

TOURISM POLICY, CLIMATE CHANGE AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

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ABSTRACT

The subject of this paper is tourism policy, climate change and sustainable development. We consider climate change to be one of the biggest problems of modern living, and the tourism is one of the many sectors affected mainly through the changing faces of tourist destinations. After the climate change we observe reduced numbers of tourists in those tourist destinations. Tourism is the antithesis of bad weather and can be developed only in areas that are not affected by such conditions. For this reason, many countries are preparing in advance and plan their tourism policies to meet the climate change issues. In this paper, we define tourism policy, climate change and implications for tourism, contribution of tourism to climate change, and we give examples of tourism policies concerning climate change. Recommendations for the Republic of Macedonia are given based on international experience and how should the country and the tourism industry prepare for the global climate change.

Keywords: tourism, tourism policy, climate change

TORISM AND TOURISM POLICY

Tourism today is a unique phenomenon present in all countries in the world and has constant tendency of increasing its growth on a global level. There is no country in the world that does not develop some type of tourism or a country where citizens are not involved in tourist movement outside of their permanent place of residence. Basically, the technical definition of tourism is just that, a trip for various reasons such as business, pleasure, sports and recreation, religion or other reasons.

According to the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO, 2017), international tourists' arrival in 2016 has reached 1.235 million (3.9% increase compared to 2015). Tourist's expenditure reached to 1.400 billion US dollars in 2015, and the tourism industry participated with 10% of the global GDP (gross domestic product). Every eleventh employed person in the world is employed within the tourism industry.

More and more countries recognize the great role of tourism, both in terms of cultural prosperity and economic benefits. For this reason, the countries at each level (national,

regional and local) are strategically planning and creating policies for development that are known as tourism policies. Many countries encourage the development of international tourism through different forms of support. At the national level the development of international tourism is falling under the Ministries and Government Agencies of tourism. Generally, these institutions are engaged in carrying out activities such as controlling and regulating of the tourist activities; gathering information about the industry; preparing a national strategy for tourism development; preparing a national tourist marketing and advertising and more (Metodijeski, Cuculeski, 2015).

The term "tourism policy" (Ackovski, Ackovska, 2003) describes the conscious activity of the country or society in the field of hospitality to develop the two main sectors of the industry (accommodation and food and beverage) as well as the development of all other sectors. The main objective of this policy is to undertake measures and activities that will fully activate all factors for development of hospitality and tourism towards the increase of hospitality revenue and consumption as well as to improve their structure and quality.

Those who own and implement the tourism policies are:

- Government authorities at all levels (parliaments, separate legislative bodies, committees, government agencies etc.)
- The executive and administrative bodies of the government (secretariats, tourism ministries, tourism and hospitality committees, General Directorate of hospitality and tourism at national, regional, cantonal, municipal, city and other levels)

Secondary holders and executors of the tourism policies are:

- Legislative bodies outside the government authorities (chambers of municipalities and special business associations)
- Social organizations in the field of hospitality and tourism (tourist associations at all levels, tourist offices and agencies)
- Local communities
- Other profit and non-profit organizations in the tourism industry which directly or indirectly participate in meeting the tourism and travel needs

Range of methods and schemes are being used to meet and achieve the goals of the tourism policy. All instruments of the policy are divided into four groups:

- Legal regulations which mainly include constitutional provisions, laws, permits, licenses, guidelines etc.
- Administrative tools which mainly include taxes, custom fees, contributions, public loans and other public revenues and subsidies (compensations, donations, bonuses, guarantees, regression, etc.)
- Economic instruments which mainly include plans, programs, resolutions, funds, loans, bonds, money, exchange rates etc.
- Contracts and agreements

Besides the creation of tourism policies, tourism is affecting the structuring of policies in other areas, urban planning for example (Dredge, Jenkins, 2011). In order, for the tourism industry to be sustainable in the future, it requires an effective policy and planning to be establish

nowadays. The creators of tourism policy and strategies should be able to identify the tourism trends and propose adequate mechanisms aimed at development of high quality tourism products and services. Tourism policy basically means planning which is aimed at giving guidance to the tourism which needs to move forward in its development (Edgell, Swanson, 2013).

In more specific terms, tourism policy fulfills the following functions (Goeldner, Ritchie, 2009):

- It defines the rules of the game — the terms under which tourism operators must function;
- It sets out activities and behaviors that are acceptable for visitors;
- It provides a common direction and guidance for all tourism stakeholders within a destination;
- It facilitates consensus around specific strategies and objectives for a given destination;
- It provides a framework for public/private discussions on the role and contributions of the tourism sector to the economy and to society in general; and
- It allows tourism to interface more effectively with other sectors of the economy.

The tourism sector through its representation in government and industry organizations can be involved in policy relevant to climate change in four distinct ways (Becken, Clapcott, 2011):

- Tourism interests are sufficiently and equitably covered within national climate change policy (e.g. a generic carbon tax) – no specific action is required.
- Tourism is sufficiently and equitably considered in national policy that addresses issues indirectly related to climate change (e.g. biodiversity protection) – no specific action is required.
- Tourism advocates for the specific inclusion of climate change aspects into national policies that address issues that are important to tourism, but that fail to take sufficient account of climate change (e.g. water related legislation).
- Tourism develops its own 'climate change policies', specifically for the tourism sector (e.g. an environmental quality scheme that includes carbon emissions).

There are examples from many countries that are preparing in advance and plan their tourism policies to meet the climate change issues (OECD, 2012). International organizations also play a significant role in global since like UNWTO with organization of international conferences and publications on the topic of climate change and tourism; United Nations Environment Programme (Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation in the Tourism Sector: Frameworks, Tools and Practices); Publications of International ecotourism society and other relevant organizations.

CLIMATE CHANGE AND IMPLICATIONS FOR TOURISM

It is one of the great truism that everybody talks about the weather. However, in recent years, interest in the weather has grown as high magnitude storm events, floods, droughts, snowstorms and record high temperatures have become associated with potential changes in the world's climate (Hall, Higham, 2005). Climate change have become the focus of media attention as well as substantial scientific debate. Our lifestyles, economies, health and social well-being are all affected by climate change, and although the consequences of climate change will vary on a regional basis, all nations and economic sectors will have to contend

with the challenges of climate change through adaptation and mitigation. Tourism is no exception and in the decades ahead, climate change will become an increasingly pivotal issue affecting tourism development and management (UNWTO, 2008).

Weather and climate have a profound influence on natural system and human societies around the world. Climate change can affect tourist experience and incorporate in travel decision process (Scott, Hall and Gössling, 2012). In table 1 we present some of the most important impacts of climate change and implications for tourism.

Table 1. Impacts of climate change and implications for tourism

Impact	Implications for Tourism
Warmer temperatures	Altered seasonality, heat stress for tourists, cooling costs, changes in: plantwildlife-insect populations and distribution range, infectious disease ranges
Decreasing snow cover and shrinking glaciers	Lack of snow in winter sport destinations, increased snow-making costs, shorter winter sports seasons, aesthetics of landscape reduced
Increasing frequency and intensity of extreme storms	Risk for tourism facilities, increased insurance costs/loss of insurability, business interruption costs
Reduced precipitation and increased evaporation in some regions	Water shortages, competition over water between tourism and other sectors, desertification, increased wildfires threatening infrastructure and affecting demand
Increased frequency of heavy precipitation in some regions	Flooding damage to historic architectural and cultural assets, damage to tourism infrastructure, altered seasonality (beaches, biodiversity, river flow)
Sea level rise	Coastal erosion, loss of beach area, higher costs to protect and maintain waterfronts and sea defences
Sea surface temperature rise	Increased coral bleaching and marine resource and aesthetic degradation in dive and snorkel destinations
Changes in terrestrial and marine biodiversity	Loss of natural attractions and species from destinations, higher risk of diseases in tropical-subtropical countries
More frequent and larger forest fires	Loss of natural attractions, increase of flooding risk, damage to tourism infrastructure
Soil changes (such as moisture levels, erosion and acidity)	Loss of archaeological assets and other natural resources, with impacts on destination attractions

Source: Sookram, S. (2008) The impact of climate change on the tourism sector in selected Caribbean countries. United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean

CONTRIBUTION OF TOURISM TO CLIMATE CHANGE

The tourism sector is especially sensitive to climate variability and change. Tourism in many regions relies on climate, which defines the length and quality of tourism seasons. Extreme events, such as heat waves, tropical cyclones, heavy precipitations or droughts, are likely to become more frequent and intense, and can play an important role in destination choice. Climate change also has a direct impact on the tourist resources at destinations. Tourism destinations are therefore faced with the necessity to develop adaptation strategies in order to maintain their economic viability and competitiveness. At the same time, activities related to tourism contribute to the emission of greenhouse gases, and tourism stakeholders should therefore participate in the global mitigation efforts (Maharaj, Wilkes, 2013).

There are number of studies that attempt to measure the negative impact of tourism to climate change. A global analysis was undertaken by an expert team on behalf of the UNWTO, and published as a technical report. The analysis comprised an emission estimate for tourism in 2005 and projections into the future for 2035 (Table 2). It was found that the 1.307 million tonnes of carbon dioxide CO₂ emitted by tourism in 2005 represented about 5% of the world's emissions.

Table 2. Contribution of tourism to global greenhouse gas emission

Sub-sectors	2005 (estimate)		2035 (future projection)	
	CO ₂ (Mt)	%	CO ₂ (Mt)	%
Air transport	515	40	1.631	53
Car transport	420	32	456	15
Other Transport	45	3	37	1
Accommodation	274	21	739	24
Activities	48	4	195	6
Total	1.307	100	3.059	100

Source: Becken, S., Hay, J. (2012) Climate Change and Tourism: From Policy to Practice. Oxon: Routledge

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION FOR REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA

Societies can respond to climate change by adapting to its impacts and by reducing greenhouse gases emissions (mitigation). Whereas in the first option, adaptation, the response addresses the effects of climate change; in the second, mitigation, the response addresses the causes of climate change (Schott, 2010). Climate change policy has arisen from a concern over the likely or possible consequences from increasing amounts of anthropogenic greenhouse gases emissions. For this reason, existing agreements and frameworks concentrate largely on how to reduce these emissions, or more specifically on policies designed to achieve such reductions in an effective manner. Recently, however, it has become clear that regardless of the emissions reduction efforts and success, and in part because of past emissions, there will be a need to adapt to unavoidable changes in climate (Becken, Hay, 2007).

In Republic of Macedonia, the Law for Crisis Management accommodates all forms and activities related to natural disasters, potential risks and hazards that can be manifested in crisis or other emergency situations. An example of such a situation is in the period of 7 August 2016 in Skopje, when 21 people have died in floods that hit the Macedonian capital, following torrential rain. The consequences of this natural disaster on behalf of the tourism could lead to cancellation of travel arrangements for visiting the country (tourism or business) and reducing the economic efficiency of the tourism sector.

Formulation and creation of climate change and tourism strategy should come from an assigned climate change and tourism group. This group in Macedonia should be supported by members from all stakeholders such as Ministry of environment and physical planning, Ministry of Defense, Center for Crisis Management, Ministry of Economy - Department of Tourism and Hospitality, Universities - Faculty of Tourism and Ecology, Agency for Promotion and Support of Tourism in Macedonia, Chambers of Commerce for tourism, Association of hotels and restaurants, NGO sector, transportation companies, facilities managers of natural and cultural significance, representatives of private sector and other associations in the field of tourism, hospitality and ecology.

The steps in the creation of climate change tourism strategy could be the following: Formation of proficient climate change and tourism group; Analysis of possible climate change threats, adaptation and mutilation; Formulation of climate change and tourism strategy; Implementation and strategy management and Monitoring and upholding the strategy. This strategy should be designed, implemented and monitored as well as the other national strategies.

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