** can check with government offices responsible for physical planning or transportation and communications for this information.

*Note: For each item, list the areas or locations served within the destination and describe connectivity; for example, an international airport may have domestic flights to key tourist destinations in the region. Cleanliness, comfort and services such as toilets should be rated under General Conditions. Transportation modes are some of the main sources of environmental degradation and pollution; therefore, document potential issues, as well as opportunities to improve sustainability or ongoing initiatives for each category, such as car rental services using hybrid vehicles, proper environmental impact analysis conducted for road building, etc.*

	LOCATIONS SERVED, CONNECTIONS	RELIABILITY AND SAFETY	GENERAL CONDITIONS	ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY
Highways				
Secondary Roads				
Other Roads, i.e. park & forest				
Airports/Airlines				
Car Rental				
Inbound Tour Operators				
Taxi Services				
Bus Terminals and Service				
Train Terminals and Service				
River or Sea Ports/Ferries				
Other Boats				
Bicycles				
Motorcycle Rental				
Other				

# Accessibility Summary<sup>11</sup>

## WORKSHEET 07

**Instructions:** Review *Worksheet 6 Transportation* and identify any major areas for improvement or opportunities. Address the following questions as you do this:

1. What modes of transportation do most visitors use to get to the destination/focus area?
2. Can debarking passengers connect easily with other transportation/information (taxis, rental cars, transit buses, visitors' center, tour guides, signage)?
3. Are the highway and road signs, which direct visitors to the area, adequate?
4. Do these signs present a positive image of the destination/focus area?
5. Can highways and roads handle more use under current maintenance budgets and schedules? Also, without becoming more congested?
6. Are there opportunities to develop other transportation modes to enhance access to other tourist markets? If yes, which modes could be developed? Consider different types of tourists and also how the local modes of transportation could promote travel.
7. What potential environmental or social issues need to be addressed? Are there any initial recommendations on how these might be addressed?
8. Are there visitors' information centers or places where information can be distributed?
9. Are the transportation services generally efficient and safe? How could they be improved?

QUESTIONS		COMMENTS/RECOMMENDATIONS	
1. Is the local police force prepared to handle increased duties: control crowds, assist visitors, manage potential increase in crime?	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>	
2. Is emergency road service available?	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>	
3. Can visitors get emergency health care locally?	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>	
4. If not available locally, how far is it to the nearest hospital?	# of miles/KMS:		Time to get there:
5. Is ambulance service available in the area?	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>	
6. Is there a local fire protection service?	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>	
7. Can the local water supply that is used for drinking and bathing handle increased use by visitors?	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>	
8. Is the local water supply of a quality acceptable to visitors (taste, smell, color)?	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>	
9. Are there public restrooms in the destination?	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>	
10. Are the public restrooms well-maintained and clean?	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>	
11. Is there a public sewage treatment system?	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>	
12. Are landscape management services provided for public spaces ensuring visitor use is managed? (litter clean-up, care of trees and plants)	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>	
13. If there is a public sewage treatment system, could it handle additional demand from tourist facilities? How much more?	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>	
14. Is sewage treated in an environmental and safe manner?	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>	
15. Are there recycling receptacles?	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>	
16. Are the trash and recycling receptacles well-maintained and emptied frequently?	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>	How often are the receptacles emptied? Trash: Recycling:
17. Are streets and public areas kept clean?	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>	Who is responsible for this? How often do they clean the streets?
18. Can local roads handle more use without becoming too congested?	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>	Who manages the maintenance of the roads?
19. Can local roads handle more traffic under the current maintenance budget and schedule?	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>	
20. Are telephone services available for:			
International direct dialing?	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>	
Internet?	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>	
Cellular phones?	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>	
21. Are there local banking services available to:			
Change currency?	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>	
Withdraw on credit cards?	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>	
Cash traveler's checks?	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>	

# Evaluation of Surroundings

## WORKSHEET 09

**Instructions:** The quality of the physical environment is critical to the tourist. Having both an esthetically pleasing (i.e. beautiful) and healthy environment (i.e. low pollution, minimal traffic, clean water) will make a significant difference to the level of satisfaction a tourist experiences during a vacation. Consider and rate the following factors.

*Note: These will need to be modified to the local context.*

FACTOR	PERCEIVED CONDITION	COMMENTS/RECOMMENDATIONS
Air quality		
Noise levels		
Road traffic		
Solid waste management (i.e. trash)		
Condition of homes and buildings		
Clean water sources (i.e. catchments, rivers)		
Health risks		
Natural landscape		
Health of major natural attractions (i.e. beaches, rivers)		
Sewage and waste water management		
Other		

# Market Demand Analysis

**MARKET DEMAND** is driven by the desires of consumers – existing tourism visitors. The **Assessment Team's** role, in identifying who they are and why they are visiting your destination, will help reveal the potential for new or “improved” tourism products. At this stage in the Tourism Assessment Process, it is important to analyze existing and potential markets and their size. This understanding of market demand will help the team identify any major considerations regarding product development, facility designs, visitor use plans, and marketing.

Initial tourism development activities often consist of identifying the existing features that residents see as interesting and trying to market them. These features, however, may or may not be attractive to potential visitors. The **Assessment Team** will need to take an objective look at the destination's market potential by basing product development on the probable interest to the consumer.

Tourism products include an ensemble of tangible and intangible components such as:

- Resources and attractions;
- Facilities and infrastructures;
- Services;
- Activities;
- Images and symbolic value.

## Sources for Conducting Market Demand Research

The **Assessment Team** should start the market demand analysis with a review of already available information. The first place to look is state, county/provincial, or regional travel offices for estimates of domestic and international visitation. These estimates would be very helpful for developing preliminary visitor trends.

The team may want to build on these estimates by including all existing sources of visitation-related data for the local area. These data sources often provide a sufficient and economical way to develop an understanding of current markets. After the team's initial estimates have been made, it will be worthwhile to consider ways to improve estimates and make future projections.

Recommended starting points for identifying visitor estimates include:

- Hotel, motel, campground and homestay occupancy;
- Event attendance records;
- Local attraction attendance;
- Accommodation and other sales tax collections;
- Roadway traffic data;
- Nearby local and national park attendance;

## Getting Started

- Collect already available information on tourist arrivals and markets in the destination.
- Consult with local experts to determine the relationship between available data and actual visitation.
- If not enough information exists, implement visitor surveys based on the following *Tools: How to Design a Questionnaire; Conducting a Visitor Survey; Sample Visitor Questionnaire; How to Analyze and Interpret Survey Results.*



- Public transportation passenger counts from air, train, bus, or ferry;
- Tourist market profiles compiled by local/provincial tourism offices;
- Market studies by local communities, universities or consultants, tourism associations, etc.
- Local tour operators registration and customer surveys;
- Guest book registration and comments at local visitor centers and attractions.

To access this information, the team would:

- Use studies and reports done by universities; local, regional and national government tourism offices; non-governmental organizations (NGOs); consultants; chambers of commerce; and tourism associations;
- Review tourism business records and their own customer satisfaction surveys;
- Refer to the surveys of attractions and business.

The **Assessment Team** will need to determine the relationship between available data and actual visitation. Not all visitors stay in commercial lodging, so many would be missed in hotel and campground records. For example, suppose there were 100 room nights sold in commercial lodging facilities in an area from June through August. One assumes that half of the visitors staying overnight in the area during those summer months stayed in commercial lodging, and the others stayed with family and friends. From this assumption, one might estimate there were 200 visitor groups who spent the night in the area from June through August.

Initially, the **Assessment Team** may consult with businesses and those familiar with the local tourism market to develop the assumptions about how existing data relate to actual tourism numbers. The more one relies on assumptions rather than hard data, the less precise the estimates will be. However, reasonable assumptions provide estimates that are acceptable for immediate decision needs.

If a destination is new, without having had any tourism previously, the **Assessment Team** may wish to seek market and visitor information from similar destinations or benchmarks. This should only be done if there is no secondary data available and no means of conducting surveys of existing visitors.

### **The Value of Conducting Visitor Surveys**

If secondary research doesn't produce enough information about market potential or if there is not secondary data available, the **Assessment Team** may choose to conduct a *Visitor Survey*. Surveys can be done at strategic entry points such as airports, park entrances and popular areas. Not only can the survey results provide the **Assessment Team** with a demographic and psychographic understanding of the tourist market(s) visiting the destination, but also of their preferences, chosen activities and their overall opinion regarding key aspects of the destination such as hospitality, safety, transportation and attractions.

The tourism industry is dependent on tourist willingness to visit a destination. This motivation is mainly driven by their own personal wants and needs.

## “TOURISM PRODUCTS CAN BE DEVELOPED IN ORDER TO ADDRESS BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION ISSUES.”



The seven-step recommended process for conducting a visitor survey is as follows<sup>13</sup>:

1. Plan the visitor survey.
2. Design the survey questionnaire.
3. Collect the desired data.
4. Process the data for analysis.
5. Analyze the data.
6. Interpret the results and draw conclusions.
7. Prepare and present findings.

### Understanding Market Segments

The tourism industry is dependent on tourist willingness to visit a destination. This motivation is mainly driven by their own personal wants and needs. In order to determine future potential markets, the **Assessment Team** will need to understand these motivations. To do this, the **Assessment Team** should review the data collected to better understand who is visiting the destination and why. This includes answering the following questions:

- *Demographic Profiles:* What is the age range, gender, education level, country of origin, and nationality of the visitors? Who is already traveling to the destination? How many are visiting foreign residents and how many are tourists?
- *Purpose of Trips:* Have the visitors come for business or leisure? Are they visiting friends and family? Have they come for educational or volunteer purposes? Why are they traveling to the focus area?
- *Travel Motivations:* What psychological, physical, emotional, and professional needs are visitors seeking to fulfill while on their vacation? What sites are they visiting during their stay?
- *Experiences and Knowledge Being Sought:* Are they interested in gaining a deeper understanding of the wildlife, the local culture, or local history? What attractions are they coming to experience? What are they planning to do during their visit?
- *Services Purchased:* What kind of tours and packages are they buying? And from whom? Do they purchase their tickets internationally or locally? What other services are they using? Are they satisfied with the services they are purchasing? Who is benefiting most from the revenue of these purchases? How much do they generally spend? How many tourists are staying in the focus area as opposed to those just stopping by?



- **Travel Behavior:** What are the travel party sizes? Have the visitors been to the destination before? How much money have they spent at the destination? What information/reservation method did they use? What types of transportation did they use to get to the destination and once at the destination? How many are “touring?” How many are just going to the destination?
- **Overall Satisfaction:** Is the destination meeting visitor needs? Are they gaining the experiences and knowledge they seek? Are these being delivered in the way they want? Are services meeting their needs and expectations? What are the potential gaps and opportunities for meeting visitor needs and wants?

By answering the questions outlined above, the team should have an adequate idea about the tourists traveling to the destination. Gaining an in-depth understanding of who is visiting will give the team an idea about which tourist market(s) would typically like to visit the area, which areas/countries they originate from, and most importantly, what additional services and activities that the destination could provide.

Keep in mind the size of the potential tourism markets will influence the number of attractions, facilities and services that can be developed in a destination. The size of the market often depends on the flow of tourists in or near the destination. If the destination is near a major attraction, such as a national park or an established tourism destination, the potential size of the market is likely to be larger. Or, if it is near a large urban area or the interstate highway system, the potential market also will be greater. Sometimes festivals or other attractions can serve as a magnet for tourism development, even when there is not a natural tourism flow near the community.

## Estimating Market Size

Using the information that has been gathered thus far on tourists’ visitation, their profiles and motivation, think about the flow of visitors in the area and try to estimate current visitation based on the categories below:

- **Pass Through:** On vacation and just passing through the area. Avoid stopping.
- **Touring:** On vacation, stay in 3 or more locations in the area. Unplanned, spontaneous, impulse location choices.
- **Visiting:** Visiting friends and/or relatives. Family and friends influence choices.
- **Destination:** On vacation, stay in 2 or less locations in the area. Use tour operators and other advertising to plan trip.

By answering the questions outlined here, the team should have an adequate idea about the tourists traveling to the destination. Gaining an in-depth understanding of who is visiting will give the team an idea about which tourist market(s) would typically like to visit the area, which areas/countries they originate from, and most importantly, what additional services and activities that the destination could provide.

“IN ADDITION TO RESEARCHING POTENTIAL MARKETS, IT IS ALSO NECESSARY TO FOCUS ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF TOURISM PRODUCTS THAT WILL SERVICE THE TYPES OF MARKETS THE DESTINATION HOPES TO ATTRACT.”



Efforts should be made to estimate the size of the tourism market for any tourism product in order to establish its viability.

In addition to researching potential markets, it is also necessary to focus on the development of tourism products that will service the types of markets the destination hopes to attract.

### Product Development and Biodiversity Considerations

Tourism products and markets can be developed in order to address biodiversity conservation issues. In the Socio-Economic, Cultural and Natural Resource Use Considerations Section, the **Assessment Team** will carefully analyze biodiversity issues. It will be important to find areas where tourism can be leveraged to address these issues. From a product development standpoint, tourism visitation can be planned to address biodiversity and community development factors, such as the placement of a tour in an area where illegal logging can be discouraged by the constant presence of people. Products can be developed to provide interpretation that educates and creates awareness of biodiversity issues among domestic tourists. In areas which are determined to have limited demand, target markets may include people who are not visiting for a vacation in the traditional sense. This may include volunteers, researchers, student scientists, and development workers.

#### Case Example: Tourism and Biodiversity Research – A Successful Application

The Fazenda Rio Negro is a Conservation International developed ecolodge in the Pantanal of Brazil. The Pantanal is the largest freshwater wetland on Earth making it one of the richest and most diverse regions in the Americas for plants and wildlife. Along the rivers and lakes surrounding the lodge, guests can discover the Pantanal’s incredible diversity including rare and endangered species such as hyacinth macaws, jabiru storks, giant river otters, giant anteaters, tapirs, and with luck, even jaguars.

Through a unique partnership with Earthwatch, tourists also have an opportunity to volunteer and help conduct scientific research on the Pantanal’s biodiversity. Volunteering involves helping researchers to collect field data such as recording the sounds of jaguars, or counting the number of macaws in an area. The research helps scientists understand biodiversity in the Pantanal in order to better conserve the area. Through volunteering, tourists get to enjoy the Pantanal, learn about the wildlife and make a valuable contribution to conservation efforts.

Earthwatch has been conducting volunteer tours to the Pantanal since 2001. Each volunteer pays for his or her lodging and food. With income from both volunteers and regular guests, the Fazenda is able to cover its main operating costs. Fazenda Rio Negro demonstrates the potential of ecotourism to provide direct benefits to biodiversity conservation efforts and to serve as an alternative to more destructive economic activities such as cattle ranching.

# How to Design a Questionnaire

To design a good questionnaire, a number of considerations must be kept in mind. For instance, does it provide the necessary decision-making information for management and does it consider the respondents? Before you start designing your questionnaire, think very carefully about what information you need and from whom. Take a look at the sample questionnaire on page 50 to get an idea of what it could look like. The following guidelines will help you design an effective questionnaire.

## The Role of the Questionnaire:

- It is a set of specially designed questions to which answers are written on a prepared form.
- It tells you who your audience might be in demographic and psychographic terms.
- It tells you certain things about your audience's behavior and lifestyle.
- It is a way of finding out exactly what your audience knows and needs to know about your topic.
- It helps in the construction of a recommendation and in generating advertising to fund that recommendation.

## Points to Consider When Designing a Questionnaire:

- A questionnaire must accommodate all the research objectives in sufficient detail in order to satisfy your information needs.
- As you design a questionnaire, keep your data collection goals in mind.
- Questionnaires should be clearly laid out and easy to read. It is crucial that all concepts be clear and simply expressed.
- Keep it short. Remember that the respondent has to remember the whole question to be able to answer it properly.
- Use multiple choice or yes/no answers to make it easier to analyze the data.
- Start off with easy questions (age, occupation, etc.) and finish with ones that have to be thought about a little more—give your interviewee the chance to warm up and focus on the topic.
- Each question should ask for only one piece of information.
- The essential task is to convey the same information to all respondents about what is wanted.
- Avoid questions that tax the respondent's memory.
- It must be convenient for the interviewer to administer, and it must allow the interviewer to quickly record the respondent's answers.
- It must be easy and fast to check for completeness.
- It must be translatable back into findings that respond to the client's original questions.

**Sequence of Questions:** The first few questions will set the scene for the respondent. It is important at the beginning to have some questions that are both interesting and easy to answer. As rapport gradually builds up between interviewer and interviewee, more difficult and personal questions can be asked. In a good questionnaire, the questions will seem to flow in a logical order.

**Quality-Control Check:** At the end of a questionnaire, include a very general open-ended question, such as, "Is there anything you'd like to add?" or "Would you like to make any comments?" Not many respondents have much to say at this point, but if a number of them make similar comments, this is perhaps a sign that you omitted a question that respondents think is important.

**Precise Questions:** Avoid vague terms, and those that have different meanings to different people. Common words to be wary of are "local" and "community." If these are used in a question, the exact geographical scope should be made clear.

**Avoid Two Questions in One:** Combining two questions to save space or time will cause more problems than it solves. Whenever a question contains the words "and" or "or" examine it carefully to make sure it really is one question and not two.

**Avoid Double Negatives:** For example, questions beginning with "Don't you think X should not ..." Many people will answer Yes when they should have said No, and vice versa.

**Don't Expect Memory Feats:** Memory feats include asking people exactly what they did a week ago. Sometimes you have no alternative, but don't expect accurate answers. For many, memory has a telescoping effect, by which two months seems like one, a year ago seems like six months, and so on.

**Avoid Ambiguity:** Sometimes it's hard to realize that a question you intend to have one meaning can be understood to have quite a different meaning.

**Avoid Leading Questions:** Leading questions are those that make it clear by their wording that one answer is preferred.

**Keep Interview Logs:** These are the interviewer's record of the attempts made to contact each selected household. With cluster surveys, when the interviewer visits a number of different households in a neighborhood, a single log is used for the cluster, with one line per household.

**Stage a Rehearsal:** Find two people who have had little or no involvement in developing the questionnaire. One should be the interviewer, and the other will play the part of respondent. This "respondent" should be someone you know well enough who will frankly discuss any shortcomings of the questions. Also at this stage, the questionnaire's duration should be checked—but the actual duration is not as important as the psychological duration. At the end of a rehearsal interview, the interviewer should ask the respondent how long the interview lasted. If it really lasted 10 minutes, but the respondent thought it took 20, this is not a good sign.

**Pilot Testing:** When these improvements have been made, the next stage is the pilot test, using real interviewers and real respondents, in the same situation as the real survey.

# Sample Visitor Questionnaire

Thank you for participating in our visitor survey. Our team of consultants and local participants will consider your responses as we assess the potential for ecotourism development in this area. Please be assured that your responses will be held in confidence. Note that only visitors to this area should fill out this form, not residents.

1. Is this your first time visiting?     yes                       no
2. If you answered no to question #1, how many times, in total, have you visited this area? \_\_\_\_\_
3. Are you traveling:                       alone                       as a couple                       with friends                       with family
4. How many people are in your travel party? \_\_\_\_\_
5. In which country do you permanently reside? \_\_\_\_\_
6. What was your primary reason for visiting this area? (please choose one)  
 leisure                       business                       visiting friends and relatives                       other \_\_\_\_\_  
 education, short-term (less than 1 year)                       volunteerism, short-term (less than 1 year)
7. How long will you be visiting this area? (please choose one)  
 for the day                       2-4 days                       5-10 days                       11-20 days                       more than 21 days
8. How did you hear about this area? (please choose one)  
 radio                       television                       newspaper                       magazine                       Internet  
 travel brochure                       tour operator                       word of mouth
9. What was your main mode of transportation to this area? (please choose one)  
 personal/rented car                       airplane                       tour bus/vehicle                       boat  
 taxi                       other, please specify \_\_\_\_\_
10. How important were the following factors in your decision to visit the area?  
(Please circle the number of the answer that represents your evaluation of each factor).

Factors	Very important	Important	Not very important	Not important at all
Good weather conditions	4	3	2	1
Quality of natural scenery & landscapes/environment	4	3	2	1
Opportunity to see wildlife	4	3	2	1
Visits to parks and other pristine natural areas	4	3	2	1
Opportunity to stay in pristine natural environment	4	3	2	1
Desire to learn about other cultures, their ways of life & heritage	4	3	2	1
Participation in major cultural or religious events	4	3	2	1
Opportunity to visit an indigenous or traditional community	4	3	2	1
Opportunities to experience traditional ways of life	4	3	2	1
Opportunities for learning about and experiencing natural and cultural attractions	4	3	2	1
Opportunities for adventure/sports activities	4	3	2	1
Good prices for quality received	4	3	2	1
Good local transportation system	4	3	2	1
Recommendations from a friend/book	4	3	2	1
Facilities for children	4	3	2	1
Accessibility	4	3	2	1
Safety	4	3	2	1
Interest in business investment in visited area	4	3	2	1

11. What activities have you been doing or will you be doing while in this area? (please check all that apply)  
 hiking/trekking                       wildlife viewing                       biking                       visiting indigenous populations  
 swimming                       visiting villages                       visiting small towns or villages  
 visiting historical places                       cultural heritage sights                       visiting national parks  
 climbing                       attending art or music performances (i.e. dancing, drumming, singing, craft demonstrations)

# Sample Visitor Questionnaire (continued)

12. How would you evaluate the following aspects of your stay in the area?  
(Please circle the number of the answer that represents your evaluation of each factor)

Products, Services & Hospitality	Excellent	Good	Bad	Very bad	N/A
Services at the airport	4	3	2	1	0
Maintenance and convenience of the airport	4	3	2	1	0
Personal safety	4	3	2	1	0
Friendliness of the people	4	3	2	1	0
Explanation and convenience of the customs	4	3	2	1	0
National cuisine/drinks	4	3	2	1	0
Accessibility to cultural heritage sites	4	3	2	1	0
Interpretation of cultural heritage sites	4	3	2	1	0
Access to wildlife/plant life viewing	4	3	2	1	0
Interpretation of wildlife/plant life	4	3	2	1	0
Diversity of athletic activities	4	3	2	1	0
Equipment for athletic activities	4	3	2	1	0
Visitor centers	4	3	2	1	0
Organized excursions	4	3	2	1	0
Degree of knowledge of foreign languages from the service personnel	4	3	2	1	0
Helpful police services	4	3	2	1	0
Weather	4	3	2	1	0
Facilities for children	4	3	2	1	0
Shopping opportunities	4	3	2	1	0
Telecommunications	4	3	2	1	0
Convenience and access to local transport	4	3	2	1	0

13. Would you recommend that a friend of yours visit this area?  yes  no  
Why or why not? \_\_\_\_\_

14. Approximately how much money did you spend during this visit to the area? Please answer with only the amounts that you/spouse paid for. Also, please respond using the currency with which you paid. (i.e. dollars, pounds, euros, etc.)

Transportation	
Airfare	
Local	
Restaurants/meals	
Activities	
Shopping	
Entertainment	
Lodging	
Other	
TOTAL:	

15. Please check the box which is closest to your annual income: (the spaces must be filled in by the **Assessment Team** according to the local salary range and currency)

1.  \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_      2.  \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_  
3.  \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_      4.  \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_

16. Your approximate age:

1.  less than 25 years      2.  between 26 and 35 years  
3.  between 36 and 45 years      4.  between 46 and 55 years  
5.  between 56 and 65 years      6.  over 65 years

17. Please check one:  male  female

18. What is your profession? \_\_\_\_\_

19. What is the highest level of education that you completed?

- Grade School       High School       Vocational/ Trade School  
 College       Post-Graduate

# Conducting a Visitor Survey

The survey process can be overwhelming; therefore, the **Assessment Team** is encouraged to seek professional help in administering the survey and analyzing the results if time and resources allow. Local businesses, universities and government bodies may be able to provide survey expertise and support.

The following overview provides you with a basic refresher on the survey process. Follow these guidelines to create a simple, yet effective, survey.

## Elements to Consider When Administering a Survey<sup>14</sup>

You will have to:

1. Make key decisions at the outset concerning what times of day to survey, where to survey and the number of days you will be surveying. Consider at which key attractions/locations you are going to administer the survey. Also, consider the scale of your survey. Are you surveying the entire region or a single village?
2. Manage interviewers and any businesses or other organizations that are cooperating in the survey.
3. Manage databases of respondent information.
4. Select a data inputting system and manage survey data input.
5. Report the results of the survey.

## Estimating Your Visitor Population and Selecting Your Sample

Typically, surveys are accomplished by choosing a portion, or sample, of the entire population and administering the survey to individuals within that sample at random. This is done with the understanding that their answers will reflect the answers of the entire and diverse population. Therefore a “sample” population represents the entire destination’s population.

Depending on the tourist season of the destination and your length of stay in the field, you may have a limited “sampling” for your survey. A “sample” is simply a portion of people who represent a larger population. Researchers survey sample sizes because in most cases it would be too costly and time consuming to survey an entire population. There is a formal equation that statisticians use for determining the optimum sample size. Generally, the size of the sample needs to be large enough to represent the whole population. Fortunately, in most instances a complex calculation for determining sample size will not be needed. Mathematically, populations with numbers over 2,000 will require approximately 385 surveys to produce results that confidentially obtain trends from the responses.

A sample population is usually chosen through random selection. This means that every member of the population has an equal chance of being selected for the survey process. If the flow of visitor traffic is good at the location(s) you choose to administer the survey, ask every other or every third visitor you see to participate in the survey. Do not simply target tourists at one hotel unless your “target population” is everyone staying at that specific hotel. However, if the destination in general has very few tourists, ask every tourist you see to participate in the survey. This will not give you a “random sampling”, however, it will give you an idea of the current tourist market. If done correctly, the survey results will offer a helpful snapshot of the visitors’ interests and their perception of the destination.

*Refer to Tools “How to Design a Questionnaire” and “Sample Visitor Questionnaire” on pages 49-51 to develop a survey that meets the needs of the Assessment Team.*

## Who Conducts the Surveys?

Local community members identified during the Involving Local Stakeholders process may help the **Assessment Team** administer the survey. When choosing survey interviewers look for the following qualities:

1. Good communication skills, speak the local language(s);
2. Social maturity and respect for all members of the community;
3. Friendly and outgoing, yet objective;
4. Task oriented and focused;
5. Ability to independently carry out a task.

# How to Analyze and Interpret Survey Results

The first step for the **Assessment Team** is to compile the data collected either automatically with a computer program or by hand. Someone familiar with computers and spreadsheets can design a simple data entry and analysis program, or can also use programs such as Excel, Stat View, SPSS, and SAS. Check the accuracy of data entry at the beginning of the process to correct mistakes that might have occurred.

Analysis of questionnaire data by hand is relatively simple. Responses to questions can be tallied up and calculation of percentages can be used to determine average response rates. For example, if the number of people who answered the question is 200 and the number of those who answered the specific response for “Strongly Agree” is 50, the percentage of people that “Strongly Agree” to the particular question is 25%. Since the questionnaire is designed to be easy to interpret and analyze, hand tabulation of the data should not be a problem. It is, however, slower than using the computer program’s more complex correlations which can give more detailed analysis such as “of the 25% that Strongly Agree, 80% feel tourism needs to be better planned.”

## Evaluating Survey Results

The **Assessment Team** should consider the following factors when reviewing the results:

- What are the characteristics of those surveyed? Do they represent the larger population?
- What is the general response of the people surveyed?
- Are there any questions that generated responses that are overwhelmingly positive or negative, or are all the responses somewhere in between?
- Are there any obvious correlations between different questions?

# Supply and Competitiveness

**THE ASSESSMENT** Team's understanding of the current and local tourism industry, as well as how it is functioning is vital to identifying new products that could bring added value to the destination. In addition to this insight, assessing supply and competitiveness will help ensure new concepts that are competitive within the overall tourism industry are recommended. To do this, the **Assessment Team** must research businesses and destinations that are supplying tourism services.

## Getting Started

- Research already existing information on the destination's tourism industry.
- Complete *Worksheet 10 Competitive Advantage Exercise* to determine and list the competition.
- Use *Worksheets 11 Accommodation Facilities Survey, 12 Tour Operator Survey, and 13 Arts and Crafts Enterprise Survey* to obtain specific details on how hotels, tour operators, and arts and crafts businesses operate.

### Understanding the Supply-side of Tourism

The first step is to analyze the supply of tourism services existing in the area to determine:

- The size and health of the local and national tourism industry;
- How the local tourism industry is structured and branded;
- Opportunities for collaboration;
- Potential target markets;
- Competitors and how to differentiate from them.

Specifically, look for the following information:

- *Location of Tourism Operations*—What are the tourism clusters (areas of intense tourism activity)?
- *Facilities and Amenities*—Which lodging, restaurants, shops, etc. are being used by tourists?
- *Rates Charged*—What are the current price levels (inexpensive, moderate and expensive)?
- *Occupancy Rates*—Which properties are successful and how many visitors do they receive per year or season?
- *Market Segments Served*—Who is currently visiting these operations and where do they originate? What brands are being promoted? How are they marketed?
- *Employment*—How have the employees changed over the years? Are there projected growths or declines in the industry?
- *Sustainability*—What measures are in place to minimize negative socio-cultural and environmental impacts? Are there current issues with these?

Recommended sources of information on the local tourism industry include:

- Registration of hotels, restaurants and retail shops with local business council or chamber of commerce.
- Studies or reports done on these business establishments by NGOs, universities, consultants, and others.
- Surveys of the tourism businesses and potential competitors



## Defining the Competition

Potential competitors are any other existing or planned tourism businesses, attractions, or destinations that could draw tourists away from the area or site where tourism development is planned. For example, a beach resort ten minutes away from an ecolodge would be considered competition, because tourists visiting the area could potentially decide to spend the night there. The ecolodge may have to “compete” for the attention of tourists. Similarly, if a forest reserve that is 30 minutes away offers camping sites, they can be considered to be competition because tourists could opt to visit the campsite instead of the ecolodge. It is important to recognize and understand the competition in order to determine how planned tourism development could attract a different market (such as targeting a luxury versus a backpacking market). Competition can often be a positive factor in creating opportunities for partnerships and developing complementary products and services to existing ones.

### Case Example: Maintaining Competitiveness in the Caribbean

Caribbean tourism destinations face extensive competition. Many amenities offered in the Caribbean (beautiful beaches, tropical climate, coral reefs, tropical forests, colonial charm) are available in other destinations in South America, the Mediterranean and the Pacific. In order to maintain their competitiveness Caribbean stakeholders are mindful of a number of issues. These include maintaining profits; keeping prices low; aging hotel infrastructure; improving service quality; and, investing in human resources and development of local entrepreneurs. In addition, environmental degradation from other industry, and tourism itself, are also concerns. To address these issues regional organizations like the Organization of American States have engaged in projects aimed at improving competitiveness such as: Caribbean Tourism Competitiveness and Sustainability; Caribbean Destination Management System; and the Caribbean Environment and Tourism Public Attitudes and Awareness Program.

The **Assessment Team** should use *Worksheet 10 Competitive Advantage Exercise* to determine and list the competition. This guideline will also walk the team through assessing the current competition and what may occur in the future.

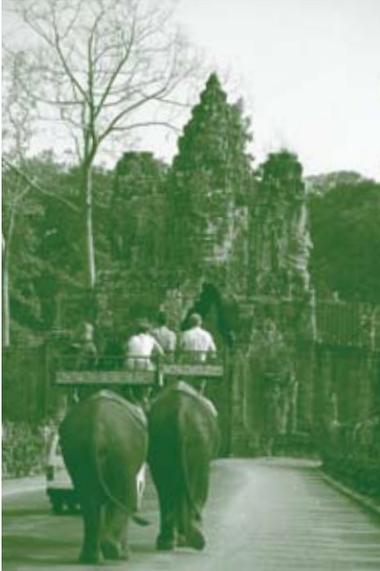
## Surveying the Tourism Industry

To learn more about potential competition and businesses in the area, the **Assessment Team** can choose to survey a select sample of existing businesses. Be aware that often businesses will not want to give out competitive information. To overcome this objection, it is important to honestly discuss the team’s intentions and emphasize that this is part of a larger effort to find ways to develop tourism in the destination.

The **Assessment Team’s** understanding of the current and local tourism industry, as well as how it is functioning is vital to identifying new products that bring added value to the destination.

Competition can often be a positive factor in creating opportunities for partnerships and developing complementary products and services.

## “ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL SUSTAINABILITY ARE OFTEN COMPETITIVENESS FACTORS.”



*It is better if the **Assessment Team** conducts these surveys without local participants to maintain objectivity. If local participants conduct the survey, the result could be less objective because personal interests may be infused into the results.*

Use *Worksheets 11, 12, and 13* to survey hotels, tour operators, and arts and crafts businesses. The team is encouraged to use these templates to design worksheets for other types of businesses.

It is important to focus on aspects of quality and customer service because they often affect the success of tourism products and services. After each survey, take note of some general observations and comment on the following factors:

- **Cleanliness**—Are the facilities well kept? Is garbage taken care of? How clean are the bathrooms? Kitchens?
- **Organization**—Are the facilities designed to help increase productivity? Are adequate equipment and supplies available, such as professional kitchens, stocks of food, linens, cleaning supplies, employee areas, clear passageways, washbasins, and so forth?
- **Maintenance**—Are buildings and furnishings in good repair? Are there any major infrastructure issues? Are the surrounding areas, such as landscaping and driveways, well kept?
- **Friendliness of Staff**—Do they offer service with a smile? Do they seem like they care? Do they listen to customers? Do they spend time informing them?
- **Level and Quality of Service or Product**—Is the staff attentive, quick and efficient? Is the staff able to efficiently correct a situation? Is the product of good quality? What is the attention to detail? For instance, what is the variety and quality of activities offered by tours operators, or the type of food being sold by restaurants?
- **Level of Comfort and Reliability**—What is the type of furnishing? Are facilities or products well designed to meet customer needs? Are they reliable and safe?
- **Quality of Interpretation**—This is a key area for tour operators. How well do they present the destination and/or attraction? Is interpretation interactive? Is it interesting?
- **Main Draw for Customers**—Why are customers attracted? What is their main benefit?
- **Location**—Is the business near major attractions, good scenery, or other businesses?
- **Information available on services**—How easy is it to find out about the business?

When reviewing these factors, think of how each has been successful, as well as any areas that need improvement. Also, try to project future competition. Factors to consider are:

- Current properties to be refurbished or expanded;
- Current properties to be removed;
- New properties, including those that are planned, already financed, or under development.



## Competitiveness and Sustainability

Another aspect impacting on the competitiveness of a destination is its environmental and social sustainability. There are eleven principles developed by Ecotourism Australia and Green Globe 21 that are internationally recognized as performance indicators for ecotourism and which can also apply to sustainable tourism efforts. The **Assessment Team** can use these to help gauge measures the existing tourism industry is taking to ensure sustainability. These include:

1. Direct contributions to the conservation of a natural area;
2. Benefits to the local community;
3. Interpretation and education so visitors better understand and appreciate nature;
4. Opportunities to experience nature;
5. Environmental sustainability;
6. Cultural respect and sensitivity;
7. Customer satisfaction;
8. Honest and accurate marketing and promotions;
9. Ecologically compatible infrastructure;
10. Ethical standards and codes of conduct;
11. Management and operational guidelines on minimizing impacts.

## Evaluating and Finalizing the Results

First, summarize the conclusions from the survey and findings. Second, list those businesses that will function as competitors and/or potential partners for collaboration, such as joint-marketing and so forth. Finally, provide conclusions on the following key factors:

- Where are the main tourism areas?
- Is the local tourism industry doing well? Which businesses are successful and why?
- Do businesses plan to grow? Will they employ more people in the next year?
- What types of facilities and services are being offered? Which ones are missing?
- Who are the main competitors and potential partners?
- What are the opportunities for collaboration?
- What are the opportunities for developing differentiated products and services?
- What recommendations are there for providing a different, unique service?
- What are the opportunities for incorporating sustainable and ecotourism principles?
- What are the prices like? Do they vary? Are they high, low, or moderate? What price range(s) are likely suitable for the destination?
- Where are visitors coming from and how are they finding out about the area?
- Are there opportunities to target new markets? If so, which ones?

Quality and customer service often affect the success of tourism products and services.

# Competitive Advantage Exercise<sup>15</sup>

## WORKSHEET 10

What are the two or three places that the Assessment Team feels are your primary competition in terms of attracting visitors away from your proposed activities?

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

Select a competitor from the above list and write the name below.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Think about the resources, attractions and other features of that competing area. For each tourism category below, list just two important advantages that this competitor has that you feel contribute to their success in tourism.

### Attractions

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_

### Events, such as cultural or social gatherings or festivals

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_

### Transportation

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_

### Tourist services

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_

### Sustainability

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_

What are some things that your competitor does particularly well in communicating information about its area and the vacation opportunities it offers? (For example: signs, brochures, advertisements, etc.)

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

### Identify some advantages and limitations your area may have over the competition.

You may want to compare what you have in common with your competitor, or try to find ways to offer better service, lower prices, or more interesting and effective advertising. However, improving and developing your unique strong points can be a good strategy.

Think about the resources, attractions and other features of your area. For each tourism category listed, record two or three advantages that your area has over competitors. Look for unique, specific features your area has, or could develop and promote, to give you an advantage in attracting visitors.

### Cultural and Heritage Attractions

#### Advantages

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_

#### Limitations

1. \_\_\_\_\_

### Nature-Based Attractions

#### Advantages

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_

#### Limitations

1. \_\_\_\_\_

# Competitive Advantage Exercise<sup>15</sup> (Continued)

## WORKSHEET 10

### Recreation

Advantages

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_

Limitations

1. \_\_\_\_\_

### Special Events

Advantages

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_

Limitations

1. \_\_\_\_\_

### Tourist Services and Facilities

Advantages

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_

Limitations

1. \_\_\_\_\_

### Accessibility

Advantages

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_

Limitations

1. \_\_\_\_\_

### Visitor Demographics, Seasons, Trends

Advantages

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_

Limitations

1. \_\_\_\_\_

### Communication

Advantages

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_

Limitations

1. \_\_\_\_\_

### Organization

Advantages

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_

Limitations

1. \_\_\_\_\_

# Sample Accommodation Facilities Survey<sup>16</sup>

TOOL

BUSINESS NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

**Which one of the following most accurately describes the lodging facility?**

Hotel                       Cottages/Bungalows                       Resort                       Campground/campsites  
 Motel                       Bed and Breakfast/Inn                       Private Home                       Hostel  
 Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

**Which best describes the style of lodging you offer?**

Family Value                       Luxury                       Economy                       Backpacker                       Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

**Number of units by type:**

**Single:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Double:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Suite:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Other:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Total:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Amenities available:**

Restaurant                       24 Hour Reception                       Transportation Services                       Swimming Facilities  
 Laundry                       Souvenir Shop                       Porter  
 Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

**About how many customers do you serve on average for each year?** \_\_\_\_\_

**Do you experience seasonality? If so, how much (% in high season)?** \_\_\_\_\_

**What is the average price of a room? High \$** \_\_\_\_\_ **Mid \$** \_\_\_\_\_ **Low \$** \_\_\_\_\_

**For the past year, what was the average number of days your guests stayed?** \_\_\_\_\_

**Where do most of your guests come from?**

Country # 1 \_\_\_\_\_ % of all guests \_\_\_\_\_  
 Country # 2 \_\_\_\_\_ % of all guests \_\_\_\_\_  
 Country # 3 \_\_\_\_\_ % of all guests \_\_\_\_\_

**Of those that are traveling for Leisure (or on vacation), what is their main reason for visiting? (one only)**

Culture                       Adventure Travel                       Desert Travel  
 Nature/Wildlife                       Exploration Arts                       Historic Attractions  
 Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

**How do you advertise your business:**

Word of Mouth                       Pamphlets                       Familiarization Tours  
 Travel Agents                       Visitor Info. Centers                       Internet  
 Travel Shows                       Road Signs                       Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

**What is your full-time employment figure in High Season?** \_\_\_\_\_ **Mid?** \_\_\_\_\_ **Low season?** \_\_\_\_\_

**What do you expect your average full-time employment figure to be next year?** \_\_\_\_\_

**What is your average part-time employment figure?** \_\_\_\_\_

**Do you work with the local community? If yes, how?** \_\_\_\_\_

**Do you use green technologies such as solar or wind energy, composting, water catchment systems, or solid waste management?** \_\_\_\_\_

# Sample Tour Operator Survey

TOOL

BUSINESS NAME

ADDRESS

PHONE

Which one of the following most accurately describes your tour operations?

- Large (>20), inbound only       Large, inbound and outbound       Small, inbound - national  
 Small, inbound and outbound       Small, local area only       Bus Tours  
 Other (specify)

What type of tours do you mainly provide?

- Cultural/Heritage       Historical       Nature/Adventure (biking, rafting, trekking)  
 Beach       Boat Tours       Beach  
 Other (specify)       Nature Interpretation (wildlife, camping)

About how many customers do you serve on average each year?

Do you experience seasonality? If so, how much (% in high season)?

What is the price range for your packages (all inclusive)?

1 day:       1 night/2 days:       2/3 days:       3/4 days:       1 week:

Where do most of your guests come from?

Country # 1  % of all guests

Country # 2  % of all guests

Country # 3  % of all guests

What do you think is the main reason people use your services?

How do you advertise your business:

- Word of Mouth       Pamphlets       Familiarization Tours  
 Travel Agents       Visitor Info. Centers       Internet  
 Travel Shows       Road Signs       Other (specify)

What is your full-time employment figure in High Season?  Mid?  Low season?

What do you expect your average full-time employment figure to be next year?

What is your average part-time employment figure?

What do you expect your average part-time employment figure to be next year?

# Arts and Crafts Enterprise Survey

TOOL

BUSINESS NAME

ADDRESS

PHONE

Which one of the following most accurately describes your operation?

- Large or medium-sized enterprise       Small-sized enterprise       Micro-sized enterprise  
 Manufacturer       Wholesaler       Retailer  
 Other (specify)

What type of product do you produce, wholesale or retail?

- Clothing       Basketry, Weaving       Art (i.e. paintings and sculpture)  
 Furniture       Jewelry       Household Items (i.e. place mats)  
 Other (specify)       Wood Carvings

About how much product do you sell on average each year?

Do you experience seasonality? If so, how much (% in high season)

What type of product do you produce?

- Expensive, high-end       Reasonable       Inexpensive

Where do you sell most of your products?

- # 1  % of all buyers   
# 2  % of all buyers   
# 3  % of all buyers

What do you think is the main reason people purchase your products?

How do you advertise your business:

- Word of Mouth       Pamphlets       Advertising       Other (specify)  
 Road Signs       Location (i.e. side of the road)       Internet

What is your full-time employment figure in High Season?  Mid?  Low season?

What do you expect your average full-time employment figure to be next year?

What is your average part-time employment figure?

What do you expect your average part-time employment figure to be next year?



# Human and Institutional Capacity

THE SUCCESS of sustainable tourism development will be determined to a large extent by the available human resources and existing institutional capacity. Tourism development requires a broad range of human capacity and skills, as well as institutional support.

## Getting Started

- This assessment is divided into four components:
  1. Mapping available human resources;
  2. Developing a labor force profile;
  3. Determining gaps between potential needs and existing capacity;
  4. Assessing institutional support structures.
- Use *Worksheets 11 Labor Force Profile and 12 Tourism Labor Demand*.
- Use business survey results from Supply and Competitiveness Tools – if available.

This capacity assessment evaluates the available human resource pool within the destination and the institutions or organizations available to support development of a tourism labor force. The destination will require people skilled in operations, management, administration, maintenance, transportation, and so forth. Well-established tourism institutions and organizations, at different levels, can effectively facilitate tourism development in the destination. Government organizations such as National Tourism Boards or Administrations and Ministries of Tourism, local industry associations, and other non-governmental organizations often play a key role in successful tourism development. Human resource planning, capacity building and institutional strengthening are often central components of planning for successful tourism development.

## The Process of Mapping Available Human Resources

The first step in the process is forecasting the human resources needs by asking the following question, “What knowledge and skills exist in the destination?” The idea here is to develop an inventory of the existing knowledge and skills. Knowledge and skills needed for tourism include but are not limited to:

- Managerial and operational;
- Accounting and controlling;
- Human resource management;
- Marketing and sales;
- Leadership;
- Food services skills such as menu planning, food preparation and waiting tables;
- Housekeeping;
- Reception guest services;
- Travel agency services;
- Tour operations;
- Attraction and recreational management;
- Knowledge of destination; i.e. cultural heritage, history and biodiversity;
- Interpretation, guiding and languages;
- Park and protected area management;
- Architectural design, landscaping and building;
- Business planning and development;
- Land-use planning, zoning and building codes;
- Environmental management and auditing;
- Banking and credit card services.

As much as possible, rely on already published data to determine the current labor market profile.



## Developing a Labor Force Profile

Most countries compile statistics on employment rates. This index is a measure of the proportion of people eligible for inclusion in the labor force that are actually working. This index can be used to project labor force availability within different employment sectors. By comparing the employment rates to population demographics, it is possible to determine which segments of the labor force to target, and whether the skills of the labor force from specific employment sectors are transferable to the tourism industry. Population demographics can also reveal any critical issues, such as migration trends, that may need to be factored into human resource planning. Use *Worksheet 11 Labor Force Profile* to help guide the **Assessment Team's** research.

It is important to be cognizant of the fact that while national-level statistics and information may be readily available from secondary sources, this may not be the case for local-level information. This limitation may be addressed by asking labor market profile questions as part of any surveys done of local businesses (see *Supply and Competitiveness Section Tools*).

In addition to general labor force trends, it is equally important to obtain information that is specific to the tourism industry and the geographic region in which tourism development will be based. This layer of data is crucial to assessing the situations that may be encountered when trying to foster a workforce that is likely to succeed. Tourism agencies and associations are often good sources of local-level labor force information.

## Comparing Forecasted Needs to Labor Market Realities

With a better understanding of general labor force trends—and more specifically, those that relate to the tourism industry—the team is now equipped to assess the overlaps between forecasted human resources needs and the realities of the labor market. By overlaying the information on forecasted needs and labor market realities, the **Assessment Team** will have a better sense of the level of effort and investment needed to successfully develop tourism in the destination. To help you conduct this assessment, use *Worksheet 12 Tourism Labor Demand*, which provides a helpful assessment framework.

## Assessing Institutional Support for Tourism

Successful tourism destinations have often relied on strong supporting institutions to provide planning, development, management, training, and marketing support. Government offices may provide funding support for planning, destination marketing and provision of services such as waste and sewage management. Banking institutions, development agencies and others may provide financing and business development support to the private section. In addition, informal and formal tourism training programs may be available through local universities, technical schools

Well-established tourism institutions and organizations, at different levels, can effectively facilitate tourism development in the destination.

Human resource planning, capacity building and institutional strengthening are often central components of planning for successful tourism development.

# “HUMAN RESOURCE PLANNING, CAPACITY BUILDING AND INSTITUTIONAL STRENGTHENING ARE OFTEN CENTRAL COMPONENTS OF PLANNING FOR SUCCESSFUL TOURISM DEVELOPMENT.”



and industry associations. The institutional support available and their capacity to engage in tourism development efforts will impact final recommendations.

## Institutional Capacity

The box below contains a listing of sources of information, which will help the **Assessment Team** answer the following key questions about available institutional support:

- Which institutions are available to support tourism development in the area?
- Are they effective? Would they be able to provide support in developing capacities to engage in tourism development in the targeted area?
- If there is current or future demand, are there adequate resources and available training for building an adequate labor force?
- Where are there major gaps for building adequate capacity to support tourism development? What type of institutional support is required to achieve this?

## Tapping into Existing Information

Institutional Support for Tourism Development can come from:

- Government tourism organizations and their hierarchical structures (Ministries of Tourism and National Tourism Boards and Administrations, Park and Protected Area Management, Forestry Departments, Environmental Agencies, Economic Development Offices, National Development and Destination Management Organizations, etc.);
- Government tourism budgets;
- Multilateral, bilateral, and other aid agencies supporting local tourism development;
- Local/regional tourism industry professional associations;
- Local/regional tourism educational institutions and centers;
- Local/regional tourism non-profit organizations;
- Private sector organizations.

# Labor Force Profile<sup>17</sup>

## WORKSHEET 11

1. Population in Study Area			
a. Number	<input type="text"/>	Trends <input type="text"/>	
b. Age structure (number)			
under 20	<input type="text"/>	Trends <input type="text"/>	
20–30	<input type="text"/>	Trends <input type="text"/>	
31–50	<input type="text"/>	Trends <input type="text"/>	
51–65	<input type="text"/>	Trends <input type="text"/>	
over 65	<input type="text"/>	Trends <input type="text"/>	
2. Labor Force			
a. Total civilian labor force	<input type="text"/>	Trends <input type="text"/>	
b. Unemployment number	<input type="text"/>	Trends <input type="text"/>	
c. Type of employment	Number	Average hourly wage earnings	Trends
Agriculture	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Mining	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Construction	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Manufacturing	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Timber	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Transportation	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Trade	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Finance/Insurance/Real Estate	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Services	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Government	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
d. Local education levels			
• % completed primary school	<input type="text"/>		
• % completed secondary school	<input type="text"/>		
• % completed 1 <sup>st</sup> university degree	<input type="text"/>		
• % completed Master's degree	<input type="text"/>		
• % completed PhD or higher	<input type="text"/>		
• Number received specific training in tourism hospitality services	<input type="text"/>		
<p>Tourism Service Positions (use the results from tourism services surveys in the Supply and Competitiveness analysis—Tools section; comment on general level of experience, education, and management style).</p>			
Owners/Managers	<input type="text"/>	#	<input type="text"/>
Employees	<input type="text"/>	#	<input type="text"/>
3. Are there any discernable trends in the economy? Are people moving into the area or out of it? Any particular type or group? Do the young stay or leave? Once educated, does the labor force move away?			

# Tourism Labor Demand

## WORKSHEET 12

### 1. Labor Force Availability

a. Does the current available labor force meet the tourism labor demands?

b. Is the available labor force increasing or decreasing?

c. What are the main factors causing this trend?

d. Is there or will there be increased demand for labor from any other industries?

e. Are the skills required to work in these other industries transferable to the tourism industry?

### 2. Tourism Demand for Labor

f. Is there or will there be increased demand for labor from the tourism industry? Why?

g. What are the specific labor needs within the tourism industry?

h. What key challenges or opportunities exist within the current and future tourism labor force?



# Socio-Economic, Cultural and Natural Resource Use Considerations<sup>18</sup>

**BECAUSE TOURISM** involves bringing “strangers” into a community, it is important to consider social, economic, cultural and related natural resource use impacts of the introduction or enhancement of tourism in a destination. Tourism has the potential to generate both positive and negative impacts on an area and its inhabitants.

## Getting Started

- The **Assessment Team** may conduct a socio-cultural impact assessment through a combination of the following methodologies:

1. Community Mapping;
2. Stakeholder Analysis;
3. Conducting Resident Attitude Surveys.

- See Tools at the end of this section detailing each of these approaches.

Negative impacts of tourism, particularly to the social and cultural integrity of a community, usually occur when the values and behaviors of the local community are threatened. This can include changes to the family structure, relationships, collective traditional lifestyles, and on moral values. On the other hand, tourism can be positive by fostering local pride, decreasing urban flight and increasing global understanding.

In addition, tourism activity can positively or negatively impact on a host community’s use of natural resources. These resources can include water, clean air, agricultural lands, recreational areas, and important ecosystems such as forests, grasslands, wetlands, and coastal areas. Tourism can also compete with host communities for scarce resources such as food, fuel, wood, and other sources of energy. These impacts can further negatively affect local economies by driving up food, housing and energy costs.

However, well-planned tourism can result in positive impacts on natural resource use. For example, it can provide alternatives to more destructive livelihoods such as illegal logging, poaching, or unsustainable farming. In most destinations, pristine ecosystems and landscapes are resources for tourism, creating an economic reliance on a healthy natural environment. In these cases, host communities often become stewards of these resources, defending and protecting important ecosystems and landscapes from over-development or degradation.

This assessment explores how to identify the complementary relationship between a host community and tourism and the potential impact on natural resource use.

Although it is difficult to determine what impacts will be viewed as having negative or positive aspects prior to their occurrence, this process helps the **Assessment Team** in gaining a true understanding of residents’ attitudes towards tourism development, and identifying probable positive and negative impacts on the “quality of life” of the host population, as well as the underlying natural resource use, social and economic issues. It also requires analysis of the tourism stakeholders’ priorities and their views of the tourism sector.

Gaining a true understanding of resident attitudes towards tourism development, as well as a better understanding of the underlying conservation, social and economic issues, will allow the team to make recommendations towards socially acceptable, economically viable and ecologically sustainable tourism development.



## The Value of Community Mapping

Community mapping is a participatory process in which stakeholders draw an illustrated geographical map. This tool shows the location of tourism and community resources and supporting infrastructure that will help the team determine any gaps that need to be addressed for the basis for tourism development decisions. The process involves:

- Working together with local stakeholders to draw a map that identifies where resources, activities and opportunities are located;
- Determining specific problem areas and potential for improvement and the dimension and scope of issues to be investigated;
- Open and intensive community discussions on tourism resources, activities, potential problems, and opportunities.

Community mapping is most effective in areas where there is clear potential for tourism development and where the **Assessment Team** has an opportunity to have a general meeting with the majority of community representatives. It is important to realize that community mapping takes time (average at least 6 hours) and stakeholders will need to be able to commit to this time.

## Advantages of Mapping

1. It clearly shows where resources, activities, problems, and opportunities are located, as well as the dimension and scope of issues to be investigated.
2. It provides information beyond that collected during the initial reconnaissance and verifies the information on the sketch map.
3. It adds details on specific characteristics – slope, drainage, vegetation, water, soils, and other resources – that further refine the **Assessment Team**'s understanding of the area and the interactions between the physical environment and human activities.
4. The discussions among participants stimulate exchanges about problems and achievements, both in current times and also going as far back as the oldest local residents' representatives can remember or were told by their parents and grandparents.
5. Group discussions provide a good opportunity for the **Assessment Team** to ask community representatives about previous trends and traditional community responses, as well as about possible opportunities to resolve current problems.
6. The discussions help the **Assessment Team** to understand the type of tourism operating in the area and the residents' perceptions of that industry, as well as the significance of the industry to household incomes in relation to other alternative enterprises.

Community stakeholders are knowledgeable and can often provide a wealth of information on tourism development and sustainability factors.

Tourism can positively or negatively impact on a host community's use of natural resources.

“IT IS CRITICAL TO IDENTIFY WHICH STAKEHOLDERS HAVE THE RESPECT AND CONFIDENCE OF THE COMMUNITY, ARE KNOWLEDGEABLE AND CAN ENGAGE IN DISCUSSIONS ON TOURISM DEVELOPMENT, SUSTAINABILITY AND ECOTOURISM FACTORS.”



7. The discussions might begin to organize the range of opportunities for the community to consider. Additionally, it will focus community attention on the positive and negative aspects of resource use and on its traditional resource management practices.

### The Value of Stakeholder Analysis

This process identifies which individuals and groups will be impacted – and how – through group interviews with stakeholders. It aims to specify who is likely to gain from tourism development and who is likely to lose, and by how much. It is also an attempt to predict changes in social behavior, local culture, traditions, and quality of life issues that might result from tourism development. By fully exploring the potential – real and perceived – impacts of tourism development in general, or of a proposed project/product, this process allows destination stakeholders to anticipate and take actions to avoid unintended negative consequences. This process will also help the **Assessment Team** augment and analyze the potential socio-cultural and biodiversity conservation impacts – positive and negative – of tourism development.

### The Value of a Resident Survey

This snapshot of residents' socio-economic situation and attitudes provides information to direct recommendations on tourism development that is acceptable to residents. In addition to understanding how much and what kind of tourism is desired, it can help the team understand residents' livelihoods, their relationship with natural resources in the area, and how tourism may be structured to foster socio-economic and environmental priorities. The results of the survey will indicate the level of support for planning, zoning, citizen involvement, and restriction of tourism development.

It is advisable that only outside help or members of the original **Assessment Team** conduct the resident survey. If local people do this, the results may be less objective due to personal interests. In most cases it is best not to attempt to survey all community residents. Instead, survey a sample of residents selected to represent the destination's attitude. This is called a sample population.



## Drawing Conclusions on Socio-Economic, Cultural & Natural Resource Use Considerations

When reviewing the results of the surveys, consider:

1. How tourism will contribute to the welfare/development of local people.
2. Defining threats attributed to tourism development plans by communities.
3. Opportunities identified to adequately mitigate short- and long-term threats to a community and tourism product relations.
4. Community interests, needs and impacts clearly defined.
5. Sufficient social cohesion and functioning institutions to enable communities to manage their role and any benefits.
6. Gender roles (men, women, old, and young) and how they are factored into tourism activity designs.
7. Internal and external social conditions that will impact the tourism development strategy and outcomes.
8. Tourism potential to provide economic alternatives. Consider the following:
  - Would additional job creation and income generating activities draw residents away from more destructive livelihoods, such as slash-and-burn agriculture, over-fishing and illegal logging?
  - Would it encourage stewardship for biodiversity? Would the benefits from tourism development be enough to motivate the community to conserve the natural environment?
  - Would communities or businesses support the creation of additional parks and protected areas? What are their attitudes to the surrounding environment? If not, what will likely increase their understanding?

Well-planned tourism can result in positive impacts on natural resources use. In most destinations, pristine ecosystems and landscapes are resources for tourism, creating an economic reliance on a healthy natural environment. In these cases, host communities often become stewards of these resources, defending and protecting important ecosystems and landscapes from over-development or degradation.

# How to Conduct Community Mapping<sup>19</sup>

TOOL

## Getting Started

- Review and use *TOOL: How to Conduct Community Mapping*.
- Source or prepare a base map that includes simple topographic data (elevations – lower/upper, etc.); simple information on soils, vegetation, ecological zones, water availability, and tourist destination sites; and infrastructure such as roads, schools, health facilities, police posts.
- Select a facilitation team from local organizations to include technical expertise in agriculture, social science, environment, and development.

## Introduction

A community map shows the **Assessment Team** and stakeholders where tourism resources, activities, problems, and opportunities are located; the dimension and scope of issues – social, cultural, economic; and, their relationships to biodiversity. It helps in understanding the boundaries and characteristics of the community involved or targeted for tourism development.

## Participants

A team comprising the core **Assessment Team**, extension field staff, government representatives, natural resource managers, and local community representatives should undertake this exercise. Someone on the **Assessment Team** should have good map drawing skills. The various representatives bring different but complementary ideas to the process. While the natural resource managers and tourism officers will verify technical issues, the community representatives will provide clear guidance on such matters as the correct position of boundaries and other site-specific details, including concerns on social issues.

The facilitation team should include both men and women with a mixture of expertise (technical extension officers with experience in areas such as agriculture, social science, environment, and community development). Their major role would be to observe and take notes of the mapping processes, the community discussions and the analysis of each feature placed on the map. They should be able to ask follow-up questions to the communities about anything the team feels is not discussed sufficiently, as well as possible opportunities to resolve current problems.

## How to Implement

Similar to calling a public meeting, the **Assessment Team** can organize the community-mapping workshop in a variety of ways (see Involving Local Stakeholders in the Assessment Process). The **Assessment Team** will need to carefully identify participants to invite and determine a venue. It is important that the meeting location is neutral and the timing is acceptable to the majority of invitees.

The **Assessment Team** starts the meeting by introducing themselves and informing the community of the planned assessment work. Each representative is then asked to introduce himself or herself and to describe the activities of his/her association briefly, clarify their roles and identify their resources base. The **Assessment Team** then presents its motivations, explains to the stakeholders why this is an important meeting for them, states clearly what the objectives are, and explains what the exercise is all about and what they would like to achieve.

Where no detailed map of the site exists, a large-scale topographical map can be drawn either on the ground or on a large piece of paper/board. It should include simple topographic data including:

- Elevations – lower/upper, etc.;

# How to Conduct Community Mapping<sup>19</sup> (Continued)

- Simple information on soils;
- Vegetation;
- Ecological zones;
- Water availability;
- Tourist destination sites;
- Infrastructure such as roads, schools, health facilities, police posts, etc.

Once the main features are in place, a more comprehensive participation of stakeholders can then be conducted. Participants can start filling in gaps in the sketch to identify areas with specific problems such as:

- Water shortage;
- Poor soils;
- Poor vegetation cover;
- Problem animal areas;
- Opportunities or potential for development such as infrastructure;
- Agriculture lands;
- Community recreational areas;
- Ecotourism sites;
- Areas of economic activity (i.e. hunting grounds, logging, fishing, gathering areas)
- Commercial areas;
- Transportation/access;
- Future protected area.

## Recording the Mapping Process

The socio-cultural assessment kicks in during the process of drawing and placing resources on the map. Before each resource or item that has been identified is added on the map, it is VERY important for the facilitators to allow 5-10 minutes of discussion. The facilitator's role is to ask about whatever is being included in the map—how it impacts, benefits, costs, and influences tourism development, and what are the trade-offs. The core team should be taking notes of what different people are presenting as challenges, opportunities, or issues. It is fine to let different people group themselves to discuss an issue while the rest of the group continues with the map; this exercise should not be formal. What is important is that the core team is capturing whatever is being said, as well as observing reactions and emotions from participants on certain important issues.

## Drawing Conclusions and Recommendations

It is these discussions and topics from community representatives that will indicate what people consider socially, economically and environmentally important. The direction of the discussions is significant; even if opinions are sometimes given as facts that cannot be quantified as statistically accurate, they may still show how the community views their situation. The very process of discussing the map items – location, impact on infrastructure and other services – will bring out important resource management issues that will help to prepare the village for ecotourism planning. Differences in how different individuals and various community groups perceive conditions in the community are important.

# How to Conduct a Stakeholder Focus Group

TOOL

## Getting Started

- Review and use:

TOOL: How to Design a Questionnaire (refer to Supply and Competitiveness chapter)

TOOL: How to Conduct a Stakeholder Focus Group

TOOL: Sample Stakeholder Focus Group Questionnaire

- In most places, it is best to involve a handful of people who have good knowledge of the community and those who influence what does or doesn't take place. Local contacts can list these people who can help the team identify the most appropriate participants.

There are many stakeholders in every community. It is critical to identify which stakeholders have the respect and confidence of the community, are knowledgeable and can engage in discussions on tourism development, sustainability and ecotourism factors. Different stakeholders have different interests and different perceptions of what might be problems or opportunities for tourism development in the locale. Therefore, it is important that during the focus group, stakeholders develop a shared perception of the problem and opportunities without undermining their variety of differences.

### Participants Should Reflect Varied Perspectives

The meeting should involve ten or fifteen persons representing a wide variety of the populations' interests, by sector, and also representing persons concerned about the negative and positive aspects that ecotourism development may have on them. Stakeholders should also represent the full range of institutions and organizations active in the destination, along with individual residents. Examples of target individuals and groups may include:

- Members of the local municipality;
- The academic community;
- The private sector;
- The farming community;
- Transportation authorities;
- The scientific community;
- Culture and arts associations;
- Tour operations, hotels, restaurants, nightclubs, and bars.

Be sure to include local leaders like the elders, church leaders, schoolmasters, teachers, and other community political leaders.

### The Goals of the Focus Group

- Learn about the activities of various groups and organizations within the community as expeditiously as possible;
- Understand how they contribute to community development and ecotourism;
- Identify the relationships among them.

The intended outcome of the focus group is to understand the complementary role of local stakeholders in the destination.

### Steps to Follow When Hosting a Focus Group

The **Assessment Team** starts by introducing themselves and informing the focus group of the planned assessment work. The local municipality or other pre-determined contacts may have announced the meeting or invited members of the stakeholder group to attend. The **Assessment Team** may also need to identify and invite additional participants. Each representative should be asked to describe the activities of his/her association briefly, clarify their roles and identify their resources base.

The **Assessment Team** should then present its motivations, explain to stakeholders why this is an important meeting for them, state clearly what the objectives are, and explain what they would like to achieve.

The process should then move to periods of questions and answers, which engage the audience and reveal issues and concerns that the community has regarding tourism development, natural resources issues and socio-economic and cultural priorities. The key objective is to create a rapport with these representative groups to discuss the challenges and opportunities of developing and sustaining tourism projects in the area. See *Sample Stakeholder Questionnaire*.

# Sample Stakeholder Focus Group Questionnaire<sup>20</sup>

TOOL

Stakeholder Information
Date:
Name:
Telephone/Address:
Occupation:
Level of Education:
Native Language:
Other languages that you speak:
Location:
National/Regional/Local Organizations or Associations, which you belong to:
Group Discussion Questions:

## Existing Tourism Presence:

1. Does tourism currently exist in your community?
2. Is it beneficial to the community in terms of social, environmental and economic impacts?
3. Does tourism benefit you personally?

## Existing Opinion on Tourists and the Social Impacts of Tourism:

1. What percentage of your tourists are local, regional, and international?
2. Have the numbers of tourists visiting your community increased in the last year?
3. Do you enjoy having tourists in your community?
4. What are the positive impacts of ecotourism on your community?
5. Currently, does your community experience any negative aspects associated with ecotourism? If so, please explain?
6. How do you feel about tourists taking pictures in your destination/village?
7. Are there any “rules” or cultural customs that you feel tourists should obey? What are they?
8. Why are tourists attracted to your area? What are your most unique existing attractions?
9. What are your most unique attractions that have yet to be developed for tourism?

### Infrastructure and Public Service Comments:

1. What services are needed in the community to make it more comfortable for residents and visitors?
2. Do you have policemen, firemen and medical emergency specialists in the community?
3. Do you think that visitors feel safe walking/traveling alone in the community? If not, why?  
How could this be addressed and fixed?

### Natural Resource Questions:

1. Do you feel that there is a strong link between ecotourism and natural resource protection?
2. Are the local natural resources managed at this time? If yes, by whom?
3. Is the community involved in the management of these resources?
4. Do you think that the community should have more or less involvement in the management of these resources?
5. How could the community improve the management of its natural resources?
6. Does the community benefit from protecting these resources?
  - If yes, how do they benefit?
  - Do they recognize these benefits?
  - If not, how could they better understand these benefits?
7. Can you describe any benefits that you are personally receiving because these resources are protected?
8. Do local people lose any benefits by protecting these resources?
9. How could ecotourism improve both your community's benefits and natural resource protection?

### Stakeholder Recommendations:

1. What are your suggestions for future tourism development in this community? What investments or improvements are of top priority?
2. If other activities, services, or products could be offered in your village or area, where do you think these activities or services should be located? Who should run them?
3. Are there other forms of development that you think would benefit the local residents more than ecotourism? If so, what are they?

# How to Conduct a Resident Survey<sup>21</sup>

This snapshot of residents' attitudes is crucial to determining local receptivity to tourism development and promotion. It is the baseline from which to build a broad network of support for—and participation in—the tourism assessment, planning and implementation process. It will provide you with information to help direct any tourism development into projects that are acceptable to residents and identify the role that residents see for tourism in the local area.

## Getting Started

- Review and use:

*TOOL: How to Design a Questionnaire*

*TOOL: How to Conduct a Resident Survey*

*TOOL: Sample Resident Questionnaire*

*TOOL: How to Analyze and Interpret Survey Results*

In the case of conducting a resident attitude survey, it is advisable that only outside help or members of the original **Assessment Team** do it. If local people conduct the survey, the results could be less objective or less valid due to personal interests.

*Note: A sample survey is included after these guidelines; this sample survey is general, and additional questions may have to be added to it as necessary. Review the objectives of the survey, and each question on the survey form, with the interviewing team. Many of the questions ask respondents to choose between: Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree, and Undecided. The team should discuss what these answers mean and how they should be interpreted.*

### Who Should be Surveyed?

In most cases you will not attempt to survey all community residents. Instead, you will survey a sample of residents selected to represent the destination's attitude. This is called a sample population.

Here are some points to consider when preparing to do a residents survey:

- Some destinations/communities prefer to make decisions by consensus. If this is the case in your destination, you will need to survey all households. This is called a household based census.
- If you have some respected people in your destination whose opinions are traditionally deferred to, such as elders, you will want to include them in your sample. These are key informants.
- You may have people who live outside the local area who are still considered community members. If you feel it is important to include them in the survey, you will need to add their names to the list from which you draw your sample.
- Include marginalized groups within the community. They are often critical to understanding resident life.

For most destinations, surveys will be conducted on a sample of the whole population. This may be done directly with people either by going from house to house or choosing highly frequented areas – markets, street corners, etc. – and asking residents to answer your questionnaire. First, the “sample” needs to be chosen.

A “sample” is simply a portion of people who represent a larger population. Researchers survey sample sizes because in most cases it would be too costly and time consuming to survey an entire population. A sample population is usually chosen through random selection. Random samples are used to avoid bias. Please refer to **TOOL: Steps to Conduct a Visitors Survey** for these survey terms, definitions and steps. There is a formal equation that statisticians use for determining the optimum sample size. Generally, the size of the sample needs to be large enough to represent the whole population. Fortunately, in most instances a complex calculation for determining sample size will not be needed. Mathematically, populations with numbers over 2,000 will require approximately 385 surveys to produce results that accurately obtain trends from the responses.

# How to Conduct a Resident Survey<sup>21</sup> (Continued)

## How to Effectively Inform the Public

By making sure that people are aware that research is being done in the area, more people will be willing to spend the time to carefully answer your questions. It is a good idea to announce the survey in the local newspaper and the radio, or use any other effective means of communication to generate interest. Note, however, it may not be a good idea to use a local figure such as the mayor to promote response to the survey. If and when the local figure is not popular, politics could come into play. It might cause some residents to be biased in their responses and could pose issues during implementation phases.

## Possible Timeline for the Resident Attitude Survey

Week 1
Selection of task force to conduct the attitude survey
Preparation, testing, and printing of questionnaires
Target sample populations and locations for administering survey
Week 2 and 3
Press release in media or other publicity methods
Administer survey
Week 4
Code survey and complete data entry
Final Week
Data analysis and preparation of results

When conducting the survey be sure that every member of the population has an equal chance of being selected for the survey process in an effort to keep your survey random. If the flow of people is good at the location(s) you choose to administer the survey, ask every other or every third person you see to participate in the survey. Do not simply target people at one location in a village for example. This may introduce a bias to the survey result i.e., all respondents happen to belong to the same family. Random sampling will ensure you obtain responses that are representative of the whole population in a destination.

# How to Analyze and Interpret Survey Results

The first step for the **Assessment Team** is to compile the data collected either automatically with a computer program or by hand. Someone familiar with computers and spreadsheets can design a simple data entry and analysis program, or you can also use programs such as Excel, StatView, SPSS, and SAS. Check accuracy of data entry at the beginning of the process to correct mistakes that might have occurred.

Analysis of questionnaire data by hand is relatively simple. Responses to questions can be tallied up and calculation of percentages can be used to determine average response rates. For example, if the number of people who answered the question is 200 and the number of those who answered the specific response for “Strongly Agree” is 50, the percentage of people that “Strongly Agree” to the particular question is 25%. Since the questionnaire is designed to be easy to interpret and analyze, hand tabulation of the data should not be a problem. It is, however, slower than using a computer program’s more complex correlations which can give more detailed analysis such as “of the 25% that Strongly Agree, 80% feel tourism needs to be better planned.”

## Evaluating Survey Results

The **Assessment Team** should consider the following factors when reviewing the results:

- What are the characteristics of those surveyed? Do they represent the larger population?
- What is the general response of the people surveyed?
- Are there any questions that generated responses that are overwhelmingly positive or negative, or are all the responses somewhere in between?
- Are there any obvious correlations between different questions?

# Sample Resident Questionnaire<sup>22</sup>

TOOL

*Note: Survey questionnaires should normally be no longer than 2 to 3 pages long. In the interest of providing several sample questions, the questionnaire below is longer.*

## A. SOCIO AND ECONOMIC PROFILE

1. Marital status  1 = Married 2 = Single 3 = Widowed 4 = Divorced/Separated
2. Gender  1 = Male 2 = Female
3. Including yourself, how many members of your household are currently living with you?  
Adults  Children
4. Years of formal education received
5. What is your **main** occupation?  1 = Farmer 2 = Business 3 = Civil Servant 4 = Fisherman 5 = Logger 6 = Artisan  
7 = Forest product gatherer (herbs, mushrooms) 8 = Charcoal Burner 9 = Quarrying 10 = Other (specify)
6. What is your **main** source of income for the household?  1 = Fishing 2 = Agriculture 3 = Business 4 = Civil service  
5 = Self employment 6 = Sale of medicinal plants or non-timber forest products 7 = Sale of timber 8 = Quarrying 9 = Other (specify)
7. Where does your **main** occupation activity primarily take place?  1 = Agricultural lands on the forest buffer zones  
2 = Tourism areas 3 = Protected marine areas 4 = Within the forest 5 = Outside the forest reserve
8. Please, indicate the number of your family members employed in the following activities:

a.	Hunting	Male	<input type="text"/>	Female	<input type="text"/>
b.	Forestry	Male	<input type="text"/>	Female	<input type="text"/>
c.	Fisheries	Male	<input type="text"/>	Female	<input type="text"/>
d.	Agriculture	Male	<input type="text"/>	Female	<input type="text"/>
e.	Other	Male	<input type="text"/>	Female	<input type="text"/>
9. In your opinion, which of the following provides the best opportunities for future economic activities in the area?   
1 = Camps/Lodges 2 = Restaurants 3 = Cattle rearing 4 = Curio shops 5 = Butterfly rearing 6 = Wood carving  
7 = Crop farming 8 = Fishing 9 = Hunting 10 = Other (specify)
10. Please, indicate your average expenditure per year on the following:  
Household items:  Transportation:  School fees:   
Health:  Food:  Other (specify):
11. How long has your family lived in this community?  years
12. What is the approximate distance from the forest border to your dwelling?  km/miles
13. What ethnic group do you belong to?
14. Overall, how would you rate this community as a place to live in?   
1 = Very good 2 = Good 3 = Okay 4 = Not good 5 = Bad
15. Generally, how would you rate the future safety of your household in this area?   
1 = Very good 2 = Good 3 = Okay 4 = Not good 5 = Bad
16. What caused your family to live in this community?   
1 = Born here 2 = Marriage 3 = Economic reasons (jobs, land) 4 = Natural disaster  
5 = Political reasons 6 = Bought shares 7 = Other (specify)

# Sample Resident Questionnaire<sup>22</sup> (Continued)

17. Please rank the top five employment opportunities in the area, with “1” being the **best opportunity**.

ACTIVITY	RANK
Agriculture/Agribusiness	
Logging	
Wood carving/Sculpting	
Quarrying/Mining	
Boat making	
Tourism industry	
Building/Construction	
Civil service employment	
Fishing	
Private business	

## B. NATURAL RESOURCE USE ISSUES

### Wildlife

- Does wildlife presently benefit you personally in any way?  1 = Yes 2 = No
- If Yes, please rank the **main** benefits with “1” being the **most preferred use**:  
 Sale of meat  Source of food  Clothing  Medicines  Sale of souvenirs/ornaments  Other (specify)
- If Yes, what percentage of your income did you get from wildlife in the last year?
- If not beneficial, why?   
 1 = Damage crops 2 = Reduce pasturelands 3 = Cause diseases to livestock and people 4 = Minimize access to other resources  
 5 = No compensation for losses 6 = Other (specify)
- Have you suffered financial losses due to wildlife during the past year?  1 = Yes 2 = No
- If Yes, how much financial loss was incurred?
- Do you experience human-wildlife conflicts in this area?  1 = Yes 2 = No
- If Yes, what **main** measures do you take to control human-wildlife conflicts?  1 = Report to Game Warden 2 = Scaring 3 = Fencing  
 4 = Hunting 5 = Other (specify)
- How effective are these measures?  1 = Very effective 2 = Effective 3 = Not effective
- Does or could tourism address some of the issues associated with wildlife problems?  1 = Yes 2 = No
- If Yes, how?  1 = alternative income 2 = employment 3 = other

### Forests

- Does the forest benefit you personally in any way at the present?  1 = Yes 2 = No
- If Yes, please rank the main benefits with “1” being the **most preferred use**.  
 Wildlife  Forest Fruits/Foods  Sale of wood products  Medicines  Tourism   
 Wood for home building  Thatching for roofs  Sale of Handicrafts  Other (specify)

# Sample Resident Questionnaire<sup>22</sup> (Continued)

TOOL

3. If Yes, what percentage of your income did you get from the forest in the last year?
4. If not beneficial, why?   
1 = Our people get arrested if found in the forest 2 = Wildlife threatens our livelihood  
3 = Our access to basic products are minimized 4 = Other (specify)
5. Does this forest face any future threats?  1 = Yes 2 = No
6. If Yes, which is the **main** threat?  1 = logging 2 = fires 3 = over use 4 = agriculture 5 = other (specify)

## Wetlands

1. Do the wetlands benefit you personally in any way at the present?  1 = Yes 2 = No
2. If Yes, please rank the main benefits with “1” being the **most preferred use**: Fish for Sale  Wildlife  Thatching   
Medicines  Tourism  Wood for home building  Sale of handicrafts  Other (specify)
3. If Yes, what percentage of your income did you get from the wetlands in the last year?
4. If not beneficial, why?   
1 = Our people get arrested if found fishing 2 = Wildlife threatens our livelihood  
3 = Our access to basic products are minimized 4 = Source of water-borne diseases 5 = Other (specify)
5. Does this wetland face any future threats?  1 = Yes 2 = No
6. If Yes, which is the main threat?  1 = Over utilization 2 = Over fishing 3 = Pollution 4 = Poaching

## Agriculture

1. Do you practice crop farming?  1 = Yes 2 = No
2. How long have you been practicing crop farming?  Years
3. Do you raise livestock?  1 = Yes 2 = No
4. What is the average size of your land?  acres/hectares
5. Has the area under fallow changed?  1 = Increased 2 = Decreased 3 = Remained same 4 = Not stated
6. Do you plan to farm new lands in the next year?  1 = Yes 2 = No      If so, how many acres/hectares?
7. Please indicate **two** major crops you grow on your farms  1 = Maize 2 = Beans/cowpeas 3 = Fruits 4 = Vegetables 5 = Sweet potatoes 6 = Rice 7 = Tomatoes 8 = Cassava 9 = Other (specify)
8. Please indicate livestock and numbers you raise on your farms: Cows  Sheep  Goats  Pigs  Poultry  Other (specify)
9. What percentage of your income did you get from crop farming in the last year?
10. Where do you sell your crops?  1 = Produce buyers 2 = Local market 3 = Roadside 4 = Hotels/Restaurants 5 = Other

## Fishing

1. Do you practice fishing?  1 = Yes 2 = No (If No, go to the next section)
2. Please indicate the average number of fish you catch per day
3. Has the number of fish caught changed over the past 10 years?  1 = Yes 2 = No

# Sample Resident Questionnaire<sup>22</sup> (Continued)

TOOL

4. If Yes, indicate the pattern of change  1 = Increased 2 = Decreased 3 = Remained constant
5. Has the number of fishermen fishing increased or decreased over the past 10 years?  1 = Increased 2 = Decreased 3 = Remained constant
6. Does the fishing industry face future threats?  1 = Yes 2 = No
7. If Yes, which **main threat** does it face?  1 = Over fishing 2 = Poisoning 3 = Poor fishing methods 4 = Mangrove destruction  
5 = More fishermen 6 = Other (specify)
8. What methods do you use to catch these fish?  1 = Single fish traps 2 = Fishing lines 3 = Spears 4 = Nets 5 = Others
9. Which main species do you catch?
10. Do you sell fish?  1 = Yes 2 = No (If No, go to the next section)
11. What percentage of your income did you get from fishing in the last year?
12. Where do you sell your fish?  1 = Local fish buyers 2 = Local market 3 = Roadside 4 = Hotels/Restaurants 5 = Other

## Quarrying

1. Are you engaged in quarrying activities?  1 = Yes 2 = No
2. If Yes, what percentage of your income came from quarrying last year?
3. If No, have you leased some of your land for the activity?  1 = Yes 2 = No
4. If Yes, how much land did you lease?  acres/hectares
5. What was the lease rate?  per month
6. If you have not leased out your land for quarrying, do you intend to do so in the future?  1 = Yes 2 = No
7. If Yes, how much would you lease out?  acres/hectares
8. If you are engaged in quarrying, where do you sell the products?  1 = To the middlemen 2 = In the nearby town  
3 = Along the roadside 4 = To construction firms 5 = Other (specify)
9. Do you feel the number of quarry workers has increased or decreased over the past 10 years?  1 = Increased 2 = Decreased  
3 = Remained constant
10. Generally, should this activity be allowed to continue in the area?  1 = Yes 2 = No
11. If No, what actions should be taken to minimize it?  1 = Introduce a moratorium 2 = Place quotas on landowners 3 = Impose tax on  
the quarry materials 4 = Issue licenses that have stronger conditions 5 = Other (specify)

## Tourism

1. Do you work in tourism?  1 = Yes 2 = No
2. If Yes, what percentage of your income came from tourism activities in the last year?
3. If Yes, do you work in tourism all year?  1 = Yes 2 = No
4. During the past one-year, how often did you interact with tourists?  1 = Daily 2 = Weekly 3 = Monthly 4 = Quarterly 5 = Never

# Sample Resident Questionnaire<sup>22</sup> (Continued)

5. If you had the opportunity to manage tourism in this area, which of the following would you do? (Rank from the first to last)

- Leave matters as they are
- Discontinue tourism altogether
- Increase the number of tourists currently visiting
- Increase the number of tourism businesses in the area
- Shut down all tourism business in the area
- Other (specify)

6. Please indicate whether or not you consider the following to be obstacles to tourism development in the area:

Issues	Is this an obstacle? 1 = Yes 2 = No	If Yes, what is the degree of impact? 1 = Very serious 2 = Somewhat serious 3 = Not serious 4 = Not Applicable
a. Conflicting aspirations (objectives) among landowners		
b. Insecurity about land tenure and squatters		
c. Lack of tourism business understanding		
d. Lack of harmony between traditional and modern leadership		
e. Language barriers		
f. Limited land for expansion		
g. Low participation of women in leadership		
h. Political divisions		
i. Poor leadership		
j. Lack of financing or development funds		

7. How would you use revenues collected from tourism? Rank the following with “1” as **the best use**

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| Support local business <input type="text"/>               | Improve health services <input type="text"/>       |
| Provide school bursaries <input type="text"/>             | Encourage new farming methods <input type="text"/> |
| Infrastructure development <input type="text"/>           | Provide cleaner water <input type="text"/>         |
| Promote HIV/AIDS awareness campaigns <input type="text"/> | Other <input type="text"/>                         |

8. Are there ways in which tourism development in this area can be changed to provide more benefits to your household or to your community?   
1 = Yes 2 = No

9. If Yes, which ways? (Rank the following with “1” as **the best**)

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| Improve security <input type="text"/>                       | Improve waste disposal facilities <input type="text"/>        |
| Improve roads <input type="text"/>                          | Develop more activities for tourists <input type="text"/>     |
| Initiate sex/drug education for locals <input type="text"/> | Increase community involvement/ownership <input type="text"/> |
| Other <input type="text"/>                                  |   |

### C. RESIDENT ATTITUDES TOWARDS TOURISM

1. Do you like having tourists visit your community?  1 = Yes 2 = No

2. Would you say that tourists are friendly or unfriendly towards the local people?  1 = Very friendly 2 = Friendly 3 = Indifferent 4 = Unfriendly 5 = Very unfriendly (hostile)

# Sample Resident Questionnaire<sup>22</sup> (Continued)

TOOL

3. Are there places in this community which should be off limits to tourists?  1 = Yes 2 = No
4. If Yes, please describe these places?
5. Have you noticed any changes in your community as a result of tourists' visits here?  1 = Yes 2 = No
6. If Yes, how do you regard those changes?  1 = Positive 2 = Negative
7. What is the general reaction of this community towards tourists visiting this area?  1 = Very friendly 2 = Friendly 3 = Indifferent 4 = Unfriendly 5 = Very unfriendly (hostile)

To get an idea of your views regarding tourism in this area, please indicate your degree of agreement/disagreement with each of the following statements:					
NOTE: In this survey, "tourists" refer to visitors to the region who live outside the local area.	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	UNDECIDED	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
1. Tourism makes local people feel inferior about their culture.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
2. Tourism helps the villagers better appreciate their community.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
3. I am concerned that tourism would take way our natural resources such as land, food, water, and wood.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
4. Tourism would bring increased crime to the area.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
5. Tourism development would increase protection of natural areas.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
6. More people in this community should be involved in tourism.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
7. Having international tourists would greatly change our communities in a positive manner.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
8. Promote tourist activities like guided walks, photography, etc. in the area.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
9. Environmentally destructive activities should be discouraged.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
10. Tourists would crowd local residents out of recreational spots.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
11. Nature/game viewing trails should be monitored by local people.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
12. My family's income and quality of life would increase if tourists were attracted to explore this area's services and activities.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
13. The infrastructure in the local area would improve because of tourism (i.e. roads, sewage systems, wells, bridges).	<input type="checkbox"/>				
14. The current rules used in managing the resources in the area are adequate.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
15. Rules and regulations regarding resource use need to be drafted.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
16. The community needs to monitor forest and marine resource use.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
17. We should take steps to restrict tourism development.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
18. Decisions about how much and what kind of tourism we should have are best left to the residents of the area.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
19. Decisions about how much and what kind of tourism we should have are best left to the private sector (i.e. entrepreneurs, non-profits).	<input type="checkbox"/>				
20. Decisions about how much and what kind of tourism we should have are best left to the public sector (i.e. government).	<input type="checkbox"/>				
21. Tourism activities/services should have a resident's fee and a foreigner's fee system.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
22. Biodiversity conservation within this area contributes to our well being.	<input type="checkbox"/>				

# Environmental and Biodiversity Footprint

PERHAPS ONE of the most influential assessments that the team will conduct, this research focuses on projecting potential biodiversity and environmental impacts of tourism development. The insight drawn from local/international sources and experts will uncover the potential for negative environmental impacts and opportunities for tourism to address environmental issues and conserve threatened biodiversity. These conclusions form a key element of the tourism assessment – one that determines whether to proceed with a project or product.

It is important to remember that it is not the team’s role to “sell” particular concepts of tourism development to the community. Your role is to objectively analyze the information gathered throughout this assessment, flag potential issues and address opportunities for improvement. These considerations should then be used to guide what type of tourism development, if any, is appropriate for the destination.

The **Assessment Team’s** ability to assess the overall footprint of tourism development in an area will be a reflection of key questions related to biodiversity conservation which will help to resolve any negative impacts that may need to be mitigated.

## Understanding Potential Benefits

As a positive benefit, tourism has been well documented to provide financing for biodiversity conservation efforts through the following revenue mechanisms<sup>23</sup>:

- **Financing for Conservation**—Revenues can be allocated to biodiversity conservation efforts through several mechanisms, including parks fees, lease fees and concessions, taxation, grants, and traveler donations.
- **Economic Alternatives**—Providing job creation and income generating activities to local communities as an alternative to more destructive livelihoods, such as slash and burn agriculture, over-fishing and illegal logging.
- **Constituency Building**—Local communities that benefit from tourism development are more motivated to conserve their unique natural and cultural heritages.
- **Impetus for Private Conservation**—Tourist demand for scenic, pristine natural surroundings and opportunities for wildlife viewing can provide an impetus to private investors to conserve areas in order to meet this demand.

However, poor planning or explosive growth of tourism can overwhelm natural resources and community infrastructure. For example, poorly planned tourism products can disturb wildlife habitats, degrade watersheds and pollute water systems, as well as add to solid waste management issues.

## Getting Started

- Review existing literature on environmental and conservation issues. See **Sources for Identifying Potential Impacts and Benefits** section for more information.
- Use **Worksheet 13: Environmental and Biodiversity Footprint Matrix & Sample**.
- Use **TOOL: Assessing Tourism’s Footprint – Sample Interview**.



## Understanding Negative Impacts

To guide research on potential negative environmental and biodiversity impacts, the **Assessment Team** will focus on the following key areas and questions:

- **Flora and Fauna**—Are there threatened plant, bird, mammal, reptile, amphibian, and fish species in the destination? Where are their habitats? Why are they threatened? What is their relationship to tourism; i.e. do these species occur in potential tourism development areas? Are they also tourist attractions? In these cases, noisy crowds of tourists viewing wildlife could disrupt feeding and breeding cycles resulting in higher mortality rates and major decreases in population growth.
- **Critical Habitats**—Which areas form critical habitats, why are these critical and how might tourism impact on them? Often animal species are threatened because their habitats are being lost. Especially problematic is loss of breeding, nesting and feeding grounds as a result of agriculture expansion, logging and other forms of human development. Some critical habitats may already be identified as such by being designated as nature reserves and sanctuaries, parks, protected areas, and core/intangible zones within established protected areas. Research and interviews with local experts will help identify those areas that aren't already protected and need to be considered.
- **Functioning Ecosystems**—Tourism, along with human development, tends to occur in some of the most biodiverse ecosystems. Coastal areas, rivers and lakes, mountains, rainforests, wetlands and grasslands are all popular recreation areas. Issues to consider include disruption of ecological processes and intricate dependencies among flora, fauna and physical attributes. For example, noise and lights which may prevent sea turtles from nesting on a beach; the clearing of vegetation along a river bank to improve the view causes soil erosion and destroys fish and frog habitats; and scuba-divers and snorklers damage reefs thus killing critical breeding grounds.
- **Biological Corridors and Physical Landscapes**—Ensuring enough habitats for territorial and migration patterns and adequate access to food is critical to larger mammal species such as elephants, jaguars, or marlin. Tourism development can interrupt connecting areas of mountain systems, valleys, plains, and rainforests. For example, roads can pose barriers to some species like turtles, frogs and crabs; and oncoming traffic can result in the death of migrating species. At the same time, tourism can be planned to reduce fragmentation by increasing protection of an area from more destructive forms of development such as logging.
- **Water Resources**—Clean, unpolluted water sources from rivers, lakes, lagoons, and water catchment areas are important to all forms of biodiversity including tourists visiting a region. What are the main water resources for existing populations? Are they adequate? Are they well protected? What current issues exist with water supply? Would additional tourism exacerbate these issues; i.e. by causing pollution of precious resources or demand outweighing supply?

The Assessment Team's ability to assess the overall footprint of tourism development in an area will be a reflection of key questions related to biodiversity conservation, which will help to resolve any negative impacts that may need to be mitigated.

“IT IS NOT THE TEAM’S ROLE TO “SELL” TOURISM TO THE COMMUNITY, BUT RATHER ANALYZE THE INFORMATION GATHERED THROUGHOUT THIS ASSESSMENT AND ADVISE ON OPTIONS FOR AND AGAINST TOURISM.”



- **Energy Resources**—In most areas, energy supply is an issue, which tourism can easily exacerbate. This can cause wider environmental issues such as air pollution from coal produced electricity. It can also lead to localized impacts on biodiversity. For example, in many areas overuse of fuel wood will lead to deforestation and loss of sources of food and important breeding sites for many bird and animal species. Further, discharges from the use of fuel such as oil, gas and diesel can overwhelm freshwater and marine habitats.
- **Waste Management Systems**—Are the current systems adequate to safely dispose of sewage and solid waste? Can they handle any additional demand? In many regions, waste management systems do not have the capacity to effectively treat and dispose of solid waste and sewage. Does tourism pose a real danger to overwhelming existing systems and thus the natural environment? Unfortunately, tourism activities often produce significant amounts of waste and the **Assessment Team** will need to consider a range of potential issues regarding wastewater, sewage treatment and solid waste. The following are adapted from Conservation International’s Center for Environmental Leadership in Business<sup>24</sup>:
  - o Wastewater comes mainly from washing, toilets and runoff. It can pollute water sources with dangerous bacteria such as fecal coliform causing disease and infection or chemicals from detergents, herbicides and pesticides killing freshwater and marine species.
  - o Poor sewage treatment can lead to pollution of ground and surface water and degradation of marine resources, such as coral reefs.
  - o Solid waste is often collected in poorly designed waste dumps or discarded directly into oceans, rivers and lakes. Besides being visually unappealing, improperly disposed waste can leach contaminants causing severe water and soil pollution. Contaminants from toxic items such as paint cans and batteries are especially dangerous. Dump sites often breed flies, which spread disease in nearby communities, release offending odors, and can result in toxic fires. Littering, especially in natural areas, can attract wildlife, exposing them to injuries and diseases, such as birds and fish attempting to ingest cigarette butts.
- **Development and Construction**—What are the potential issues regarding the actual construction of facilities and infrastructure? Are there issues with sourcing building materials? What measures may need to be taken when developing sites? Tourism often has the highest impact on the environment and biodiversity during the development and construction phase. In many countries, developers often clear land of vegetation and trees in order to complete the boundary survey and prepare sites for construction. Critical nursery areas for many marine species are destroyed by clearing mangroves and filling in wetlands in order to create more land and beach areas. Shoreline development causes erosion, reducing water clarity and smothering reefs. Often building materials



may be sourced from the local area. For example, logging for wood may cause deforestation, “sand mining” or sourcing gravel and stones from rivers and beaches cause major changes to the physical environment.

- **Introduction of Invasive Species**—What are the current issues with transportation of exotic animals and plants? Often customs authorities, forest and agricultural departments will have information on key issues. Invasive species are perhaps the largest threat to biodiversity. They are non-native species of plants and animals that when introduced to an area become predators and/or compete for precious food and nutrient sources. Tourists can inadvertently introduce invasive species to an area. Often tourists will acquire exotic plants and animals and carry them to non-native habitats. Tourists may also transport fruit and vegetables that may host invasive species of insects.

Note: In certain situations, national and local laws and/or donor agencies may require an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for development projects. At this point, the team is not conducting a full-fledged environmental impact assessment (EIA) to meet legal requirements. Rather, the team will be working through a much more general process.

### Sources for Identifying Potential Impacts and Benefits

The tourism footprint assessment begins by researching existing literature on tourism’s potential environmental impacts and threats to biodiversity. By exploring secondary sources, the team will be able to get a picture of key environmental and biodiversity issues in the destination. Research on specific impacts related to tourism, however, may not be as readily available. The combination of the team’s assessment so far on tourism development in the destination and local area expert opinion should provide a good basis to create a matrix of tourism’s potential environmental and biodiversity footprint.

The team can start its exploration of key environmental and biodiversity issues by reviewing already existing information. Sources can include:

- Local and international environmental and conservation organizations publications, literature and online information. For example, CI’s Country Program Executive Program Summaries, Hotspots publication, and the Critical Environmental Partnership Profiles available at [www.cepf.net](http://www.cepf.net).
- IUCN’s Red List species listings available at [www.iucn.org](http://www.iucn.org) and [www.redlist.org](http://www.redlist.org). These lists rate species as being Critically Endangered and Vulnerable.
- Park and protected area management plans and any zoning regulations (these should be in place for well-established park and protected areas).
- Reports and papers from scientists and conservation organizations working in the local area.
- Review of *Socio-Economic, Cultural and Natural Resource Use Assessments* for insights on how the socio-cultural context may impact or benefit biodiversity and environmental issues.

Your role is to objectively analyze the information gathered throughout this assessment, flag potential issues and address opportunities for improvement. These considerations should then be used to guide what type of tourism development, if any, is appropriate for the destination.

**“TOURISM, ALONG WITH HUMAN DEVELOPMENT, TENDS TO OCCUR IN SOME OF THE MOST BIODIVERSE ECOSYSTEMS.”**

**SAMPLE ENVIRONMENTAL AND BIODIVERSITY FOOTPRINT MATRIX**

<b>Type of Threat</b> (The following are examples. Fill in appropriate descriptions as necessary.)	<b>Potential Impacts</b>	<b>Potential Opportunity and Key Assumptions</b>	<b>Key Groups/ Stakeholders Involved or Affected</b>	<b>Expert/ Person(s) to Contact</b>	<b>Potential for Impact</b>  Fill in each box with +, 0, or -.
Poaching of endangered Species in Protected Area	Tourism Development might provide income to locals to purchase better hunting equipment (i.e. better guns, traps and snares, tracking devices).	Poaching illegal, used to increase income due to few alternatives. Tourism could provide an alternative and a reason to protect wildlife. Awareness campaign and increased ranger activities will be key.	Local villages and hamlets around protected area.  Protected Area Management	Local biologist, researchers  Protected area management staff  Socio-cultural experts  Socio-economic surveys	( - )
Agricultural encroachment into unprotected forest reserve	Tourism Development might increase demand for agricultural products, provide income for agricultural technology – increasing farming.	Ecotourism may provide rationale for creating a protected area, could provide incentives for organic and sustainable agriculture, etc. Economic justification for establishing a protected area will be strong enough, the right community cultural/historical context exists in favor of Protected Areas.	Local Ecotourism Associations  Community Members  Government Ministry and Official	Agriculture Extension Officers  Local Biologists  Economists  Socio-economic surveys	( - )



The issues and opportunities identified will later be added to the footprint matrix.

### Tapping into Environmental and Biodiversity Experts

Once initial research has provided enough of a basis for further discussion, the **Assessment Team** can rely on local environmental and biodiversity expert interviews and consultations to better understand potential impacts and opportunities in the local area. These will include:

- Conservation biologists;
- Botanists;
- Wildlife specialists;
- Ecologists;
- Researchers;
- University professors;
- Park and protected area management staff;
- Leaders in associations and organizations who are actively involved in biodiversity and conservation issues in the focus destination.

### Conducting Expert Interviews

1. Working together the **Assessment Team** can prepare an impact and opportunity matrix that summarizes potential impacts, opportunities and stakeholders involved. See sample on page 89 and *Worksheet 13*. Identify experts to consult for each item on the matrix through the *Involving Stakeholders in the Assessment Process*, many of these contacts may have been identified. Otherwise, the local **Assessment Team** members' networks may also help to identify key participants. Keep in mind that experts may specialize in specific areas and the team will want to choose the appropriate person to interview for each impact area. For example, a natural resource specialist may be better to answer questions on potential impacts on energy resources than a botanist.
2. Prepare an expert interview questionnaire, based on the checklist. See *TOOL: Assessing Tourism's Footprint – Sample Interview*. Strive to determine:
  - If tourism development were to occur in the destination or focus area, what impacts may occur?
  - Would these impacts be acceptable or unacceptable, and how could they be addressed?
  - How could tourism development be designed to address existing environmental and biodiversity issues and threats?
  - What types or groups of individuals are involved in these impacts?
  - What were their reactions to opportunities to address issues?
3. Contact experts and key stakeholders and arrange for interviews and consultations. Some recommended methods are to:
  - Meet with individuals.
  - Invite group representatives to meet with the **Assessment Team**.
  - Attend group meetings to discuss potential impacts.
  - If face-to-face discussion is not possible, the team might ask the

Poor planning or explosive growth of tourism can overwhelm natural resources and community capacity and service infrastructure.

## “TOURISM OFTEN HAS THE HIGHEST IMPACT ON THE ENVIRONMENT AND BIODIVERSITY DURING THE DEVELOPMENT AND CONSTRUCTION PHASE.”



groups to submit a position statement regarding the proposed development.

- Special efforts should be made to obtain reactions to potential tourism development. Keep in mind that it is important for the success of any future projects that stakeholders (this includes experts) have the opportunity to be involved and to express their opinions and concerns.

**Remember** that the team is seeking **objective** information, not trying to sell tourism development to those it will likely impact.

### Guidelines for Assessing Results

It is recommended that the **Assessment Team** view the potential tourism footprint in negative or cost terms, as well as in positive impacts or benefits. This cost benefit analysis will direct the team towards a decision of whether to cancel or proceed with modifications. Further analysis will result in key considerations for any tourism development and/or whether development should be recommended based on controllability, likelihood of occurrence, duration, and magnitude of impacts.

1. After the team finishes the interviews, review the *Footprint Matrix (see Worksheet 13)* and update it with new and additional information. Once the team has finalized the matrix, use the last column to indicate whether the overall impact of any potential tourism development would be positive, negative, or neutral using +, -, or 0. This is the list of costs and benefits. Based on this analysis, review the matrix to help decide whether tourism development overall could be a benefit or a cost to the area.
2. Supplement the information gathered through expert interviews by examining the impacts of similar developments on groups elsewhere to strengthen the analysis and to find some ideas for modifications, which may be necessary to mitigate perceived negative impacts.
3. Draw conclusions on the impacts and opportunities as they relate to the most important positive and negative impacts. Decide whether the overall benefit/cost ratio is positive or negative.
4. In making the judgment on whether to proceed with a project or product, consider the following types of issues related to the positive and negative impacts:
  - Controllability;
  - Likelihood of occurrence;
  - Likely duration and magnitude;
  - Breadth, depth, diffusion.

Based on the team's data collection from sources and experts, a clearer understanding of the potential for both positive and negative impacts on the destination's environment and biodiversity should appear. The **Assessment Team** will continue its analysis of costs and benefits of tourism development in the next chapter.

# Environmental and Biodiversity Footprint Matrix

## WORKSHEET 13

<b>Type of Threat</b> (Fill in appropriate descriptions as necessary.)	<b>Potential Impacts</b>	<b>Potential Opportunity and Key Assumptions</b>	<b>Key Groups/ Stakeholders Involved or Affected</b>	<b>Experts/ Person(s) to Contact</b>	<b>Potential for Impact</b> (Fill in each box with +, 0, or -.)

# Assessing Tourism's Footprint

## Sample Interview<sup>25</sup>

Hello, Mr./Mrs./Ms. [REDACTED]. We are here to learn your opinions regarding the potential impacts, as well as opportunities of ecotourism development in the area (describe potential for ecotourism based on attractions inventory and market demand).

1. What do you expect the impacts on (insert appropriate category of impact, such as on flora and fauna, water resources area, etc.) to be?
  
2. Of the impacts you listed, do you consider them to be acceptable or unacceptable?
  - a. If impacts are not acceptable, what key considerations would need to be addressed?
  
  - b. How controllable is this potential impact?
  
  - c. How likely would it be to occur?
  
  - d. How long would this impact last?
  
  - e. What would be the extent of the impact?
  
3. Could ecotourism be altered in some way to address key considerations and make the impact acceptable?
  
4. Are there any issues that ecotourism development might solve? (Give examples from your matrix)
  
5. Which key stakeholders or groups would need to be involved in addressing ecotourism as an opportunity or a threat?



# Cost Benefit Analysis<sup>26</sup>

**THE COST** Benefit Analysis will help the **Assessment Team** to determine, in general, if the positive impacts of tourism development would outweigh the negative impacts at the destination. This technique is one way to evaluate benefits compared with costs to show the estimated net effect of a plan on the destination's local economy and socio-cultural and physical/biological environments. It also allows the **Assessment Team** to review and prioritize major impacts and opportunities based on an integrated review of the assessments.

These include:

- Potential to develop attractions and activities;
- Infrastructure and public services needs;
- Potential market demand;
- Overall potential competitiveness of the destination;
- Socio-cultural impacts and opportunities;
- Potential impacts on the surrounding environment and biodiversity;
- General estimates of potential impacts on the local economy.

## Using the Cost Benefit Analysis

Cost Benefit Analyses can be very technical, but for the purpose of this Assessment Process, the cost benefit analysis suggested is a general method used to answer the main question—*Is it worth it?*—before moving on to finalizing recommendations and developing action plans for the priority projects and products.

Although the final decision about tourism development in the destination will be based primarily on economic factors and the priorities and values of stakeholders and the **Assessment Team**, the Cost Benefit Analysis helps guide stakeholders in deciding for example, that a negative economic impact could be offset by positive social and environmental benefits. Trade-offs are natural and can best be evaluated in relation to an overall vision and values.

## Conducting the Cost Benefit Analysis

The **Assessment Team** will need to collect and analyze the necessary information for each of the following three areas:

- Economic;
- Socio-Economic and Cultural;
- Environmental and Biodiversity.

You can choose to do the cost benefit analysis of the economic, social and environmental impacts in any order or simultaneously. It is the composite result that you are seeking, so you will look at all of the results together to make final decisions on how to proceed.

## Getting Started

- Review **Worksheet 14 Economic Costs Benefit Analysis** for key data needed to estimate economic impacts.
- Assign team members to focus on estimation of economic costs and benefits and others to focus on weighing the costs and benefits of socio-cultural, environmental, and biodiversity impacts and opportunities.
- If necessary the Assessment Team may want to invite specific experts to participate in helping to calculate and analyze economic impacts. For example, a wastewater system and traffic engineer to give input on infrastructure capacity and costs.
- Plan on one full day to bring the team together and review the cost benefit analysis to finalize, rank and compare overall costs and benefits.



## How to Conduct the Economic Cost Benefit Analysis

To analyze the economic costs and benefits of potential development, the **Assessment Team** will draw on results from the Market Demand, Attractions Inventory, Infrastructure and Services, and Supply and Competitiveness assessments. The **Assessment Team** can use *Worksheet 14* as a framework for comparing the potential economic benefits with the costs incurred to implement any potential tourism development.

### EXAMPLE: TOURISM DEVELOPMENT, VORE SITE IN WYOMING<sup>27</sup>

Tourism Development at the Vore Site in Wyoming	ANNUAL BENEFITS		ANNUAL COSTS	
	Private	Public	Private	Public
Local Income \$3,600,000 expenditures × 0.35 local income multiplier coefficient	\$1,260,000			
Local Tax Revenues sales tax*		\$72,000		
Facility Construction O & M Promotion			\$327,000 \$264,000 \$23,000	
County Services				\$75,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$1,260,000</b>	<b>\$72,000</b>	<b>\$614,000</b>	<b>\$75,000</b>

	Net Measurable Benefits		Costs		Benefits
Private	\$1,260,000	–	\$614,000	=	\$646,000
Public	\$72,000	–	\$75,000	=	–\$3,000
Overall	\$1,332,000	–	\$689,000	=	\$643,000
					Benefit/Cost Ratio
Private	\$1,260,000	÷	\$614,000	=	2.05
Public	\$72,000	÷	\$75,000	=	0.96
Overall	\$1,332,000	÷	\$689,000	=	1.93

The Cost Benefit Analysis helps the Assessment Team determine if the positive impacts of tourism development would outweigh the negative impacts in the focus area. It also allows the Assessment Team to review and prioritize major impacts and opportunities based on an integrated review of the assessments.

“ TRADE-OFFS ARE NATURAL AND CAN BEST BE EVALUATED IN RELATION TO AN OVERALL VISION AND VALUES.”



The **Assessment Team** should keep in mind that calculating economic costs and benefits is not as simple as adding, subtracting and dividing, straight-forward numbers. A significant amount of value judgment and best guesswork are involved and the **Assessment Team** should seek consensus on such judgments to ensure support for decisions.

### Calculating Economic Benefits

When a tourist spends in a destination the most obvious economic impacts are direct. For example, increased revenues for hotels, artisans, tour operators or guides, income and employee wages. Indirect economic impacts can also be measured and include increased revenues and incomes for businesses which supply or service tourism businesses. For example, local farmers which sell fruit or vegetables to a lodge. Other economic benefits include increased tax revenues for local and state government, which can come from income and sales taxes or specialty tourism fees.

**FIGURE: DISTRIBUTION OF TOURISM INCOME**

Tourists				
Service stations	Hotel/Motel	Restaurants	Attractions	Retail stores
Hardware	Groceries	Insurance	Repair service	
Laundry	Real estate	Advertising		

SOURCE: WESTERN RURAL DEVELOPMENT CENTER, 1997

### Steps to Calculate Economic Benefits

#### Step 1. Estimate number of visitor days and average daily expenditure per visitor

Review the Market Demand Analysis and determine visitor expenditures. If this has not been done, estimate total potential number of visitors per year, and multiply by the average number of days and by average spending per day.

For example: 6000 visitors x \$200 per day x 3 days = \$3,600,000 of annual visitor spending

#### Step 2. Calculate Local Income

Total visitor expenditures do not translate exactly into the amount of **new local income** that is generated by tourism expenditures. Money is spent in more than one round. During each round of spending, some of the money stays in the local economy buying locally-produced goods and services, and often much is spent purchasing goods and services that tourists demand which are not available locally. For example, insurance or building and construction supplies.

To calculate the local economic impact, the **Assessment Team** will need to determine the **local income multiplier and its coefficient**. This figure might be available from government economic reports or studies done on the tourism sector. If it is not the **Assessment Team** will have to rely on average figures. Research on tourism has found a realistic income multiplier for most communities to be 1.3 to 1.5;



meaning that for every dollar spent by a tourist \$0.30 to \$0.50 in addition to the \$1.00 dollar spent remains in the local economy in the form of new wages and business revenues to local households. Average multiplier coefficients are between .3 and .5.

If the **Assessment Team** needs to estimate the multiplier coefficient figure, think about both sides of the coin. Consider whether most items purchased are produced with local inputs. Or, are most items either purchased outside the destination or purchased in the destination, but made or assembled with parts/components that are imported? Areas that import most goods and supplies will have a multiplier below 1. Areas that have most of the goods and supplies needed for tourism will have a multiplier above 1.

When the multiplier is below 1, then this is considered leakage. For example, studies of some Caribbean islands have shown that only 70% to 80% of every tourist dollar spent remains in the local economy. The figure below shows how the leakage happens.



SOURCE: UNEP SUSTAINABLE TOURISM

Once the team has determined the multiplier coefficient and projected visitor expenditures, calculate the total additional local income and fill in the worksheet as per the example.

For example: In Vore, Wyoming the multiplier is 1.35. \$3,600,000 in visitor expenditures x .35 = 1,260,000 of additional spending in the local economy.

### Step 3 Calculate Local Tax Revenues

These can include increased local taxes and fees such as sales, occupancy rate, and service. For example, for some destinations occupancy rate tax or additional food services taxes can be as high as 10% and 18%. Other revenues that are derived from park concessions, property taxes and grant funding should also be considered. It will be important to determine which tax revenues remain with the local government and which go to the national or state government.

In addition to taxation and fees, other sources of incomes to cover costs could come from grants and aid funding. If this information is known, include it on the worksheet as per the example.

### Other Benefits

The team is encouraged to adapt the worksheet to their use. For example, if other major sources of revenues are identified such as grants and donations, they may want to include these on their worksheet.

If the Assessment Team is uncomfortable with making rough estimations of costs, consider consulting local economists and planning experts such as wastewater system and traffic engineers.

“THIS ANALYSIS WILL HELP ASSESS  
SOME OF THE TRADE-OFFS THAT ARE LIKELY TO OCCUR.”



### Calculating Economic Costs

Developing a destination for tourism will require certain costs. The private sector, if profitable, will recoup investments in developing and operating facilities and services. The public sector, however, will likely need to incur additional costs to support the development of tourism such as maintaining nature parks, scenic areas and other major attractions, as well as providing additional roads, parking, electricity, water, and sewage systems.

By calculating costs on an annual basis, the **Assessment Team** will compare costs with any revenues to cover those costs. For example, the cost of building roads requires large initial sums of money, however if averaged over 20 years (life span of the road), the cost can better be compared with the projected annual tax revenues.

#### Step 1. Estimate Public Planning Costs

Include costs associated with this assessment and any further planning such as project design costs, workshops, fees for experts and consultants, and additional research studies deemed necessary.

#### Step 2. Calculate Infrastructure and Services Costs

Refer to the results from the Infrastructure and Services assessment and determine if there are any infrastructure needs that may not be funded by the private sector, such as development of certain attractions, trails, tourist information centers, roads, entry ports, and sewage and waste management systems and facilities. Also consider additional maintenance for existing infrastructure and service. Base your estimations on other similar projects in the area or country, such as the costs of building information centers, and so forth. Divide this by the estimated lifespan to get average yearly costs.

What types of services would have to be provided in order to accommodate tourists in the destination, such as upgraded health services, police, emergency services, and so forth? Review the Infrastructure and Services section to estimate needs; discuss with government officials, police administration and others to get a rough idea of the potential costs involved.

If the **Assessment Team** is uncomfortable with making rough estimations of costs, consider consulting local economists and planning experts such as wastewater system and traffic engineers.

#### Step 3. Estimate Destination Management Costs

The public sector may also incur additional costs, which are critical to the ongoing support of tourism in a destination. These include costs associated with destination marketing and promotions to ensure tourist arrivals, training and education to provide a skilled labor force and functions such as tourism boards or offices to administer these programs.



The **Assessment Team** can use existing data to make projections from tourism boards or offices. Where the information doesn't exist, they can rely on nearby or comparable destinations.

#### **Step 4. Other Costs**

There may be other economic costs that need to be considered such as loss of jobs and income if any new tourism would take business away from existing businesses. For areas where any additional tourism might encourage immigration, government may have to be ready to provide additional social, educational and basic services to an increased population. Local residents may not have the skills to fill new jobs. These factors will influence how tourism development efforts benefit local residents.

The **Assessment Team** is encouraged to consider these factors and add additional rows and categories to the worksheet if necessary.

#### **Comparing Economic Costs with Benefits**

Once the information on projected costs and benefits has been collected, the **Assessment Team** will need to review and answer larger questions, such as:

- Are local economic benefits greater than the overall costs?
- Are local economic benefits being maximized? If not, how can they be? For example, is a policy of encouraging local spending, longer lengths of stays, and additional services needed?
- Will local government need to spend more than it earns in taxes to support tourism development? If so, will they be able to find funding to provide the necessary support? And, is the potential addition in local income and jobs worth it?
- Are there other industries that could bring greater benefits with less costs?

#### **Calculating Socio-Economic, Cultural & Environmental Costs and Benefits**

From preliminary assessments, the **Assessment Team** should have a concrete idea of potential social, cultural, and environmental costs and benefits which could impact the destination if new or additional tourism development were to occur. These factors may not have a dollar value placed on them, but they can either enhance or detract from the local economy in terms of quality of life and natural resource use. This analysis will help assess some of the trade-offs that are likely to occur. For example, the opportunity for environmental education could be seen as a greater benefit than the costs of developing visitation in a new park.

To analyze the economic costs and benefits of potential development, the Assessment Team will draw on results from the Market Demand, Attractions Inventory, Infrastructure and Services, and Supply and Competitiveness assessments.

“THESE FACTORS MAY NOT HAVE A DOLLAR VALUE PLACED ON THEM, BUT THEY CAN EITHER ENHANCE OR DETRACT FROM THE LOCAL ECONOMY IN TERMS OF QUALITY OF LIFE AND NATURAL RESOURCE USE.”



The **Assessment Team** can use the following framework as an example of how to assess and assign a positive, negative, or neutral value to each potential unmeasurable cost and benefit.

*Note: There are methodologies for measuring complex costs and benefits, such as polluting effects; however, these are treated as unmeasurable for this assessment.*

TYPE	DESCRIPTION	MAJOR GROUPS AFFECTED	MAJOR ASSUMPTIONS	UNMEASURABLE RATING (+,0,-)
Cultural	Indigenous community with very little to no exposure to tourism, cultural heritage eroding.	Youth, young adults and children	Extensive awareness building and monitoring will be needed. Potential for impacts very high.	-
Socio-Economic	Destination is over-reliant on tourism.	Whole population	Destination will be very susceptible to outside events vulnerable to sharp economic depressions	-
Biodiversity	Results from socio-cultural assessment indicate that if given alternative sources of income, poaching of endangered species could be reduced.	Adults, head of households	Cultural significance of hunting is an important factor.	+
Environmental	No formal waste water and sewage facilities in place, very little regulation or enforcement exists, potential for pollution is high.	All	Private sector investment in tourism would have to voluntarily address these issues	-

**Unmeasurable Rating:**

Pluses outweigh minuses

Neutral

Minuses outweigh pluses



Start by reviewing each assessment and consulting with team members to develop a list of major issues and opportunities. Use *Worksheet 15* to assist with this step. These should include issues and opportunities identified during the *Socio-Economic, Cultural and Natural Resource Use* and *Environmental and Biodiversity Footprint* assessments. The team can check their list against the following list of common unmeasurable costs and benefits.<sup>28</sup>

#### SOCIO-ECONOMIC AND CULTURAL COSTS

Over-reliance on tourism	Adoption of the permanent vacation syndrome
Inflation in real estate values and higher prices	Feelings of inferiority due to disparities in wealth
Overpopulation due to immigration	Increased crime; i.e. petty theft
High opportunity costs	Child prostitution
Loss of culture	Competition over recreational areas
Disruption of social and family structures	Exacerbation of land tenure; indigenous rights issues

#### SOCIO-ECONOMIC AND CULTURAL BENEFITS

Opportunities for poverty reduction	Better access to markets
Increased wealth creation	Enhanced public facilities
Development of new skills and capacity	Intellectual interaction
Economic diversification	Cultural exchange
Improved communications	Improved education
Provision of basic services	Cultural pride & education for younger generations

#### ENVIRONMENTAL AND BIODIVERSITY COSTS

Disruption of breeding & feeding patterns of species	Diseases from sewage & solid wastes
Destruction and degradation of critical habitats	Visual degradation of sites and landscapes
Interruption of ecological processes	Introduction of invasive species
Pollution	Unsustainable demand for natural resources

#### ENVIRONMENTAL AND BIODIVERSITY BENEFITS

Financing for conservation	Impetus for private conservation efforts
Alternatives to more destructive livelihoods	Healthier environments
Increased stewardship for the environment	Improved quality of life
Greater environmental awareness and education	Higher quality scenery and attractions

In this Tourism Assessment Process, the cost benefit analysis is the general method used to answer the main question – *Is it worth it?* – before moving onto finalizing recommendations and developing action plans for the priority projects and products.

“YOU ARE ASSESSING TOURISM AS A POTENTIAL SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND CONSERVATION STRATEGY, NOT JUST THE FEASIBILITY FOR AN INDIVIDUAL OR ORGANIZATION TO MAKE A PROFIT.”



### Ranking Socio-Economic, Cultural and Environmental Costs and Benefits

The scale of impact of each Socio-Economic, Cultural and Environmental cost and benefit listed by the **Assessment Team** may not be equal. A useful exercise is to rank each cost and benefit against the others, judging the listed items in terms of amount, breadth and magnitude of impact. This internal ranking exercise will also help to prepare the **Assessment Team** for the presentation of results and the final participatory process of gathering stakeholders' input into final recommendations.

*TIP: Set aside some time for a team workshop and use flipcharts to facilitate the ranking process.*

The actual ranking can be done in a variety of ways. It is recommended that the **Assessment Team** use additional plus (+) and minus (-) signs to demonstrate the potential of the cost or benefit; however, the team can also elect to use very formal calculations of percentages or have an open-ended discussion followed by voting. At the end of the ranking process the **Assessment Team** should determine an overall rating for all unmeasurable costs and benefits. The overall rating can be:

- + If the benefits seem to outweigh the costs.
- If the costs appear to outweigh the benefits.
- 0 If they seem to balance each other out, giving a neutral impact once both benefits and costs are evaluated.

### Assessing Overall Results

In order for the team to recommend tourism, the net benefits should be positive. For example:

- If the costs outweigh the benefits, then the **Assessment Team** might want to consider a “non viable project” situation.
- In the case where the socio-economic, cultural and environmental benefits are positive but the economic public benefits are negative, the **Assessment Team** would need to consider that the public sector may decide to invest in projects that will not earn them a profit, provided the projects meet their objectives, such as community development, biodiversity conservation, poverty alleviation, and so forth.
- If the public benefits are negative, any recommended projects may face local government and taxpayer resistance. If taxes will go up, but the government still perceives an overall benefit, tourism develop-



ment will need to receive the buy-in and support from local residents and communities.

### Consider Equity as a Factor

When deciding whether tourism should be an option to pursue, equity is another aspect of the cost benefit analysis to consider. You are assessing tourism as a potential socio-economic development and conservation strategy, not just the feasibility for an individual or organization to make a profit. Therefore, the benefits should be reaped and the costs should be borne on a widespread basis. Review the costs you calculated and make a note of:

- Who will bear the costs?
- Who will realize the benefits?
- What is the team's best judgment on the apparent equity of the distribution of costs and benefits?
- Are there any groups that appear to take on an unfair proportion of the costs, especially if the same ones do not appear to reap comparable benefits?
- Are there any groups that seem to benefit without bearing any or enough of the costs?
- How does the project affect social and gender aspects?

It can be a strategic decision to distribute more benefits than costs to certain populations, such as indigenous communities, senior citizens, the poor, and youth. Once again, the **Assessment Team's** best judgment and values are needed to make this evaluation. *Worksheet 16 Evaluation/Recommendations* can be used to help with this step.

There may be cases where the benefits are positive for the private sector, however, have negative socio-economic, cultural and environmental costs. In these cases, the team may determine tourism development is not viable.

# Economic Cost Benefit Analysis<sup>29</sup>

## WORKSHEET 14

Tourism Development at	Annual Benefits		Annual Costs		
	Private	Public	Private	Public	
Local Income (expenditures × local income multiplier coefficient)					
Local Tax Revenues					
Planning					
Infrastructure and Services					
Destination Management Costs					
Other					
TOTAL					
	Net Measurable Benefits		Costs		Benefits
Private		–		=	
Public		–		=	
Overall		–		=	

# Estimating Unmeasurable Costs & Benefits<sup>30</sup>

## WORKSHEET 15

Brainstorm a list of unmeasurable benefits and costs.

UNMEASURABLE BENEFITS (+)	UNMEASURABLE COSTS (-)

# Cost/Benefit Evaluation & Recommendations<sup>31</sup>

## WORKSHEET 16

1. We have the following main comments/concerns about the costs and benefits of the proposed project.

2. Suggestions for project modifications are (list and describe):

3. Based on our research we recommend the project:

- Proceed as planned
- Proceed if modified
- Not proceed



# Phase III

## Recommendations

**AFTER COMPLETING** the assessments and the overall cost benefit analysis, the **Assessment Team** should have a fairly complete idea of potential attractions to develop, the market demand and the destination's competitiveness, as well as a host of insights into how tourism might be developed to address biodiversity conservation and socio-economic development issues.

The role of the **Assessment Team** is to make recommendations on:

- What types of development and projects could be developed?
- What are the impacts, benefits, costs, and trade-offs?
- How do the team, stakeholders and community jointly contemplate options and arrive at a consensus on priority tourism development or project options?

Having completed a range of analyses and assessments, the **Assessment Team** will need to report on and seek input on assessment results before making final recommendations and conclusions on how to proceed. Some of the major questions to be discussed are:

- What types of tourism attractions and products does the destination have the potential to develop or improve?
- Would this tourism development foster the creation and growth of small- and medium-size businesses at the local level?
- Is there potential for the tourism-related businesses to be profitable?
- Is there adequate infrastructure and services to support tourism development?
- Are existing human resource and institutional capacities adequate? If not, what are the areas of needed improvement?
- Will employment for local residents be one of the benefits derived from tourism development, and if so, what types of employment will be created?
- How could destination stakeholders benefit from this development? How could they lose?
- What is the potential for tourism to address important issues or the overall goals of key stakeholders? For example, poverty reduction and biodiversity conservation.
- What are the potential impacts of tourism on the natural environment and resource use? If negative, how can these be mitigated?
- Based on the cost benefit analysis, are the overall benefits greater than the overall costs?
- What are the major risks for adverse impacts?
- What key assumptions have been made regarding the opportunities and potential issues with tourism development in the destination? Are there additional considerations?

### The Importance of Building Consensus and Reporting Results

When sharing their findings and soliciting feedback, the tourism **Assessment Team** should include stakeholders who may have expressed concerns about tourism at any stage during the assessment process. By informing everyone, the team is likely to increase support as the tourism development process moves forward. There are a variety of ways of reporting the results and garnering feedback. When choosing the type of communication, consider its pros and cons with the intended audience.



### Circulating a Formal Report

PROS	CONS
Thorough explanation of the assessment and the results, which can be easily distributed to interested groups and organizations	Lengthy
Provides detailed information to the reader	May not be read by constituents
Can be targeted to a smaller audience of community leaders and key stakeholders	May not receive proper translations
	Limits open discussions on feedback
	Reader may need a lot of time to provide feedback or may not provide feedback

### Circulating an Executive Summary

PROS	CONS
Brief, easily digested summary on the assessment and its results	Too brief
Can be written to appeal to a specific target audience	May not fully portray key aspects of the community's needs, resources, and readiness for tourism development
Can be targeted to a smaller audience of community leaders and key stakeholders	Readers may not return feedback
	Limited opportunity for open discussions on feedback

### Using Press Releases and Radio Programs

PROS	CONS
Potentially good media exposure	Too brief
Ability to reach a wider audience, sharing key aspects of the results and the potential for further study and/or development	May not be seen or heard by key constituents
By keeping a general audience informed, it can increase people's interest about the assessment	Interested people may forget to follow-up and get more information on the assessment
The individuals and businesses affected by tourism are often widespread in a community and the mass media may be a good way of reaching them, particularly if the survey covers a large/remote area.	Opportunity for feedback minimal
Consider breaking out information from the report into small chunks for press releases. This way you can inform people without overwhelming them with too much detail at once.	Stakeholders may not receive all the information.

Very often a destination will get to the stage of identifying priorities and then stop there. Once priorities are identified, it is imperative that stakeholders be assigned the task of moving these priorities forward.

“TOURISM DEVELOPMENT CAN BE A TEDIOUS PROCESS, IT IS CRUCIAL FOR BOTH THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL SUSTAINABILITY OF THE DESTINATION THAT THIS PROCESS BE AS OPEN AND AS PARTICIPATORY AS POSSIBLE.”



### Public-Community Meeting

PROS	CONS
Large audience	Attendance determined by space available
Questions easily answered	Audio/visual equipment may not be available or reliable
Key constituents present	Translators may not be available or reliable
Visual aids support the assessment's results	Audience may differ greatly, discouraging some from fully participating in discussion
Participatory processes, like the “ranking process” can be leveraged to gain consensus on recommendations and next steps. See TOOL: Ranking Problems and Opportunities for more details	Some constituents may also be frustrated or miss key points due to a “simplified version” of the presentation to meet the needs of the audience

### Workshops and Seminars

PROS	CONS
Generally gets great participation from community members	Can require significant time commitments from key stakeholders
Interactive and creative presentation	Appropriate meeting space required
Provides an ideal venue for conducting the ranking exercise and further defining in detail the lines of action and next steps	Ability to get a broad representation of community limited by number of participants
See discussion under Public-Community Meeting above. See TOOL: Ranking Problems and Opportunities for more details	

### Links on Your Organization's Website

PROS	CONS
Easily accessible for people who have Internet access	Limits viewers due to Internet access requirement
Easily viewed and kept as a reference point by Internet accessible constituents	May be difficult to find on the website
Easily updated	May load slowly if there are a lot of graphics
Informs viewers of your organization in its entirety through content of website	Little room for gaining consensus



## Using the Ranking Process to Help Stakeholders Give Insightful Feedback

Ranking is a useful tool for collecting feedback and fine-tuning assessment results. It allows stakeholders and other interested parties to clarify their thoughts on potential opportunities. More importantly, it promotes open discussion that may reveal insights that have not yet been shared with the **Assessment Team**.

The goal of the ranking process is to: display a list of opportunities and issues identified by the **Assessment Team**; gain consensus on the list; and have participants rank opportunities and issues according to priority. Additionally, the team can ask participants for additional suggestions on next steps. This can be done in public meetings, workshops or consultations.

When communicating initial results and soliciting feedback, the **Assessment Team** will find it useful to provide illustrative examples to help stakeholders envision and better understand how some recommendations may work or the reasoning behind their approach. The **Assessment Team** can provide brief examples of how sustainable and ecotourism development has been applied in similar situations in other destinations. The team is encouraged to seek case examples that apply to the local context within which they are working.

### Ranking Problems and Opportunities Tool<sup>32</sup>

The process of ranking problems and opportunities is an important step in the assessment because it enables stakeholders and other interested parties to discuss and agree upon priorities. It is best used once the problems and opportunities of an ecotourism project have been listed.

Ranking problems and opportunities creates community awareness of the risks involved in developing an ecotourism project. This information-based overview orients communities towards their needs in relation to available resources. Specifically, ranking can help in increasing your knowledge of:

- The stakeholders' natural resources management issues;
- Their interest in participation and action;
- Technical information for specific problems;
- Awareness of the funding mechanisms available;
- An understanding of the interlinks within the ecotourism industry.

### Instructions for Participants

This process could be done in a large village meeting or a smaller stakeholder representative meeting. In either case, the meeting should provide a setting in which stakeholders or representatives prioritize the identified problems, and then rank the opportunities that address the most crucial ones. The ranking process may be carried out by a variety of approaches, but the most practiced is open-ended discussion

Integrating tourism into a larger development strategy that includes improvements in basic services like health and sanitation for the local community, as well as developing alternative strategies for economic development, such as sustainable agriculture, will help ensure the overall success of the destination.

## “CHOOSE TO APPLY THE KNOWLEDGE AND DECISION-MAKING EXPERIENCE GAINED THROUGH THIS ASSESSMENT PROCESS TO EXPLORE ALTERNATIVE DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES.”



followed by voting or buying of options. This might take longer than you would expect, but it is important for everyone to be heard, especially women and youth groups.

### Guidelines to Follow

The following format and steps are suggested for a successful ranking process with stakeholders:

- Assemble participants, making sure that someone from the **Assessment Team** is there to help guarantee that the opinions of women and youth are heard.
- Explain the process of gathering data, the kind of information that the stakeholders have provided to the team, and the key changes/trends emerging from the process.
- Display the preliminary problems and opportunities as captured by the **Assessment Team**.
- Review the information on problems and opportunities carefully with the stakeholders to verify the issues. New information can be included and a separate sheet for a master list of points can be used for the ranking process.
- Prepare a short list of the most pressing problems in the community.
- Rank the actions that can be taken to solve each priority problem. Discuss criteria to be used for ranking options with the group. The criteria used to prioritize problems may be quite different from those used to rank actions. Stakeholders may identify such criteria as the relevance of cost, social and technical feasibility, and the time before benefits can be realized. It may be up to the **Assessment Team** to introduce such concepts as sustainability, equity, gender, and productivity.
- When the initial list of criteria for ranking options has been established, review it with the group.
- The outcome of the ranking should be agreement on the priorities for community action.

### Capture This Feedback in a Report

The final, and possibly the most concrete output of this exercise, is a report that serves a variety of purposes and audiences. As a record of all the stakeholders' priorities and perceived potential, it is used as a basis for ecotourism development. The report should identify:

- Priorities as agreed upon by stakeholders;
- Proposed actions and requirements;
- Duties and responsibilities for individuals and groups;
- Schedules, if possible;
- Identification of areas where the stakeholders need external assistance.



## The Value of Ranking

Ranking is based on locally accepted criteria, as well as on externally identified categories such as environmental sustainability, stability, equity, productivity or cost, time to benefit, and social and technical feasibility.

Besides drawing out stakeholder perspectives on the possibilities for each opportunity, ranking also serves as a basis for developing the community stakeholder ecotourism management plan.

## Components of the Written Report

Once the team has obtained feedback, they will need to go back to their preliminary assessment results, make adjustments and finalize their recommendations. Typically a final written report will be necessary, especially if the assessment is funded by external donors. However, these final recommendations will then have to be communicated to the key stakeholders. The **Assessment Team** may choose to implement a few of the previously discussed communication options.

In addition, the **Assessment Team** should adhere to any guidelines and reporting needs specified by the organization that commissions the Assessment. For general guidelines, consider including the following information in a final written report:

- An executive summary with the highlights of the study;
- An introduction;
- The results of each assessment presented in narrative text, tables and graphs;
- Conclusions and recommendations;
- An appendix with sampling methodology and analytical methods;
- An appendix with a copy of the survey instrument.

Remember to make enough copies of the report for the wide range of recipients, which includes people and businesses currently interested in tourism in the community, individuals interested in investing in tourism related businesses in the area, as well as key contacts outside the community such as the regional/national office of tourism, university recreation and tourism departments and non-profit tourism associations.

## How to Define Next Steps

The TAP is complete once recommendations have been finalized and appropriately disseminated. The **Assessment Team** has examined major opportunities and risks and provided preliminary recommendations on what types of tourism attractions and products the destination can develop or improve, given considerations for socio-economic, cultural, and environmental impacts, capacity, economic and natural resource use constraints. Broad consensus and understanding has been built among stakeholders on these recommendations and the destination is ready to begin the planning stages of tourism development.

Once priorities are identified, it is imperative that the **Assessment Team** detail action plans that assign the task of moving these priorities forward to specific stakeholders or to team members where appropriate.

“THE MORE SPECIFIC THE DIRECTION GIVEN,  
THE GREATER THE CHANCE THAT THE ACTION WILL TAKE PLACE.”



After the TAP, the process will need to rely on key stakeholders and organizations to take the next steps towards beginning the planning stage. Perhaps the community has selected one or more tourism projects that appear to have benefits that are greater than their costs. Or, additional investments in supporting infrastructure, capacity building and biodiversity conservation efforts may have been identified. Defining these next steps will be important. It is recommended that the following areas be considered:

- Lead organizations and/or stakeholders;
- Funding availability to conduct planning and implement projects;
- Project or product design and development processes;
- Action planning, implementation and management;
- Marketing;
- Monitoring and evaluating future implementation.

Product design and development will require a separate planning process associated with the feasibility and development of ecotourism products. Such a process can be launched with a visioning exercise similar to the one described in the Destination Visioning Exercise in the *Involving Stakeholders in the Process* section, however, with product development specialists, architects, and other tourism and tourism-related planners. Issues to be addressed in a product design and development planning process include designing differentiated and competitive ecotourism products together with physical design, marketing, pricing, distribution, and promotion strategies for the successful launch of their product. It can involve initial feasibility analysis to determine if product development ideas are viable, and which factors or resources are critical to the success of the idea and must be investigated further. And finally, if interested parties should go ahead and invest in completing a full business plan. There are many resources available for guiding product design and development and business planning such as CI's *Product Development and Marketing Workshop* and *Business Planning for Environmental Enterprises*.

Often a tourism development priority may not involve product or enterprise development. For example, a priority may be developing training and education, addressing policy issues, putting in place financial assistance programs, providing needed public services and infrastructure, or focusing on destination marketing. In these cases, project design and development processes can be useful in ensuring clear delineation of the objectives, issues and strategies for implementing programs to address them.

If the **Assessment Team** did not identify any projects to proceed with, the team has the option of revising its prioritized potential project lists to find other projects to assess. Or, you may choose to apply the knowledge and decision-making experience gained through this assessment process to explore alternative development strategies.



Very often a destination will get to the stage of identifying priorities and then stop there. The more specific the direction given, the greater the chance that the action will take place. Priorities that are left nebulous or vague will be difficult to implement. Once the priorities have been set, it is necessary to identify specific tasks and leaders for them, as well as timelines and available resources. If this is not done at this stage, the team risks losing the momentum that has been built around the assessment process. Capitalizing on that momentum moves the team closer to actually accomplishing the priorities addressed in the assessment rather than allowing months to go by without anything happening.

### Conclusions

Throughout the world, an increasing number of destinations are embracing tourism as a means to reduce poverty, provide employment, conserve biodiversity, and so forth. This manual was created to address some of the complexities of tourism development, particularly in rural or biodiversity rich areas. By following the guidelines outlined in the three phases of the **Tourism Assessment Process**, community leaders and stakeholders should have a clearer picture of whether or not tourism is a viable option for the destination. And if so, what type and how much tourism does the community want to develop. Although tourism development can be a tedious process, it is crucial for both the economic and social sustainability of the destination that this process be as open and as participatory as possible.

In addition, tourism should not be seen as a “one stop solution.” While tourism may be one approach to protecting the environment or improving the economic situation of a destination, it is crucial that the destination consider the “bigger picture” beyond tourism. Tourism is not a “stand-alone” activity. Integrating tourism into a larger development strategy that includes improvements in basic services like health and sanitation for the local community, as well as developing alternative strategies for economic development, such as sustainable agriculture, will help ensure the overall success of the destination.

By following the guidelines outlined in the three phases of the Tourism Assessment Process, community leaders and stakeholders should have a clearer picture of whether or not tourism is a viable option for the destination.

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## CONSERVATION INTERNATIONAL

Founded in 1987, CI believes that the Earth's natural heritage must be maintained if future generations are to thrive spiritually, culturally and economically. CI's mission is to conserve the Earth's living heritage, our global biodiversity and to demonstrate that human societies are able to live harmoniously with nature. With headquarters in Washington, D.C., CI works in more than 40 countries on four continents.

CI has over 15 years of experience of applying innovations that demonstrate ecotourism can provide income to local people and, by its reliance on healthy ecosystems, offers a powerful incentive to conserve and protect biodiversity. CI's ecotourism projects have placed it at the forefront of conservation efforts in some of the Earth's richest regions of plant and animal diversity. These include success stories such as the Chalalan Ecologde in Bolivia's Madidi National Park, the Kakum Canopy Walkway in Ghana's Upper Guinean Forests, and Eco-escuela Language School in Guatemala's Maya Biosphere Reserve.

## GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

Since 1972, GW has been a pioneer in tourism management, education, research and technical assistance. GW was the first university in the United States to offer a master's degree in tourism administration, and continued its tradition of "firsts" by creating the International Institute of Tourism Studies (IITS), the first university-based World Tourism Organization Center for Tourism Education and Research.

IITS excels in professional development and career education certificate programs including the Tourism Destination Certificate Program. This professional certificate program has helped hundreds of individuals working in the public and private sectors as well as civil society begin or enhance their career in the tourism industry. The CI-GW Ecotourism Learning Program is based in part on the IITS Tourism Destination Management Program.

## THE CI-GW ECOTOURISM LEARNING PROGRAM

The CI-GW Ecotourism Learning Program is a collaborative partnership aimed at meeting the urgent need for capacity building and training in tourism approaches that truly addresses conservation issues and create needed job and income opportunities. ***Linking Communities, Tourism and Conservation: A Tourism Assessment Process*** is one of a series of manuals and courses developed jointly by CI and GW as part of the program.

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