

# TOURISM The Business of Travel

## Environmental /Cultural Impacts of Tourism: the Case for Sustainable Tourism



# *Introduction*

- ❖ Economic Impacts are not the only important impacts tourism can have
- ❖ Nature, peoples and cultures also affected



# *Tourism and the Environment*

- Tourism can be used to help preserve the environment
  - ▣ Through education and appreciation
  - ▣ To help finance preservation
  - ▣ Creation of National Parks



# *Environmental Impacts of Tourism*

- ✦ Tourism development requires a foundation of infrastructure
- ✦ Also requires development of superstructure
- ✦ Pollution and other damage can develop with increases in visitors
- ✦ Efforts are being taken to reduce impacts



# *Mass Tourism vs. Ecotourism*

- ❖ Explosive growth in tourism
  - ❑ Quicker, cheaper and safer transportation
  - ❑ Increase in number of world's citizens who can afford to travel
  - ❑ Longer lives and better health
  - ❑ Global communications
- ❖ Destinations are proposed to go through a set of stages from exploration to decline



# *Mass Tourism vs. Ecotourism, continued*

- ✪ Criticism of mass tourism
  - ❑ Architectural pollution
  - ❑ Herding of tourists
  - ❑ Disruption of traditional events and occupations
  - ❑ Diminished natural beauty and environment
  - ❑ Low priority paid to local needs
  - ❑ Economic gains short-lived but damage long-term
  - ❑ Developers abandon area when growth ceases



# *The WTTC*

## *~ Four Myths of Tourism ~*

### **Myth #1:**

Travel & Tourism is a non-essential, 'mass' activity of affluent people in developed countries.

### **Myth #2:**

Tourism's major environmental impact is damage to developing countries.

### **Myth #3:**

Ecotourism is the only logical, sustainable response to the environmental impacts of Travel & Tourism.

### **Myth # 4:**

Comprehensive planning regulations and control are the only way to curb the environmental exploitation of Travel & Tourism.



## *Elements of the WTTC Vision of Travel & Tourism and the Environment*

- Travel & Tourism is an integral aspect of modern societies
- Global awareness of environmental damage is developing rapidly
- The resources of the world's largest industry can and must be harnessed to achieve environmental goals
- The industry has the potential to influence billions of customers per years and to use its leverage to achieve beneficial environmental effects
- The customer challenge will exert a growing pressure to achieve environmental improvements
- Environmental lobbies will add pressure to develop good environmental practice
- Self-regulation must be developed rapidly and effectively and used to influence the development of appropriate and workable regulations
- Corporate environmental mission statements are a vital first step toward self-regulation
- Environmental leadership must come from the major international companies





# Definitions of Ecotourism

**Some definitions of ecotourism are as follows:**

- Responsible travel to natural areas that conserves the environment and sustains the well-being of local people
- Environmentally friendly travel that emphasizes seeing and saving natural habitats and archeological treasures
- A tool for conservation
- Ecologically responsible tourism



# What is Sustainable Tourism?

- ✦ Tourism that “meets the needs of present tourists and host regions while protecting and enhancing opportunities for the future.”

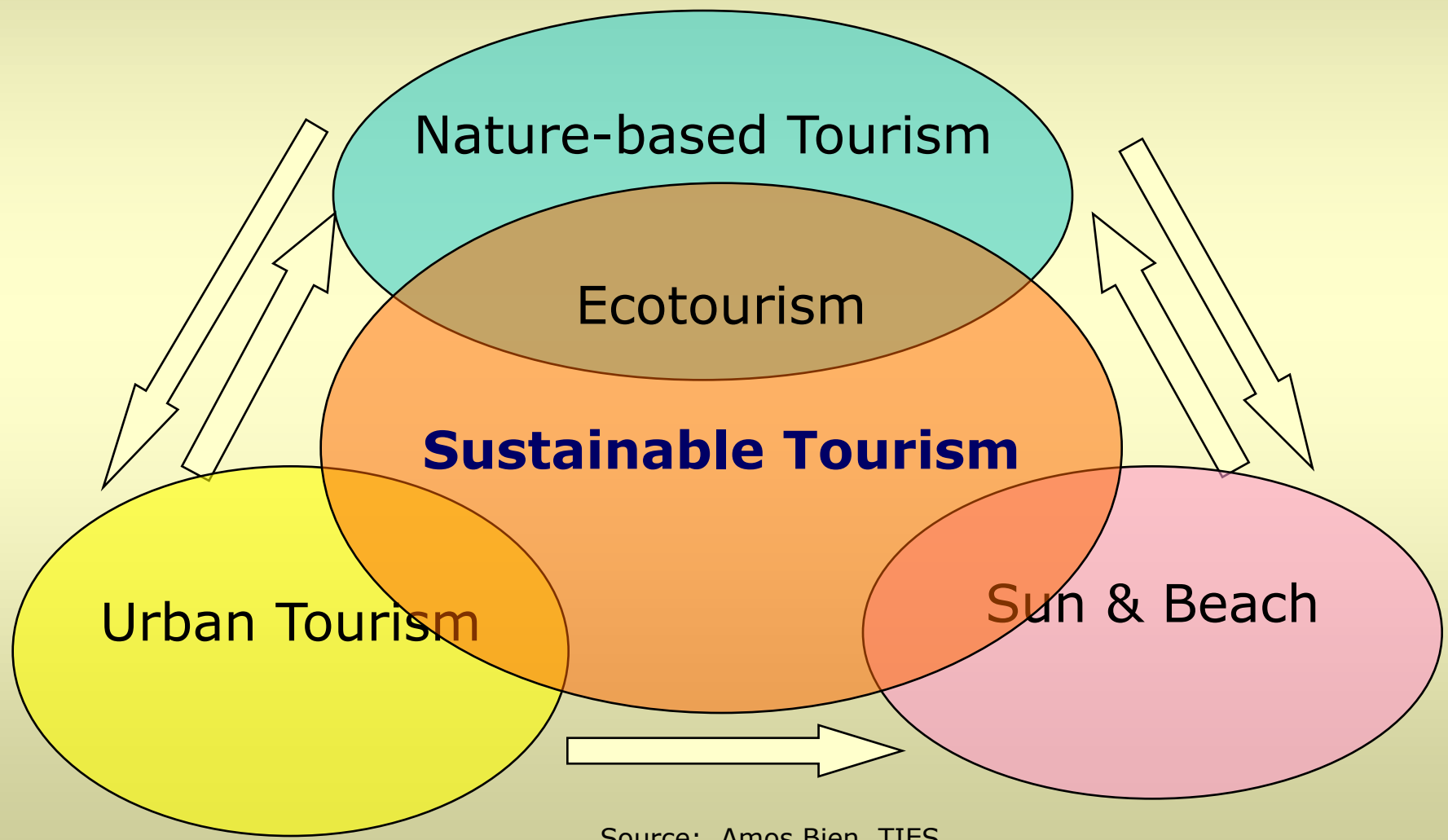


Source: Agenda 21  
for the Travel & Tourism Industry

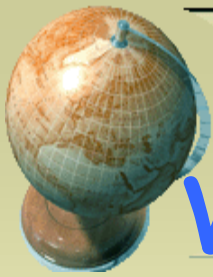
Sustainable tourism practices promote “management of all resources in such a way that **economic, social and aesthetic needs can be fulfilled** while maintaining **cultural integrity, essential ecological processes, biological diversity, and life support systems.**”



# *Sustainable Tourism*



Source: Amos Bien, TIES



# What do We Understand for "Best Practices"?





## *Consumer Demand for Responsible Tourism*

- ✦ **Strong and growing, but largely passive**
- Majority of tourists are interested in their destinations' social, cultural and environmental issues (50-60%).
- They want to learn about the issues both before they travel, and while they are at their destination.
- Seek out pristine environments. The vast majority consider it important that their trips not damage local ecosystems (75+%).
- Want to patronize hotels committed to protecting the local environment (67-90%). Increasingly view local environmental and social stewardship as a business responsibility.
- However, *few tourists describe themselves as "ethical" or ask about hotel policies (0-26%);* even fewer report changing their plans due to responsible tourism issues.



# *Translating Idealism into Sustainable Tourism*

*~ What Managers Need to Know ~*  
Measures of

- ❖ The general relationship between tourism and the environment
- ❖ The effects of environmental factors on tourism
- ❖ The impacts of the tourism industry on the environment



## *Negative Impacts of Tourism Development*

- Unsustainable consumption of resources (water, energy).
- Uncontrolled visitation to natural sites and protected areas.
- Displacement of local people and wildlife.
- Habitat destruction.
- Pollution: absence of waste disposal and recycling systems.
- Erosion and introduction of exotic species.
- Visual pollution: spoiled natural sceneries.
- Lack of respectful behavior towards local cultures.
- At the global level: loss of biodiversity, contribution to global warming, and depletion of the ozone layer.
  - ✦ **No direct benefits to local communities**
  - ✦ **No direct support to conservation efforts**



# What does the use of Best Management Practices imply?

1. Attitude adjustments
2. Operative changes
3. Changes on the installations of equipments





## What does attitude adjustment mean?

### Administrators Commitment :

- **To involve personnel**
- **To share with clients**





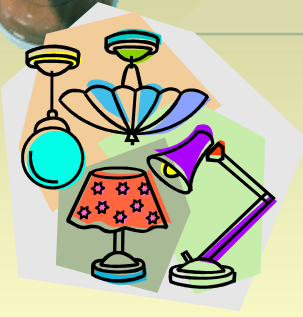
## What does operational changes mean?

- **Performance at work**
- **Not necessarily the most urgent thing to do is the most important**
- **Do the same things but in different ways**





# What does changes in installation of equipment mean?



- **Friendly design**
- **Efficient installations**
- **Cleaner Technology and Production**



**Investment with Vision**



# From Mexico to the Patagonia: Nature and Culture Based Tourism is being Promoted

- ✦ **Guatemala:** "... Maya Spirit"
- ✦ **Belize:** "Catch the Adventure...Belize, Mother Nature's Best Kept Secret"
- ✦ **Costa Rica:** "No artificial ingredients"
- ✦ **Panama:** "...the path less traveled"
- ✦ **Peru:** "Land of the Inkas"
- ✦ **Ecuador:** "Life at its purest"
- ✦ **Chile:** "Naturaleza que conmueve"
- ✦ **Uruguay:** "A natural country"

