

## **TOURISM AND PROBLEMS THAT COME WITH IT**

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Tourism can create great pressure on local resources such as energy, food, land and water that may already be in short supply.

According to the Third Assessment of Europe's environment (EEA, 2003), the direct local impacts of tourism on people and the environment at destinations are strongly affected by concentration in space and time (seasonality).

They result from:

- a. The intensive use of water and land by tourism and leisure facilities.
- b. The delivery and use of energy.
- c. Changes in the landscape coming from the construction of infrastructure, buildings and facilities.
- d. Air pollution and wastes.
- e. The compaction of soils (damage and destruction of vegetation).
- f. The disturbance of fauna and local people (for example, by noise).

The growing number of tourists visiting sensitive natural areas may also jeopardize nature conservation. Some conflicts may also arise between tourism development and other sectors such as agriculture and forestry.

Tourism can cause loss of biodiversity in many ways, e.g. by competing with wildlife for habitat and natural resources. More specifically, negative impacts on biodiversity can be caused by strain on water resources. Water and especially fresh water is one of the most critical natural resources. The tourism industry generally overuses water resources for hotels, swimming pools, golf courses and personal use of water by tourists. This can result in water shortages and degradation of water supplies, as well as generate a greater volume of wastewater. For example, the average water consumption in Antalya City (Turkey) is 250 litres per person a day, while the average water consumption in the tourist areas of Antalya exceeds 600 litres. In Mallorca (Spain), water consumption in rural areas is 140 litres per person a day, in urban areas 250 litres, while the average tourist consumption is 440 litres, or even 880 litres in case of a luxury establishment (EEA, 2001).

Direct impact on natural resources, both renewable and non-renewable, from the construction of tourist facilities, roads and airports can be caused by the use of land for accommodation, other infrastructural provisions and the use of building materials (sand mining!). Forests often suffer negative effects of tourism in the form of deforestation caused by fuel wood collection and land clearing. This is the case in many valuable coastal areas in Turkey where the forests were cleared

for the construction of summer houses and hotels during the last three decades. For example in the Kusadasi-Davutlar area of Turkey, a coastal strip of 30 km by 750 m has been totally covered by summer houses during the period of 1975 to 1985. These houses are owned by the middle and higher income residents of the larger cities. They provide a temporary relief from the stress of big cities are regarded as good investment, increasing in value over time and can be used as permanent residence after retirement. However, this trend has resulted in a severe loss of forests, free space and agricultural land. Growing pressure on the water resources has led to a shortage of drinking water in many areas and the waste problem is growing. Electricity shortage and cuts have become common in many important tourist areas.

Transport by air, road and rail is continuously increasing, along with the rising number of tourists and their greater mobility. Tourism now accounts for more than 60% of air travel and is therefore responsible for an important share of air emissions such as carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>). Transport emissions, emissions from energy production use are linked to acid rain, global warming and severe local air pollution.

Noise pollution from airplanes, cars, motorbikes, buses, as well as recreational vehicles such as snowmobiles and jet skis, is an ever-growing problem of tourism, causing annoyance, stress and even hearing loss.

In some locations, conventional tourism has been accused of failing to integrate its structures with the natural features and indigenous architecture of the destination. Large, dominating resorts can look out of place in any natural environment and may clash with the indigenous structural design. In areas with high concentrations of tourist activities and appealing natural attractions, waste disposal is a serious problem. Improper disposal can be a major despoiler of the natural environment. Solid waste and littering can degrade the physical appearance of the water and shoreline.

Development of marinas, breakwaters and shoreline development can cause changes in a currents sediment supply and consequently coastal erosion. Extraction of building materials on coastal land and in near-shore areas can harm inland forests and lead to erosion.

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