

Monitoring the Sustainable Development of a Seaside Tourist Destination

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Edited by

Stoyan Marinov and Velina Kazandzhieva

**Cambridge
Scholars
Publishing**



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This book first published 2023

Cambridge Scholars Publishing

Lady Stephenson Library, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE6 2PA, UK

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

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ISBN (10): 1-5275-9226-X

ISBN (13): 978-1-5275-9226-1

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INTRODUCTION

Monitoring is an empty exercise, no matter how well conceived, if it does not tie in with the policy-making or management process.

Busch & Trexler (2003, p. 10)

Changes in climate and their expected impacts on tourist areas and activities in the coming decades make it necessary for stakeholders to take measures for transforming sustainable tourism from a large-scale and abstract notion into a clear and precise set of particular and measurable goals. Taking into consideration the exact goals researchers should assess the degree of progress, generate information and data, improve knowledge and skills, and implement effective actions for supporting and encouraging the transition to sustainable, harmonious and environmentally and socio-culturally friendly tourism. Basically, the potential impacts of the ***climatic changes*** on the tourist activity in Mediterranean and Southern Europe result in shortening traditional summer vacations due to expected extra heat, together with an increased number of visits in spring and autumn.¹ The forecast is for increased stimuli and motivation for the tourist travel of southern Europeans to destinations in Northern Europe.

The contemporary tourist markets and destinations are ***changing continuously*** and this is occurring even faster due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Monitoring at the project, national or local level is a vital tool for assessing and managing this change. For tourism in particular regions monitoring helps to better understand the divergent impacts of the specific tourist activities on the host community. Monitoring and management are presented as interconnected and inter-dependent processes.² Through monitoring:

- ❖ it is easier to accept the contribution of tourism for achieving the objectives of sustainable development of destinations;

¹ Buhalis, D., Costa, C. *Tourism Management Dynamics: trends, management and tools*. Elsevier Butterworth-Heinemann, 2006, p. 46.

² A Toolkit for Monitoring and Managing Community-Based Tourism, A collaborative publishing and distribution project by: SNV Asia Pro-Poor Sustainable Tourism Network SNV Vietnam and the University of Hawaii, School of Travel Industry Management, 2007, p. 7.

- ❖ it is able to identify the spheres that need to be improved, as well as the areas in which essential transformations take place.

Monitoring is not a recent process. A brief historical retrospective reveals that each selection of indicators for monitoring reflects the changes of time when the respective data are collected and analyzed. The Romans, for example, carried out surveys for counting the population in order to help the precise tax collection in the empire. In the USA they measured the national income as an indicator of wealth and welfare in the 1920s. Despite the successful use of economic indicators to establish and convey important information to the decision-making subjects, the conclusion is that the effective management of complex social systems cannot be achieved by the use of a limited number of indicators. A number of social surveys were carried out in the mid-1960s up to the late 1970s. It was not until the late 1980s, when the movement for sustainable development connected environmental protection with decreasing poverty and increasing economic welfare, that the monitoring of the quality of life included an even more thorough set of tools.

After the first Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro (1992), which was the keystone in the efforts for climate protection, many organizations headed by OUN came up with indicators as tools for monitoring the headway to the general objectives of sustainable development. The most important document of the Summit in Rio, “Agenda 21” placed significant emphasis on the commitment for *monitoring sustainable development with the help of indicators* which could provide a solid ground for decision-making on all levels.³

As a result of the increased significance of monitoring sustainable development, many organizations from the public and private sector created their own systems of monitoring. Monitoring various indicators, including those for sustainable tourism, can act as a stimulus and tool for encouragement in critical times or as an opportunity for identifying issues that are different in scope and scale, which need corrective actions and changes. Monitoring is an opportunity for achieving transparency in tourism development, reinforcing the trust and dialogue between stakeholders in defining and discussing important issues, as well as ways for managing them; this is one of the fundamental principles of sustainable tourism.

The rich ecological and cultural-historical heritage, variety and attractiveness of the *sea and coastal destinations* attract a considerable tourist flow from all over the world. According to the European Environment

³ Agenda 21: The United Nations Programme of Action from Rio. United Nations Department of Public Information, NY, 1994, p. 284.

Agency, increased temperatures could result in better conditions for sea recreation tourism on average across Europe.⁴ The beach season has real potential from spring until autumn in the regions in the south. On the other hand, in a European study from 2015 it is claimed that in the current economic situation climatic changes in the coming decades could reduce revenues from tourism by up to 0.45% of GDP annually in the southern Mediterranean EU regions, whereas destinations in Northern Europe would earn up to 0.32% of GDP.⁵ To these observations and expectations could also be added contemporary challenges in tourism due to:

- the lack of available data, especially locally and the weak credibility of gathering data and information at the local level;
- the low degree of understanding the pressure on sea and coastal destinations, mostly about the pressure and hardships in weakening the effects of: climatic changes; the fragility of ecosystems; mass tourism and the significant negative effects of seasonality, erosion on the coast, sea pollution, water shortage and others.
- the lack of political commitment and financial investment for providing long-term monitoring of the processes of sustainable development through an integrated and holistic approach;
- the low level of specialized skills and qualifications of human resources for the appropriate management of measuring and collecting data, especially in compiling surveys, and interpreting results and information.

The presented and analyzed circumstances and facts determine the *significance and relevance* of the issues and challenges before the monitoring of the sustainable development of the sea tourist destinations, including those in Bulgaria, in conditions of transformations in tourism; they thus motivate the chosen topic of this monograph. The main difficulties and complications refer to, on the one hand, the way that the tourist business adapts to the dynamics of the current changes in the industry and, on the other, the principles of the harmonious and balanced development of destinations, and the way it is measured and assessed. With a few exceptions, we also point out the lack of purposeful and systematic scientific research in the sphere of monitoring the tourist sustainability in Bulgaria and abroad. Studies of the opportunities for balanced development of the tourist sites are quite popular, unlike the

⁴ Marzo, C. Ensuring an effective monitoring of tourism sustainability in the Mediterranean region. June, 2019. Interreg MED project BleuTourMed_C3. Project co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund.

⁵ Barrios, S., Ibañez, J. N. Time is of the essence: adaptation of tourism demand to climate change in Europe. *Climatic Change*, 132(4), 2015, pp. 645-660.

research works about monitoring in the sphere of tourism – these are limited in scope and content. The monograph is an attempt to draw attention and the academic debate towards the monitoring process as a tool for establishing the degree of sustainability of the sea tourist destinations in order to enrich and add to the scientific information and conceptual knowledge about the process as an integral part of the management of tourist sites.

The subject of research in these chapters relates to the characteristics and set of tools for monitoring the coastal destinations in compliance with the objectives and principles of sustainable tourism. The **object** of research is the monitoring of the harmonious tourist development on the Bulgarian Black Sea coast – in the regions of Dobrich, Varna and Bourgas. The **main thesis** in this monograph is that monitoring is a systematic and on-going process of gathering and interpreting data, integrated into the management of tourist sites, which is necessary and useful for making objective assessment of the sustainable development of the destinations. The thesis also underpins the research **objective** of the monograph *to analyze and evaluate the harmonious development of tourism in the regions of Dobrich, Varna and Bourgas and determine opportunities for optimizing the process in a sea destination by studying the specifics of the monitoring of the sustainable development of the destinations, of its toolkit and information provision*. To accomplish the objective, the following research **tasks** have been set:

- ✓ the analysis of modern conceptual models of the tourist destination and justification of the need for its management and sustainable development;
- ✓ defining the essential characteristics and specifics of monitoring, its specific toolkit and indicators of balanced development, regarding a particular sea tourist destination;
- ✓ studying the particularities of the tourist development of the Bulgarian Black Sea coast and particularly the monitoring of sustainable tourism in the regions of Dobrich, Varna and Bourgas;
- ✓ defining tendencies and perspectives in the monitoring process and formulating recommendations for its optimization in the sustainable development of a sea tourist destination.

The authors of the monograph present a comprehensive research study based on a **scientific and theoretical** approach. The choice of this approach is justified by the status and nature of the secondary data on the state of the monitoring of the sustainable development of a sea destination, which is a basic and direct subject of research in a limited number of researches.

In the monograph a *systematic and inter-disciplinary approach* was applied in order to determine the structure and elements of the tourist destination, the internal and external links between them which influence its management and sustainable development. The following *methods of research* have been combined and adopted:

- *A systematic review* of research publications on the subject (academic journals, articles, books, collections of articles from conferences and others) in order to determine the relevant state of the subject of research in the monograph and understand the conditions of the environment in which the monitoring process is carried out, as well as the specific selection of indicators of the sustainable development of a sea destination;
- *Content analysis* for an objective definition of the content of the academic publications, the characteristics of the modern conceptual models of tourist destinations, the notion of sustainable development and scope of the process in view of its objective supervision and analysis;
- *A chronological approach* for tracing logically bound events and facts that have resulted in the emergence and spread of the concept of sustainable development, compiling a specific toolkit of indicators for its monitoring in a sea tourist destination;
- *Analysis and synthesis for:* characteristics of the Bulgarian Black Sea coast and a definition of its role in the country's tourism; revealing the characteristic features of the tourist flow on the coastal territories; and an evaluation of the tourist development in the regions of Dobrich, Varna and Bourgas in respect of basic indicators of sustainability;
- *A conceptual (theoretical) framework* as a means of defining the structure of the tourist site as an element of the tourism system in the context of the modern scopes of destination management. The theoretical framework is especially suitable for studying phenomena and processes, which are dynamic, and for enlarging and expanding their own scope.

The more important **restrictions** in the publication refer to the fact that the monitoring to achieve the principles and objectives of large-scale sustainable tourism is a risky process that has its complications and challenges. The successful selection of particular systems of monitoring and specific indicators is an activity implying financial resources and spending time. In addition, it requires expert experience and long-term commitment for the regular monitoring, analysis, interpretation and reporting of results by particular indicators. The process of monitoring can

lead to having too much trust in qualitative data and even favoring them. As a result, there is a risk of neglecting significant problems at the expense of others that are more evident due to an overreliance on qualitative information.

This monograph has been prepared as a result of implementing an applied-science project with the same title as part of Contract № NIR – 42 from 2020 with the University of Economics – Varna. The project is financed by a subsidy of the state budget and the implementation period is by the end of 2022. The authors of the separate sections of the monograph are:

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- Chief Assist. Prof. Todor Dyankov, PhD – chapter four;
- Assist. Prof. Yana Doneva, PhD – chapter five;
- Assist. Prof. Hristina Filipova, PhD – chapter six;
- Assist. Pr. Katina Popova, PhD – chapter seven;
- Chief Assist Prof. Maria Veleva, PhD and Assist. Prof. Marianna Alexandrova, PhD – chapter eight;
- Assist. Prof. Marianna Alexandrova, PhD – chapter nine;
- Assist. Prof. Hristina Santana, PhD – chapter ten.

CHAPTER ONE

MODERN CONCEPTUAL MODELS OF THE TOURISM DESTINATION

STOYAN MARINOV

The tourism destination in the tourism system

In its essence, tourism presents people overcoming distances and temporarily residing for specific purposes within certain territorial boundaries, other than those of their permanent residence. Based on this axiom, a number of authors try to explain and schematically visualize the tourism system. The multifaceted appearance of tourism gives grounds for each individual author, depending on their scientific specialization, to interpret the phenomenon, emphasizing its various aspects – geographical, economic, sociological, ecological, psychological, legal-political, health, educational, media and others.

Among the well-known proponents of the spatial systemic model of tourism are P. Mariot and N. Leiper.¹ The authors consider the tourism system as a set of components, including the tourist, the tourist outbound territory, the transit territory along the tourist route, the tourism place and the tourism industry.

In an attempt to comprehensively conceptualize the tourism system, the tourism model of the research and consulting company “Forecast” JSC appeared in 1976. The model is based on the ideas of W. Hunziker² and

¹ Apostolov, N. On the geography of the geography of tourism in Central Europe. // “Tourism in the XXI century”. Sat. Doc. Sofia, 2002, p. 403; Leiper, N. Tourism Management. Collingwood, VIC: TAFE Publications 1995; Cooper, C., J. Fletcher, D. Gilbert, St. Wanhill. Tourism: Principles and Practice. London, 1993.

² Hunziker, System und Hauptprobleme einer wissenschaftlichen Fremdenverkehrslehre. Handels-Hochschule (St. Gallen). Seminar für Fremdenverkehr. Schriftenreihe (in German). St. Gallen. Walter, 1943.

considers tourism as a combination of “private tourism” and “business tourism” with the respective motives for their practice. In turn, each of the two types of tourism is divided into national and international. The different types of tourism and the policy for their development are placed in the context of the social, economic and foreign policy of the country in terms of market transparency and information, leisure, labor regulations, human resources, settlement structure, transport system, cross-border accessibility, currency relations and eco-capacity of tourist centers.³

Due to its greater specificity in comparison with the model of “Forecast” JSC, in 1979 the Swiss concept of tourism, the work of the Advisory Committee on Tourism at the Federal Council⁴ gained wide popularity. The Swiss concept is assessed as a common and comprehensive system for presenting the tourist and social elements, linked in four major subsystems:⁵ the social subsystem with its values, norms and rules of behavior; the economic system, including investment in tourism and the cost of tourism consumption; the environmental system with the available natural and landscape resources; and the state system with its policy, defined as superstructural, due to the stimulating or restricting role of the maintained tax level.

The Swiss systemic model of tourism is adopted and interpreted by J. Krippendorf and H. Müller. J. Krippendorf defines the four subsystems of the Swiss system as areas of contradictions and conflicts.⁶

Adhering to the Swiss concept of tourism, Claude Kaspar emphasizes the important role of the tourism place (destination) and constructs the tourism system as consisting of two subsystems: the subsystem “tourist subject”, including tourists as participants in the tourist trip; and the

Hunziker, Walter. Betriebswirtschaftslehre des Fremdenverkehrs: Der Fremdenverkehrsbetrieb und seine Organisation. Schriftenreihe des Seminars für Fremdenverkehr und Verkehrspolitik an der Hochschule St. Gallen (in German). Bern: Gurtenverlag, 1959.

³ Prognos. Informationsbedarf fuer die Fremdenverkehrspolitik in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland. Untersuchungen im Auftrag des Bundesministers fuer Wirtschaft Basel, 1976. цит. по Freyer, Walter. Tourismus: Einführung in die Fremdenverkehrsökonomie. München : De Gruyter, 2011, p. 40.

⁴ Beratende Kommission fuer Fremdenverkehr des Bundesrates: Schweizerisches Tourismuskonzept – Grundlagen fuer die Tourismuspolitik, Bern 1979, s. 84.

⁵ Freyer, W. Tourismus: Einführung in die Fremdenverkehrsökonomie. München: De Gruyter, 2011.

⁶ Krippendorf, Jost. Die Ferienmenschen, Bern 1984, S.29; Müller, Hansruedi, Freizeit und Tourismus. Eine Einführung in Theorie und Politik, Berner Studien zu Freizeit und Tourismus 41, 2002.

“tourism site” subsystem, the elements of which have an institutional character and are the tourism place (destination), the tourism companies (industry) and the organization of tourism.⁷

Robert Mill and Alistair Morrison try to present the tourism system in terms of the main elements and processes involved in the formation of the tourism product, its promotion, sale and implementation. Their procedural system model includes elements and connections between them in the following sequence: the tourism destination; the marketing process; tourism demand; and the tourist trip.

Robert Mill and Alistair Morrison's point of view on the tourism system is also accepted by T. Bieger. In his relatively simple model, the tourism system consists of four subsystems – destination, demand, transport and intermediaries.⁸

A summary of the various formulations leads to the conclusion that the **tourism system** is a conceptual structure that defines tourism as a unity of interrelated elements – stakeholders, including tourists, the tourism industry, local community, and public institutions, and the non-governmental tourism organizations that interact in the field of the tourism destination in the conditions of a specific external environment (Fig. 1-1).

There are two types of connections between the elements of the tourist system:

- information – for example, the representatives of the tourism industry inform the tourists about the goods and services offered by them, the public organizations inform the representatives of the industry about the existing rules and conditions of business, etc.;
- material (volume, mass) – for example, there are quantitative relationships between tourism resources, infrastructure, superstructure, the number of tourism enterprises, the number of tourists and the local population in the destination;

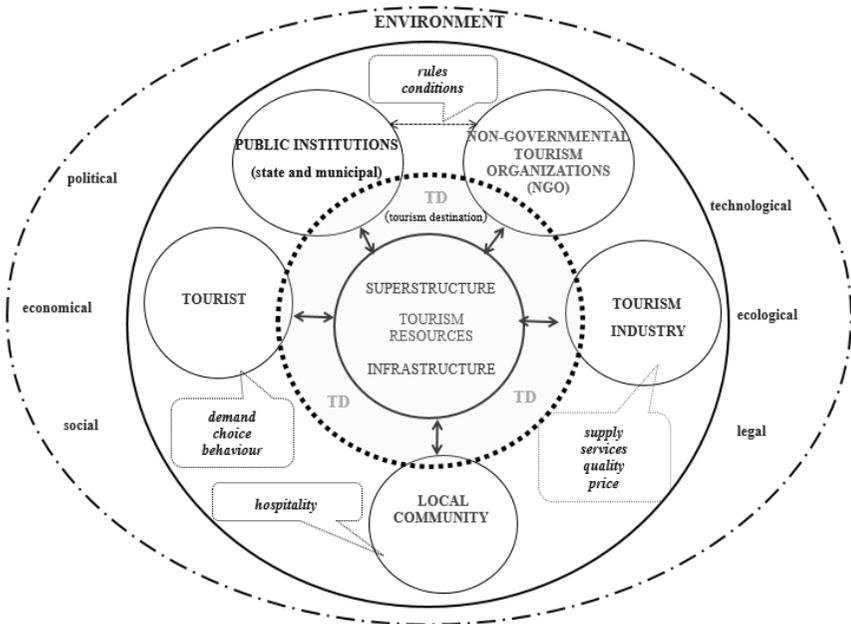
The interdisciplinary analysis of the tourism system reveals its essence by distinguishing its peculiarities. The tourism system is:

1. Artificial – created by man and modeled by him;
2. Open – strongly influenced by environmental factors;
3. Heterogeneous – as it includes diverse elements: individuals, communities, institutions, and material objects;
4. Complex – it contains a large number of elements with interrelations that cannot be completely and comprehensively described – for example, the tourism destination has many hoteliers, restaurateurs,

⁷ Kaspar, C. Die Tourismuslehre im Grundriß. Bern, 1996.

⁸ Bieger, T. Tourismuslehre – Ein Grundriss. Bern: Haupt Verlag, 2006, s. 84.

- transporters, industry tourism organizations, etc.;
5. Spatially defined – there are certain spatial connections between its elements;
 6. Variable – its elements are constantly modified and its content is enriched (concepts such as “professional tourist”, “space tourism”, “sustainable tourism”, etc., arise and are defined);



Source: Created by the author of this chapter
 Fig. 1-1 Conceptual structure of the tourism system

The tourism destination is an element of the tourism system. It has a rich content and complex structure. It is a subject for consideration from the standpoint of various scientific disciplines – geography, ecology, economics, spatial planning, marketing, etc.

In modern tourism theory, the term “tourism destination” is taken from English and is associated with a place to which someone (something) goes or is sent.⁹ The definition of a tourism destination in Medlik's Dictionary of Travel, Tourism and Hospitality states that tourism destinations are

⁹ Oxford Advanced Learner's Encyclopedic Dictionary. Oxford ect., 1992, p. 244.

“Countries, regions, towns and other areas which attract tourists, are main locations of tourist activity, and tend to account for most of tourists' time and spending. They are the main concentrations of tourist attractions, accommodation and other tourist facilities and services, where the main impacts of tourism – economic, social, physical – occur”.¹⁰ According to R. Davidson and R. Maitland, destinations are the center of attention because they act as stimulators of tourist visits and are the places where the main part of the tourism product is created, the tourism industry is concentrated and much of the impact of tourism is experienced.¹¹

K. Gunn defines a tourism destination as “a geographical area with a critical mass of development that meets the goals of tourists”. By “critical mass of development” the author means “sufficient variety and quantity of attractions and services that meet the needs of tourists from several market segments”. According to K. Gunn, a tourism destination can cover the territory of one or several municipalities.¹² N. Leiper explains that tourism destinations are “places where people travel and where they choose to stay for a while to try (experience) certain peculiarities, features, characteristics – perceived as attractions of a certain type”.¹³ K. Cooper interprets the tourism destination as “a focus of amenities and services designed to meet the needs of the tourist”.¹⁴ F. Kotler, D. Bowen, and D. Makens define them as “places with some form of actual or imaginary (perceived) boundaries, such as the physical boundaries of an island, political boundaries, or even market-based boundaries like those of a tour operator who defines a tour of the South Pacific only as Australia and New Zealand”.¹⁵ For the needs of his economic research on tourism, N. Vanhove defines the tourism destination as “a specific geographical area, subordinated to one or more government authorities, which attracts visitors from significantly remote places through its attractions and provides paid accommodation”.¹⁶

¹⁰ Medlik, Sl. Dictionary of Travel, Tourism and Hospitality. Second edition. Oxford, 1996, p. 250.

¹¹ Davidson, Rob., Robert Maitland. Tourism Destinations. London, 1997, p. 3.

¹² Gunn, C. Tourism planning: Basics, Concepts, Cases. Third edition. Washington DC, 1994, p. 27.

¹³ Leiper, N. Tourism management. Melbourne, 1995, p. 87.

¹⁴ Leiper, N. Tourism management. Melbourne, 1995, p. 87.

¹⁵ Kotler, Ph., J. Bowen, J. Makens. Marketing for hospitality and tourism. London., 1996, p. 636.

¹⁶ Vanhove, N. The economics of tourism destinations. Routledge: Taylor & Francis Group, London, 2011, p. 21.

The cited definitions allow the tourism destination to be considered within a wide spatial scale, starting from a region composed of a group of neighboring countries and ending with an individual tourism site (tourism landmark – attraction), occupying several square meters.¹⁷ The spatial boundaries of the tourism destination are relatively clearly delineated in the administrative-territorial units (districts and municipalities) and territorial units (cities, villages and settlements).

In search of the spatial specificity of the tourism destination for the needs of its management and marketing, some researchers offer useful definitions from a practical point of view. Such is the definition of R. Davidson and R. Maitland, according to which the tourism destination is “a single area, capital or city, or a clearly defined and delineated rural, coastal or mountainous area with the following characteristics: creating and offering a total tourism product, performing other economic activities, existence of a local host community, existence of an elected local public authority, active private sector”.¹⁸

Relatively clean and clear from a spatial management point of view is the definition of D. Buhalis, which states that the tourism destination is “a defined geographical region, which is perceived by its visitors as a unique entity and has a political and legal framework for tourism marketing and planning”.¹⁹ The definition encloses the destination within spatial boundaries, outlined by a real and existing institutional framework for management and marketing the relations between a spatially concentrated tourist supply and the demand of tourists in relation to it.²⁰

Trying to group the different authorial interpretations of the tourism destination, Saila Saraniemi and Mika Kylänen distinguish four different approaches to interpret the destination: the first approach, oriented to economic geography; the second approach, oriented to marketing management; the third, a customer-oriented approach; and the fourth approach, oriented to the socio-cultural nature of the destination.²¹

In our opinion, tourism destination management organizations need a pragmatic definition of their object of influence. In this regard, we believe

¹⁷ Davidson, R. Cited source, p. 3.

¹⁸ Ibidem.

¹⁹ Buhalis, D. Marketing the competitive destination of the future. *Tourism Management*, 21, 2000, p. 97.

²⁰ Buhalis, D. Cited source, p. 98.

²¹ Saila Saraniemi, and Mika Kylänen. Problematising the Concept of Tourism Destination: An Analysis of Different Theoretical Approaches. *Journal of Travel Research OnlineFirst*, published on March 19, 2010 as doi:10.1177/0047287510362775.

that for the purposes of management the most appropriate is the definition of the UNWTO for a local tourism destination. According to the UNWTO, “a local tourism destination is a physical space where the tourist spends at least one night. It includes tourism products such as support services and attractions, and tourism resources within one day’s return travel time. There are physical and administrative boundaries that determine its governance, as well as image and perceptions that determine its market competitiveness. Local tourism destinations involve a variety of stakeholders, most often a local community, and can create networks to form larger destinations”.²²

System model of the tourism destination

For the needs of the management of the tourism destination, a series of authors such as R. Mill and A. Morrison, K. Gunn, E. Inskeep, P. Murphy, E. Lowes, M. Manete, C. Goldner and others make an attempt to conceptualize the destination as a system.²³

The models of individual researchers show differences regarding the components of the tourism destination.

D. Pierce proceeds from the elements necessary for the realization of the tourist trip and the tourist stay. On this basis, the author distinguishes five components of the tourism destination: “attractions; transport; hospitality; ancillary facilities; infrastructure”.²⁴

C. Gunn initially points out four elements: “transport accessibility; utilities and tourism services; groups of attractions corresponding to market needs; efficient and attractive transport connections between the sites (attractions) in the destination”. Subsequently, in presenting the functional system of the tourism destination, the author distinguishes five components: “attractions; transport; services; promotion and information”.²⁵

²² UNWTO. *A Practical Guide to Tourism Destination Management*. Madrid: UNWTO, 2007, p. 1.

²³ Mill, R. Cited source, p. 264; Gunn, C. Cited source, p. 27; Inskeep, Ed., N., Y. *Tourism Planning: An Integrated and Sustainable Development Approach*. New York, 1991; Davidson, R. Cited source, p. 26; Laws, Eric. *Tourist Destination Management: Issues, Analysis and Policies*. London, 1995, p. 36; Manete, M., M. Cerato. *Understanding the Destination as a System: A Proposed Methodology*. *Turizam*. Vol. 47, No. 3, 1999, pp. 188-209; Ritchie, J., R., Brent, Geoffrey, I. Crouch. *The competitive destination: A sustainable perspective*. *Tourism Management*, 21 (2000), p. 1-7.

²⁴ Pearce, D. *Tourist Development*. Longman Group UK Ltd., London, 1989, p. 2.

²⁵ Gunn, C. Cited source, p. 27-34.

According to E. Inskeep, the tourism destination includes: a “natural, cultural and socio-economic environment in the role of a system core; hospitality; transport; tourist attractions and activities, other tourism facilities and services; other infrastructure; institutional elements”.²⁶

Like the authors already mentioned, R. Mill and A. Morrison distinguish: “attractions (natural resources, climate, culture, historical resources, ethnicities, accessibility, development and design of attractions, events such as festivals, etc.); amenities (hotels, restaurants, supporting activities such as trade, tours, etc.); infrastructure – transport (water supply systems, communication networks, health centers, transport terminals, energy sources, sewerage, streets and highways, security systems)” and add “hospitality (attitude of locals towards themselves, attitude towards others, attitude towards work)”.²⁷

The components of the tourism destination, mentioned by K. Cooper, are similar, namely: “attractions; accessibility; amenities (hotels, restaurants, trade, utilities and other services); ancillary services, such as those of organizations for promotion, development, control, destination reservations”.²⁸

V. Middleton looks through the prism of the “total tourism product” and defines the following system components of the tourism destination: “attractions (natural resources, anthropogenic resources, socio-cultural environment); amenities (hotels, restaurants, local transport, sports and entertainment, retail network, utilities); accessibility (transport, reservation); image; price per consumer”.²⁹

Taking V. Middleton's view of the “total tourism product”, L. Lumsdon, R. Davidson, and R. Maitland omit “image” and “consumer price” as components. The first author speaks of four elements: “primary attractions that appeal to international, national or local visitors and that distinguish tourism destinations from each other; the created environment – physical identity, which includes infrastructure elements, commercial areas and utilities; support services such as hotels, communication, transport, restaurants, entertainment; socio-cultural atmosphere – connections between past and present, lifestyle, friendliness and hospitality”.³⁰ In turn, R. Davidson and R. Maitland believe that the tourism destination as an expression of a “total product” is constituted by three main elements: resources – natural resources, built material environment and intangible

²⁶ Inskeep, Ed. Cited source, p. 48.

²⁷ Mill, R. Cited source, p. 263.

²⁸ Cooper, Cited source, p. 80.

²⁹ Middleton, V. *Marketing in Travel and Tourism*. Butterworth-Heinemann, London, 1994.

³⁰ Lumsdon, Les. *Tourism Marketing*. Oxford, 1997, p. 239.

socio-cultural environment; services – transport services (ensuring external accessibility of the destination and internal connections), accommodation services (hotels, restaurants, entertainment), additional services (information, tour guides); destination development and management organizations (non-governmental, governmental, private)”.³¹

D. Buhalis presents six components of the tourism destination, without including the institutional element. According to him, the components are: “attractions (natural and artificial – purpose-built, inherited, special events); accessibility (the whole transport system of roads, terminals and rolling stock); amenities (hotel services, restaurant services, trade services, etc.); available tourist packages (pre-ranked by intermediaries’ service packages); activities for the tourist (all activities available in the tourism destination for the customer during his stay); additional services (banking, telecommunications, postal, hospital, etc.)”.³²

In his attempt to summarize the opinions on the content elements of the tourism destination, E. Laws reduces them to two major groups: primary components (climate, ecology, cultural traditions, traditional architecture and terrain) and secondary components (created especially for tourists, accommodation establishments, restaurants, transport, tourism activities and entertainment).³³

By placing the tourism destination in the conceptual framework “consumers – producers – resources – production process – products – customers”, M. Manete and M. Cerato develop the idea of a “local tourist supply system” (LTSS/SLTO). The system by definition is a cluster of activities and attractions in a certain territory (place, municipality, district), which can provide a complex tourism offer, i.e., provide a comprehensive opportunity for tourism hospitality with specific and distinctive features and which is capable of exploiting local resources and culture”.³⁴ On this basis, M. Manete and M. Cerato consider the tourism destination as a combination of two components: “actors (local public and private subjects of tourism supply and non-local subjects of tourism supply); strategies, policies and actions of the entities regarding the creation and maintenance of a certain marketing mix (product, price, distribution and promotion)”.³⁵

Among the most comprehensive models of the tourism destination in terms of its composition, its structure and the various processes taking place within it, is that of C. Goldner and B. Richie. Initially, the authors

³¹ Davidson, R. Cited source, pp. 21-23.

³² Buhalis, D. Cited source, p. 98.

³³ Laws, E. Cited source, p. 14.

³⁴ Manete, Cited source, p. 190.

³⁵ Manete, Cited source, p. 192.

distinguish between the physical components of the tourism destination on the one hand and tourism-related processes, activities and results on the other. Depending on their origin, the physical elements are classified into the natural (climate, relief) and created environment, the working result of human activity (infrastructure, superstructure, culture, technology, information and local government system). The model indicates the functional units of the destination, corresponding to nine operational sectors of the tourism industry and respectively to organizations for planning, development and control. Last but not least, the authors highlight the two main types of tourism destination management – the public and private sectors, emphasizing the crucial importance of integration between these two sectors to increase its competitiveness and sustainability.³⁶

The considered attempts for systematic interpretations of the tourism destination lead to the conclusion that many relations intersect within it, such as “man-nature”; “material culture-spiritual culture”; “economic activity-non-economic activity”; “public property-private property”; “matter-function-process”, etc.

Based on the existing theoretical concepts, we can offer our own model of the destination, within which the nature, content elements and features of its management are specified³⁷ (Fig. 2-2: System model for the marketing conceptualization of a tourism destination).

³⁶ Goldner, Ch., B. Ritchie. *Tourism: principles, practices, philosophies*. New York, 2000, p. 26.

³⁷ Marinov, St. Marketing conceptual model of a tourism destination. “Announcements of the University of Economics” – Varna, 2002, pp. 60-69.

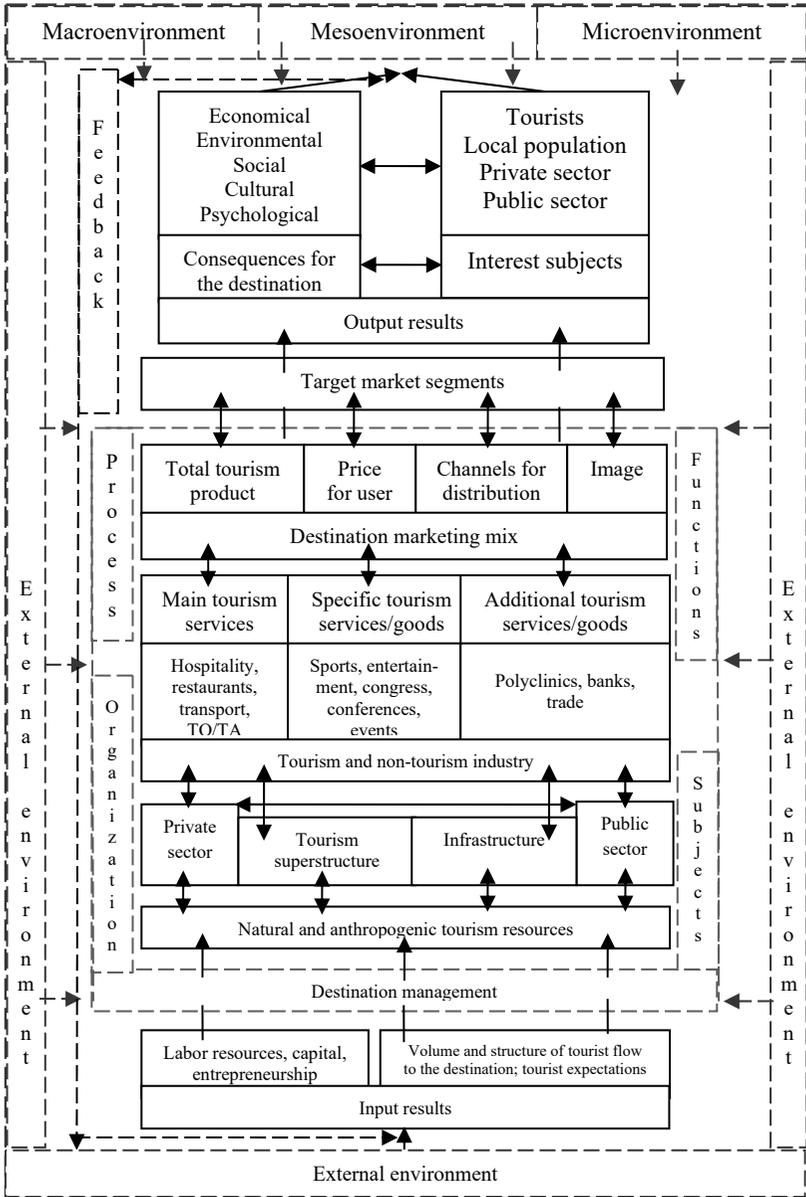


Fig. 2-2: System model for the marketing conceptualization of a tourism destination

The main components in the system model of the tourism destination, presented in a logical order according to their managerial significance, are as follows:

a) External environment of the destination. This includes: *the macro-environment of the destination* (political, economic, social, technological, environmental and legal factors at the international, national and local level, creating opportunities and threats for the destination); *the meso-environment of the destination* (market factors such as tourism demand, tourism supply and the competitive environment in tourism on a global and local scale); and *the micro-environment of the destination* (suppliers, intermediaries, direct competitors, public opinion).

b) Internal environment of the tourism destination. This includes the internal elements of the system, whose behavior can be managed by the respective management entities in the destination. These elements are: destination resources; infrastructure and superstructure; the public and private sector; the tourism industry; the destination marketing mix; the organization (subsystem) of the destination management; and output results.

The proposed system model of the tourism destination allows conclusions to be drawn about the connections between the system elements and their environment as follows:

- Territorial concentration of tourism resources. The tourism destination develops on the basis of spatially concentrated tourism resources.
- Territorial concentration of the material base. The tourism destination has an infrastructure and tourism superstructure, which are an important prerequisite for the accessibility and stay of tourists.
- Territorial concentration of the tourism industry. The tourism destination is formed on the basis of the emergence and development of enterprises from different sectors of the industry – hospitality, restaurant business, tourist transport and others.
- Functional-zonal order. The system of the tourism destination is distinguished by the spatial arrangement of some of its derivatives, material and production elements (infrastructure, superstructure) in relation to its primary elements – the tourism resources.
- Territory for creating a tourism product. The main part of the overall tourism product is created in the tourism destinations, which is a result of the functional manifestation of the overall local tourism system.
- Spatial conditionality. Viewed through the prism of the tourist, the tourism destination is a perceptual category (determined by the perceptions of the subject). Its boundaries are a result of the desires

and behavior of tourists and in this sense, they acquire conditionality.

- Inseparability of tourism production from tourism consumption. The spatial consolidation of the tourism resources, and the intangible and perishable nature of the related tourism services determine the inseparability of the tourism production from the tourism consumption within the destination. In order to consume the tourism product, the tourist must be in the tourism destination.
- Limited carrying capacity. This characteristic reflects the physical, biological and socio-psychological ability to welcome a certain number of tourists from the individual system elements and the system as a whole in order to preserve and increase, not reduce the attractiveness of the tourism destination. It is measured by the possible maximum tourist attendance per unit area per unit time.
- Heterogeneous ownership of system elements. Some of the tourism resources such as climate, landscape, fresh air, customs, traditions, etc., are freely available goods and there are no clearly defined property rights over them. Other elements of the system such as beaches, rivers, museums, infrastructure, etc., are public property. A third part of the system elements, mainly superstructural (hotels, restaurants, shops, etc.), are privately owned. Diverse ownership of the components of the tourism destination is a prerequisite for its heterogeneous organizational structure.
- An important role of the local public authority. The systemic elements of free disposal and those that are publicly owned are a prerequisite for the establishment and existence of the local private tourism business. However, they do not constitute a primary concern for the private business because these goods are freely available. For this reason, the local public authority plays an important role in the absorption, management and preservation of the public elements of the tourism destination. It defines the rules for their appropriate and efficient operation.
- Attractiveness. Each tourism destination is characterized by individual attractiveness. It is objectively determined by the qualitative and quantitative characteristics of the system elements and the relations between them in their functioning process.
- Specific life cycle. Historically, each tourism destination goes through different phases of development, which are the result of changes in the number and structure of tourist visits on the one

hand and changes in the local tourism supply on the other.³⁸

Need for tourism destination management

During the first two decades of the 21st century, the global tourism market suffered the negative effects of various phenomena: natural disasters (tsunamis in the Indian Ocean region, the eruption of the volcano Eyjafjallajökull); terrorist attacks (USA 2001, Madrid 2004, London 2005, Glasgow 2007, Boston 2013), local wars and refugee waves (Iraq, Syria, Afghanistan), economic crises (the global financial crisis from 2009 and the recession in the Eurozone in 2012), and pandemics (SARS 2003 and COVID-19 since 2020).

The COVID-19 pandemic caused an unprecedented crisis in world tourism in 2020. There was a 74% decrease in international tourist arrivals or 1 billion trips fewer than in 2019. Destinations lost more than 1.3 trillion dollars in income from tourist exports, and between 100 and 120 million jobs in tourism are at risk of closure.³⁹ The crisis is continuing in 2021. The expectations of the majority of businesses are that the recovery of the pre-crisis 2019 level will happen no earlier than 2023.⁴⁰

Various organizations at the international, regional, national and local levels are working hard to restore tourism. The World Tourism Organization (WTO) is setting up a special Global Tourism Crisis Committee, as well as the One Planet Vision for Responsible Recovery of the Tourism Sector.⁴¹ The vision of “One Planet” was announced at the celebration of *World Environment Day* in 2020 and represents concrete actions based on the launch in 2015 of the WTO's *One Planet Sustainable*

³⁸ Butler, R. The concept of a tourist area life cycle of evolution – implication for management of resources. *Canadian Geographer*, Vol. 24, pp. 5-12; Burton, R. *Travel Geography*. Pitman Publishing, 1995, pp. 67-69.

³⁹ UNWTO. 2020: WORST YEAR IN TOURISM HISTORY WITH 1 BILLION FEWER INTERNATIONAL ARRIVALS (28 JAN 2021).

<https://www.unwto.org/news/2020-worst-year-in-tourism-history-with-1-billion-fewer-international-arrivals> (23.11.2021); Source: World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) © • * Change over 2019 (provisional data). Data as collected by UNWTO, September 2021. Published: 04/10/2021.

⁴⁰ UNWTO. “SUSTAINABILITY AS THE NEW NORMAL” A VISION FOR THE FUTURE OF TOURISM.

<https://www.unwto.org/covid-19-oneplanet-responsible-recovery> (23.11.2021).

⁴¹ UNWTO. *One Planet Sustainable Tourism Programme* (2020) – One Planet Vision for a Responsible Recovery of the Tourism Sector.

Tourism Program. The ultimate goal is to make global tourism better and stronger and to balance the needs of people, the planet and prosperity.

In response to market challenges posed by COVID-19, there has been a significant change in the structure and management of tourism destinations. The changes are in the following directions:

- The decentralization of tourism management;
- The involvement of key subjects of the tourism industry in the process of tourism policy formation and their stronger involvement in the issues of tourism destination development and management;
- Making competitiveness a key objective of national tourism authorities at the central government level and a strategic task for local tourism destination management organizations;

Tourism Destination Management (TDM) is emerging and evolving in response to the growing need for systematic, multidisciplinary and cross-sectoral strategies for tourism development at local, regional and national levels.

In a broad sense, TDM is a modern conceptualization of micro-level activities at the national, regional and/or local level, through which tourism stakeholders fulfill their individual and organizational obligations in a coordinated way, aiming at the implementation of macro-level policies.

In a narrow sense, TDM can be defined as the coordinated management of all system elements of the tourism destination on the basis of a partnership and a shared vision of the stakeholders.

TDM applies a strategic approach to link these, often highly separated, elemental sites in order to better present the destination to customers. By bringing together and coordinating stakeholders, TDM helps to avoid the duplication of effort in terms of promotion, visitor services, training, business support and more at the destination.

TDM provides sustainable tourism development of the destination through appropriate tourism planning. TDM achieves the conservation of the natural and anthropogenic resources of the destination, which are the basis of its attractiveness. TDM helps to avoid social and cultural conflicts and damage of the local lifestyle, traditions and public values in the destination.

TDM contributes to a fairer distribution and allocation of the tourism benefits among all stakeholders. TDM supports the development of small and medium tourism businesses, the development of local crafts and souvenir production, and the inclusion of local products in the tourism supply. It increases the efficiency of tourism activities in the destination and contributes to the economic well-being of the local population.

TDM increases the profitability of the tourism activity in the destination. Through focused spatial development and targeted marketing, TDM prolongs the stay of visitors, increases the income per tourist and reduces the seasonality of visitor arrivals, providing a higher return on investment.

TDM creates a strong and vital brand identity of the destination. Ensuring the consistently excellent quality of the tourism product and the visitor experiences caused by it, TDM increases the loyalty of visitors to the brand of the destination, as a result of which the number of regular visitors increases.

CHAPTER TWO

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF THE TOURIST DESTINATION

VELINA KAZANDZHIEVA

Prerequisites for sustainable development of a tourist destination

The image and perceptions of destinations, in their actual and digital dimensions, attract visitors, motivate trips and thus nourish and stimulate travel and tourism system development at different levels. Destinations and their adjacent territories both benefit from tourist visits, but also suffer the negative consequences of mass tourism consumption. The abundance and diversity of explicit functions in tourism spots are the main driving force for the successful expansion of tourism. Each tourist site acquires specific features, generally related to: territorial concentration of resources and tourism activities; functional-zonal order and spatial conditionality; level of attractiveness and absorption capacity; different ownership of the elements of the tourism system; specific life cycle, etc.¹

In general, destinations demonstrate complex and diverse models of development around the world, and in turn tourists are attracted, both by their unique and exotic characteristics, and by being vulnerable and susceptible to external and internal impact features as well. As a consequence, the necessity to apply a sustainable approach in order to direct tourism development in destinations is to be imposed. *The negative effects* of tourism massification affect more and more regions, remote tourism destinations, included.² A sustainable approach is necessary, as the

¹ Neshkov, M., Marinov, S., Kazandzhieva, V. Introduction to tourism. Varna: Science and Economics, 2014, pp. 146-149.

² Fennell, D., Cooper, C. Sustainable Tourism, Principles, Contexts and Practices. Channel View Publications, Bristol, UK, 2020, p. 150.

destination is the fundamental unit on which territory a complex amalgam of multifaceted effects manifests, and as a result – the destination is the focus of tourism management and planning, implemented within the concept of sustainability, based on stakeholder partnerships.

Tourist spots are an integral part of the complex nature and socio-economic systems, where the interactions between the various tourism consequences are progressively realized by the subjects of its management, local communities and visitors. In this regard, an important group of prerequisites imposing the necessity for the sustainable tourism development of destinations refers to *the effects of* over-tourism, a well-known problem in the tourism industry. This complex phenomenon is palpable, “when too many tourists overwhelm a destination, shifting the balance from a positive experience to one where tourism becomes unsustainable”.³ The excessive visitor growth causes overcrowding in certain areas, and as a result – “residents suffer the consequences of temporary and seasonal tourism peaks, which have enforced permanent changes to their lifestyles, access to amenities and general well-being”⁴. In order to fulfil the purpose and tasks of the current study, the definition of super-tourism in a European Parliament research study is adopted. The phenomenon is described as “*a situation in which the impact of tourism, at certain times and in certain locations, exceeds physical, ecological, social, economic, psychological, and/or political capacity thresholds.*”⁵

The term “over-tourism” refers to mass visits to certain destinations overcrowded with tourists. As a result, irritated local citizens protest against the flows and are united under the title “Tourists go home” or “Tourist: Your Luxury Trip Is My Daily Misery”.⁶ The act is global and typical for destinations such as Venice, Amsterdam, Barcelona, Palma de Mallorca, Dubrovnik, Rome, Paris, Prague, San Francisco, etc. It has even reached the “ice country” of Iceland, which is a relatively expensive destination, that attracted over 2 million visitors in 2017, i.e., six times its population.⁷ The tourist flow globally is expected to reach about 3 billion

³ Jet, J. How Is Overtourism Impacting Travel to Popular Destinations? <https://www.forbes.com/2018/08/20/> (02.11.2021).

⁴ Overtourism: a growing global problem. <https://theconversation.com/> (02.11.2021).

⁵ Research for TRAN Committee – Overtourism: impact and possible policy responses. Policy Department for Structural and Cohesion Policies. Directorate-General for Internal Policies, PE 629.184 – October 2018, European Parliament, p. 15. <https://www.europarl.europa.eu/> (02.11.2021).

⁶ Hughes, N. Tourists go home: anti-tourism industry protest in Barcelona. Social Movement Studies. Routledge Taylor & Francis Group, 2018.

⁷ <https://www.nationalgeographic.bg/a/svrxturizm> (02.11.2021 г.).