

Tasks of a new sustainable Romanian model destination

Mirela Mazilu, Daniela Dumitrescu, Mădălina Andrei, Roxana Marinescu

Abstract— Tourism was bounced from one ministry to another without being given due importance in the national economy. Fortunately, the current government has reinstated the ministry, taking appropriate measures for the good of the tourism, helping budgetary Romanians to spend their holidays within their country by holiday vouchers.

The Romanian ecotourism destinations, no matter of the season, remain Romanians favorites, given the modest prices the owners of these pensions charge.

In present, sustainable Romanian destinations are increasingly affected by the new strategic challenges posed by innovative technologies and often related to tourist consumer behavior and environmental pressures. In order to address these challenges, destinations first have to analyze the global trends and then respond proactively (Soteriades et al., 2007), strongly emphasizing that innovation is extremely important, even indispensable to evolution.

Keywords—criteria, consumer, development goals, sustainable tourism.

I. INTRODUCTION

THE new publication of the Sustainable Development Goals has encouraged countries and industries to foster realizable aims that address such issues as poverty eradication, the elimination of inequality and injustice, and the mitigation of climate change by 2030 (United Nations, 2015). Weeden and Boluk (2014) claim “*the tourism industry, producers, and tourism consumers, have not responded convincingly to calls for more responsibility in tourism*” (p. 1) furthering the need for scholarly work to better understand the motivation (or lack of motivation) to support the sweeping ideals of the Sustainable Development Goals.

Our scope and profession, as professors, academics, is to encourage the adoption of sustainable practices in tourism industry by reducing barriers, delivering best-practice, and providing insight into a rapidly changing industry and sustainable consumer base.

The aim of this article is to provide a comprehensive set of tourism debates surrounding the future of sustainable in Romanian tourism destination model.

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II. METHODOLOGY

Analytical methodology used in the space of this article allowed the author a presentation, not exhaustive, leaving room for other complex analysis to give a real image of Romanian tourism eco destinations for gaining more ground at the expense of sustainability.

All these differ in each sector level (public or private) to which the action of shaping the tourist destination is implemented.

Both sectors have much to offer. The public sector provides a holistic strategy and strategic role on a long term for quality assurance, while the private sector acts quickly to develop profitable business.

The strengths and weaknesses highlight the importance of partnerships and of the development of synergies where the whole is the bigger than the sum of the individual parts.

The objectives of a sustainable and competitive tourism are:

- ❖ Circumstantial: the practical implementation of freedom of movement and communication between countries and the cultural value of natural, artistic and architectural heritage of the countries;
- ❖ Purely economic (qualitative and quantitative): as tourism policies favor certain types of consumption to increase the production and to direct the sectors and the regions which are of particular interest and have a positive effect of increasing the economic growth of external trade and employment.

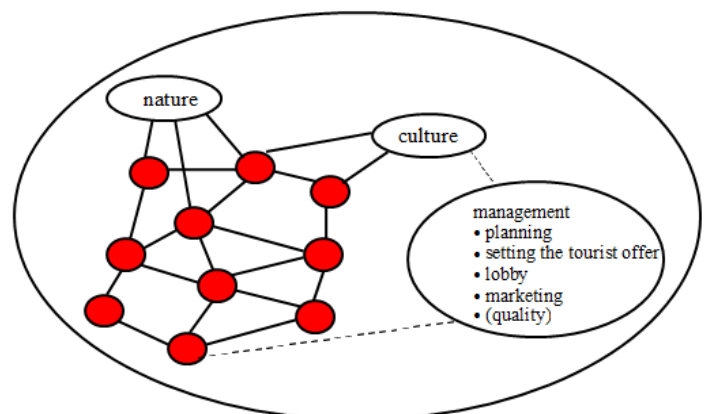


Fig.1. Destination as a Virtual Business Company: Cooperative

Table 1. Tasks of a destination

Planning	Information	Setting the tourist offer
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Setting the mission ▪ organisation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ information for guests ▪ information for local population ▪ support for journalists 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ care for guests ▪ entertainment for guests ▪ coordination of tourist infrastructure ▪ operation of the entertainment facilities ▪ control and improvement of the product quality
Marketing and communications	Sales	Lobby
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ promotion ▪ sale promotion ▪ PR ▪ brand management ▪ marketing research 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ information and booking system ▪ packages 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ tourism awareness among the population ▪ understanding tourism at the level of the political authorities ▪ collaboration within “cooperative” organisations

1. The structure of the tasks must be examined.

- **Size of the processes:**
 - **Basic size:** What organisation takes over the task? (may be justified through the geographical position).
 - **Performance size:** Who will generate what performances within these organisations? (mentioned above)?
- **Content size:**
 - **Territorial task:** Assignment of space-limited tasks
 - **Product task:** Assignment of segment specific tasks
- **The geographical origin of the tasks must not be the same with the geographic origin of the task achievement!**

Tasks structure: Main task

1) Territorial tasks (main care for the tourist):

- *Create attention and access!*

- The access to promotion for all the partners (information for clients, booking channels, distribution, etc.).
- The encouragement of structures to create several marketable tourist products
- Region promotion

2) Tasks related to the product:

- **Hard to sell!**
- Focusing the unique offers in marketable products
- Organising possible attractions

Tasks structure: Agencies and Organizations that take over the tasks

3) Territorial tasks:

- Agencies:
 - All the services providers from a region (**neutrality principle**)
 - clients (Information)
- Organisations that take over the tasks: The promotion organisations which are territorially limited, PPP (public-private partnership); if it is necessary the exclusivity principle (based on the property of the territorial brands)

4) Product tasks:

- Agencies: Services providers selected and qualified (elimination principle)

The organizations that take over the tasks: public organizations, PPP or private marketing organizations (e.g.: hotel chains, agencies, tourism organizations, etc.)

2. Roles and responsibilities in the Management and Marketing of the Destination

There are many various roles and responsibilities in the management and the marketing of the destination.

These are led in different manners in different countries, but, usually, these are divided between the national, provincial/regional and local levels. Normally, the national level is responsible for more strategic roles while the local level is responsible for operational elements.

It is important to re-examine the concept of innovation in sustainability in products tourism and reflect on how innovation has contributed to the sustainability of tourism in the last time.

Linking the review of innovation to progress in sustainable tourism more broadly can help assess whether and how innovation has contributed to or resulted in making tourism more sustainable.

Table 2. Specific roles and responsibilities - national, provincial/regional and local Tourism National Policy! Action, instead of beautiful words?

	national	provincial/regional	local
Destination, promotion, inclusion of brand promotion and image	✓	✓	
Campaigns for the business establishment, especially SMEs	✓	✓	✓
Non-discriminating information services	✓	✓	✓
Operations/easy booking			✓
Destination and coordination and management			✓
Information and booking for visitors			✓
Training and education		✓	✓
Business advice		✓	✓
“Start-ups” new products		✓	✓
Development and management of events			✓
Development and management of attractions			✓
Strategies, research and development	✓		✓

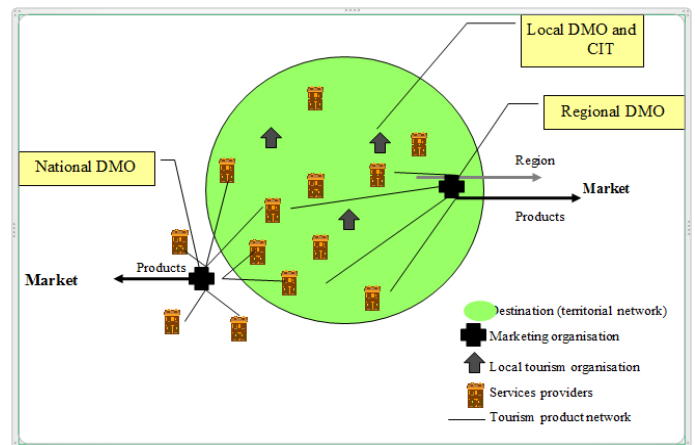


Fig.2. The model of a Romanian destination

Strong points	
Public sector	Private sector
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Strategic approach on a long term ▪ Stimulation of the public awareness regarding Destination ▪ The management of the public domain ▪ SMEs support ▪ Quality insurance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Strategic approach on a short term ▪ Focus on sales ▪ Client relationship management ▪ Focus on the market opportunities ▪ Quick decision making ▪ Entrepreneurship
Weak points	
Public sector	Private sector
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Lack of interest for establishing new businesses ▪ Poor trade revenues ▪ Risk phrases ▪ Tolerate the poor performance ▪ Slowly in taking decisions ▪ Distrust in the private sector and in profit 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Lack of interest for the general public welfare ▪ Limited interest in long-term planning ▪ Unsuitable resources ▪ Frustrated by the public sector

Fig.3. Strong and weak points of the government types

More, an original consideration of future directions and contemplation of the environment of progress also supports a renewed perception of sustainable tourism itself (fig.2, 3).

Both sectors have a lot to offer. The public sector ensures a holistic approach and a long-term strategic role for the

insurance of the quality while the private sector quickly and advantageous acts for business development.

These strong and weak points emphasise the partnership importance, as well as of synergies where the whole is larger than the amount of the individual parties.

Table 3. Levels in the Destination “Brand” Hierarchy

Level	Entity
1	Country brand
2	Rural tourism brand
3	State tourism brand
4	Regional brands/Regional Macro
5	Local communities brands
6	Individual tourism brand

Recently, the objective of sustainable tourism that supposed to be achieved should be clear and explicit.

Though, there is no standardized way to reach such a goal. In spite of that is to develop a strategy and an action plan for sustainable tourism of useful measures to ensure effective and coordinated steps on the road for achieving its goal.

This is also one of the best provided approaches that include the involvement of all major interest groups and have an interest in establishing sustainable local development rule. It is simply defined as a tool of development and conservation.

On the other hand, the sustainable development can join us as an alibi, a utopia maintained voluntarily by the political and economic actors, preoccupied by justifying and proving their economic logic, but also by preserving and keeping the economic powers already acquired.

We believe that solving the problem, adapting the social, economic and ecologic systems to this fact of the globalization: the sustainable development would be enough. We should draw the attention towards the fact that the transformation/the change/the improvement in tourism need another strategy than the continuous improvement, because the success from the past can sometimes be a great obstacle.

But, are the foreign investors necessary, is a new strategy, or are the people prepared for a change, especially for the acceptance of the new and of the sustainable things in Romanian tourism?

Or do we wait again for the good interventions of the state? These are more than normal questions which, we think, any person – citizen of this country – who feels useless when sees that the things do not go well at all in the tourism field asks oneself, although we have tourism potential!

This article tries, briefly, to underline the various favorable elements which the Romanian tourism can use in its favor ...

Tourism represents an important domain in the revival and modernization of any economy because businesses are rather

small sized and capital needs reduced imprinting investments a fast rhythm.

Investments in tourism also imply investments in those sectors the activity of which are strongly correlated with tourism hence the double impact of tourism: stimulating the investments specific to tourism as well as the national ones. At world level, investments in tourism represent 7% of the total investible efforts.

Tourism is considered a means of lessening the inflation phenomenon as it ensures a more balanced money flow.

Inflation aspects in tourism are to be found mainly in the areas where touristic development is in progress as there is a greater tourist demand which brings along an increased seasonal fluctuation of prices, a discrepancy between the purchasing power of the residents and that of the tourists as prices go up especially for food, accommodation for tourists, investors or external employees.

The most direct way to reduce the adverse impacts of tourism-related travel is to increase opportunities for people to engage in appealing tourism activities in their own cities, regions or countries.

In various cities of the world, this local tourism concept is known as “green tourism.”

Green tourism in contrast to “eco-tourism,” which relies on travel to distant locations seeks to provide recreational attractions and hospitality facilities to local people within their local regions, thereby reducing tourism-related travel.

While green tourism has the positive economic effect of stimulating local economic activity, it reduces the flow of foreign currency to developing nations and any resulting economic benefits that may accrue to developing towns and cities from these revenue flows.

Already for a long time, the tourism industry has started to develop the concepts of **sustainable tourism** and **ecotourism**, with the purpose of guaranteeing the minimization of the negative impacts of tourism, while maximizing its economic positive advantages, because “2017 is a unique opportunity for us to promote the contribution of tourism to achieving the future we want – and also to determine, together, the exact role we will have tourism play in the sustainable development agenda, to and beyond 2030., a unique opportunity to ensure that tourism is a pillar in achieving the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)”, UNWTO Secretary General, Taleb Rifai, opening of the event.

The key aspect is making the tourist aware that his/her trip might contribute to some negative impacts on the destination, inviting him/her to care about their minimization.

Tourists should accordingly be invited to choose those destination, products and services, which give some kind of guarantee about this minimization.

This is the spirit of sustainable tourism and ecotourism **certification systems**.

Through these system specific service providers (hotels, restaurant), travel packages, or even destinations, are certified and labeled as aware and oriented towards the minimization of the negative impact of tourism.

By choosing these providers/packages/destination, the tourist is reassured that his/her trip will not harm the local environment, economy or social system.

Ecotourism is a market niche within tourism in natural areas, which has recorded an impressive growth in recent decades. It tends to become an independent market segment under the influence of factors such as: population aging, the preference of travelers to choose educational holidays, which enrich their existence, their desire to escape in nature, to be active and to spend quality time with family and friends, *etc.*¹

To become sustainable, a tourist destination must provide a number of supporting factors and competitive tourism resources, like the case of the Danube Bend destination (fig.3).[

The **promotion of a unitary idea** about Romania's ecotourism image is necessary, as well as it should be completed with secondary images according to fields, strategies and planning which have to be consistent with the unitary image. A branding program should be based on an integrated policy through which to communicate and execute in a coordinated and repeated manner motivating themes that differentiate Romania from other countries (Fig.4).

An umbrella mark (a ecotourism nation mark) is necessary, which can be used as a reference by all the other secondary marks developed in various fields and/or areas.

The product, corporation, city, ecotourism destination or region, district marks must be an integrand part of the national brand/mark. It, in its turn, may be integrated into a supra-national brand, in our case Central and Eastern Europe or the European Union .

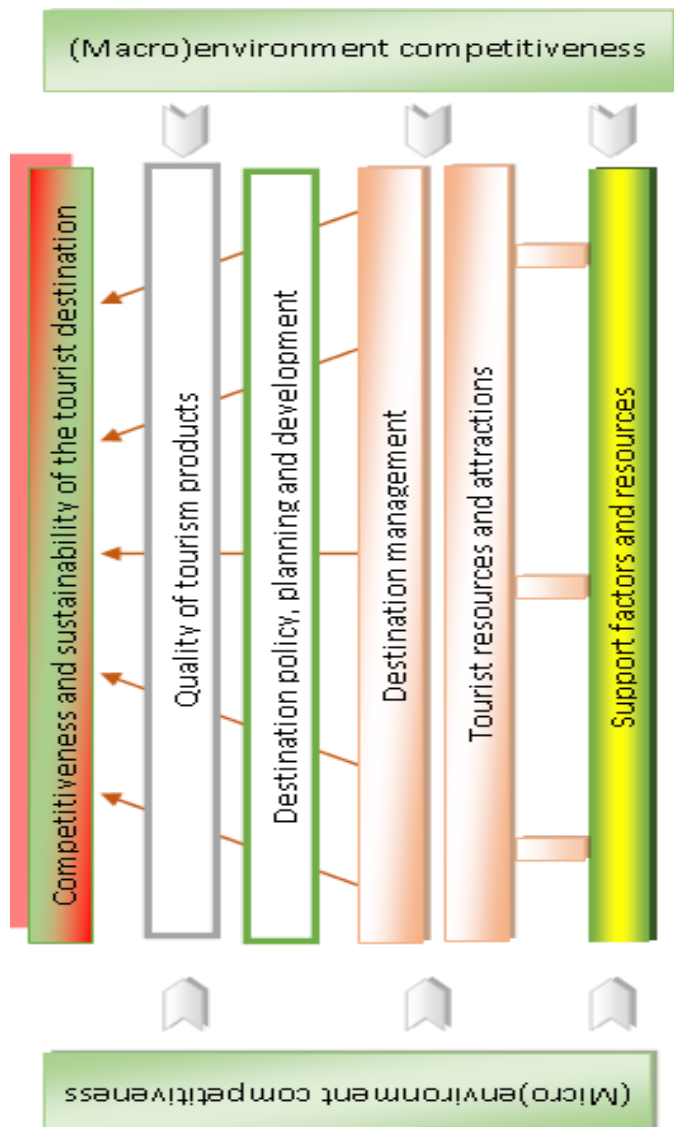


Fig. 3 The conceptual model of tourist destination competitiveness

(Author's adaptation after Ritchie and Crouch, 2003, p. 63)

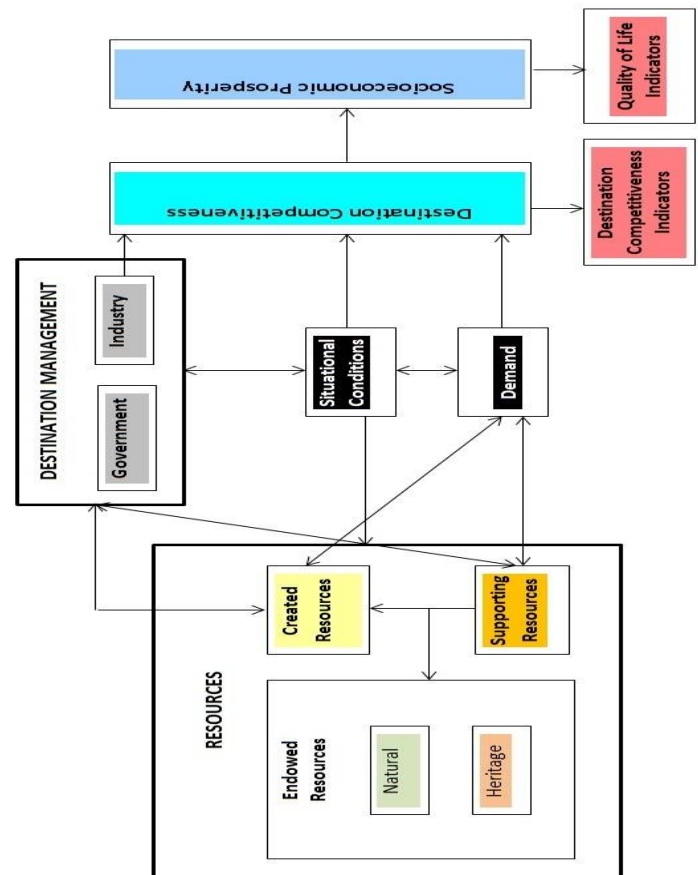


Fig.4 Tasks in Sustainable DMO

¹ Mirela Mazilu, Turism și Dezvoltare durabilă, Ed Universitaria, Craiova, 2012, p.412

III. CONCLUSIONS

The World Travel Market Industry 2016 Report was published at WTM London in November 2016. Amongst the findings, those that are most pertinent to the development of sustainable tourism are:

1. 3/4 of holidaymakers say sustainability is important to their holiday decision
2. 59% of holidaymakers say responsible tourism is the industry's responsibility, compared with 25% who say it is the governments.
3. 75% of industry exec think capping numbers is a practical solution for overcrowding.
4. 7 out of 10 of industry respondents say industry has become more sustainable in last 10 years
5. Yet only 35% of British holidaymakers agree.
6. 90% of industry executives say sustainability is important to their organization.
7. Only 28% of their organizations have a carbon emissions reduction policy
8. 38% of execs reckon tourism does better in terms of greenhouse gas emissions than other industries².

However, short of definitive actions by the tourism industry and host countries/communities to reduce the negative environmental impacts of foreign travel and the negative social impacts of foreign tourist enclaves in developing nations, green tourism advocates will continue to build support among tourism consumers.

As written in the space of this article, a sustainable and responsible tourism development is inconceivable without thinking green.

Consequently, ecology tourism, like theory and practice, naturally helps to target areas of tourism development on natural resources, social and cultural.

Sustainability has three independent aspects for tourism as well as for other industries: economic, social-cultural and environmental.

The sustainable development implies permanence, meaning that the sustainable tourism represents the optimal usage of resources (including the biological diversity), the minimisation of the negative economic, social-cultural and ecologic impact, and the maximisation of benefits on the local communities, the national economy and the preservation of nature.

As a natural consequence, sustainability refers also to the necessary managerial structures in order to fulfil these purposes.

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² <http://www.wtmlondon.com/about/wtmlondon2016/>