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# What Globalization Means for Ecotourism: Managing Globalization's Impacts on Ecotourism in Developing Countries

ALEXANDER C. O'NEILL\*

## INTRODUCTION

During this current period of globalization, the global community is faced with the challenge of protecting resources of international importance while at the same time facilitating economic growth in both the developed and developing worlds.<sup>1</sup> The current era of globalization has seen an increase in the exploitation and degradation of natural resources due, in part, to the opening of markets, an increase in trade and industrialization, and developing countries struggling to improve their standard of living. Much has been written about sustainable development and its use as a possible solution to the challenge of economic growth and environmental protection. One tool that can be used as part of a sustainable development approach to link economic growth with conservation of natural resources in developing countries is ecotourism.<sup>2</sup>

This note will discuss ecotourism and how it has been affected, both negatively and positively, by the process of globalization and what mechanisms exist to control the negative impacts of globalization on ecotourism. Part I will examine the evolution of tourism and ecotourism. Part II will examine the phenomenon of globalization and how it has impacted the ecotourism industry and what results these impacts have had on local communities trying to utilize ecotourism as a sustainable

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1. World Comm'n Env't & Dev., *Our Common Future*, in INTERNATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL LAW AND WORLD ORDER 306, 306-07 (Lakshman D. Guruswamy et al. eds., 1994); HILARY FRENCH, VANISHING BORDERS: PROTECTING THE PLANET IN THE AGE OF GLOBALIZATION 15 (2000).

2. See ELIZABETH BOO, 1 ECOTOURISM: THE POTENTIALS AND PITFALLS 3 (1990).

development tool. It will also consider what mechanisms exist to manage the negative impacts of globalization.

### I. BACKGROUND AND MEANING

The concept of ecotourism is susceptible to many different meanings and is often confused with other closely related concepts, such as adventure tourism or wildlife tourism. The lack of semantic consensus about the meaning of these terms is the subject of much research in this field.<sup>3</sup> Variations on definitions of ecotourism<sup>4</sup> reflect the different perspectives, values, and interests that different parties have with respect to tourism.<sup>5</sup> Pleumarom suggests that “[g]iven the impossibility to foster a ‘correct’ understanding, ecotourism can at best be called an approach, rather than a viable strategy or model.”<sup>6</sup>

As a general agreement on the meaning of the term ecotourism is not likely to be reached in the near future,<sup>7</sup> it is necessary to establish a definition of ecotourism that will be useful for the purposes of this note. For the purposes of this note,

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3. DAVID B. WEAVER, *ECOTOURISM IN THE LESS DEVELOPED WORLD I* (1998).

4. The Ecotourism Society has defined ecotourism as “[p]urposeful travel to natural areas to understand the cultural and natural history of the environment, taking care not to alter the integrity of the ecosystem, while producing economic opportunities that make conservation of natural resources beneficial to local people.” *Ecotourism Soc’y, Spring Newsletter 1 (1) (1991)*. According to the International Resources Group, ecotourism is “[t]ravel with a concern for the environment, and with an appreciation of the natural attraction being the prime purpose of the trip.” *INT’L RESOURCES GROUP, ECOTOURISM: A VIABLE ALTERNATIVE FOR SUSTAINABLE MANAGEMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES IN AFRICA* (Agency for Int’l Dev. Bureau for Afr., 1992). Ecotourism has also been described as “dependent upon the quality of the experience of the observer with the resource or the environment. It is information consuming and demands a high quality natural experience with minimal to no impact on the environment.” Richard C. Smardon, *Ecotourims; Blessing or Bane to Sustainable Development*, LALUP (NewsL. Landscape/Land Use Plan. Committee Am. Soc’y Landscape Architects), Fall 1994, at 4. Finally, The Tourism Authority of Thailand describes ecotourism as “[a] visit to any particular tourism area with the purpose to study, enjoy and appreciate the scenery—natural and social—as well as the lifestyle of the local people, based on the knowledge about and responsibility for the ecological system of the area.” *Tourism Authority of Thailand, Policies and Guidelines: Development of Ecotourism (1995-1996) of the Tourism Authority of Thailand* (Bangkok, 1995). For a complete listing of these definitions, see Anita Pleumarom, *Open Questions Concerning the Concept, Policies and Practices of Ecotourism*, in *ECOTOURISM FOR FOREST CONSERVATION AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT: PROCEEDINGS OF AN INTERNATIONAL SEMINAR 26*, app. 2, at 37 (Jeffrey Bornemeier et al. eds., Reg’l Cmty. Forestry Training Ctr. Report No. 15, FAO/RAP Publication 1997).

5. Pleumarom, *supra* note 4, at 27.

6. *Id.*

7. See WEAVER, *supra* note 3.

[e]cotourism is a sustainable form of natural resource-based tourism that focuses primarily on experiencing and learning about nature, and which is ethically managed to be low-impact, non-consumptive, and locally oriented (control, benefits, and scale). It typically occurs in natural areas, and should contribute to the conservation or preservation of such areas.<sup>8</sup>

This definition was chosen, from among many, for several reasons. First, it draws a distinct line between ecotourism and other forms of alternative tourism, such as wildlife tourism or adventure tourism, that are sometimes grouped together.<sup>9</sup> Second, this definition recognizes that more than just tourist demand should be taken into consideration when defining ecotourism. Some authors have drawn a distinction between passive and active ecotourists, with passive ecotourists manifesting certain mass tourist traits, participating in ecotourist activities as just one aspect of a multipurpose trip, and requiring more infrastructure facilities, including mechanized transportation, easy accessibility and a high level of services.<sup>10</sup> Kearsley *et al.* have noted, “[a]t present, the bulk of demand is less likely to be for the ‘back country’ of wilderness and remote places than it is to be for the ‘front’ country of relatively easily accessible natural settings with a good but unobtrusive infrastructure of basic facilities.”<sup>11</sup> Active ecotourists engage in ecotourism as the main focus of their trip. Finally, because this definition is not demand-based, it does not include as many tourists under its meaning as a more general definition might.<sup>12</sup> This is important in the context of this note because this note will discuss the use of ecotourism in less developed countries, which, in many instances, are not prepared or equipped to prevent the devastating consequences of an out of control tourist industry.<sup>13</sup> It is beneficial to have dedicated ecotourists who are likely to be more sensitive to the local culture and the goals of ecotourism

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8. DAVID A. FENNEL, ECOTOURISM: AN INTRODUCTION 43 (1999).

9. *See id.*

10. *See* WEAVER, *supra* note 3, at 16-17.

11. G. Kearsley *et al.*, *Introduction to COLIN MICHAEL HALL ET AL., TOURISM PLANNING AND POLICY IN AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND: CASES, ISSUES AND PRACTICE* 66-74 (1996), *cited in* WEAVER, *supra* note 3, at 17.

12. *See* WEAVER, *supra* note 3, at 17.

13. *See* DEBORAH MCLAREN, *RETHINKING TOURISM AND ECOTRAVEL: THE PAVING OF PARADISE AND WHAT YOU CAN DO TO STOP IT* 11-13, 23 (1998); WEAVER, *supra* note 3, at 24-25.

because this reduces the resources spent on mitigating tourist impacts and will likely improve the local populations' standard of living.

In order to provide a thorough understanding of the concept of ecotourism, this section will describe the evolution of the tourism industry in general and how ecotourism developed as a result of the discontent with mass tourism.

### *A. Evolution of Tourism*

The terms "tourist," meaning "an individual who travels for the pleasure of traveling, out of curiosity," and "tourism," describing travel as a leisure activity, first appeared in the early 1800s.<sup>14</sup> However, tourism's roots reach as far back as the ancient Greeks and Romans. Wealthy citizens in these societies traveled to exotic locations around Europe, the Mediterranean, and the Middle East to experience different cultures, indulge in thermal baths, and relax.

During the Middle Ages people traveled mainly for religious reasons.<sup>15</sup> Many religious pilgrimages to holy shrines were made by large groups traveling on foot over great distances, sometimes entire continents.<sup>16</sup> A French monk by the name of Aimeri de Picaud is credited with having developed the first tourist guide for pilgrims traveling to the Spanish shrine of Santiago de Compostela in 1130.<sup>17</sup>

People did not start to travel in great numbers for pleasure, education, and knowledge until after the Renaissance.<sup>18</sup> In the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries European aristocrats would travel around Europe for up to three years at a time.<sup>19</sup> However, it was not until the Industrial Revolution that the general population took part in tourist activities.<sup>20</sup> The Industrial Revolution brought with it paid holidays and cheaper transportation in the form of the railroads, allowing the growing middle

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14. HÉCTOR CEBALLOS-LASCURÁIN, *TOURISM, ECOTOURISM, AND PROTECTED AREAS 1* (1996) (defining "tourist"); MARTHA HONEY, *ECOTOURISM AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT: WHO OWNS PARADISE?* 7 (1999) (defining "tourism"). The term "tourism" first appeared in the *Oxford English Dictionary* in 1811. *See id.*

15. CEBALLOS-LASCURÁIN, *supra* note 14, at 1.

16. *Id.*

17. *Id.*

18. *Id.*

19. *Id.*

20. *Id.*

class to experience popular pleasure retreats like the seaside resorts of France, England, and New York state.<sup>21</sup> During the 1840s and 1850s, Thomas Cook began organizing tourist excursions by train, at first through the English Midlands and later around the European continent.<sup>22</sup> At about the same time, in the United States, the American Express Company began catering to tourists when it introduced travelers checks and money orders.<sup>23</sup> Much of the pleasure travel during this time period "was essentially a quest for spectacular scenery."<sup>24</sup> It was also during this period that the first serious environmental impacts associated with tourism developed.<sup>25</sup>

In industrializing countries tourism development was further spurred by increasing mobility, as a result of the automobile and airplane, and awareness of other countries and cultures.<sup>26</sup> The increasing awareness of other countries and cultures was facilitated by the return of soldiers from distant lands and the colonization of places like India, Africa, and Australia.<sup>27</sup> Furthermore, the growing use of photography allowed for the production of visual evidence of "exotic" places that aroused the curiosity of many adventurous travelers who wished to visit these unique places.<sup>28</sup> However, nothing has had a greater impact on tourism than the airplane.

Airplanes began to open up the world to tourists in 1948 when Pan American World Airways introduced tourist class.<sup>29</sup> But it was not until the development of wide-body, high speed airplanes in the 1970s that tourists began to travel to less developed countries in significant numbers.<sup>30</sup> During the mid-1970s, tourists from developed countries traveling to less developed countries accounted for eight percent of tourism travel.<sup>31</sup> By the mid-1980s, the number was seventeen percent.<sup>32</sup> And by the mid-1990s, the number had reached twenty percent.<sup>33</sup> International tourism to less

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21. *Id.*

22. HONEY, *supra* note 14, at 8; *see* CEBALLOS-LASCURÁIN, *supra* note 14, at 1.

23. HONEY, *supra* note 14, at 8.

24. CEBALLOS-LASCURÁIN, *supra* note 14, at 1.

25. *Id.*

26. *See id.* at 2.

27. *See id.* at 1.

28. *Id.* at 1-2.

29. HONEY, *supra* note 14, at 8.

30. *See id.*; *see* MCLAREN, *supra* note 13, at 11.

31. HONEY, *supra* note 14, at 8.

32. *Id.*

33. *Id.*

developed countries is currently growing six percent annually, with the majority of these tourists coming from just twenty developed countries.<sup>34</sup>

Tourism has become one of the world's largest industries.<sup>35</sup> In 1995, global spending on travel totaled \$3.4 trillion and was expected to grow to \$4.2 trillion by the year 2000.<sup>36</sup> In addition, tourism has also become one of the world's largest employers, accounting for between six and one-half percent and ten percent of jobs globally.<sup>37</sup> Tourism accounts for between one and 1.5<sup>38</sup> and 5.5 percent of the global gross national product (GNP) and plays a major role in the economies of 125 countries.<sup>39</sup> For example, in India, Costa Rica, Nepal, and Kenya tourism accounts for eleven, fourteen, thirty-three, and thirty-eight percent, respectively, of the value of exports.<sup>40</sup> Forecasts suggest that the growth in tourism will continue to outpace global economic growth until the year 2020.<sup>41</sup>

### B. Problems with Mass Tourism

The tremendous growth in tourism has not come without a price. Starting in the 1940s, when airplanes started to make travel easier, mass tourism began to develop a bad reputation.<sup>42</sup> Initially, mass tourism was touted as a "smokeless" (non polluting) industry that would raise foreign

34. *Id.*

35. FENNEL, *supra* note 8, at 2; HONEY, *supra* note 14, at 9; WORLD TRAVEL & TOURISM COUNCIL, TRAVEL AND TOURISM'S ECONOMIC PERSPECTIVE (1995), *cited in* David Harrison & Martin F. Price, *Fragile Environments, Fragile Communities? An Introduction*, in PEOPLE AND TOURISM IN FRAGILE ENVIRONMENTS 1, 1 (Martin F. Price ed., 1996).

36. HONEY, *supra* note 14, at 9.

37. CEBALLOS-LASCURÁIN, *supra* note 14, at 9; HONEY, *supra* note 14, at 9; *Travel and Tourism: Home and Away*, ECONOMIST, Jan. 10, 1998, at 1, 1.

38. *Commission on Sustainable Development, Tourism and Sustainable Development: Report of the Secretary-General: Addendum: Tourism and Economic Development*, U.N. ESCOR, 7th Sess., addendum 1, at 2, U.N. Doc. E/CN.17/1999/5/Add.1 (1999) [hereinafter *Commission on Sustainable Development*].

39. See CEBALLOS-LASCURÁIN, *supra* note 14, at 9; HONEY, *supra* note 14, at 9.

40. See WTO (World Tourism Organization) *Compendium of Tourism Statistics*, 1989, *cited in* CEBALLOS-LASCURÁIN, *supra* note 14, at 8. The economic data provided in the paragraph above must be qualified, however. It is difficult to discern the actual magnitude of the tourist industry for three reasons. First, there is no consensus on what constitutes the tourism industry. See CEBALLOS-LASCURÁIN, *supra* note 14, at 9. Second, many tourism activities (e.g. guided tours and souvenir sales) and income (e.g. tips) go unrecorded. See *id.* Third, the differences in country data make assessments of international travel difficult. See *Survey: Travel and Tourism*, THE ECONOMIST, Mar. 23, 1991, *cited in* CEBALLOS-LASCURÁIN, *supra* note 14, at 9.

41. *Commission on Sustainable Development, supra* note 38.

42. See CEBALLOS-LASCURÁIN, *supra* note 14, at 2.

exchange earnings, GNP and tax revenue, and employment rates.<sup>43</sup> However, in many cases these benefits were never realized.

Mass tourism has often resulted in over-development, uneven development, environmental degradation, and invasion by culturally insensitive and economically disruptive foreigners.<sup>44</sup> Examples of environmental degradation can be seen around the world, in developed and less developed countries alike. Some examples of environmental degradation include algal blooms in the Adriatic Sea that have made swimming unpleasant; beaches that have been closed due to radioactivity in the UK, sewage in Haiti, and hospital waste in New Jersey; 600 fishing lodges in Canada that face closure because acid rain has resulted in a decline in salmon populations and recreational fishermen; declining tourism in Mexico City due to air pollution; overloading of local infrastructure facilities like sewage and trash collection in the Mediterranean coastal areas to the detriment of marine and human life alike; disruption of sea turtle breeding in the Greek islands and Turkey; and destruction of coral reefs in Australia and Belize.<sup>45</sup> In many cases, mass tourism is to blame for these problems; but in others, "it is the pattern of industrial growth, exploitation of natural resources and consumerism, in brief, the unsustainable development that characterizes contemporary Western Civilization, that are to blame."<sup>46</sup>

The economic promises that mass tourism held, in many cases, never materialized. In some cases, local citizens were left worse off because of the opportunity costs of developing a tourism industry, leakage of revenues out of the host country, and an over-dependence on an unpredictable tourism industry.

The opportunity costs of developing a tourism industry occur when other forms of development must be forgone as a result of resources being devoted to the tourism industry. In many cases, large government subsidies are given to the tourism industry in the form of tax incentives and funding of national tourist offices and airports.<sup>47</sup> These subsidies favor the tourist

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43. *Id.*

44. See HONEY, *supra* note 14, at 9.

45. FRANCES BROWN, TOURISM REASSESSED: BLIGHT OR BLESSING? 48 (1998); see CEBALLOS-LASCURÁIN, *supra* note 14, at 19.

46. CEBALLOS-LASCURÁIN, *supra* note 14, at 19.

47. BROWN, *supra* note 45, at 57.



over the local because they divert funds away from programs and industries that might directly benefit locals.<sup>48</sup>

Moreover, much of the income generated by the tourist industry “leaks” out of the local community or host country and into the hands of foreign interests or never reaches the host country to begin with.<sup>49</sup> Leakage is most pronounced in developing countries and, according to Brown, occurs when there are

high levels of outside ownership of plant and services; through the sale of inclusive tours, whereby a package that includes transport, accommodation, food and recreational activities is bought outside the destination from a (foreign) tour operator; when expatriate labour is used to staff hotel and businesses, thereby denying job opportunities to locals and again remitting tourist expenditure out of the destination; and where imports (of food, equipment and machinery) are required to meet tourist demands, thus negating at least part of the balance of payments advantages provided.<sup>50</sup>

The World Bank estimates that up to fifty-five percent of tourism profits in developing countries leak back to the developed countries.<sup>51</sup> For example in Kenya, all inclusive tour packages can result in leakage of between forty and seventy percent.<sup>52</sup> Typically the revenues that do stay in the host community are usually in the form of wages paid to locals employed in low paying, low skilled, service-level, and seasonal positions, such as maids, waiters, and drivers.<sup>53</sup> The fact that most of the locals employed in these menial positions are women serves both to keep wages low and reinforce the unjust division of labor.<sup>54</sup>

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48. *Id.*

49. BROWN, *supra* note 45, at 58; see HONEY, *supra* note 14, at 9.

50. BROWN, *supra* note 45, at 58.

51. See K. LINDBERG, POLICIES FOR MAXIMIZING NATURE TOURISM'S ECOLOGICAL AND ECONOMIC BENEFITS (1991), *cited in* CEBALLOS-LASCURAIN, *supra* note 14, at 10.

52. J.S. Akama, *Tourism Development in Kenya: Problems and Policy Alternatives*, in PROGRESS IN TOURISM AND HOSPITALITY RESEARCH 3, 95-105 (1997), *cited in* BROWN, *supra* note 45, at 58-59.

53. BROWN, *supra* note 45, at 57-58; see HONEY, *supra* note 14, at 9.

54. BROWN, *supra* note 45, at 58.

In developing countries that have a significant portion of their population employed in agriculture, tourism can lead to a decline in traditional agricultural exports as the tourism industry begins to employ increasing numbers of farm laborers.<sup>55</sup> This was the case in Yugoslavia, when in the 1970s, a growing tourist industry drew inland farmers to the coast to work in the fledgling industry.<sup>56</sup> The transition from agriculture and industrial exports to tourism can result in a country being over-dependent on the tourism industry, leaving the country vulnerable to fluctuations caused by unpredictable economic and political events and changes in fashion and taste that might make a country no longer desirable as a tourist destination.<sup>57</sup>

### C. Development of Ecotourism

The fact that mass tourism, in many instances, has ignored the environmental, economic, and cultural aspects of host countries led to research in the 1980s that argued for a socially and ecologically benign alternative to mass tourism.<sup>58</sup> "Alternative tourism," which calls for approaches to tourism that are opposite to those of mass tourism, is based on the belief that tourism policies should not just consider economic and technical necessities but should also take into account the demands for environmental quality and the welfare of local people.<sup>59</sup> According to Fennell,

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55. *Id.*

56. T.M. Poulsen, *Migration on the Adriatic Coast: Some Processes Associated with the Development of Tourism*, in POPULATION AND MIGRATION TRENDS IN EASTERN EUROPE 197-215 (H.L. Kostanick ed., 1977), cited in BROWN, *supra* note 45, at 58.

57. *Id.*

58. See FENNELL, *supra* note 8, at 9.

59. See *id.* However, DeKadt believes alternative tourism and mass tourism should not be distinguished. Instead he argues that policymakers should strive to make mass tourism more sustainable, responsive to community needs, and smaller in scale. See CEBALLOS-LASCURAIN, *supra* note 14, at 22.

Some researchers, however, are quick to point out that as an option to mass tourism, full-fledged alternative tourism cannot replace conventional tourism simply because of mass tourism's varied and many-sided associated phenomena. Instead, it is more realistic to concentrate efforts in attempts to reform the worst prevailing situations, not the development of alternatives.

FENNELL, *supra* note 8, at 10 (citations omitted).

[t]his “softer approach” places the natural and cultural resources at the forefront of planning and development, instead of as an afterthought. Also, as an inherent function, alternative forms of tourism provide the means for countries to eliminate outside influences, and to sanction projects themselves and to participate in their development—in essence, to win back the decision-making power in essential matters rather than conceding to outside people and institutions.<sup>60</sup>

The concerns over mass tourism that led to the research of the 1980s can be traced to the huge influx of tourists to host communities soon after World War II and to the environmental movement of the 1960s.<sup>61</sup>

As the numbers of tourists increased, especially during the 1950s and 1960s, the image of tourism began to deteriorate. First, it was U.S. tourists who were seen as “insensitive and boorish” when visiting foreign countries, often being referred to as the “Ugly Tourist.”<sup>62</sup> The behaviors displayed by American tourists were often thought to be the result of traits unique to Americans.<sup>63</sup> However, in the 1970s this label was also ascribed to Germans visiting countries in Europe and East Africa, and in the 1990s to the Japanese.<sup>64</sup> The Ugly Tourist phenomenon is not based on actual personality traits; instead it results from a feeling of invasion by foreigners.<sup>65</sup> The Ugly Tourist phenomenon has brought with it cultural and economic disruptions and resulted in over-development, and has led to the deterioration of mass tourism’s reputation.<sup>66</sup>

The explosion of mass tourism also paralleled a social movement gaining strength during the 1960s. The concern over the environment, by people living mainly in industrialized countries, led to the emergence of a new type of socially concerned citizen and tourist; one concerned not only about human health as it related to the environment, but also the welfare of

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60. FENNELL, *supra* note 8, at 9.

61. See CEBALLOS-LASCURÁIN, *supra* note 14, at 23.

62. *Id.*

63. *See id.*

64. *See id.*

65. *See id.*

66. See JAMES R. BUTLER, ECOTOURISM: ITS CHANGING FACE AND EVOLVING PHILOSOPHY (1992), cited in CEBALLOS-LASCURÁIN, *supra* note 14, at 23.

animals and the ecosystem as a whole. Conservation organizations were formed and rallied support around the idea of lobbying governments to set aside land for the protection of animals and ecosystems in the belief that a positive feedback system could be institutionalized, so as more people had the opportunity to visit protected areas and see the beauty and wildlife within them more areas would be protected.<sup>67</sup> As Ceballos-Lascuráin notes, “[a] protected area . . . needs a constituency of supporters who appreciate and understand it if its long-term survival is to be assured.”<sup>68</sup> This increased emphasis on environmental exploration and protection in conjunction with an increase in tourism led to the development of ecotourism.

Ecotourism can be traced to four sources. These sources are (1) scientific, conservation, and nongovernmental organization (NGOs) groups; (2) multilateral aid institutions; (3) developing countries; and (4) the travel industry and traveling public.<sup>69</sup>

Ecotourism usually involves visits to protected areas set aside by governments, conservation or scientific organizations, or private owners or entrepreneurs.<sup>70</sup> Most of these protected areas are modeled after the U.S. National Parks System which was established in the late nineteenth century to serve as a “pleasure grounds” for visitors.<sup>71</sup> The Park System model is known as the fencing model because it establishes boundaries around areas to protect them and limit access to the resources contained within them.<sup>72</sup> Over one hundred and thirty countries have established approximately 6,900 protected areas that cover nearly five percent of the earth’s land surface using this method.<sup>73</sup>

By the late 1960s, international conservation and scientific organizations began to notice two phenomena occurring on different continents. In Africa, the fencing model was failing. Local people (who were often politically and ethnically marginalized rural poor), received little, if any, benefit from the protected areas and were often forcibly

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67. See CEBALLOS-LASCURÁIN, *supra* note 14, at 24.

68. *Id.*

69. See HONEY, *supra* note 14, at 11.

70. *See id.*

71. *Id.*

72. *See id.*; see Sean T. McAllister, *Community-based Conservation: Restructuring Institutions to Involve Local Communities in a Meaningful Way*, 10 COLO. J. INT’L ENVTL. L. & POL’Y 195, 195-98 (1999). For a critique of the fencing model, see McAllister, *id.*

73. See CEBALLOS-LASCURÁIN, *supra* note 14, at 29.

removed from the protected areas and placed on unsustainable areas around the park.<sup>74</sup> They began to resent the park system and tourists who frequented the protected areas, and started to poach and degrade the protected areas' resources.<sup>75</sup> Scientists, conservationists, park officials, and environmental organizations, concerned about the conflict between protected areas and local people, began to realize that if the protected areas and local people were going to peacefully coexist, the local people would need to derive some benefit from the protected areas and tourism.<sup>76</sup>

Kenya was the first African nation to experiment with integrating environmental protection and economic development by placing control of several game reserves in the hands of local county councils.<sup>77</sup> These councils received revenues from park entrance fees and hotels and other tourism facilities.<sup>78</sup> According to Honey,

This "stakeholders" theory—that people will protect what they receive value from—has dovetailed with economic development theories holding that the road out of poverty must begin at, not simply trickle down to, the local community level. In the mid-1980s, as the concept of ecotourism began to take hold in East and southern-Africa, the stakeholders theory was broadened to encompass environmentally sensitive, low-impact culturally sensitive tourism that also helped educate visitors and local community members.<sup>79</sup>

Around the time the "stakeholder theory" was developing in Africa, a second trend was noticed in Costa Rica. Scientists and environmental activists were worried that the increase in ranching, oil drilling, mining, human settlements, and illegal logging were leading to the destruction of the rainforests which were valuable for both their biological diversity and their oxygen supply which helps to regulate the earth's climate.<sup>80</sup> While

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74. HONEY, *supra* note 14, at 11-12.

75. *See id.* at 11.

76. *Id.* at 12.

77. *Id.*

78. *Id.*

79. *Id.*

80. *Id.*

most conservationists in Latin and South America initially viewed ecotourism as simply an environmentally friendly public awareness tool that could be used to generate funds for conservation,<sup>81</sup> several conservationists believed that it would be most beneficial for the environment and local people if it were an active and holistic activity that emphasized cultural exchange rather than just sightseeing.<sup>82</sup> This interaction with nature, they contended, would inspire tourists to actively participate in the protection of the environment and local cultures.<sup>83</sup>

The simultaneous development of the desire to benefit local people in Africa and the desire to protect and benefit fragile ecosystems in Latin and South America were two factors that influenced the development of ecotourism.

The development of ecotourism can also be traced to international aid institutions, specifically the World Bank and the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID).<sup>84</sup> During the late 1970s, the mounting debt load of the less developed countries and the growing environmental movement prompted international lending institutions to seriously consider tourism as a mechanism for development and conservation.<sup>85</sup>

During the 1970s, the World Bank became the major source of funding for tourism-related projects.<sup>86</sup> Its first tourism-related loan, which went to finance the building of a hotel in Kenya that was partly owned by the Inter-Continental Hotel Corporation, a subsidiary at that time of Pan American Airways, seemed to set the trend for its future tourism-related lending practices.<sup>87</sup> Between 1969 and 1979, tourism-related loans, made to eighteen countries for twenty-four projects totaling \$450 million, primarily financed the development of luxury hotels and large infrastructure projects that supported mass international tourism and the private sector.<sup>88</sup> In 1986, however, the World Bank, after being criticized for its environmentally

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81. *Id.*

82. *See generally id.* at 12-13.

83. *See id.* at 13.

84. *See id.* at 14. Other international aid institutions that have played a role in ecotourism development include, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), and the Organization of American States (OAS). *Id.*

85. *Id.*

86. *Id.* at 14-15.

87. *See id.* at 15.

88. *See id.*

destructive projects around the world, issued guidelines that “emphasize[d] the need ‘to include local people in the planning and benefits’ of wildland management projects and note[d] that ‘rural development investments that provide farmers and villagers in the vicinity of [wildland management areas with] an alternative to further encroachment’ can also help protect parks and reserves.”<sup>89</sup>

Another institution involved heavily in financing ecotourism project is USAID. Ecotourism fits well with its objectives “to promote environmentally and socially sound, long-term economic growth” while at the same time placing a “high priority on stimulating private investment, free markets and free enterprise.”<sup>90</sup> For example, in Nepal, Madagascar, and Thailand USAID has helped create ecotourism industries that provide new livelihoods for local people so that they no longer have to rely on the resources provided by national parks.<sup>91</sup>

The development of ecotourism can also be traced to developing countries. In the mid-to-late 1980s many developing countries began to realize the potential of ecotourism to increase foreign exchange while minimizing the impacts on the environment.<sup>92</sup> Ecotourism provided a sustainable development alternative to the more invasive and destructive practices of logging, oil extraction, cattle ranching, bananas, commercial fishing, and conventional mass tourism.<sup>93</sup> Less developed countries believed that ecotourism could minimize impacts on the environment “through its emphasis on low-impact construction, controlled visitor numbers, and care in interacting with the local flora, fauna, and human population.”<sup>94</sup> In many cases the economic benefits were also greater than more destructive forms of development. Studies have shown that, especially in arid and semi-arid areas, ecotourism can be more profitable than cattle ranching or agriculture.<sup>95</sup> For example, studies in Africa have shown that ecotourism ventures involving wildlife were three to eleven

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89. *Id.* at 15-16.

90. *Id.* at 16.

91. U.S. Agency Int’l Dev., Ctr. for Info. & Evaluation, Win-Win Approaches to Development and Environment: Ecotourism and Biodiversity Conservation (July 1996), at [http://www.usaid.gov/pubs/usaid\\_eval/pdf\\_docs/pnaby204.pdf](http://www.usaid.gov/pubs/usaid_eval/pdf_docs/pnaby204.pdf).

92. *See id.* at 17.

93. *See id.*

94. *Id.*

95. *Id.*

times more profitable than cattle ranching, and in one study, ecotourism produced more than fifteen times as many jobs as cattle ranching.<sup>96</sup>

Finally, the development of ecotourism can be traced to the travel industry and tourists. The travel industry was quick to seize the opportunity ecotourism provided to tap into the traveling public's environmental consciousness and take advantage of its growing dissatisfaction with mass tourism.<sup>97</sup> A 1995 survey conducted by the Travel Industry Association, a Washington, D.C. organization that represents 2,300 travel-related businesses promoting travel to and within the United States, found that eighty-three percent of travelers support "green" travel companies and are willing to spend more for travel services and products that conserve or protect the environment.<sup>98</sup> Around thirty million Americans belong to environmental organizations and there was growing interest by these people to engage in an alternative form of tourism that was environmentally friendly.

Economic data on ecotourism is scant and often unreliable. The main reason for this is that there are a number of definitions of ecotourism and the definition used in a particular study may encompass one or more forms of alternative tourism in addition to true ecotourism. Other reasons include the fact that ecotourism is a relatively new industry, and that data is not collected systematically by the private sector, governments, or the United Nations-World Tourism Organization.<sup>99</sup> With the discrepancies among varying definitions in mind, I provide the following economic data on ecotourism/alternative tourism not to show conclusively its growth but to provide some evidence that the growing public commitment to ecotourism makes it a viable component of a sustainable development strategy for developing countries. Because of its viability and potential it should be carefully monitored to avoid harms to the environment and local cultures so that it does not contribute to the very problem it can be used to solve.

In 1988, it is estimated that there were between 157 and 236 million international ecotourists worldwide.<sup>100</sup> This translates into between ninety-three and \$233 billion in national revenues for various countries.<sup>101</sup> The

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96. *See id.* at 17-18.

97. *See id.* at 19.

98. *Id.*

99. *See* CEBALLOS-LASCURÁIN, *supra* note 14, at 46.

100. *See id.*

101. *See id.*



estimated annual growth rate of culturally and environmentally sound travel is thirty percent, compared to a growth rate of four percent in the U.S. travel industry.<sup>102</sup> In 1996, the World Tourism Organization estimated that by the year 2000, most of the eighty-six percent increase in world tourism receipts would come from “active, adventurous, nature- and culture related travel.”<sup>103</sup> Another indicator of the rising popularity of ecotourism is the increase in the number of ecotours being offered, both to developed and developing countries. A non-probability convenience sampling of forty-one U.S. “ecotourism operators” and tourism agencies conducted in the early 1990s found that the number of ecotours offered to both developed and developing countries rose from 33,738 in 1980 to 45,842 in 1985 to 75,727 in 1989.<sup>104</sup>

## II. GLOBALIZATION AND ECOTOURISM

Part II will argue that globalization has negative, as well as positive, impacts on ecotourism and that traditional, in most cases voluntary, approaches designed to address the negative impacts of globalization on ecotourism have met with mixed results and therefore new approaches should be implemented.

### A. *Globalization and Changing Roles*

Coming to a consensus on a definition of globalization, like that of ecotourism, could consume this paper and, even then, the resulting definition would still not be satisfactory to many. The purpose of this section, however, is not to enter into a debate about the definition of globalization. This section will set out a general definition of globalization in order to provide a framework for the purposes of this paper. But, perhaps more importantly, this section will focus on and outline how globalization has led to a change in the traditional state and non-state roles and what the implications are of these shifting roles.

Globalization refers to a process of growing interconnectedness between people as a result of the decreased effects of distances and political

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102. HONEY, *supra* note 14, at 64.

103. *Id.*

104. WEAVER, *supra* note 3, at 20.

boundaries and is marked by a reduced State role and an increase in the role of non-state actors.<sup>105</sup> Because the interactions among state and non-state actors and markets make globalization a complicated and contested topic, it is helpful to first establish a framework within which to discuss globalization.<sup>106</sup>

This note works within the framework of the “Globalization as Denationalization” approach in order to analyze the impacts of globalization on the specific industry of ecotourism in developing countries. The “Globalization as Denationalization” approach emphasizes the increasing role of non-state actors and the decreasing role of traditional State actors in dealing with global issues.

A major component of the “Globalization as Denationalization” approach is that economic markets that used to be defined by political borders are now fluid. This fluidity has occurred as a result of advances in technology and the ease with which capital flows from one place to another.<sup>107</sup> Transnational corporations are driven to seek out the most cost-effective or attractive locations to produce goods and services and also customize their products for local markets.<sup>108</sup> Their search has been facilitated by the trend toward privatization, and the increase in foreign direct investment and the resulting increase in export flows.<sup>109</sup> From an economic perspective, the increasing dominance of transnational corporations in developing countries has led to a decline in traditional state roles in international markets because the emphasis on state to state loans and humanitarian assistance has shifted to dependency of developing countries on private investors.<sup>110</sup>

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105. Andrea D. Bontrager Unzicker, *From Corruption to Cooperation: Globalization Brings a Multilateral Agreement Against Foreign Bribery*, 7 IND. J. GLOBAL LEGAL STUD. 655, 659 (2000); see Alfred C. Aman, Jr., *The Globalizing State: A Future-oriented Perspective on the Public/Private Distinction, Federalism, and Democracy*, 31 VAND. J. TRANSNAT'L L. 769, 780-81 (1998).

106. See Alfred C. Aman, Jr., *Proposals for Reforming the Administrative Procedure Act: Globalization, Democracy and the Furtherance of a Global Public Interest*, 6 IND. J. GLOBAL LEGAL STUD. 397, 404-11 (1999).

107. See *id.* at 408.

108. *Id.*

109. See Paul Cook & Colin Kirkpatrick, *Globalization, Regionalization and Third World Development*, 31 REGIONAL STUD. 55, 57 (1994).

110. See Paul Hirst & Grahame Thompson, *The Problem of 'Globalisation: International Economic Relations, National Economic Management and the Formation of Trading Blocs*, 21 ECON & SOC. 357, cited in ANDREA YODER, SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT, ECOTOURISM, AND GLOBALIZATION: ARE THEY COMPATIBLE? 15, at <http://darwin.bio.uci.edu/~sustain/global/sensem/S98/Yoder/yoder.htm> (Nov. 12, 2000). But see PAUL N. DOREMUS ET AL., THE MYTH OF THE GLOBAL CORPORATION (1998).

The integration and fanning out of markets that has transcended political borders has also resulted in a denationalization of the laws that govern transnational corporations.<sup>111</sup> One example of these denationalized laws is the development of arbitration mechanisms designed to settle disputes between corporations doing business transnationally.<sup>112</sup> These proceedings “may, to some extent, occur within the shadow of the state, and may depend on the legal preconceptions brought to bear on a problem by the arbitrator involved,” but the orientation of these proceedings is primarily denationalized.<sup>113</sup>

This denationalization of law and markets has also manifested itself in the way corporations conduct their operations.<sup>114</sup> In order to attract new business states often engage in a race to the bottom by lowering environmental, health, and safety regulations.<sup>115</sup> However, corporations often voluntarily set their standards of operation above those of the country where they do business.<sup>116</sup> The denationalization is also evident when examining the role of non-state actors and their interaction with transnational corporations. The role of non-state actors has been to increasingly target their lobbying efforts directly at transnational corporations in order to affect a change in their operating procedures and bypass the state altogether.<sup>117</sup>

As a result of the expansion of markets and the decreasing importance of national laws, states are increasingly relegated to the position of weak referees in the game between transnational corporations and non-State actors.

### *B. Globalization's Effects on Ecotourism in Developing Countries*

The effects of globalization on ecotourism cannot be overlooked. As Honey states, “[t]hroughout most of the world, the rise of ecotourism has coincided with the promotion of free markets and economic globalization, with the private sector hailed as the main engine for development.”<sup>118</sup> In

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111. See Aman, *supra* note 106, at 409.

112. *Id.*

113. *Id.*

114. *See id.*

115. *See id.*

116. *See id.*

117. *See id.*

118. HONEY, *supra* note 14, at 18.

order to examine the impacts of globalization on ecotourism in developing countries the broad "Globalization as Denationalization" framework set out above must be honed. Examining these impacts from a market-oriented perspective, there are two approaches that will aid in our understanding: the convergent approach and the divergent approach.

The convergent approach emphasizes the benefits that developing countries gain from participating in the globalization of the world economy. Privatization, foreign direct investment, and openness to trade are seen as ways that developing countries can open themselves up to the global markets and generate revenues that will enable them to finance needed infrastructure development and expedite technology transfers. Foreign direct investment is now preferred over traditional commercial loans because of the international debt crisis of the 1980s and the conditions placed on commercial loans that restricted the use of funds and resulted in countries owing half the amount of the loan in interest before the funds could be utilized.<sup>119</sup> The result has been that countries now focus on outward looking development strategies, like ecotourism. Such strategies not only generate income that contributes to the economy of the country but also allow the countries more freedom to do what they wish with the funds.<sup>120</sup> Through the development of attractive investment opportunities, developing countries can get the capital they need for infrastructure and technology improvements with little or no investment on their part.<sup>121</sup>

Advocates of the convergent theory would emphasize that the increase in the number of people participating in ecotourism has led to a variety of benefits for developing countries. Ecotourism generates funds through entrance and concession fees that can be used to maintain protected areas and parks, around which many ecotourism businesses operate.<sup>122</sup> Furthermore, ecotourism generates employment opportunities like tour guides, park guards, lodge owners, handicraft makers, maintenance personnel, and concession vendors.<sup>123</sup> Finally, because ecotourism emphasizes education as one component of the experience, positive ecotourism experiences will often promote environmental awareness as

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119. See Hirst & Thompson, *supra* note 111.

120. See *id.*; Cook & Kirkpatrick, *supra* note 110, at 59.

121. See Hirst & Thompson, *supra* note 111.

122. See ELIZABETH BOO, THE ECOTOURISM BOOM: PLANNING FOR DEVELOPMENT AND MANAGEMENT vi (Paper No. 2, 1992).

123. See *id.* at vi-vii.

well as concern for local populations resulting in strong advocates for protection of natural and cultural resources.<sup>124</sup>

However, there is another side to globalization and its effects on ecotourism. The divergent approach sees globalization as a threat to developing countries. This approach focuses on the distribution of benefits from globalization and trade, rather than its efficiency effects.<sup>125</sup> Globalization is dependent on the import/export model of development.<sup>126</sup> The developing world relies heavily on the income from exports to developed countries.<sup>127</sup> For example, the protectionist barriers imposed by the developed economies in the 1980s reduced the amount of exports purchased from developing countries and, consequently, led to severe recessions and poverty in the developing countries.<sup>128</sup>

Globalization and its "pot of gold" have put pressure on developing countries to compete in the world marketplace. But with seriously underdeveloped infrastructure, communications, and technology facilities, developing countries have been at a disadvantage in competing for their share of the pie in the global marketplace. As Cook and Kirkpatrick state, "[w]here administrative, institutional and organizational structures are weak, the capacity to 'manage' the globalization process is undermined."<sup>129</sup>

This underdevelopment and desire to compete have left developing countries vulnerable to the demands of transnational corporations. "Ecotourism promotes locally owned enterprises, but with globalization and free trade, weak national capital often cannot compete with strong foreign companies. The lowering of trade barriers and opening up to unfettered foreign investment is again and again undermining the sustainability of smaller, locally owned ecotourism ventures in developing countries."<sup>130</sup> States in the global economy are increasingly trying to promote trade while at the same time giving up control of the economic processes occurring within their countries in the hopes this will increase their GNP. To put it

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124. *See id.* at vii.

125. *See Cook & Kirkpatrick, supra* note 110, at 61.

126. *See Hirst & Thompson, supra* note 111.

127. *See id.*

128. *See Cook & Kirkpatrick, supra* note 110, at 61.

129. *Id.* at 62.

130. HONEY, *supra* note 14, at 86; *see also* Anita Pleumarom, *Tourism, Globalisation and Sustainable Development*, at <http://www.twinside.org.sg/title/anita-cn.htm> (last visited Feb. 18, 2002).

more bluntly, developing countries have opened the castle gates and left no one on guard duty.

The susceptibility of developing countries and their citizens to corporate demands and the resulting effects are well documented.<sup>131</sup> As mentioned earlier, transnational tourism corporations, like Thomas Cook, American Express, and Thomas, have become dominant players in the globalization process. Pleumarom argues,

most of the profits are made by foreign airlines, tourist operators, and developers who repatriate them to their own economically more advanced countries. With increasing privatisation and deregulation of the global economy, there are now great and justifiable concerns that Southern countries will lose out even more. More liberalisation will lead to more foreign-owned tourist facilities and tour operations, and as a result, less income from tourism will remain in the local economy.<sup>132</sup>

Ascher further argues that “[t]h[e] increasing size and concentration of economic power among nature tourism operators within industrialized countries has impacts on all levels of nature tourism.”<sup>133</sup>

Globalization’s impacts on ecotourism need to be carefully monitored for five reasons. First, ecotourism operations are usually established near sensitive or protected areas, this is usually the draw for ecotourists. However, by their nature, these areas are the most susceptible to outside disturbances caused by too many tourists and the pollution they leave behind. Second, again because of the remote location of ecotourism operations, local and indigenous cultures can be severely altered by the influx of tourists and their western belief systems. Third, many locally

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131. See BOO, *supra* note 123, at vii-viii; KATRINA BRANDON, ECOTOURISM AND CONSERVATION: A REVIEW OF KEY ISSUES 31 (1996); see BROWN, *supra* note 45, at 18-19; Robert N. Gwynne & Cristobal Kay, *Latin America Transformed: Changing Paradigms, Debates and Alternatives*, in LATIN AMERICA TRANSFORMED: GLOBALIZATION AND MODERNITY 7 (Robert N. Gwynne & Cristobal Kay eds., 1999); HONEY, *supra* note 14, at 86; McLAREN, *supra* note 13, at 16-23.

132. Anita Pleumarom, *Eco-tourism: A New “Green Revolution” in the Third World*, at <http://www.twinside.org.sg/title/eco2.htm> (last visited Feb 25, 2002), cited in HONEY, *supra* note 14, at 86.

133. F. ASCHER, TOURISM: TRANSNATIONAL CORPORATIONS AND CULTURAL IDENTITIES (Paris, UNESCO 1985), cited in Bryan R. Higgins, *The Global Structure of the Nature Tourism Industry: Ecotourists, Tour Operators, and Local Businesses*, J. TRAVEL RES. 11, 15 (1996).

owned ecotourism operations are small in scale and unable to compete financially against larger, more powerful foreign operations. Fourth, because of its great potential as a sustainable development strategy that has large multiplier and spillover effects in developing economies, ecotourism may be the most attractive development alternative some developing countries have in the short to medium term.<sup>134</sup> Finally, individual ecotourism packages can be easily “green washed” and marketed to a trusting public as environmentally friendly when in reality they carry many of the same harmful impacts as mass tourism.

All of this is not to say that transnational corporations do not have an incentive to maintain the environmental and cultural integrity of an area, but that locally owned ecotourism operations have more of an interest in the long-term viability of their culture and environment and therefore should be able to exercise the utmost control over their surroundings.

### *C. Suggestions on How to Control the Negative Impacts of Globalization on Ecotourism*

Control over globalization’s effects on developing countries is a recurring theme in the globalization literature.<sup>135</sup> However, as is common with the “Globalization as Decentralization” approach, most of the proposals of the United Nations, tourism trade associations, and government organizations, tout the effectiveness of voluntary, self-regulation.<sup>136</sup> The question is how much do we want to rely on the voluntary efforts of corporations to mitigate their impacts on developing countries’ ecotourism industry?

Corporations are in the business of increasing shareholder value and to do this corporate leaders focus on the financial bottom line. While attention is no doubt given to the social impacts of corporate decisions, these impacts more likely than not take a back seat to profits. For example, during a Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly, one tourism

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134. See *Commission on Sustainable Development*, *supra* note 38, at 4.

135. See Cook & Kirkpatrick, *supra* note 110; David Held & Anthony McGrew, *The Great Globalization Debate: An Introduction*, in *THE GLOBAL TRANSFORMATIONS READER: AN INTRODUCTION TO THE GLOBALIZATION DEBATE* 1, 29 (David Held & Anthony McGrew eds., 2000).

136. See *Commission on Sustainable Development*, *supra* note 38, at 8-16; see HONEY, *supra* note 14, at 32; INTERNATIONAL RESOURCES GROUP, *ECOTOURISM: A VIABLE ALTERNATIVE FOR SUSTAINABLE MANAGEMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES IN AFRICA* 92-98 (1992).

industry group that represents many of the world's largest tourism corporations, the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC), lobbied against and defeated an international airline transportation tax that would have generated funds to be used for environmental protection.<sup>137</sup> The WTTC's president said that the tax would only create further bureaucracy and interfere with the innovations that the tourism industry was making on its own.<sup>138</sup> While definite conclusions should not be drawn from this one example it does provide some evidence that the global tourism industry is understandably resistant to the idea of impinging on the fiscal bottom line even if doing so would create funds that would protect, among other things, the environment.

On the other hand corporations should not be excluded from dialogue on the impacts of globalization on the ecotourism industry of developing countries. On the contrary, as this note has suggested, transnational corporations are a major component of globalization and should be involved in any attempts to regulate the impacts of globalization on ecotourism. However, corporations should not have free reign to potentially alter the cultural, environmental, and political aspects of host developing countries while we take false comfort in the fact that the tourism industry is trying its best to voluntarily remedy any damage or impacts that may be occurring.

So how do local people in developing countries manage the globalization process to their benefit? There are at least two ways to go about managing these impacts. One form seeks to effect change within a country's borders while the second advocates reform on a global scale.

The first form of control that could be used to manage globalization's impacts on developing countries is called public sector management (PSM). PSM is a system in which civil service managers and elected officials control or manage the tourism industry of a particular area or country in the public interest.<sup>139</sup> Their job is to ensure that tourism development is sustainable and does not harm people, communities, and cultural and natural resources.<sup>140</sup> In fact, PSM managers should try to increase the

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137. HONEY, *supra* note 14, at 33.

138. *Id.* The WTTC along with the Travel Industry Association believe in self-monitoring and "green" innovations that save money, and they oppose government or international attempts to regulate or levy taxes against the tourism industry. *See id.* at 32-33.

139. JAMES ELLIOTT, *TOURISM: POLITICS AND PUBLIC SECTOR MANAGEMENT* 213 (1997).

140. *See id.* at 215.



living standards of the poor and those least able to protect themselves.<sup>141</sup> PSM managers have the power to intervene and protect nascent tourism projects from foreign interests and help them compete in the international market.<sup>142</sup>

For example, Vietnam is undergoing a transition from a centrally planned, highly regulated economy to a more market-based system. Tourism is being developed in poor rural areas of Vietnam as a means of reducing the numbers of people who migrate to the cities. But while tourism is an important tool for rural economic development, it should be implemented judiciously. According to Elliott,

[c]ontrol is needed to prevent damage to the economy and society by the wrong kind of, and excessive, investment, which can cause inflation, strain the existing infrastructure and cause social unrest . . . Tourism also needs sensitive and positive control if its full potential is to be realised and damaging effects kept to a minimum . . . Market forces will not pursue the public interest or provide the public services needed for the poor and those in need. It is only PSM which has the authority and knowledge to protect the local people and to conserve the natural and historic heritage of Vietnam.<sup>143</sup>

While PSM has great potential as a means of minimizing the impacts of globalization on the ecotourism industry of developing countries, it has two weaknesses. The first is that it requires resources to establish a formal PSM system and many developing countries might not have the necessary resources to get a PSM system off the ground. Second, PSM requires a proactive government with the foresight to implement it. Some developing countries might not believe in PSM's effectiveness or might already be under the influence of powerful foreign interests or transnational corporations who would rather not have a PSM system in place. Protection of developing countries' ecotourism ventures and local cultures from

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141. *See id.* at 216.

142. *See id.* at 215.

143. *Id.* at 226. While PSM has been discussed in the context of general tourism, it embraces many of the same principles as ecotourism and could easily be applied to the management of ecotourism as a component of a broader PSM scheme for tourism in developing countries.

foreign interests might require a fundamental shift in the way globalization occurs.

The second method for minimizing the impacts of globalization on the ecotourism industry of developing countries is essentially to reform globalization. Jan Nederveen Pieterse argues that

[t]he only way for localities, nations, regions not to be outflanked by the merciless economics of global competitiveness is by changing the rules of the global game itself. Since local, national and regional reform is ultimately checkmated and since what is at issue are processes of a global scope, what is called for is global governance.<sup>144</sup>

Those who currently benefit from the globalization process have little incentive to change it. What is needed to achieve global reform is local empowerment of those who have been negatively impacted by globalization. But attempts at reform that are centered on “defensive, reactive, backward, inward looking” paradigms should be replaced with programs that are centered on “forward, proactive, outward looking paradigms.”<sup>145</sup> In order to link together the “soft” social agendas of local people and the “hard” economic agendas of the neoliberal globalization movement there must be a middle ground “that intellectually, politically, institutionally bridges the span between local struggles and global reform, between local alternatives and global constraints.”<sup>146</sup> One middle ground is the human development approach.<sup>147</sup>

There are three elements involved in global reform. These are the need for global reform, the agenda, and the implementation of reform. The need

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144. Jan Nederveen Pieterse, *Globalization and Emancipation: From Local Empowerment to Global Reform*, in *GLOBALIZATION AND THE POLITICS OF RESISTANCE* 189, 201 (Barry K. Gills ed., 2000). Before proceeding further, I want to make clear that I do not advocate that developing countries that are negatively impacted by the globalization process isolate and remove themselves from globalization, a process that is known as delinking. *See id.* at 192. Social movements often organize in response to external threats and as a result they “erect barricades against inroads into local or national moral economies.” *Id.* at 195. This is not productive because it tends to marginalize movements to achieve reform and will likely result in a country being disenfranchised from the global economic community. *See id.* at 192.

145. *Id.* at 196.

146. *Id.*

147. *See id.*

for reform has been outlined in subsection B of this section. The agenda for global reform can, and in some cases currently does, involve many issues including restrictions on speculative economic transactions, formulation of a global development agenda, establishing international labor and environmental regulations, and formation of regional parliaments and global parties.<sup>148</sup>

In terms of implementation, there exists a solid foundation, in the form of international institutions and treaties, from which to expand the global public sector<sup>149</sup> and facilitate global reform to minimize the negative impacts of globalization on the ecotourism industries of developing countries. Two such promising documents, founded on the human development approach, have been produced by the International Labour Organization (ILO) and the United Nations. These documents, while not specifically addressing ecotourism, address and revolve around four principal categories: cultural protections, land rights, economic and social welfare, and self-determination.<sup>150</sup> The ILO's Convention Concerning Indigenous and Tribal Peoples in Independent Countries (ILO Convention No. 169)<sup>151</sup> and the United Nations draft declaration on indigenous rights,<sup>152</sup> which has not yet been ratified, together form a solid foundation on which local populations who qualify as indigenous people may resist the negative impacts of globalization. Both of these documents call upon the United Nations and states to implement and enforce them. The value of these documents lies in the fact that to a certain extent they level the playing field by providing international protection for locals from external globalizing forces.

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148. See *id.* at 199, 202.

149. See *id.* at 202.

150. Raidza Torres Wick, *Revisiting the Emerging International Norm of Indigenous Rights: Autonomy as an Option*, 25 YALE J. INT'L L. 291, 296 (2000).

151. International Labour Organization, *Convention Concerning Indigenous and Tribal Peoples in Independent Countries*, 28 I.L.M. 1382 (1989).

152. *Commission on Human Rights: Sub-commission on the Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities, Discrimination against Indigenous Peoples: Report of the Working Group on Indigenous Populations on Its Eleventh Session*, U.N. ESCOR, 45th Sess., Annex I, Agenda Item 14, U.N. Doc. E/CN.4/Sub.2/1993/29 (1993).

## CONCLUSION

The development of tourism, in all its forms, has paralleled and resulted from the process of globalization. Ecotourism evolved out of a dissatisfaction with traditional mass tourism which was seen as environmentally damaging and harmful to local cultures. Today ecotourism is widely viewed as a viable component of a sustainable development approach to growth in developing countries. There is, however, an inherent tension underlying the phenomenon of ecotourism that needs to be further explored. This is the tension between economic values and ecological/cultural values. Ecotourism is potentially a valuable economic tool for developing countries, but its economic benefits may carry hidden ecological and cultural costs.

The challenge is to balance these tensions in a way that allows developing countries to reap the economic benefits of ecotourism while containing its potential for ecological and cultural destruction. The definition of ecotourism used in this paper states that ecotourism is natural resource-based tourism that is "ethically managed to be low-impact, non-consumptive and locally oriented."<sup>153</sup> This definition assumes a paradigm that treats natural resources as special in the sense that there are limits to the degree they can be exploited. The definition goes on to say that ecotourism "should contribute to the conservation or preservation of [natural resources]."<sup>154</sup> The concept that ecotourism should contribute to conservation or preservation of natural resources is critical. This paradigm is in sharp contrast to a paradigm that treats natural resources like any other kind of resource which can be exploited for economic benefit. The impact of the forces of globalization could easily lead to ecotourism turning into just another form of mass tourism and thus leaving developing countries one less alternative for sustainable development. However, this does not have to be the inevitable result if ecotourism development is based on the former instead of the latter paradigm.

What is called for is management of the globalization process at the state and local level and reform of the globalization process at the global level to allow local communities involved in ecotourism ventures to benefit

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153. FENNELL, *supra* note 8, at 43.

154. *Id.*

from the positive aspects of globalization while mitigating its negative impacts.