A POLICY FRAMEWORK FOR SUSTAINABLE TOURISM: THE CASE OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

by

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ABSTRACT

International tourism is rapidly becoming the world’s fastest growing industry. The industry has generated growth and investment in many countries. However, this growth has frequently been achieved at the expense of the human and physical environment in many countries, particularly in the developing world. These impacts have been manifested in the form of social, cultural and environmental degradation.

Disillusionment with mass tourism and the problems associated with it have led many researchers and planners to question the past unplanned approach to tourism development. Organizations such as the World Tourism Organization and the Ecumenical Coalition on Third World Tourism (ECTWT) are calling for an "alternative tourism," broadly defined as a form of tourism which is consistent with social, cultural, economic and environmental values of destination areas.

The case study outlines a policy framework for adopting an alternative approach to tourism development for one Commonwealth Caribbean country, Trinidad and Tobago. Implicit in this approach is the need to ensure that tourism development emphasizes community involvement, distributional equity, respect for local cultures, and protection and enhancement of the human and physical environment on which tourism is based.

The general purpose of the case study is to make a contribution to the development of a sustainable tourism industry in Trinidad and Tobago by emphasizing the need for effective planning, and by providing a policy framework within which sustainable tourism can take place. The focus will be on how policy and planning approaches can facilitate a move towards a more sustainable form of tourism development.
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DEDICATION

I dedicate this thesis to my beloved Andrea
CHAPTER ONE

1.1 INTRODUCTION AND MOTIVATION OF STUDY

Tourism is one of the leading sectors of the economy in the Commonwealth Caribbean. It is the engine that drives many of the economies in the region. Underlying its prominence as a tourist destination is the region's natural advantages of a tropical climate, sandy beaches, blue sea and varied landscapes. Beach front tourism is the predominant type of tourism in the region that draws tourists from all over the world. Within the region, heritage, cruise and eco-tourism are being promoted in an effort to broaden the tourism product base.

Tourism development can have significant economic benefits for the Commonwealth Caribbean, such as growth stimulation, job creation, inducement of business investment and income distribution. Non-economic benefits that can be derived from effective tourism development are, among others, the fostering of understanding among people from different cultures and the provision of educational opportunities for host communities.

However, tourism development in the region has not occurred without some controversy. Mc Afee (1991) argues that the current structure of the industry in the region has offered limited economic benefits to Caribbean economies and that it has been damaging to Caribbean societies. Other aspects of this disillusionment with the industry have been its high import content and foreign control, both of which have substantially reduced the benefits of tourism to the Caribbean.
Secondary sources on tourism planning in the Commonwealth Caribbean reveal shortcomings at both the national and regional levels, particularly regarding appropriate policy formation, careful planning and effective monitoring of tourism resources.

Traditional tourism development (mass tourism) has generated negative externalities in the form of social, environmental, cultural and economic impacts. These impacts are well documented (Mathieson and Wall 1982) and have resulted in calls for alternative tourism models of development. One model adopted by The World Tourism Organization (1993) entitled "sustainable tourism" emphasizes distributional equity, decision making by all segments of society, and the need for proper planning and zoning guidelines to ensure that tourism development is consistent with the carrying capacity of the host environment.

This thesis will focus on the development of a sustainable tourism policy for one Commonwealth Caribbean country, Trinidad and Tobago. Unlike other Caribbean countries, Trinidad and Tobago is currently at the planning stages of developing its tourism industry. As such, the country has a unique opportunity to develop an "alternative tourism" industry, one that emphasizes the need for a sustainable development strategy aimed at meeting basic human needs, protecting and enhancing environmental quality and promoting equity. Wilkinson (1993) points out that such models have been termed "indigenous" (Pigram and Cooper 1980), "alternative" (Dernoi 1981), "soft" (Krippendorf 1982), "New Tourism" (Rosenow and Pulsipher 1979), or "integrated development" (Jenkins and Henry 1982). In contrast to "mass tourism," which excludes community involvement in the tourism sector, the "alternative tourism" models call for greater involvement by governments and community groups.
The general purpose of this study is to make a contribution to the development of a sustainable tourism policy in Trinidad and Tobago by emphasizing the need for effective planning, and by providing a policy framework within which sustainable tourism development can take place. The focus will be on how policy and planning approaches can facilitate a move towards a more sustainable form of tourism development. The thesis will use the World Tourism Organization (1993: 11) definition of sustainable tourism "...as a model form of economic development that is designed to: (1) improve the quality of life of the host community; (2) provide a high quality experience for the visitor; and (3) maintain the quality of the environment on which both the host community and visitor depend."

1.2 Research Problem and Questions

There is a growing interest in Trinidad and Tobago regarding the subject of tourism development and environmental management. The environment is being seen as a key tourism resource and as such, its management and conservation are in the long-term interest of all actors involved in the tourism industry. Trinidad and Tobago is entering a critical stage of development in which a policy of general economic diversification is being pursued with the tourism sector playing a leading role. While this shift in perception is speculated to have a considerable impact on development in the country, unless appropriate policy formulation, careful planning and effective monitoring are implemented into developmental strategies, tourism development will have negligible benefits for the country.

In the course of the research two questions will be explored that pertain to developing a sustainable tourism policy for Trinidad and Tobago: (1) What plan of action could the Trinidad and Tobago government take to direct the industry towards
There are two primary motivations for the study. The first is to examine the elements of sustainable tourism and assess the likelihood of applying sustainable development principles to the development of the tourism industry in Trinidad and Tobago.

Secondly, Trinidad and Tobago is at a critical stage in the development of its tourism industry. The government is pursuing tourism as part of its diversification strategy rather than as a basic inescapable economic imperative dictated by harsh necessity. The country is in a unique position in being a late arrival to the tourism scene and can learn from the mistakes of other tourist destinations. In this context, the present study represents a contribution to the debate on what kind of tourism policy is appropriate.

1.3 Methodology and Organization

The methods chosen to explore the development of a sustainable tourism policy for Trinidad and Tobago are twofold: a literature review and a case study. The thesis begins with a survey of current books, reports and journal articles that discuss both mass and sustainable tourism as forms of tourism development. From the literature review, key factors will be identified which will be used in designing a sustainable tourism policy for Trinidad and Tobago.

Chapter Two looks at some of the impacts associated with traditional tourism development as characterized by mass tourism. It examines the negative impacts of the industry and the need for an alternative model of tourism development that meets
the needs of the host environment. Different approaches to tourism planning are examined and sustainable tourism is presented as an alternative to mass tourism. Elements of a sustainable tourism policy are explored and an analytical framework for action is developed.

Chapter Three focuses on tourism policy and planning in Trinidad and Tobago. The government's tourism strategy is examined against the criteria for long-term sustainability of the industry. This is followed by an examination of the major tourism resource management issues confronting tourism planners in Trinidad and Tobago and the surrounding Caribbean islands. A policy framework is then provided for developing and implementing a sustainable tourism policy for Trinidad and Tobago.

The final chapter, Chapter Four, offers concluding comments and recommendations for the future direction of the tourism industry in Trinidad and Tobago. In addition, suggestions are offered that will allow Trinidad and Tobago to move beyond policy concepts and towards action for achieving a long-term sustainable vision for tourism development. The policy implications of a sustainable tourism policy in Trinidad and Tobago will also be examined.
CHAPTER TWO

TOURISM AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

2.1 Introduction

Tourism is recognized as the largest industry in the world and has been promoted as a 'passport to development' (de Kadt 1979). In most developing countries the industry has evolved in an unsustainable manner. The literature is full of examples of the negative social, economic, cultural and environmental impacts associated with mass tourism. The common feature in all these cases has been the absence of effective planning and management of tourism development. As a consequence, tourism has been allowed to develop according to the dictates of the market without any mitigating measures put in place to minimize the associated negative impacts.

The purpose of this chapter is not to provide an exhaustive analysis of tourism and development, but to examine tourism development within the context of sustainable development. First, the chapter examines the link between tourism and development. This is followed by a discussion of the impacts of tourism development. Following this will be a look at the different approaches to tourism planning. Finally, sustainable tourism will be distinguished from mass tourism.

2.2 Tourism and Development

The tourism sector has generally been ignored in the development literature. If the subject is addressed at all, it is done within a very narrow context of development. The literature has failed to allude to the role of tourism in the development plans of developing countries. The tourism sector, much like the service sectors in developing countries, has been neglected in the writings on development. Instead, the
development literature has tended to focus on the shift of developing countries moving from agricultural to industrialized economies. Absent from many of the writings has been the role of tertiary activities like tourism in the development process. Exceptions to this pattern have occurred with some writers, notably Krapf (1961), Kasse (1973), Van Doorn (1979), Bryden (1973) and de Kadt (1979) who have established a link between tourism and economic development theories.

Karpf (1961) argues that tourism has a special function in developing countries. He describes these functions in terms of economic imperatives: balanced growth, improved balanced of payment, exploitation of the countries' own natural resources, employment generation and the multiplier effect. Krapf's work focuses on the economic contribution the tourism sector can make in developing countries.

In the early 1970s Kasse (1973) began to address in his writings the emergence of a theory of the tourist industry in developing countries. His theory is summarized "...in terms of tourism's perceived ability to generate, from limited investment in plant and infrastructure, large sums of capital which may be transferred to other sectors of the economy" (Pearce 1989: 11). Kasse's theory also examines the multiplier effect of the industry, its ability to generate foreign exchange and the creation of employment opportunities. Kasse raises two basic questions about the role of tourism in developing countries: (1) What is the real cost of developing tourism? and (2) What are the effects, direct and indirect, which tourism has on the rest of the economy? (Pearce 1989). Based on the African experience with tourism, he concludes that the cost of tourism outweighs the benefits and that the benefits were exaggerated. Kasse broadened the economic argument for tourism and addressed some of the social implications of tourism development.
Bryden (1973), like Kasse, sought to address the economic and social dimensions of tourism development in developing countries by documenting them in a study entitled "Tourism and Development". From his study of tourism development in the Caribbean, Bryden concludes that "To state that this study has provided a definitive economic case against the further development of tourism in the Caribbean would be going too far, but continues that it does raise some very serious doubts about the viability of tourist development in its present form " (Bryden 1973 in Pearce 1989: 12). Bryden was one of the early pioneers in the field of tourism development and impacts. Pearce (1989: 12) makes this position more vivid by stating that:

Bryden was one of the first to recognize explicitly that tourism development takes different forms and its impact is conditioned by the context in which that development occurs. In particular, he notes that his general conclusions about the viability of tourism in the Caribbean result from the high degree of foreign ownership and consequent repatriation of profits, the employment of non-nationals with similar results and the real cost to the nation of government involvement in the provision of infrastructure and incentives.

Van Doorn (1979) expanded on Bryden's ideas by arguing that tourism development cannot be considered outside the context of development theories. He then developed a typology "...which combines levels of social and economic development based on prosperity and welfare criteria with levels of tourist development derived from the social impact work of Foster (1964) and Greenwood (1972)" (Pearce 1989: 12). Van Doorn's typology has not been elaborated on nor illustrated by empirical examples; he did, however, make a strong case for theories of development to be taken into account when assessing the impact of tourism in developing countries.

Hills and Lundgren (1977) set their analysis of tourism in developing countries in the context of the modern theories of development. They both argue that
"from the viewpoint of geographical theory, a major characteristic of international tourism is the centre-periphery syndrome ... The periphery is ... relegated to a subordinate function of the centrifugal process, bringing not only visible physical commodities, in the form of tourists, but simultaneously injecting powerful, and more subtle, hierarchical dimensions" (Pearce 1989: 14). They sought to place tourism in developing countries within the context of dependency theory. Britton (1982) was also a strong advocate of placing tourism within the context of development. According to Britton "the international tourism industry, because of the commercial power held by foreign enterprises, imposes on peripheral destinations a development mode that reinforces dependency on, and vulnerability to, developed countries" (Britton in Pearce 1989: 14). Lea (1988: 76) identifies three basic tasks that developing countries should undertake in order to adopt appropriate policies when planning tourism. The basic tasks in figure 2.1, are summarized in the form of three questions:
Figure 2.1. Three major questions in tourism administration (after Cleveron 1979)

Source: Lea (1988:76)
First, what is the country's tourism resource potential? Second, how can the maximum benefits be obtained from tourism? Third, how is the country's tourist industry performing? Lea (1988) argues that by examining these questions developing countries can adopt appropriate policies for their tourism industry.

The case for the use of tourism as a development instrument in developing countries is questionable. On economic grounds it does offer some tangible benefits in terms of employment, generation of foreign exchange and infrastructure development. However, most of the literature indicates that in many cases the cost of tourism development in developing countries outweigh the benefits. The negative cultural, environmental, economic and social impacts of unplanned and uncontrolled tourism developments are well documented, some of which have been mentioned in this chapter. The true social, cultural, and environmental balance sheet of tourism development in developing countries is yet to be computed because of the difficulties associated with measuring such impacts. The next section will examine some of the key variables that affect the different impacts.

2.3 Tourism's Impact

Tourism studies have traditionally focused on the positive impacts of tourism, such as employment generation, generation of foreign exchange and diversification of the economy. The negative impacts of tourism development have been assumed to be minimal. Inskeep (1991) observed that since the 1980s negative impacts resulting from earlier tourism development (e.g., soil erosion, employment and economic distortions, overcrowding and loss of amenities for residents) have focused attention on the need to address these issues in tourism planning. In addition, the World Tourism Organization's position on sustainable development emphasizes the need to
plan tourism in an integrated manner aimed at meeting the goals of sustainability. The potential negative and positive impacts of tourism development will be addressed in the following sections.

2.3.1 The Economic Impact of Tourism

Tourism's economic importance to the international economy is evident by its contribution to the world's aggregate gross national product. In 1989, travel and tourism generated almost $2.5 trillion in revenues, or 6.5 per cent of the world's aggregate gross national product. The industry is by far the world's largest industry recording $2 trillion in sales in 1987 and employing 6.3 per cent of the global workforce (Gayle and Goodrich 1993).

At the end of 1990, the Caribbean region welcomed 11.8 million tourists and 7.5 million cruise passengers (Holder 1993). Total expenditures by visitors to the region totaled $8.9 billion and provided employment for approximately 300,000 people in 1990. It is evident from the above figures that tourism has made a valuable contribution to the foreign exchange earnings of the region.

The literature is full of studies that have examined the economic impact of tourism. Models have been developed by Pearce (1989), who developed a framework for looking at the cost and benefits of tourism, and Hills and Lundgren (1977), who focused on entrepreneurial activity. Lea (1988) identifies nine key variables that affect the magnitude of tourism's economic impacts; these variables are depicted in figure 2.2.
Figure 2.2. Factors governing tourism's economic impacts

Source: Lea (1988:45)
It can be seen from this figure that there are a wide range of economic costs and benefits associated with the magnitude of tourism's economic impact. Three factors of particular relevance to the Caribbean are the degree of foreign ownership, employment of foreigners in senior tourism jobs and the degree of recirculation of tourist expenditure. In addition, the absence of backward and forward linkages of the tourism sector with other sectors (e.g., agriculture, handicraft and manufacturing) in the region has resulted in leakage. Further, the high degree of foreign ownership implies that the benefits from the industry are not shared equally.

2.3.2 The Environmental Impact of Tourism

Tourism development brings great benefits to communities, for example, employment and foreign exchange. However, if the development is not well managed, it can have a negative impact on both the human and physical environment. Tourism depends on the natural environment as a resource base, yet its commercial development requires that this very resource base be depleted and polluted. "Meader (1988) comments that on any Sunday when the weather is fine 6,000 cars drive to Grindelwald, and in doing so consume 80,000 litres of gasoline to produce 9 tons of carbon monoxide, 1.3 tons of hydrocarbon, 1.7 litres of nitrogen and 24 lbs of lead" (Ryan 1991: 95). This conflict between tourism development on the one hand and the goals of conservation on the other has escalated in recent years. Figure 2.3 gives an idea of the different ways that tourism reacts with the environment in the developing world.
Figure 2.3. Tourism and the environment

Source: Lea (1988:52)
The figure shows the three determinants of tourism's impact on the environment: conservation, conflict between tourism and the environment, and carrying capacity and multiple use.

**a. Conservation**

Mathieson and Wall (1982) discuss four main conservation influences of tourism on the environment. First, tourism has played a positive role in conserving and enhancing historical and cultural sites worldwide. Many buildings in the developing world have been rehabilitated and preserved because of their tourism potential. "Notable progress has been made in some Asian countries, with the partial reconstruction and protection of ancient cities and temple shrines being encouraged because of their unique attractions for foreign tourists" (Lea 1988: 54). Secondly, old buildings have been transformed to new uses. "There is some evidence of this effect in India, for example, where the magnificent guest-house attached to the Maharajah's palace in Mysore is now a luxury hotel" (Lea 1988: 55). Thirdly, national parks have been established in developing countries with the aim of preserving natural resources. Finally, planning and control procedures have been introduced to conserve the environment and ensure that development occurs in a sustainable manner.

**b. Tourism's Environmental Conflict**

Some of tourism's chief environmental conflicts, as shown in figure 2.3, are permanent restructuring, generation of waste, tourist activities and population dynamics (OECD 1977-78). Permanent restructuring occurs as a result of major construction activities such as a new airport or resort complex. In the Caribbean, beaches are under stress from two major causes: the use of beach sand as a fine aggregate in construction, and the irrational building of tourism structures in active
beach zones. Although tourism facilities may not be the major users of sand for construction, the widespread use of concrete blocks can be traced to the emergence of tourism in some countries in the region.

Waste generation is another environmental stressor activity that affects both air and water quality in tourist zones. Wall and Wright (1977) have documented the effects of recreational activity on water quality. Some of these effects include pollution from untreated sewage and the addition of nutrients from run-off which leads to excessive weed growth resulting in decreased water oxygen and fish levels. The Caribbean Sea is at risk from pollution generated from the region's tourist resorts. Untreated sewage from cruise ships and domestic sewage effluent are weakening the cleansing capacity of the sea (Jackson in Cox, John and Embree 1990: 131). Proceedings from a Caribbean Seminar on Environmental Impact Assessment (1985) attributes Phytoplankton blooms, fish kills and aesthetic degradation in Kingston, Jamaica to a combination of domestic sewage, industrial waste and stormwater runoff. W. Hunte found nitrates and phosphates in the Grand Anse resort bay sufficiently elevated to cause eutrophication stress to corals. A. Archer concluded that sewage and other waste from urban areas, which have fairly large numbers of hotels and other facilities catering to tourist, have destroyed fringing reefs on the south coast of Barbados.

The projected increase in resorts in the region means that we can expect elevated levels of pathogenic bacteria and nutrients to contaminate adjacent leisure and recreational facilities. Unless measures are introduced to deal with the solid waste problem in the region, the health of tourist and residents will be at risk. There is no evidence, however, to suggest that plans to install or upgrade the sewage waste infrastructure in the region will match the growth in resorts and other urban areas going into the year 2000 (Cox, John and Embree 1990).
c. Carrying Capacity and Multiple Use

Two planning concepts, carrying capacity and multiple use, allow tourism development to occur in a more integrated and efficient manner. Lea (1988: 61) defines carrying capacity "as a notion which recognizes that both natural and man-made attractions have upper limits in their capacity to absorb visitors, above which a deterioration of the resource itself takes place". Williams and Gill (1991: 1) point out that carrying capacity "... implies thought and concern for not only the benefits that tourism may bring (e.g., jobs, taxes, income), but also the costs it creates (e.g., noise, litter, crowding)". Lea (1988) points out that the concept is difficult to apply due to measurement problems associated with the link between tourist impacts and their effects on the environment.

Multiple use is seen as a strategy that offers promise for the full utilization of resources. For example, a forest could be used for both logging as well as a tourism resource (hiking, biking etc.). This approach is very attractive to small islands in the Caribbean which have limited land resources.

2.3.3 The Social and Cultural Impacts of Tourism

There can be both negative and positive social and cultural impacts resulting from tourism development. The resulting impacts depend upon how the tourism development is planned and managed. Social and cultural impacts are identified in terms of how they affect the social conditions in developing countries. These impacts have received less attention in the literature relative to economic impacts. The emphasis in the literature has been to focus on those aspects of tourism which can be measured by using economic tools. Lea (1988), however, has developed a schematic
view of the impact of international tourism on the social condition in developing
countries. The social and cultural impacts of tourism are illustrated in figure 2.4.

Figure 2.4. Social and cultural impacts of tourism

Source: Lea (1988:63)
Lea (1988: 12) describes three broad ways of examining the impacts of international tourism on the social condition in developing countries as follows:

The first portrays the tourist-host encounter as an identifiable event with a number of positive and negative outcomes, the assessment of which depends on how the observer views the 'correct' path towards development. The second is a functional view of various elements of Third World society which may experience change as a direct result of tourism, such as moral behavior, language, and health. The third perspective considers aspects of cultural change that come about through tourism's influence in resurrecting traditional skills and customs like handicraft and dance.

Mathieson and Wall (1982) point out that these three forms of social impacts overlap, and that it is difficult to differentiate one from the other. "The distinction between social and cultural studies is particularly hard to identify but is useful in differentiating between research into universal human issues like crime or health, and that directed at the things which condition human behaviour" (Lea 1988: 62).

It is suggested that there are positive and negative effects accompanying any tourism development. Within the context of developing countries the negative impacts usually outweigh the positive impacts for various reasons, some of which have been touched upon in this chapter of the study. However, the challenge for government planners is to develop an approach to tourism planning directed at optimizing the positive effects (e.g., foreign exchange, employment) while at the same time minimizing the negative effects (e.g., environmental and cultural degradation).

2.4 Approach to Tourism Planning

Tourism development during the post World War II period was mainly uncontrolled and unplanned. Mass tourism was promoted without any thought given
to the potential negative impacts of the industry on the human and physical environment of destination areas. The Caribbean and Mediterranean regions which encouraged mass tourism during this period are still suffering from the consequences of unplanned tourism development. As Inskeep (1993) points out "... some of those unplanned tourism places are now having to take remedial actions to upgrade their environments and development patterns." (Inskeep 1993: 15).

There are many different approaches to tourism planning evident in the literature. Writers like Braddon (1982), Baud-Bovy (1985) and Murphy (1985) have all called for a new approach to tourism planning that goes beyond the narrow concern of promotional planning. Instead, they advocate a broader approach to tourism planning that addresses the needs of communities as well as tourists and developers. Inskeep (1993:29) outlines an approach to tourism planning within a general planning framework that emphasizes "the concept of planning being continuous and incremental, system oriented, comprehensive, integrated, and environmental, with the focus on achieving sustainable development and community involvement." (Inskeep (1993:29) describes the elements of his approach as follows:

- Continuous, incremental, and flexible approach - Although still based on an adopted policy and plan, tourism planning is seen as a continuous process with adjustments made as needed based on monitoring and feedback, but within the framework of maintaining the basic objectives and policies of tourism development.

- Systems approach - Tourism is viewed as an interrelated system and should be planned as such, utilizing systems analysis techniques.

- Integrated approach - Related to the systems and comprehensive approach, tourism is planned and developed as an integrated system within itself and also is integrated into the overall plan and total development patterns of the area.

- Environmental and sustainable development approach - Tourism is planned, developed, and managed in such a manner that its natural and cultural resources
are not depleted or degraded, but maintained as viable resources on a permanent basis for continuous future use in the environmental and sustainable development approach.

- Community approach - There is maximum involvement of the local community in the planning and decision-making process of tourism and, to the extent feasible and desirable, there is maximum community participation in the actual development and management of tourism and its socioeconomic benefits.

Inskeep clearly conveys the basic approaches to tourism planning that should be adopted by planners in the tourism sector. However, this thesis will focus on two elements of Inskeep's approach to tourism planning: the community, and the environmentally sustainable development approaches. Both approaches stress the importance of developing the tourism industry in a manner which is consistent with sustainable development principles. These principles as described by the World Tourism organization (1993: 10) are:

- Ecological sustainability, which ensures that development is compatible with the maintenance of essential ecological processes, biological diversity and biological resources.

- Social and cultural sustainability, which ensures that development increases people's control over their lives, is compatible with the culture and values of people affected by it, and maintains and strengthens community identity.

- Economic sustainability, which ensures that development is economically efficient and that resources are managed so that they can support future generations.

A sustainable approach to tourism will be consistent with these principles. Pleumarom (1990) as quoted in Hitchcock, King and Parnwell (1993: 23) states that:
Sustainable tourism development can be thought of as meeting the needs of present tourist and host regions while protecting and enhancing opportunity for the future. Sustainable tourism development is envisaged as leading to management of all resources in such a way that we can fulfill economic, social and aesthetic needs while maintaining cultural integrity, essential ecological processes, biological diversity and life support system.

This approach to tourism planning is a radical departure from the traditional approach which has focused exclusively on the profit margin, with little or no attention given to social and cultural impacts of tourism development. The sustainable development approach challenges the established mass tourism approach to tourism development. It calls upon the tourism industry to re-examine its relationship to the social, cultural, economic and physical environments in which it operates.

2.5 Ways of Attaining Sustainable Tourism

Sustainability as an organizing concept is being widely discussed by policy makers around the globe. The Brundtland Commission's report "Our Common Future" has placed the issue of sustainable development on the political agenda in many countries. The definition of the concept as enunciated by the Brundtland Commission is defined as any development which maintains resources for present and future generations with equity. Nelson (1991: 51) points out that "the notion of equity is often omitted from re-statements or interpretations of the idea of sustainable development as put forward in the Brundtland Report." However, he argues that equity be strongly recognized in tourism and other activities. Equity is defined "...to mean full access to economic, social and environmental continuity and opportunity" (Nelson 1991: 51). Furthermore, the sustainable development of resources applies not only to physical resources but also to cultural and human resources. In the context of tourism development, it means the full participation of the public in the planning and management of tourism projects. "Sustainable tourism is envisioned as leading to the
management of all resources in such a way that we can fulfill economic, social and aesthetic needs while maintaining cultural integrity, essential ecological process, biological diversity and life support systems" (GLOBE '90 Conference, Tourism Stream: 3). The tourism stream of the GLOBE '90 conference brought together 42 representatives of the tourism industry, government international agencies and non-government organizations to discuss the challenges of achieving sustainable tourism development. The experts at the conference outlined some principles for sustainable tourism that can be used as basic guidelines when attempting to incorporate sustainability principles into policies and practices in the tourism industry. These principles are:

- Tourism planning, development and operation should be part of conservation or sustainable development strategies for a region, a province (state) or the nation. Tourism planning, development and operation should be cross-sectoral and integrated, involving different government agencies, private operations, citizens' groups and individuals thus providing the widest possible benefits.

- Agencies, corporations, groups and individuals should follow ethical and other principles which respect the culture and environment of the host area, the economy and traditional way of life, the community and traditional behavior, leadership and political patterns.

- Tourism should be planned and managed in a sustainable manner, with due regard for the protection and appropriate economic uses of the natural and human environment in host areas.

- Tourism should be undertaken with equity in mind to distribute fairly benefits and costs among tourism promoters and host peoples and areas.

- Good information, research and communication on the nature of tourism and its effects on the human and cultural environment should be available prior to and during development, especially for the local people, so that they can participate in and influence the direction of development and its effects as much as possible, in the individual and collective interests.
• Local people should be encouraged and expected to undertake leadership roles in planning and development with the assistance of government, business, financial and other interests.

• Integrated environmental, social and economic planning analyses should be undertaken prior to the commencement of any major projects, with careful consideration given to different types of tourism development and the ways in which they might link with existing uses, ways of life and environmental considerations.

• Through all stages of tourism development and operation, careful assessment, monitoring and mediation program should be conducted in order to allow local people and others to take advantage of opportunities or to respond to changes.


Sustainable tourism is promoted as an approach to tourism planning which places considerable emphasis on minimizing the industry's negative social, cultural and environmental impacts. The concept is still relatively new and a universally accepted definition has not yet evolved. Many writers are still trying to define the term "sustainable tourism." Some like Butler (1992) argue that sustainable development in the context of tourism is different from sustainable tourism. Butler's working definition of sustainable development in the context of tourism is "... tourism which is developed and maintained in an area (community environment) in such a manner and at such a scale that it remains viable over an indefinite period and does not degrade or alter the environment (human and physical) in which it exists to such a degree that it prohibits the successful development and well-being of other activities and processes" (Butler quoted in Nelson 1993: 3). Butler agrees that this is not the same as sustainable tourism which he defines as "tourism which is in a form which can maintain its viability in an area for an indefinite period of time" (Nelson 1993: 3).
The goals of sustainable tourism as enunciated by a group of international experts from the fields of industry, academia, and government whose expertise represents tourism, environment, economic analysis and policy formulation at the Globe '90 conference in Vancouver are:

• to develop greater awareness and understanding of the significant contributions that tourism can make to environment and the economy;

• to promote equity in development;

• to improve the quality of life of the host community;

• to provide a high quality of experience for the visitor; and

• to maintain the quality of the environment on which the foregoing depends.


Sustainable tourism seeks to achieve a fair distribution of the benefits of tourism in a society. Issues of distributional equity and appropriate planning and zoning guidelines are an integral part of this approach to tourism planning. Implicit in this approach to tourism planning is the need to have a decision making process that is inclusive. All segments of society should be given an opportunity to participate in the planning and management of tourism projects. Sustainable tourism involves a partnership between the major stakeholder groups of community, environmental supporters and the tourism industry. In contrasting the 'Old Style' tourism with the 'Sustainable Approach,' the World Tourism Organization (1993) emphasizes the need for partnership building among the different stakeholder groups as a precondition for achieving sustainability in the industry. It is argued that the interests of the different groups overlap and that more effective means need to be adopted to manage the
industry. The basic elements of both styles of tourism are illustrated by the World Tourism Organization in figures 2.5.1 and 2.5.2.

**Figure 2.5.1 Old Style Tourism**


**Figure 2.5.2 Sustainable Tourism**

The figure shows that the interests of the different groups in the tourism sector overlap in the sustainable tourism approach. In contrast, the 'old style' of tourism planning assumes that the goals and interest of the different stakeholders are in conflict. However, collaboration between the different groups can be facilitated through the planning, development and management process. "Through the cooperation and productive interaction of the tourism industry, environment protectors and community, all can benefit and achieve an improved quality of life for the community" (WTO 1993:16).

The needs of the tourist industry, environmental supporters and community authorities must be acknowledged and addressed if the partnership model is to be effective. The World Tourism Organization (1993) emphasizes the importance of identifying the needs and common concerns among different groups. Figure 2.6

Figure 2.6 Model of common concerns

specifies the needs and common concerns of the different groups. These concerns as seen by the World Tourism Organization (1993: 35) are:

The tourism industry seeks a healthy business environment with:
- financial security
- a trained and responsible workforce
- attractions of sufficient quality to ensure a steady flow of visitors who stay longer and visit more often

Those interested in natural environment and cultural/heritage issues seek:
- protection of the environment through prevention, improvement, correction of damage, and restoration,
- to motivate people to be more aware and therefore "care for" rather than "use up" resources

Community members seek a healthy place in which to live with:
- food, adequate and clean water, health care, rewarding work for equitable pay, education and recreation
- respect for cultural traditions
- opportunities to make decisions about the future

Some concerns that each pair may hold in common include:
- issues of access, such as when, where and how tourists visit and move from place to place
- host and guest issues, such as cultural impact or common use of infrastructure
- land use issues, such as hunting/wildlife habitat, agriculture/recreation, preservation/development, etc.

The World Tourism Organization argues that "...by integrating and recognizing these needs and concerns within the framework of achieving sustainable development, an improved quality of life can be achieved for the community, while
the tourism industry makes a fair profit and the environment is protected for continuous future use” (WTO 1993: 32). The model illustrated above can be used as a starting point to facilitate group discussions among the different stakeholder groups and help in identifying other areas of concern and conflict. The adoption of sustainable tourism will have certain implications for policy. Some of the implications that resulted from the Globe '90 conference in Vancouver are:

- Sustainable tourism development involves making hard political choices based on complex social, economic and environmental trade-offs in a more extended time and space context than that traditionally used in decision-making.

- Sustainable tourism must avoid all actions that are irreversible. Some natural and cultural resources can be replaced. But old-growth forests, wildlife species and similar features, once lost, can never be enjoyed by future generations. As well, ancient monuments, historic urban areas, and distinct landscapes are irreplaceable.

- Sustainable tourism development involves promoting appropriate uses and activities that draw from and reinforce landscape character, sense of place, community identity and site opportunity.

- Sustainable tourism development involves the establishment of education and training programs to improve public understanding and enhance business and professional skills.

- Sustainable tourism development means promoting working partnerships among the network of actors, and linking scientific research and public consultation to decision-making.

- Sustainable tourism development must provide for intergenerational equity. To be fair to future generations of tourists and the travel industry, we must leave them a resource base no less than we have inherited. Each generation of tourism developers, planners and operators is obliged to look after the generation that follows.

Underlying the notion of sustainable tourism is the question of who will benefit the most from the industry. Presently, the old style approach to tourism development has benefited mainly the tourist and the tourist industry. In the words of Hitchcock, King and Parnwell (1993:24) "...it is debatable whether tourism in its present form has been successful in alleviating such problems as poverty, inequality and unemployment."

The challenge for sustainable tourism is to replace the laissez-faire approach to tourism planning with an approach which is based on sustainable principles. This can only be achieved if local communities and governments in the developing world are part of the decision-making process that determines the pattern and pace of tourism development. As Hitchcock, King and Parnwell (1993:24) points out "...most commentators now argue that a greater level of local involvement in the planning and development of tourism is an essential prerequisite of sustainable tourism."

Community involvement is not being presented here as a panacea for the ills of mass tourism in the developing world. However, it is a step in the right direction to address some of the undesirable impacts of mass tourism. As these impacts are felt at the community level, any policy response to them must involve active local participation and management of tourism projects.

Despite the strong case being made for sustainable tourism by international development agencies, critics such as "Edward Niles suggest that it is a myth, in that it is impossible to create culturally and environmentally benign forms of tourism - particularly against the back-drop of mass, commercial tourism which characterizes the industry today - when tourism is essentially structured upon the exploitation of these very resources" (Niles 1991: 3-4 in Hitchcock, King and Parnwell 1993: 24).
Conversely, Butler (1992) argues that alternative tourism in some cases may be desirable and appropriate to mass tourism but that it cannot replace mass tourism in economic terms. He does not, however, dismiss it as being impractical or undesirable. Instead, he sees alternative tourism as complementing "...mass tourism by increasing attractions and authenticity, as for example Meganck and Ramdial note (1984:4), allowing tourist the chance to enjoy the natural areas and rich cultural history of the region" (Meganck and Ramdial (1984) in Butler 1992:44).

Organizations like the World Tourism Organization and the Ecumenical Coalition on Third World Tourism (ECTWT) are strong advocates for an alternative form of tourism. Their promotional campaigns are gaining the attention of governments, tourists and the tourist industry about the need to address the negative impacts of mass tourism. Pleumaron (1990) defines alternative tourism as "...a process which promotes a just form of travel between members of different communities. It seeks to achieve mutual understanding, solidarity and equality among participants" (Pleumaron in Hitchcock, King and Parnwell 1993:25). This form of tourism is gaining in popularity among certain groups of tourists. In the words of Hitchcock, King and Parnwell (1993: 25)

A growing number of small tour operators now offer supposedly 'softer', more 'responsible' forms of tourism (Johnston, 1990,3). These have been given a bewildering range of titles, such as 'ecotourism', 'adventure tourism', 'heritage tourism', 'educational tourism', 'special interest tourism', 'soft-path tourism', 'solidarity tourism', and so on. Each purports, in its own way, to offer an alternative to mass tourism, commercial tourism.

Alternative forms of tourism are seen as helping in the pursuit of sustainable tourism; nonetheless, due to their inability to generate economies of scale they are not expected to radically change the tourism industry. The promotion of alternative
forms of tourism like heritage tourism and eco-tourism have raised the public awareness about the negative impacts of mass tourism. These forms of tourism have also been useful in providing an economic argument to preserve heritage buildings and wilderness resources like national parks. The principles underlying alternative tourism in its pure form as envisioned by Hitchcock, King and Parnwell (1993:25) are:

- First, tourism should be built upon a dialogue with local people, who must be made aware of the likely effects of a tourism project, who must be centrally involved in the decision-making process, development and management of the project, and whose voice must carry genuine political weight.

- Second, alternative tourism should constitute a means of giving the poor a reasonable and more equal share in the profits which accrue from tourism. This further presupposes that their involvement in the development of the tourism industry is considerable.

- Third, tourism should be built upon sound environmental principles, should be sensitive to local cultural and religious traditions, and not exacerbate existing inequalities within the host community.

- Fourth, the scale of tourism should be tailored to match the capacity of the local area to cope with it. This assumes the potential carrying capacity of the locality can be ascertained, and that the volume of tourism can be controlled within the bounds of this capacity.

These principles of alternative tourism are consistent with sustainability principles and applies to tourism developments which does not damage the environment, are ecologically sound, promotes distributional equity and emphasizes local input in the management and planning of tourism developments. Like sustainable tourism, alternative tourism seeks to shift the focus towards communities and away from a narrow focus on economic growth and the expansion of markets associated with the promotional image of mass tourism. This concept of community-based tourism has been advanced by Murphy (1985) who advocates that tourism
should be socially responsible. Alternative tourism is indeed an effective ally in the pursuit of sustainable tourism.

Butler (1992) points out that alternative tourism is often used as a synonym for appropriate tourism. However, like mass tourism, alternative tourism does have an impact on the human and physical environment. As a form of tourism it needs to be evaluated in its own right rather than as an alternative to mass tourism. The issue is not one of the just what kind of tourism development occurs in an area but whether appropriate planning and management procedures are in place to minimize the potential negative impacts. Measures of sustainability must be developed and implemented if the negative impacts associated with mass tourism are to be minimized.

There are many surrogate measures of sustainability. One measure advanced by Archer and Heal (1990:10 in Wilkinson 1993:3) views sustainable development as a process which achieves the following goals: (1) high per capita consumption, sustainable over an indefinite period (rather than "increasing consumption"); (2) distributional equity; (3) environmental protection, including protection of biological diversity and the continued functioning of complex and natural systems; and (4) participation of all sectors of society in decision-making (Wilkinson 1993:3). Wall (1993) on the other hand advocates a different set of criteria against which sustainability can be measured. Wall's seven sustainable development assessment criteria are depicted in figure 2.7.
These seven criteria can form the basis against which to measure the attainment of sustainability in the tourism sector. Wall (1993: 56) "...suggests that developments and policies, including those for tourism, can be evaluated against each of the seven sustainable development criteria to determine the extent to which they are likely to promote sustainability."

Sustainable tourism is a form of tourism development that seeks the full integration of economic, social, environmental and cultural policies. It requires a new set of values and an active interest on the parts of government and policy makers to
ensure that tourism resource management represents a balance between environmental, social and economic considerations. The next few years will be critical in determining the long-term sustainability of the tourism industry in Trinidad and Tobago. If the country is to avoid the negative economic, social, environmental and cultural impacts associated with mass tourism, a new planning approach must be adopted that addresses issues of equity and environmental quality in the development of its tourism industry.

However, to merely promote the principles of sustainable tourism will not be enough. What is needed in Trinidad and Tobago is an appropriate policy framework for sustainable tourism development. All parties involved in the tourism industry must agree on certain fundamental principles. In addition to the principles of sustainable tourism outlined at the Globe '90 conference and discussed in this chapter, the following principles are proposed:

- That tourism development be planned in an integrated manner this means that the components of the tourism system, namely the tourist, the biophysical, economic and cultural environment, and the local people should not be treated as separate entities, but contributing elements to an overall experience.

- The ultimate goal of tourism development in Trinidad and Tobago should be to contribute to the improvement of the quality of life of the people, particularly those living in and around areas of particular ecological and cultural value, both through direct economic gain and indirect spin-off.

- To achieve this goal, the tourism resource base must be managed appropriately to ensure maximum socio-economic benefits and long term sustainability.

- Such management requires a continuous, participative process, the cornerstone of which is effective involvement of all stakeholders, namely tourists, local communities and the tourism industry throughout the life span of any tourism project.

- Stakeholder involvement should be based on three pillars, namely:

  - Joint decision-making by stakeholders.
- Joint responsibility and accountability of stakeholders
- Joint sharing in benefits derived.


The above stated principles can be put into practice by developing an appropriate policy framework for action in Trinidad and Tobago. Within this framework, the government of Trinidad and Tobago has a leading role to play. The foundation for tourism development has been laid by the government with the publication of three documents: Trinidad and Tobago Tourism Development Authority Strategic Plan 1991 - 1995, Medium Term Policy Framework: From Stabilization To Growth 1993 - 1995 and the Trinidad and Tobago Tourism Development Authority Tourism Policy 1988. These documents will be examined in the following chapter and an analytical framework for action developed.

2.6 Summary

This chapter examined the link between tourism and development within the context of the developing world. It was stated that the development literature has tended to ignore tourism as a tool for development. Tourism impacts were examined and found to stem from the absence of effective planning and management procedures to mitigate their effects. Sustainable tourism development was then introduced as an alternative to unplanned mass tourism. It was acknowledged that there is no universally accepted definition of sustainable tourism; nonetheless, there is agreement among policy planners on sustainability principles and the need to apply them to the tourism industry. The next chapter examines tourism development in Trinidad and Tobago and suggests a policy framework for developing and implementing a sustainable tourism policy for the twin island nation.
CHAPTER THREE

A SUSTAINABLE TOURISM POLICY FOR TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO: POLICY FRAMEWORK FOR ACTION

3.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on tourism policy and planning in Trinidad and Tobago. The government's tourism strategy is examined against the criteria for long-term sustainability of the industry. This is followed by an examination of the major tourism resource management issues confronting tourism planners in Trinidad and Tobago and the surrounding Caribbean islands. A policy framework is then provided for developing and implementing a sustainable tourism policy for Trinidad and Tobago.

3.2 Trinidad And Tobago: Tourism In Perspective

From a tourism perspective Trinidad and Tobago has been aptly described in the following terms:

The islands of Trinidad and Tobago offer a variety of scenic appeals and cultural experiences. While Trinidad is not renowned for its beaches or holiday resort possibilities, it does potentially offer the opportunity for an interesting cultural experience for the discerning visitor. Trinidad, based on its wide spectrum of ethnic and cultural traditions (the rainbow country), can provide a valuable foundation for cultural and special interest tourism. The diversity of cultural festivals and the birthplace of steel-band, calypso and limbo have obvious motivational appeal and imagery. In addition, Trinidad is renowned for its wide range of unique indigenous birdlife. Parts of the island offer easily accessible, unspoiled natural resources including the rainforests, the mountains, and the northern coastline.

Tobago, providing a tranquil environment, can deliver the idyllic Caribbean island image. The island has numerous unspoiled sandy beaches, beautiful coastal scenery and crystal clear water including Buccoo Reef and the Nylon Pool. The physical attractiveness of the coastal scenery with the serene ambiance of a relatively
unspoiled island are the foundation for good visual appeal and motivation to visit. In addition, the island offer a strong historical and cultural heritage.


The tourism industry in Trinidad and Tobago is largely underdeveloped, "...it is estimated that tourism contributes roughly one percent to GDP; employs in the order of 4,500 people, accounting for approximately 1.5 percent of total employment; and generates approximately $300 million in gross foreign exchange earnings annually" (Trinidad and Tobago Tourism Development Authority: Strategic Plan 1991 - 1995: 9). Tourism as a sector has been neglected for many years due to the vast economic windfall Trinidad and Tobago has enjoyed from the petroleum sector. The fall in oil prices on the international market has focused the government's attention on the need to diversify the twin island economy.

The government has targeted the tourism sector as a high priority sector for development. It is one of the five pillars of the government's diversification strategy to turn the economy around. The others are agriculture, business enterprise development, manufacturing and petroleum. The tourism sector is seen as having high growth potential. According to the Medium Term Macro-Planning Framework, 1989-1995: 41):

Tourism is expected to make a major contribution to the diversification of the economy, primarily through direct job creation, the generation of foreign exchange earnings and the creation of linkages with other sectors of the economy. These benefits are expected to accrue once Trinidad and Tobago can effectively exploit and market its rich history, cultural diversity, renowned creativity, natural beauty, stability and the humour and spontaneous good-nature of its people.

The government's desire to maximize the economic returns from tourism is tempered by a desire to maintain the cultural and social integrity of the people of
Trinidad and Tobago. As such, its tourism philosophy statement reflects the
government's commitment to avoid and/or minimize as much as possible the negative
social, cultural and environmental impacts associated with mass tourism. The
government's tourism development philosophy states that:

- The development and promotion of the Tourism Industry in Trinidad and Tobago
  will place emphasis on the country's cultural heritage, natural resources and
  history, and not merely perpetuate the image of sea, sun and sand as the basis for
  marketing the tourism product.

- The government is committed to the development of the industry in a manner that
  will preserve the national pride and dignity of the peoples of Trinidad and
  Tobago, while simultaneously encouraging foreigners to visit and experience our
  way of life.

- In developing tourism plant, infrastructure and related facilities, the government
  will take into account the need to stimulate the expansion of domestic tourism in
  harmony with the drive to increase international tourism.

- In marketing the tourism product the government will not encourage the creation
  of enclaves that exclude nationals on the grounds of race, colour, religion and sex.

- The government will not permit the establishment of gambling casinos and any
  similar activities that are likely to have undesirable consequences for the society.

- The government will pursue a policy of exploiting the tourism market selectively,
  stressing to the various target groups the uniqueness of the tourism product within
  the Twin Island destination.

Source: Trinidad and Tobago Tourism Development Authority Tourism Policy, 1988

The government's policy rejects the establishment of gambling casinos and
objects to the development of enclaves which exclude nationals on the grounds of
race, colour, religion and sex. "Instead, tourism development will aim at encouraging
visitors to gain a fuller appreciation of the immense cultural variety, rich natural
endowment and interesting history of the country" (Medium Macro-Planning
Implicit in the government's strategy for tourism development is a desire to avoid the negative impacts associated with mass tourism. As such, the focus is on developing a tourism industry that goes beyond the sand, sea and sun tourism promoted in the region. The country's rich art forms, cultural heritage, natural endowment and history will be promoted. "Natural resources will also be promoted, such as the island's varied and unique bird life, featuring some 400 species and a number of famous sanctuaries, over 600 species of tropical butterflies, its rich mix of flora and the legendary Pitch Lake" (Journal of International Tourism Report 1988: 56). The government is also concerned about the potential negative social impacts of tourism development on the twin island republic. Accordingly, it has outlined in its policy statement social objectives for the industry:

The policy seeks to ensure that tourism serves as a vehicle for securing definite social gains to the national community while simultaneously avoiding and or minimizing as far as possible the negative aspects of tourism development activity. It aims to:

- encourage the development of those cultural forms and expressions which are distinctly national in origin and development, e.g., steelband, calypso, limbo;
- develop new attractions based on the diverse social and cultural heritage of Trinidad and Tobago in order to provide residents and visitors with more leisure alternatives;
- promote greater international awareness of Trinidad and Tobago through the projection of our cultural forms into identified market centres;
- foster greater national awareness and pride by attention to the preservation, restoration and promotion of historical sites, cultural festivals, art forms, natural scenic sites, etc.;
- protect historical and archaeological sites to ensure that the delicate balance of the physical environment is not threatened;
- safeguard the physical and social territorial rights of residents especially with respect to the positioning of accommodation or other tourist facilities which will
require servicing by visitors on a regular basis in numbers likely to exceed the population of established local community;

- ensure that as far as possible all sections of the national community benefit from tourism;

- avoid the corruption of moral values and the adoption of undesirable life-styles which may be popularized by the influx of tourists.


Trinidad and Tobago's tourism industry is a late developer compared with those in many other Caribbean islands. The government is cognizant of the need to develop the industry in a planned and controlled manner in order to avoid and or minimize the negative impacts evident from unplanned tourism development in other countries in the region. Accordingly, the government has initiated a national consultation process to get the inputs of different groups in the formulation, adoption and implementation of policies regarding tourism development.

3.3 Planning for Tourism in Trinidad and Tobago

The public policy environment in Trinidad and Tobago in the late eighties and early nineties for sectoral planning was based on open consultation with a broad cross-section of the society. "In the overview to the planning framework document, the planners stressed that all sector plans had been developed with the popular involvement of a broad cross-section of the population" (Williams in Gale and Goodrich: 1993: 79). The consultative process was used to address tourism planning and development in the country. Different stakeholder groups were encouraged to present their view on the form and pattern of development they would like to see occur in the tourism industry. "As a result, a national consultation strategy was adopted by the National Planning Commission, in direct collaboration with the Ministries of Planning and Mobilization, as well as the portfolio Ministry of Industry,
Enterprise and Tourism" (Williams in Gale and Goodrich: 1993: 79). Fifty one organizations were represented in the consultation process (Table 3.1 in Appendix ). The consultation process formed the basis for developing the government's goals and objectives for the tourism industry. The tourism development objectives as outlined in the tourism document formed the basis for the discussions. These objectives are:

- a commitment to develop the industry in a manner that would preserve the national pride and dignity of the peoples of Trinidad and Tobago;
- the promotion of domestic tourism in equal measure as international tourism;
- efforts to discourage the creation of enclaves that would exclude nationals on the grounds of race, colour, religion and sex;
- the exclusion of commercial gambling establishments that were likely to generate undesirable social consequences; and
- selective tourism marketing, stressing to various target groups the uniqueness of the tourism product within the twin island destination.

Source: Tourism Marketing and Management in the Caribbean (1993)

The consultation process on tourism produced agreement on two key issues. First, participants emphasized the need to maximize the economic benefits from tourism (e.g., increase foreign-exchange earnings and employment opportunities) while at the same time putting measures in place to minimize the potential negative socioeconomic impacts of uncontrolled tourism development. Secondly, it was acknowledged that linkages between the tourism sector and other sectors in the economy, for example, manufacturing, agriculture, sports, handicraft, construction and sports and culture should be promoted.

Trinidad and Tobago has a wider view of tourism than that of other countries in the Caribbean. The country is fortunate in being in a position to learn from the
mistakes of other Caribbean countries. As pointed out by The Economist Intelligence Unit in the Journal of International Tourism Report (1988:58)

The lessons of rapid and ill planned development painfully learned by other Caribbean islands have not been lost on the economic planners of Trinidad and Tobago. Although they are as desirous as their counterparts in other island states to maximize the foreign exchange and employment creation potential of tourism, they are not willing to relinquish control of development or incur avoidable social and environmental disruption in order to achieve it. The proposed expansion of Trinidad and Tobago tourism sector from its currently insignificant status represents an attempt by the government to strengthen the economy through diversification.

In many ways Trinidad and Tobago is fortunate. Unlike many other islands whose only viable resources are their people, the good weather, the sea and sand, Trinidad and Tobago is well placed because it is pursuing tourism as part of a diversification strategy rather than as a basic inescapable economic imperative dictated by harsh necessity. In order words, the twin-island republic has a measure of choice to develop the kind of tourism its people want, guided by lessons that the experiences of the other nations in the region and elsewhere provide free of charge.

It is suggested that the government of Trinidad should adopt a sustainable development approach to the development of its tourism industry. The government has set the foundation for such an approach by engaging in a consultative process with a broad cross-section of the population. However, in order to go beyond good intentions and move towards action, an appropriate policy framework for sustainable tourism development is required. The next section outlines some of the major resource management issues confronting planners in the tourism industry in the Caribbean. Trinidad and Tobago's position on resource management is also examined within the context of tourism development.
3.4 Major Resource Management Issues

Tourism in the Caribbean is mainly concentrated in coastal zones. This is due to the preference of tourism for sea and land uses. "As a result, the majority of Caribbean tourist facilities are sited within less than 800 meters of the high-water mark, in a zone that can be both unstable and vulnerable to geological, oceanographic and meteorological phenomena" (Miller 1987: 42). This type of tourism development has generated a range of environmental and socioeconomic impacts for the region. Environmental problems associated with the evolution of the tourism industry in the region include:

- near-shore pollution due to untreated or insufficiently treated sewage which is often washed onto the beaches;
- damage and erosion of beaches as a result of breakwater construction and mining of sand to build hotel and related facilities; and
- the breakdown of coral reefs directly by stripping and indirectly through pollution

Source: Environmentally Sound Tourism Development In The Caribbean (1987)

The region is also experiencing conflicts over competing demand for resource use. Increasing urbanization together with the promotion of residential and commercial properties in the region is focusing attention on the need for land use policy and stronger government intervention to address some of these issues. As Miller (1987: 42) points out
Competition and conflict in land use occurs frequently with residential, tourist, commercial, industrial, transportation, recreational and agricultural activities competing for limited space. In marine areas fishing boats, ports, marinas, yacht anchoring, water sports, oil terminals, waste outfalls and transportation are examples of multiple uses. Tourism can therefore be seen as the activity most responsible for intensifying land use competition and conflict. It therefore follows that the closer the physical relationship between marine resources and coastal tourism, the greater the likelihood that damages will be sustained to such resources. For this reason, monitoring of building sites, waste disposal, anchoring of boats and dredging, etc., is of paramount importance.

The absence of any strategic plans for land and marine uses in coastal areas means that the negative repercussions that accompany developmental stress will only intensify. There is a great need for land use policies to protect environmentally sensitive areas (e.g., coral reefs, wetlands, lagoons) and other tourism resources in the region. Among the problems facing the coastal zones in the region are pollution and erosion.

Pollution stemming from the use of coastal swamps and nearshore coastal waters as disposal sites have generated problems. The absence of proper treatment and disposal sites for sewage has resulted in untreated sewage being dumped into the sea in a number of islands (Moore 1987). "Most of the island's coastal and marine ecosystems (coral reefs, seagrass beds, mangroves, wetlands, beaches) and species (fish, seabirds, sea mammals, and a host of both pelagic and benthic invertebrates of commercial value - shrimps, lobsters, molluscs) are under stress from pollution caused by modern chemical-based agricultural practices, industries, poor land management and wastes from coastal settlements and urban developments" (Moore 1987: 60). In addition, the presence of large oil refineries in the region (e.g., St. Croix,
Trinidad) are a constant threat to the region's fragile ecosystems. Blommestein (1987: 40) describes the impact of beach tourism in the Caribbean as follows:

Beach tourism can have a particularly significant impact on the coastal zones. Construction near the high water line eliminates coastal vegetation, which acts as a stabilizer for sand dunes, thereby accelerating coastal erosion. On occasion groynes are built and erosion may develop downdrift as a result. Sewage disposal is a serious problem throughout the islands particularly where the scale of the project is such that the local capacity for handling it is insufficient. The result is pollution of the very beaches on which tourism depends.

These impacts are the result of uncontrolled or poorly planned tourism development in the Caribbean. The most visible coastal zone problem in the Caribbean is beach erosion. The region's beaches are under stress from the use of beach sand as a fine aggregate in construction and the irrational building of tourism structures in active beach zones. "The loss of sand by erosion from the beach not only undermines the foundations of those plants erected too near the waterlines, but rips the whole fabric of the tourist economy" (Moore 1987: 65). Furthermore, the growing dependence on sand for construction exacerbates the erosion problem in the region.

3.5 Tourism Development: Challenges and Constraints

Trinidad and Tobago faces many environmental (human and physical) challenges ahead as the country develops its tourism industry. Awareness of the impact of uncontrolled tourist development in the other Caribbean islands has focused the government's attention on the need to preserve and protect the environment. "At present the country faces serious environmental problems such as forest destruction, especially in the Northern Range; water pollution, particularly in the West Coast; localized air pollution in urban areas; pollution from liquid and solid hazardous wastes for which proper disposal facilities are non-existent; and the mushrooming of unplanned human settlement" (Medium Term Policy Framework: From Stabilization
to Growth 1993 - 1995: 46). The country's rich biodiversity is at risk in some areas, especially marine species and coral reef habitats. However, the government is committed to environmental conservation, and this concern is reflected in the government's Medium Term Policy Framework: From Stabilization to Growth (1993 - 1995: 45) as follows:

Government recognizes that development cannot be predicated on a deteriorating environment and that the environment cannot be protected when decisions with respect to resource allocation do not take account of the environmental dimension. Accordingly, emphasis will be placed on ensuring that economic, social and physical development take place in a manner that will foster sustainability of the development process and avoid foreclosure of fundamental options for the future. In confronting the challenges posed by sustainable development, Government's strategy will be underpinned by the principle that an anticipatory and preventable approach is preferable to correcting environmental problems after they occur.

The government is focusing on promoting development which uses the natural and human resources in a sustainable manner. Accordingly, "... Government's efforts at environmental protection will focus on the promotion of the efficient and optimum use and development of the country's human and man-made resources; conservation; promotion of environmental education, information, training and public awareness; strengthening of environmental monitoring and enforcement through the development of standards and enactment of legislation; establishment of appropriate administrative and organizational structures; and intensification of environmental research and development" (Medium Term Policy Framework: From Stabilization to Growth 1993 - 1995 45). The government's commitment to environmental preservation is reflected by its placement of responsibility for environmental management within the portfolio of the Ministry of Planning and Development. "This administrative change will facilitate environmental issues being addressed at the earliest stages of the economic planning and development process, thereby ensuring that environmental factors are more systematically and explicitly incorporated in decision making, as well as allow
for a more integrated approach in addressing environmental issues" (Medium Term Policy Framework: From Stabilization to Growth 1993 - 1995: 46).

Adoption of this approach to environmental management being adopted by the government is consistent with its plans for the tourism sector. In its Tourism Strategic Plan (1991 - 1995: 81) the government's policy statement on environmental conservation states that:

The tourism product of Trinidad and Tobago is environmentally based and its prosperity depends on a sensitive handling of its expansion. The Tourism Development authority (TDA) must be prepared to take a stand against unacceptable environmental developments and pollution which endangers the product base.

The TDA was established in February 1988 by an Act of Parliament and given the responsibility for developing the tourism sector. "It was envisaged that the TDA would operate with great autonomy as the Government's agent in the tourism sector and provide direction and support for the expansion of the nation's tourism industry" (Trinidad and Tobago Tourism Development Authority: Strategic Plan 1991 - 1995: 81). The TDA strategy is based on the following:

- The TDA will seek a wider role by acting as a consultative body and by raising the level of awareness of environmental matters.

- The TDA will lobby for the introduction of regular monitoring of water quality/pollution levels in Tobago. The Tourism Development Authority will continue to support the recommendations of the South-West Tobago Committee on the environment.

- The TDA will make its views known publicly on major environmental and conservation issues of key tourism importance.

- To continue working with I.D.C. to ensure that development incentives are limited to projects meeting stringent environmental and aesthetic standards.
• To seek new legislative mechanisms to ensure the primacy of tourism's needs in certain

Source: Trinidad and Tobago Tourism Development Authority: Strategic Plan 1991 - 1995:

The Tourism Development Authority's plan for the development of Trinidad and Tobago's tourism industry goes beyond the typical sun, sand and sea tourism associated with mass tourism. Instead the focus will be on the nation's rich cultural and environmental resources. The government emphasizes in its policy statement that it will promote the following assets in its marketing thrust:

a. Tobago:
• A well preserved unique physical environment, rich in diversity and replicating in a single location the beautiful landscape of several different Caribbean Islands

• Numerous superior beaches, sandy and unspoiled, with an intriguing colour range, white through yellow and pink to black.

• An incomparable marine environment which includes some half a dozen of the finest, easily accessible coral reefs.

• Location of the breeding ground of the fabled flying fish.

• Unique and interesting flora and fauna to capture the attention of special interest visitors from the world over.

• Fascinating historical sites, including several well preserved sugar mills, great houses and fortifications, indicative of the island's colourful history.

• A spectacular 18-hole golf course.

• A tranquil and idyllic ambience that keeps alive the Robinson Crusoe legend; and

• The distinctive character of its people who possess natural friendliness, a philosophy of caring, tolerance and pride that is endearing to visitors.
b. Trinidad:
- The rich art forms and the uniqueness of Trinidad as the birthplace of the renowned steelband, calypso and limbo.

- The island's ethnic mosaic which finds expression in a diversity of cultural festivals, some of which can at one and the same time be informative, entertaining and spectacular.

- The opportunity for promoting Trinidad as a Naturalist's paradise, including:

  (1) its renown for a varied and unique indigenous birdlife which features some 400 species, together with its world famous bird sanctuaries and the Asa Wright Nature Centres, the Point-a-Pierre Wild Fowl Trust and Caroni Swamp;

  (2) the fact that it is home to more than 600 species of tropical butterflies;

  (3) its rivers which are the natural habitat for some rare freshwater fish;

  (4) the legendary Pitch Lake at la Brea;

  (5) numerous waterfalls, nature trails and scenic sites;

  (6) a rich mix of flora that is both Antillean and South American in character;

  (7) the potential for the development of specialized tours of industries such as sugar, oil, manufacturing;

  (8) the existence of numerous beaches and historical sites.

Source: Trinidad and Tobago Tourism Development Authority Tourism Policy 1988.

The government is also promoting the establishment of national parks as a means of meeting conservation objectives. "Government is aware that well managed National Parks and Reserves including the preservation of their animal and plant life, are key to its efforts to promote eco-tourism as a means of increasing employment and foreign exchange earnings while preserving the integrity of the environment" (Medium Term Policy Framework: From Stabilization to Growth 1993 - 1995: 47). Many of these parks have already been declared protected areas and there is a
commitment by the government to increase resources to the Forestry Division to ensure effective management of these natural resources. The government is also seeking resources for this venture from the World Bank in the context of its Forestry and Natural Resource Protection Facility (Medium Term Policy Framework: From Stabilization To Growth 1993 - 1995).

The major challenge that the government will face is the implementation of its policies for the tourism sector. Unless effective partnerships are established between the different stakeholder groups in the tourism sector, the government's objectives for the environment and tourism will just remain words on paper. The next section introduces a policy framework for action. "This is particularly relevant in the case of small island states where an effective approach to many of the environmental issues requires either a pooling of scarce human and complementary resources; a fair measure of programme co-ordination; or the sharing of information and experiences on a systematic and institutionalized basis" (Medium Term Policy Framework: From Stabilization To Growth 1993 - 1995:48).

3.6 Analytical Framework for Action

The Trinidad and Tobago government should be guided by an analytical framework for action which will focus its attention on incorporating sustainability principles in its tourism policy. A useful framework developed by Nelson and Jassen (1981) and adapted by the writer can be used as the basis for action. The basic parts of the framework are: (1) mandate, (2) guiding principles, (3) planning, (4) implementation.

Nelson (1991) points to certain aspects of this analytical framework for action which has relevance for tourism planning in Trinidad and Tobago. "First, the term
mandate calls for identification of roles for and involvement of all the major agencies, groups and actors in the host area". The government of Trinidad and Tobago has identified these groups and solicited their input in the consultation sessions on tourism planning. What is not clear, however, is whether these groups would be involved in every phase of the planning and management of tourism projects. Nelson and Jessen together with the World Tourism Organization (1993) stress the importance of having stakeholder groups involved at every stage of the planning, development and management phases of tourism projects.

Secondly, once the different stakeholder groups in Trinidad and Tobago have been identified, a set of principles on sustainable tourism development can serve as a guide on how to incorporate sustainability principles into policies in the tourism industry. The principles for sustainable tourism outlined in chapter two and discussed at the Globe '90 Tourism Stream Conference in Vancouver could form the basis for action. In addition to the sustainable tourism principles outlined in chapter two, the government can adopt the following suggested principles to ensure that tourism planning and management occur within the context of sustainable development. These principles are as follows:

- Tourism should be developed in a sustainable manner, i.e. with due regard for the protection and appropriate use of the natural and human environment in host areas.

- In the spirit of sustainable development, tourism should be undertaken with equity in mind, i.e. with the idea of a fair distribution of benefits and costs among tourism promoters and host people areas.

- It follows from the foregoing that good information on the human and cultural environment should be available prior to and during tourism development, with this information being produced and known to all parties, including all people.
• It also follows that careful and sustained consultation should be undertaken with local people, who should be encouraged and expected to undertake leadership roles in planning and development with the assistance of government, financial, business and other interests.

• A code of ethics should be developed and followed which would enunciate basic principles of respect for the culture and environment of the host area, for the economy and traditional way of life, for community, traditional behaviour, leadership and political patterns.

• Comprehensive planning analyses should be undertaken prior to the start of any major projects, with careful consideration given to different types of tourism development and the ways in which they might link with existing uses, ways of life and environmental considerations.

• Throughout tourism planning, development and implementation, a careful assessment, monitoring, information and mediation program should be conducted in order to allow local people and others to take advantage of opportunities and to adapt to unwanted changes.

• Tourism planning, development and implementation should be in the spirit of sustainable development in being cross-sectional and integrated, involving different government agencies, private corporations and groups and individuals so as to provide for the widest possible benefits.

• In the light of the foregoing, tourism planning, development and implementation should be part of integrated conservation or sustainable development strategies for a region.

• Senior governments should encourage the development of action plans for important tourism areas on the basis of the foregoing principles.


The Trinidad and Tobago government can use these principles as guidelines to ensure that its tourism industry is developed in a manner consistent with sustainability principles. However, principles alone are not enough. What is needed is a series of legislative and policy instruments that can operationalize the stated objectives and principles. It is in this context that an appropriate planning framework is needed to ensure full participation by all major stakeholder groups.
As pointed out by Nelson (Nelson 1991: 53) "... in strategic planning, the philosophical or underlying principles of tourism development should be identified, including the basic types of tourism, whether spectator or participatory or cultural or eco-tourism." In addition, Nelson states that although the basic elements of the framework suggest a rational or comprehensive planning approach, it is not always possible to follow such a linear approach. Hence, Nelson (1991: 53) suggest that

In actual practice, planning and development would be expected to proceed in an opportunistic, interactive and adaptive manner in accordance with local interest, information uncertainties and so forth. In such a mixed scanning or transactive approach, the basic principles of respect for the host culture and environment, and for a participatory and equitable management style, should be the rule.

This approach to planning is consistent with the writer's recommendation for an appropriate planning approach for Trinidad and Tobago. In addition, elements of Inskeep's planning approach discussed in Chapter Two that emphasizes elements of an integrated, community and environmental and sustainable development approach to planning are useful. As mentioned in chapter two, Inskeep's approach to planning emphasized "the concept of planning being continuous and incremental, system oriented, comprehensive, integrated, and environmental, with the focus on achieving sustainable development and community involvement" (Inskeep 1993: 29). It is only by adopting such an approach to planning that issues of equity and environmental quality in tourism development will be addressed. It is within this context that the government should work closely with communities and the tourism industry to develop a sustainable and prosperous tourism industry in the country. From a tourism resource management perspective, fulfilling these goals translates into three key challenges:
- Building extensive consultation and partnerships amongst governments (local and national), industry, environment groups and the public to promote sustainable tourism.

- Developing effective management processes (effective and enforceable policy instruments).

- Ensuring that the local population share in the benefits from tourism.

3.7 Role of Governments

The Trinidad and Tobago government has a key role to play in promoting sustainable tourism. It must take the initiative by adopting sustainable practices in its development plans. The government could follow the lead of the province of British Columbia by establishing a Sustainable Development function within the Ministry of Tourism. Such an approach would ensure that all tourism projects incorporate the principles of sustainable development. In addition, the government could explore the use of legislative and policy instruments to guide tourism development. A good starting point would be a revision of the Tourist Board Act to give legislative power on matters affecting cultural integrity and environmental quality. An amendment to the act could include a charter of rights which would outline the form and scope that the development of the country's tourism development should take. The charter could be implemented by making it compulsory for tourism operators to follow certain guidelines which are consistent with the maintenance of environmental quality and cultural integrity. Standards and enforceable regulations that protect local arts and crafts and discourage the commercialization of local culture should be implemented.
The government should also establish controls on the

- Use of beach sand and coral stone for construction.
- Removal of scarce species of plants and animals by locals for sale to tourists.
- Volume of tourist visiting fragile ecosystems and historical site.

In addition, the government should introduce other control measures deemed necessary to protect the island's natural resources from uncontrolled tourism development. Strict development and operating standards should apply to any tourism product. Where appropriate, the government should establish absolute upper limits on tourism development, such as has been done in Bhutan and the Seychelles (Inskeep 1993). Another approach outlined by Inskeep is for the government to promote environmental resource based types of tourism development. Such an approach will also aid in achieving conservation goals. "Also important, especially in newly developing tourism areas, is to maintain a moderate rate of tourism growth in order to allow sufficient time to properly plan and develop the area and to monitor and control environmental impacts" (Inskeep 1993: 348). It is argued that such an approach will give communities time to adapt to and learn how to be effective partners in tourism development.

The government should also concentrate on small scale cottage industries as opposed to big hotels. These types of accommodations are environmentally appropriate for the fragile environments of small island states. In addition, local small entrepreneurs are more likely to benefit from the adoption of small cottage industries as opposed to large hotels which are out of character with the island's environment.
In addition to the foregoing mentioned environmental policies which could be adopted by the government of Trinidad and Tobago to ensure that tourism development occurs in an integrated manner; the government should introduce strict land zoning regulations. These regulations can include guidelines for

- Controls on the heights of buildings (no more than two stories), setbacks of buildings from the shoreline (minimum of five meters), and suitable landscaping to complement the natural vegetation that, as mentioned, must be preserved.

- Architectural control of resort buildings so that they are well integrated into the island environment, take advantage of the tropical climate and use local building materials.

- Requirement for proper solid waste disposal systems, utilizing controlled incineration, compaction.

- Application of controls on collection of coral, seashells, and certain types of fish, with no live coral collection or spear fishing allowed

Source: Adapted from the Republic of Maldives Ministry of Tourism in Inskeep (1993)

By developing standards for the industry in consultation with the different stakeholder groups the government will be promoting a sustainable approach to the development of the country's natural and cultural assets. Accordingly, tourism policies will aid in the conservation of the environment and revitalization of traditional art, handicraft, dance, music, drama and other aspects of traditional cultural life-styles. This will help in reducing some of the negative sociocultural and environmental impacts of tourism. The government should play the major role in identifying sociocultural impacts and applying policies and measures (e.g., legislation and policy instruments) to minimize as much as possible the negative sociocultural aspects of tourism development activities. The government can also do the following:
• Undertake area and sector specific research into environmental, cultural and economic effects of tourism.

• Assist and support lower levels of governments to develop their own tourism development strategies in conjunction with conservation goals.

• Develop standards and regulations for environmental and cultural impact assessments, monitoring and auditing of existing and proposed tourism developments.

• Apply sectoral and/or regional environmental accounting systems for the tourism industry.

• Design and implement public consultation techniques and processes in order to involve all stakeholders in making tourism decisions.

• Design and implement educational and awareness programmes which will sensitize people to the issues of sustainable tourism development.

• Develop adequate tools and techniques to analyze the effects of tourism development projects on heritage sites and ancient monuments as an integral part of cultural and environmental impact assessment.

• Ensure that carrying capacities of tourism destinations reflect sustainable levels of development and are monitored and adjusted appropriately.

• Regulate and control tourism in environmentally and culturally sensitive areas.

• Include tourism in land use planning.

• Create tourism advisory boards that involve all stakeholder groups (the public, industry, NGOs, etc.)

• Ensure that all government departments involved in tourism are briefed on the concept of sustainable development. The respective Ministers (Environment, Natural Resources, etc.) should collaborate to achieve sustainable tourism development.

Source: Adapted from An Action Strategy for Sustainable Tourism Development: March 1990: 7
3.8 The Role of Communities

Any government policy in Trinidad and Tobago that seeks to minimize the possible negative sociocultural, environmental and economic impacts of tourism development must have community input. This is essential since it is at the local community level that the negative impacts are felt the strongest. These impacts include among others the growth in undesirable activities, social dualism, demonstration effects, and culture as a commercial commodity.

The input of communities in the development of a strategy to deal with negative sociocultural, economic and environmental impacts is crucial. Such input into the policy making process is vital since many of the procedures that will be needed to deal with these impacts must come from the community level. Consequently, the involvement of community groups in the management and planning of the tourism resource base is imperative. As Inskeep (1993: 375) points out,

For both socioeconomic and environmental reasons, it is important to develop tourism in a gradual manner so that local residents have sufficient time to develop tourism in a gradual manner so that local residents have sufficient time to adapt to, understand, and participate in it and so the government can properly plan, organize, and monitor tourism development as it proceeds. This also provides the time to apply a community development approach, which is an essential fundamental policy, especially at the local level of development.

Community involvement can be effective through the establishment of tourism advisory boards and open meetings with community groups. Effective public education programs to raise the public's awareness about tourism issues should be implemented. This can be achieved through an effective communication strategy aimed at the population. Community resources should be utilized to develop the
communication strategy by drawing on the cultural heritage of Trinidad and Tobago as a mode of communication. The communication strategy should be tailored to suit the target audience and their environment. Accordingly, the educational material should be delivered in a manner so as to invite community response and participation.

Trinidad and Tobago's government could benefit from ideas from the British Columbia experience by setting up Community Tourism Action Plans (CTAP). "CTAP involves the collection of local tourism data and the delivery of a two-day workshop involving community, business and industry representatives" (Canada's Report on Government Initiatives in Support of Sustainable Tourism 1992: 7). This approach allows communities to become active participants in the tourism sector as opposed to passive players. CTAP encourages communities to view tourism as a social development tool which stimulates and supplements local economies. Through this process of community planning, each community can develop an action plan for implementing tourism initiatives. This approach to community planning is supplemented with specific education and training programs aimed at developing a tourism industry which gives pride to the expression of local culture and art forms. It is at this stage that a Code of Ethics and Practice could be developed for the industry in consultation with other stakeholder groups.

Community based tourism plans are one mechanism which can be used to ensure that tourism resources (human and physical) are developed in a manner consistent with the principles of sustainable development. Such an approach to tourism development will provide an opportunity for visitors to experience Trinidad and Tobago's unique cultural environment. Visitor centres can be established in communities to provide visitors reception and interpretation of natural history and cultural forms, and also function as a local meeting place for tourists and the host
community to interact. These mechanisms can assist in addressing the potentially negative sociocultural impacts associated with tourism development in host communities where the lifestyle, culture and expectation of visitors and residents may differ (Canada's Report on Government Initiatives in Support of Sustainable Tourism 1992: 51).

3.9 Role of the Private Sector

Tourism, if properly developed, could play a major role in contributing to Trinidad and Tobago's prosperity. However, this will only take place if the major players in the industry — both domestic and foreign investors — accept the challenge to operate in a policy framework which is consistent with the principles of sustainability. Issues of equity, respect for local culture and effective environment policies are essential elements in the development of any tourism policy. The private sector has an important role to play in this process. In this regard, the private sector should focus on

- Protecting the biosphere, for example, by minimizing and eliminating pollution which causes environmental damage (e.g. use of herbicides on golf courses) and by supporting parks and reserves at key sites.
- Sustaining the use of resources, for example, by ensuring sustainable use of land, water, forest in tourism activities.
- Reducing and disposing of wastes, for example, by recycling, reusing, and reducing wherever possible and by having high standards for sewage treatment, and waste disposal.
- Minimizing environmental risks, for example, by minimizing environmental and health risks (e.g. avoid hazardous locations such as near malarial swamps, favoured wildlife areas, unique features, ancient sites).
- Undertake green marketing, for example, by promoting "soft" tourism that minimizes adverse environmental and cultural impacts (e.g. natural tourism) as well as informing tourists of the impacts of their presence.
• Incorporating environmental values in management of operations, for example, by ensuring environmental representation at the executive level on board or management groups.

• Conducting regular environmental audits, for example, by conducting independent assessments of environmental performance of the entire business operations (e.g. monitor water quality, carrying capacity, energy consumption, environmental aesthetics, sewage, etc.).

• Establishing strong links with community organizations that are involved in ethical business practices

• Refraining from inappropriate behaviour which negatively affects the host community or degrade the local natural environment

• Establishing guidelines with input from other stakeholder groups for maintaining the natural and cultural resource base

• Establish management strategies which include all groups in society.

Source: Adapted from An Action Strategy for Sustainable Tourism Development (1990)

A model of partnership must be developed between the different stakeholder groups to develop tourism policies which respect local culture, expectations and lifestyles. Policies must address issues of equity and seek to equitably distribute tourism benefits across the society.

The development of the tourism industry and protection of the environment must be approached in an integrated manner. The protection of the environment must take first priority. Accordingly, tourism development should be consistent with the goals of sustainability and conservation. Within this framework there is an important role to be played by governments, private sector and communities. Partnerships between multi-stakeholders must be strived for to come up with an approach to resource management that includes
• A commitment and willingness among politicians, planners and communities to work towards a common purpose.

• Co-ordination between the various levels of government (federal, national and local).

• An adequate planning framework backed by effective legislation.

• Communication and education programs that stress sustainability and environmental responsibility.

The government has an important role to play in building partnerships among stakeholders. "More proactive frameworks must be adopted to integrate tourism facilities and activities with environmental values and other land uses" (Environment Strategy Europe 1992: 79). Building partnerships with other multi-stakeholders is vital to the establishment and implementation of a sustainable tourism policy. "Multi-stakeholder round tables and working groups can assist with this shift, and with developing industry codes of environmental practice" (Environmental Strategy Europe 1992: 79).

However, if tourism development in Trinidad and Tobago is to be based on the principles of sustainable development, then the planning process must be inclusive rather than exclusive. The government will have to establish close working relationships and consultative processes with all stakeholder groups towards the preservation and enhancement of the country's natural and cultural assets.

3.10 Summary

This chapter ties together some of the major conclusions of the thesis. On the basis of the findings and insights, it argues for the adoption of a sustainable approach to tourism planning in Trinidad and Tobago. It posits that a necessary but not
sufficient condition for sustainable tourism development is public participation in the planning and management of tourism projects. Government intervention in the tourism sector is also necessary to set standards and regulate the industry. An analytical framework for action was presented that promotes active participation by all stakeholder groups.
CHAPTER FOUR - RECOMMENDATIONS AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Introduction

The study has outlined a policy framework for a sustainable approach to tourism development in Trinidad and Tobago. Specifically, the study has focused on measures that governments can adopt to avoid and or minimize the negative impacts associated with mass tourism development, while at the same time accentuating the potential positive benefits associated with planned tourism development. It is suggested that governments take a proactive role in regulating and preserving the social, cultural, environmental and economic context in which the industry is based. The absence of such controls has imposed huge environmental, economic and cultural costs on destination areas such as like those in the Mediterranean and Caribbean. Procedures and controls must be put in place to guide the form and pattern of tourism developments. In addition, governments must play the leading role in enhancing the capacity for sustainable tourism.

4.2 Enhancing the Capacity for Sustainable Tourism

The government of Trinidad and Tobago should implement policies and measures to enhance the nation's capacity for sustainable development. These policies must promote education and training across a wide cross-section of the society. Elementary, secondary and university curriculae should promote the concept of sustainable development. Government departments should provide information for their staff on the rationale and benefits of adopting a sustainable approach to development. This approach should include all sectors of the economy if the country is to avoid the long-term consequences of unplanned development. A multi-dimensional approach to tourism policy and planning is required. Such an approach
will allow the government to deal more effectively with the potential negative social, economic, environmental and cultural implications that accompany development. A multi-sectoral approach to planning "...offers the possibility of discovering the most effective means - whether institutional, regulatory, economic or other - of integrating environmental policy not only with tourism but also with the policies for other sectors" (UNEP 1983: 75). Furthermore, measures such as institution building at the national and community level, public education and community based resource management should be promoted. Renard in Cox and Embree (1990: 188) points out:

Public education is a prerequisite for community participation and is required at all levels. It is required, first of all, for reformulating development, and broad consultations must take place to create a dialogue and to generate new responses to current challenges. It is clear that the new development paradigm will not be created - as the old paradigm had been - by the so-called development experts. It will arise out of a dialogue among all sectors of society-including the experts-through an extensive process of consultation and participation.

Public participation is a necessary condition if Trinidad and Tobago is to develop its tourism industry along sustainable lines. The public should be offered the opportunity to be involved in every stage of the planning, development and management of tourism projects. Institutional frameworks must be put in place to respond effectively to the potential impacts that will result from tourism development. Community based resource management committees can be promoted as a means of having local input in designing guidelines and policies to protect and enhance the resource base on which tourism depends. However, the issue of sustainable tourism development does not respect national boundaries. Oil spills, migratory birds, fisheries stocks, pollution and dumping of untreated sewage into the ocean are important regional environmental concerns. Trinidad and Tobago is part of the larger Caribbean community known as Caribbean Community and Common Market
(CARICOM) and as such, the long-term survival of its tourism industry will be affected by what measures are adopted by other countries in the region and regional organizations. Any long-term strategy to address sustainable development in Trinidad and Tobago must have a regional focus.

The present structure of the tourism industry in the Caribbean is not serving the regional interest. Local resources and inputs are not integrated into the industry. Most of the food and building materials used in the industry are imported, exacerbating the leakage from regional economies. "When the tourist industry does consume Caribbean resources, it often does so at the expense of Caribbean people and their environment: hotels and golf courses have displaced farms and homes from fertile and accessible land, especially in small Caribbean countries where flat areas are rare; vacation villas frequently command the finest views and exclude local residents from the best beaches; luxury yachts claim the safest mooring places from local fishing boats" (McAfee 1991: 172). The Caribbean Tourism Research Centre (CTRC) was formed in September of 1974 to address the negative sociocultural and economic impacts of tourism development in the Caribbean. Its mandate is to address all those aspects of Caribbean tourism to which little attention had formerly been paid, issues such as

- resentment against the luxurious lifestyles of wealthy foreigners;
- an increase in prostitution and begging;
- exploitation of local workers by foreign-owned hotel chains;
- an artificial rise in the price of land;
- repatriation of profits by foreign firms;
• a heavy import bill, resulting from the types of goods and services needed by the industry, and its own lack of links with the local agricultural and manufacturing sectors;

• limited links with local economies and multiplier effects;

• crowding out of agriculture as land and workers move into the tourism sector;

• high import propensities and costs, resulting in inflationary pressures;

• environmental and cultural degradation.

The CTRC is the main institutional organization for tourism planning in the region. However, its institutional structure must be strengthened to give it the mandate to implement and enforce sustainable development in the region. Mechanisms should be directed to promote joint efforts in the area of tourism development and natural resource management in the region. National policies in the region need to be harmonized and a concerted effort made to adopt and enforce guidelines and regulations which will lead to a sustainable development of the region's tourism resource. According to Cox and Embree (1990: 191):

Governments of the region must also maintain and increase their support to and participate in the Caribbean Environment Programme, sponsored by UNEP, coordinated out of Jamaica. This program, which brings together all countries of the wider Caribbean region, is a unique opportunity for harmonizing policies, for coordinating efforts and for concerted action. It is a source of technical and financial assistance, and manages activities in such important areas as pollution monitoring, environmental legislation, and specially protected areas and wildlife.

The Caribbean region is not short of institutional structures to address issues of sustainable development. However, the problem is one of coordination and effectiveness of the different institutions. Existing organizations involved in resource management issues in the region include:
The challenge for the region is to coordinate the activities of these organizations to better address resource management issues like tourism development. CARICOM should act as an umbrella organization to facilitate the development and enforcement of appropriate policy instruments which can be applied broadly in the region. Unless such an approach is adopted, private foreign investors will continue to play one country against the other to seek concessions to strict controls for tourism development which might be in existence in other countries in the region.

Countries in the Caribbean already collaborate in the areas of health, education and tourism. This collaboration should be strengthened by adopting effective and enforceable measures and guidelines which can be applied regionally to enhance and preserve the region's human and physical resources. The region should send a strong signal to foreign investors that countries in the region are prepared to operate from a position of strength when it comes to appropriate development in the region. "The creation of a ministerial council manned by every tourism minister or equivalent tourism political figure in its member states provide a mechanism for collective regional action which, if used, can make Caribbean tourism a powerful negotiating force in the world of tourism" (Holder in Gale and Goodrich (ed.) 1993:
Proposals aimed at fostering regional coordination in the tourism sector in the Caribbean should focus on:

- a stronger regional role in the planning, coordination, production, promotion and marketing of a diversified regional tourism product (a product that goes beyond the sand, sun and sea tourism that the region is famous for to include cultural, heritage and eco-tourism);
- setting standards for the industry that are effective and enforceable (as opposed to laws which just remain on the book);
- on employing sustainable practices in the tourism sector (as outlined in chapter three of the thesis);
- putting legal and managerial responsibility for tourism projects in the hands of regional and community organizations (enforceable by a common agreed upon legal framework);
- promoting and funding inter-disciplinary research at the University of the West Indies on tourism development in the Caribbean. Such research should focus on (among other areas) the potential social and environmental impacts of tourism development in the region.

A long-term regional approach to tourism development that supports the development of institutions and mechanisms is needed if the region is to implement environmentally and economically sustainable tourism. A more diversified tourism product should be promoted that is based on regional coordination, distributional equity and enhancement and preservation of the human and physical environment. "The higher the level of environmental awareness and sustainability in the Caribbean, the better are the prospects for ecologically attractive and sensitive tourism" (McAfee 1991:173).

Trinidad and Tobago can be used as a test case on how tourism development should proceed. Unlike the other countries in the region, Trinidad and Tobago is developing its tourism industry at a time when the ideas of sustainable development
are being promoted by international development agencies. "Moreover, both governments and investors / developers are realizing that tourists are increasingly expecting and demanding a high level of environmental quality in tourism areas, and that environmental planning is simultaneously good economic planning" (Inskeep 1987: 131). Accordingly, tourism development must address issues of environmental sustainability if the industry is to be maintained in the long-term.

4.3 Policy Implications

The policy implications of the study on developing a sustainable tourism policy for Trinidad and Tobago are clear. Distributional equity, active community involvement and participation in the planning and management of tourism projects will be the cornerstone of a sustainable approach to tourism planning. Issues of resource competition among different stakeholder groups and sectors will demand a level of cooperation across different sectors of the economy. This will require better linkages between tourism, natural resources and cultural policies with a view to optimizing the economic, social, cultural and environmental returns to the host communities. As such, efforts should be directed towards developing comprehensive methods of social, cultural, economic and environmental impact assessments of tourism projects. Projects should be given the green light of approval by the government only if they meet the criteria of carrying out impact studies on how those projects will affect the host communities. This simply means that standards will have to be set and strictly enforced for all categories of tourism development.

The study suggests that standards and codes of ethics should be formulated so that they can play a supportive role in protecting and enhancing the human and physical environment. The alternative will be social, cultural, economic and environmental degradation of the nation's human and physical capital. Without
positive government intervention, taken in support of protecting, enhancing and regulating the resource base on which tourism depends, market forces will allocate development rights according to the profit margin without internalizing the substantial environmental, social, cultural and economic costs that accompany tourism development in developing countries.

4.4 Summary

Tourism planning in Trinidad and Tobago should be integrated into the total development process. A multi-sectoral approach to planning (integrated planning) along sustainable lines is required. This is necessary to avoid undesirable spillovers from other sectors of the economy into the tourist sector. Integrated planning is defined by the United Nations Environment Programme (1983: 76) as follows:

Integrating planning for tourism consists, in the first place, in placing projects for tourism plant in the context of national and global planning where the tourism activity is programmed not only in respect of profit-making criteria, but takes into account social and cultural factors. This planning should not be restricted to one sector of activities, but integrated into an overall strategy. Integrated planning is effectively the only method of reconciling the conflicting interests of the various activities concerned in any tourist development and, moreover, of placing the tourism component in the context of all other non-tourist sector.

Any long-term strategy to develop and maintain the sustainability of the tourism sector must also address the potential problems in other sectors which impact on the tourism sector. It is suggested that integrated planning "...be conceived and put into place by national tourism authorities, who should also coordinate the work of all government departments directly or indirectly concerned, as well as that of the different sectors of tourism involved" (UNEP 1993). National planning should focus on integrating tourism interests (e.g., conservation, generational equity and foreign exchange generation, etc.) with those of other sectors like manufacturing, fisheries
and handicrafts. A strategy of multiple use of the island's limited land and other resources should be promoted. The United Nation Environment Programme (1983: 32) supports this approach to resource use by stating that:

The multiple use of land is an important aspect that truly needs appreciation since it allows for the optimizing of land resources not only for tourism, but also for other activities appropriate to everyday life. Thus a specific area of land may be zoned for agriculture, tourism, informal recreation and also conservation and be managed to permit all three activities simultaneously.

Adequate planning and zoning guidelines are necessary to deal with conflicts among competing resource users and to avoid incompatibility of use. This approach to planning is an important element of land use planning in small island states with limited resources.

Trinidad and Tobago has the opportunity to develop its tourism industry in a sustainable manner. The government is pursuing the development of the industry as part of its diversification strategy. In so doing, it has a lot of room to maneuver since it is not looking at the tourism sector as a panacea for the nation's economic problems. Within this context, the opportunity exists for the government to be more critical and discriminatory in its policies for the industry. This is in sharp contrast to the choices that are available to the other small islands in the region whose economic survival is linked strongly to tourism. However, as discussed in this study, Trinidad and Tobago cannot develop its tourism industry over the long-run in isolation from the other islands in the region. The destiny of each of the islands in the region is closely tied to the others. There is no doubt that development in isolation, and insularity for the individual countries in the Commonwealth Caribbean, is out of the question.
The trend throughout the world is towards regional groupings. The North American Free Trade Agreement between Canada, The United States and Mexico attest to this fact. Additionally, the coming together of the European Community as the world's largest trading block, together with the possibility of regional groupings in Asia, means that such blocks are emerging as a dominant form of organizing economic, social, cultural and political activity.

The Caribbean region is no exception to the general trend towards regional groupings. As there are benefits from large economies cooperating in different areas, benefits for small economies like those in the Caribbean should be encouraged and strengthened. The Caribbean cannot stand still while the rest of the world advances. If the region is to avoid being marginalized, joint action is needed. Regional institutions and arrangements such as the Caribbean Community and Common Market (CARICOM), Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS), Caribbean Tourism Organization (CTO), Caribbean Tourism Research Centre (CTRC) Caribbean Conservation Society (CCA), the University of the West Indies (UWI), and so on, need to be strengthened, and the process of functional cooperation in the area of tourism and resource management (and other areas) deepened. The challenge which faces the leaders and people of the Caribbean as they move towards the year 2000 is whether they will be able to overcome the forces of separation, insularity and move towards cooperation in important functional areas which can benefit all the islands in the region.
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## APPENDIX

Table 3.1 Organizations represented during national consultations on tourism in Trinidad and Tobago

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>Ministry of Planning and Mobilization</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Ministry of Industry, Enterprise and Tourism</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Ministry of Health</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Ministry of Works and Infrastructure</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Ministry of Youth, Sport, Culture and the Creative Arts</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>Tobago House of Assembly</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>Port Authority of Trinidad and Tobago</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>Auditor General Department</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>Ministry of Finance and the Economy (Customs and Immigration)</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>Trinidad and Tobago Electricity Commission (TTEC)</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>Trinidad and Tobago telephone Company (TELCO)</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>Trinidad and Tobago Arts and Crafts Council</td>
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<td>13</td>
<td>Tobago Marketing Company Ltd.</td>
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<td>14</td>
<td>Trinidad and Tobago Industrial Development company</td>
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<td>15</td>
<td>The Trinidad and Tobago hotel School</td>
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<td>16</td>
<td>The Development Finance Company</td>
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<td>17</td>
<td>British West Indian airways</td>
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<td>18</td>
<td>Hotels/Guest-houses</td>
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<td>19</td>
<td>Tobago chamber of Commerce</td>
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<td>20</td>
<td>YMCA</td>
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<td>21</td>
<td>Bed and Breakfast Association</td>
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<td>22</td>
<td>Tobago Taxicab Association</td>
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<td>23</td>
<td>Association of professional Engineers of Trinidad and Tobago</td>
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<td>24</td>
<td>Youth Camps</td>
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<td>Fine Arts Centre</td>
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<td>26</td>
<td>Youth Training, Employment and Partnership programme</td>
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<td>27</td>
<td>Airline Superintendent's association</td>
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<td>28</td>
<td>Tobago news</td>
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<td>29</td>
<td>Radio Trinidad</td>
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<td>Jaycees</td>
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<td>31</td>
<td>Crown Reef Society</td>
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<td>32</td>
<td>Caribbean Tourism Research and Development Corporation</td>
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<td>33</td>
<td>Bacolet Corporation</td>
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<td>34</td>
<td>TECU Credit Union</td>
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<td>35</td>
<td>Crusoe Reef Society</td>
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<tr>
<td>36</td>
<td>Anthony C, Lewis Associates Ltd.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
37 Town and Country Planning Division
38 Trinidad and Tobago Hotel and Tourism Association
39 Water and Sewage Authority (WASA)
40 Tourism Development Authority
41 Division of Tourism
42 Airport Authority
43 Institute of Marine Affairs
44 Atlanta
45 Delea Mira Guest-house
46 Clyde Bacchus Associates
47 Turtle Beach Hotel
48 Rotary Club, Tobago
49 Storebay Holiday Resort
50 Coral Reef Guest-house and Apartment
51 Tobago Resorts Hotels Ltd.

Source: Tourism Marketing and Management in the Caribbean (1993)