

Tourism, conservation and farmers

*Possibilities and limitations of ecotourism
promotion in livelihood systems*

– for discussion only –

Published by:

Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ) GmbH
Dag-Hammarskjöld-Weg 1-5, Postfach 5180
65726 Eschborn, Germany

Sectoral project "Livelihood Systems and Tropical Forest Areas (LISTRA)"
Division 4543
Tel.: (+49) 6196 / 79-4200, fax: (+49) 6196 / 79-6190
e-mail: listra@gtz.de

The sectoral project LISTRA is implemented by GTZ on behalf of the Federal *Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development* (BMZ).

January 1998

This publication has been prepared by the LISTRA team (responsible for this element: Ulrike Breitschuh, Carsten Kolbe and Thora Amend) and has been amended by many colleagues and friends whom we wish to thank. More comments, critical remarks and contributions of case studies and experiences are very welcome.

Contents

Summary	5
1. Introduction	7
2. Can tourism be ecological?	9
2.1. Definition and general goals	9
2.2. Different activities and landscapes	10
2.3. Ecotourism in transition and buffer zones of tropical forests	11
3. Experiences of promoting ecotourism in protected areas, buffer and transition zones	13
3.1. Experiences of projects	13
3.2. Impact and limitations of ecotourism promotion	15
3.3. Conditions for successful support activities	21
3.4. Opportunities for ecotourism promotion	22
• Strengthening the negotiating position of the local population	23
• Education and advisory services for the local population in the trade and services sector	23
• Advising the local population on the development of potentials	24
• Advising authorities and other government institutions in the design of conducive policies.....	24
3.5. Building negotiation structures and distributing tasks	25
4. Development of a strategy for promotion of ecotourism	27
4.1. Assessment of the potential for tourism	28
4.2. Clarification of the different ideas and interests	29
4.3. Negotiations of interests of the different stakeholders	31
4.4. Implementation of pilot measures	35
4.5. Evaluation and learning cycles	35
5. Integration into regional rural development and national planning of tourism	36
6. Conclusion	38
References	39

Summary

Tourism, conservation and farmers

Possibilities and limitations of ecotourism promotion in livelihood systems

1. Developing countries have high expectations of the boom in world-wide tourism. The term ecotourism is used all over the world, but it is often used inconsistently and is identified with nature and adventure tourism. Ecotourism is different from nature tourism, which traditionally consumes many resources, in that it aims to have as little effect as possible on the local culture and the ambient environment of the holiday resort. Also, it aims to contribute to the improvement of the incomes of the local population and to the financing of the protected areas. Many forest reserves are the habitat for indigenous ethnic groups. Their social and cultural identity is the centre of attraction for ethnic tourism.
2. Ecotourism is one option to diversify the sustainable uses of tropical forest reserves and their buffer zones. Its effect on development is amplified if tourists demand locally produced goods and services from agriculture and small industries. There is a need to promote both these areas.
3. The demand for "hard-core" ecotourism seems to be limited. Therefore it often only generates seasonal, unskilled jobs for the local population. The social and cultural impacts of tourism can be serious, and they are difficult to control.
4. Clearly defined ownership and land rights, a stable social organisation and the acceptance of private initiatives within the rural sections of the population are good preconditions for the promotion of ecotourism. Planning of tourism at the national level and control by institutions for nature conservation are necessary prerequisites.
5. Village-level organisational development, consultation during the course of negotiations, safeguarding of common laws and functions to preserve resources of the villages are to be taken into account when supporting the promotion of ecotourism. To enable the local population to provide services, advisory services and education might be necessary. Complementary activities (farming, small industries) should be coordinated, promoted by corresponding advisory services and secured by negotiated trade conditions. Legal and political frameworks have to be validated on a national level.
6. A participative strategy development in five working steps is suggested. The potential for tourism is jointly assessed with stakeholder

organisations, implementation partners and the local population. How this potential will be used as well as the distribution of rights and duties are negotiated. Consultation processes should happen before and during these negotiations within and between the villages involved. Also the roles must be clarified between tourism enterprises and projects. Negotiation and planning, implementation, evaluation and new planning mesh together in learning processes. The results of these processes should be discussed extensively.

7. The promotion of ecotourism has to be integrated into the strategies of regional and sectoral development. If there are too high expectations at the local level, "smaller solutions" will be rejected because of frustration. The promotion of ecotourism can be a balancing act between contradictory targets of the various partners and places high demands on the skills of moderation, negotiation and consultancy of the employees and partners of a project.

1. Introduction

To more effectively protect the tropical forests and the transition zones around them there must be a change in the use of the forests by the local population. These can be associated with a loss of income for households and agricultural enterprises. The development of ecotourism offers additional sources of income which could compensate for these losses.

Compensate for losses of income by protection of resources with offers of services for ecotourism

The potential for the development of tourism is generally high. World-wide, the number of trips abroad since 1979 have more than tripled (1995: 500 million). This figure will double again within the next 20 years. The number of registered arrivals of tourists in developing countries of business travellers and holiday makers from industrial nations has increased from 18.5 million (1978) to 53.9 million (1990). The developing countries have high expectations of this world-wide, fastest growing economic sector. The potential for income from ecotourism for developing countries is much higher than that from other sectors.

According to studies the demand for "nature" and "adventure tourism" is increasing. Reasons for this are seen as the growing environmental awareness and interest in nature as well as the desire for as unaffected, "wild" nature as possible. Also, ecotourism, which is often used as a label for different nature orientated tourist activities, has gained importance in the last few years. It should, on one hand, finance the conservation of biodiversity and cultural heritage and on the other hand contribute to the social-economic development of the population in the host countries. Up until now ecotourism has operated in most countries without an extensive strategy of governments and the tourist industry (Brandon 1996). Management plans for the protected areas were often lacking and frequently the local population was not included in the projects. The only immediate benefit for the local population consisted of rather badly paid seasonal jobs. The reason for the limited participation of the local population in the delivery of tourist services was that they were of a poorer quality than that of the normal standards of the market.

Well-targeted promotion of ecotourism in the framework of protected areas and transition zone projects can create income for local agricultural livelihoods. Through this the interest of the local population in the conservation of resources is increased - an important step for the preservation of the forests. Therefore the promotion of ecotourism and the protection of the forest entails including the local population in the development of strategies for promotion and letting them participate in the benefits produced.

Strengthen the interest of the local population in the protection of resources

For this paper examples and publications of different projects, organisations and institutions were analysed. It describes how in transition zone

development projects a strategy for the support of ecotourism can be worked out and implemented with all parties involved. Ecotourism is regarded as an instrument for the support of agricultural livelihoods in transition zones.

The following section defines the term "ecotourism" and its related activities and landscapes more clearly. The fourth section analyses past experiences and basic principles are developed for the successful promotion of ecotourism in transition zones. Section 5 describes a practical approach of how a strategy of promotion can be developed and implemented in order to consolidate rural livelihood systems in transition zones. In the last section ecotourism is put into a larger, regional and national, context.

2. Can tourism be ecological?

Internationally the term "ecotourism" is widely used without, however, being precisely defined. It is frequently used and abused as an effective label for advertising purposes for various types of tourism. Therefore it requires clarification.

2.1 Definition and general goals

Agenda 21 of the Rio meeting describes ecotourism as a form of "sustainable tourism" which, when related to protected areas, can make an important contribution to the conservation of the biological diversity.

The extent and density of the tourists' activities are decisive criteria for the appraisal of the social and environmental soundness of tourism. Unlike mass tourism, ecotourism sees itself as small scale with little ecological, social and cultural negative effects (Brandon, 1996).

In this ecotourism is also different from "nature tourism". Originally, tourism in reserves and national parks was described as being nature tourism, e.g. "Yellowstone" and "Yosemite" in the USA or "Serengeti" in East Africa. In the meantime nature tourism is regarded as an expanding segment of the tourist industry and occasionally has features like that of mass-tourism. Nature tourism comprises of "all activities in attractive original landscapes, mainly in reserves which are concerned with nature. The spectrum reaches from scientific tourism, animal watching and nature photography, to consumptive activities, e.g. fishing and hunting, as well as sports and adventure tourism" (Arbeitsgruppe Ökotourismus 1995).

Ecotourism, as we understand it in this paper, extends this definition and at the same time disassociates ecotourism from ordinary nature tourism in certain ways.

Ecotourism – contribution to the conservation of the biological diversity

Nature tourism uses nature for activities. Ecotourism consciously minimises the effects of its activities on nature and culture. Ecotourism contributes to the improvement of nature conservation and the conditions of life of the local population.

"Ecotourism" has the aims of minimising influences on the culture and environment of the target region, to improve the income of the local population and to contribute to the financing of protected areas (Arbeitsgruppe Ökotourismus 1995).

2.2 Different activities and landscapes

There are different types of ecotourists who seek different levels of natural conditions and levels of luxury comfort and services. Differences become apparent also in their manner of dealing with the residents, culture and nature in the target area.

Each continent has its own attractions and activities:

- **Africa:** Hunting and safari-tourism, predominantly in savannah areas, sparse woods and also rivers which are suitable for watching animals, rainforest-tourism in connection with gorilla watching.
- **Latin America:** Rainforest tourism combined with seaside or culture tourism (archaeological sites), visits to unspoilt landscapes and the "jungle" where large animals are not predominant, "birding" (bird watching) is particularly popular with the US American tourists.
- **Asia:** The landscapes, which range from hot and damp tropical forests to the highest mountains on earth, offer an enormous amount of attractions for the nature tourist including nature sports like trekking, mountaineering, rafting, etc.

Every continent has its own attractions and activities

Protected areas are well suited for nature tourism, but are often difficult to reach

Corresponding to the different natural areas the attractiveness for tourists varies greatly. Protected areas with their comparatively well conserved natural landscapes, various vegetation and partly rich animal stock, are well suited to nature tourism. However, their attractiveness to tourists is decisively impaired by the missing infrastructure, i.e. by poor accessibility and traffic connections. Most remote areas are only visited by a relatively small number of ecotourists who put less emphasis on luxury in favour of nature and cultural experiences which are as genuine as possible¹.

Ethnotourism – danger for traditional social structures – opportunity to increase the self-confidence of the indigenous population

A further form of tourism in the surroundings of tropical forests and forest reserves is "ethnotourism". While for ecotourism and nature tourism "nature" (the reserve) is the main attraction, the interest for the ethnotourist is the people and their social and cultural identity. Interesting ethnic groups frequently live in attractive and ecologically intact target areas.

Ethnotourism is not unquestionable. The main point of criticism in the past was that the host society is forced by tourism to commercialise its immaterial and material cultural possessions. Beyond this there is the danger that traditional and approved networks of social and emotional

¹ The various demands of the clientele are important for the promotion of ecotourism in transition zones. For example the often high demand for luxury from international tourists can only be partially satisfied by the villagers. If this is possible at all, a long-term promotion programme is needed. Therefore tourist agencies which are competent and have a lot of capital are usually requested to support this. On the other hand it is then mainly them who keeps the profits. Additional to incomes from accommodation and catering for ecotourists with low demands for luxury, the villagers can gain further income from the sales of their agricultural products and handicrafts and from other services to the tourists.

security and stability are dissolved. On the other hand the tourists' interest in traditional cultural possessions can strengthen the pride and self-confidence of the indigenous groups and so contribute to the conservation of the culture. (compare, for example, "Indian communities organise themselves" in Section 3.2).

2.3 Ecotourism in transition and buffer zones of tropical forests

With the support of agricultural livelihood systems in the transition zones of tropical forests the interest of the local population in the conservation of the natural resources should be increased. Tourism, that is socially and ecologically sound, e.g. ecotourism, can be a way to the sustainable conservation of buffer and transition zones.

In many tropical forests indigenous communities often live in close interaction with the natural environment they live in. The fact that the forests were conserved despite being utilised indicates some form of sustainable management and that the residents have an interest in the protection of the forest.

However, the resource conserving practices of indigenous communities are related to relatively constant conditions of life and economic systems.

*on dense
e forests
digenous
p up their
nserving
systems*

Many tropical forest areas are inhabited by indigenous communities

Nowadays, both conditions are rarely the case as the population grows freedom of movement is restricted and the local population needs to produce for the market.

The forest use is often quite alien to immigrants

Besides the indigenous population also many other groups of different origins live in the forests who immigrated by spontaneous or state controlled immigration. This cultural variety frequently creates problems as there is no natural community between the groups, and for the new groups the use of the forest is often quite alien. On the other hand, this variety of groups of peoples leads to further potential for development because there is a wide range of experiences and knowledge which can be used effectively in the transition zone development.

For agricultural livelihood systems tropical forests are traditionally an essential source of income. If protected areas are established which prevent the local population from using the forest, they must renounce on these activities and this could negatively affect the area. Ecotourism as a economic way of using the forests for the inhabitants of the local population could increase the interests of the households in protecting the forest, and make the concerned households allies of conservation.

The suitability of a forest for ecotourism depends on management targets, the sensitivity of the ecosystem, accessibility and other natural and socio-cultural factors. Not all reserves are equally suited to ecotourism. Of course the activities of the ecotourists must also be adapted to the respective zones, i.e. whether core, buffer or transition zones.

Driving forces for development by increased sales of local agricultural produces

Ecotourism can be a strong incentive in transition zone development provided it creates additional marketing possibilities for local agricultural products, handicrafts and jobs beyond primary production. The population should be actively involved in decision and implementation processes of the development strategy for ecotourism. In negotiations with the tourism enterprises they must be able not only to point out their rights, e.g. land rights or usufructs of waterways, but also to offer competitive services, such as guided tours and products. How such a strategy can be developed and implemented is presented in the following and is based on available experiences of various projects and programmes.

3. Experiences of promoting ecotourism in protected areas, buffer and transition zones

3.1 Experiences of projects

The following experiences were collected from transition zone development projects or are taken from case studies described in literature. The project partners are various bodies, like state administrations, national and international non-governmental organisations (NGOs), the World Bank or GTZ. The local population are indigenous groups of the population and immigrants. They are hunters, gatherers, woodcutters or carry out farming or small enterprises .

These initiatives are primarily protected area management projects. The strategies of the support projects are aimed at a stabilisation of the economic activities in the transition and buffer zones in order to secure the long term conservation of the protected area. The local population is increasingly involved in the demarcation of protected areas and the use of the different zones (participative resource use planning). The extent of tourism activities is also decided upon during this process. In most cases tourism is only one among several income-generating measures. In most cases, earnings from state controlled hunting tourists are only partially distributed amongst the local villages.

Participation in and the support of private initiatives by the villages has only occurred in a few cases. A positive example of this is ASACODE. With the help of ecotourism this association of farmers has successfully managed to generate money from the forests.

In rural livelihoods tasks and interests of forest utilisation are distributed according to gender and age

The case of ASACODE, Costa Rica

ASACODE – participation and economic success

ASACODE (Asociación San Miguel para la Conservación y Desarrollo) is a local community based, democratic association with the objective of studying and protecting the natural resources as a base for living and to contribute to the improvement of the general conditions of life. The village San Miguel lies in a secluded position in the area that borders Panama, close to the Costa Rican Caribbean Coast. The members of ASACODE collectively own 90 hectares of land, an "ecolodge", the only regional sawmill and their own farms. Their community and regional nature conservation organisations with these aims are supported by donations in kind and cash, as well as by practical work.

An isolated "eco-lodge ..."

... 130 US \$ gross return per hectare of forest area

Co-operation with normal tourist agencies is not needed

Every community member can freely decide whether or not to join ASACODE. At the general meeting the 17 members determine the course of the association and elect the different representatives. The four main foci of the work of ASACODE are ecotourism, sustainable forestry, livestock farming and organic farming. For each area working groups were formed which interact closely to implement ideas and innovations.

In 1994 the ecolodge was opened in the transition zone of a rainforest reserve which is privately protected by ASACODE. The ecolodge is simple and only accessible by foot. The services on offer are accommodation, catering with organic food, excursions to the different projects, forest tours and seminars. By end of 1997 more than 1000 tourists had visited ASACODE. In 1995 the gross return on the forest areas protected by voluntary groups amounted to 130 US dollars per hectare. How is this possible?

ASACODE is keen to experiment and be innovative with economical, ecological and organisational systems. This has met with success. Many national visitors wanted to inform themselves about the project especially during the initial phase. Since then ASACODE is increasingly visited by international tourists (via educational establishments like CATIE, which provides further education in agriculture and forestry) and ecotourists with simple demands. Strong connections to other international NGOs (e.g. Tropica Verde in Germany) contributes to the fact that ASACODE can do without the cooperation of ordinary travel agencies.

Work in the individual projects is usually paid for as wages. In the initial phase women did the administration work free of charge. They then decided to produce T-shirts with the emblem of ASACODE on them and to sell them to tourists.

ASACODE is the democratic, organisational framework for private economic initiatives which are in turn of benefit to the overall project with its diversified activities. (C. Kolbe 1997)

Projects for nature conservation in protected areas are often confronted with conflicts. Interests of nature conservation, e.g. conservation of species diversity and safeguarding the available forests conflict with the interests of the population in the protected area. The conflicts have various causes. Critical are the following problem areas:

Inadequate information of the local population about planned reserves leads to the rejection of the

- **Lacking participation of the local population.** The interests of the local population were not or were insufficiently taken into account during planning and zonation of the protected area. In cases where the implementation of protected areas required resettlement or limited the local peoples' resource use they were totally rejected by the population in particular if the people were not properly informed. Often the relationships between the local population, intermediate NGOs and governmental offices for nature conservation become very strained by the imposition of protected areas. This situation can only rarely be improved even if land use planning procedures are applied.

- **Competitive ownership claims.** The conflict situation can be intensified if many different groups claim ownership (e.g. indigenous groups, settlers, small farmers, big landowners, the state). This different interests can limit the prospects of co-operation and participative approaches.
- **Lacking economic alternatives.** Without economic alternatives the local population is, in many places, forced to continue activities like timber exploitation, slash-and-burn agriculture and hunting in order to maintain their livelihoods. These activities are contradictory to the goal of nature conservation. To a certain degree ecotourism can offer alternatives to these activities. However, the pressure to maintain activities which damage the forest can also endanger the development of ecotourism.

The described causes of conflicts and opposing interests must be taken into account when developing strategies for the promotion of ecotourism. In the worst case conflicts of interests and balance of power do not allow the development of ecotourism to the advantage of the local population even if the natural prerequisites are ideal for this. Therefore it is necessary to analyse in advance the interests of the various stakeholders in order to identify differences and to create space for negotiation.

3.2 Impact and limitations of ecotourism promotion

Impacts and limitations need to be evaluated by ecological, economic, social and cultural criteria. Some of the key areas are analysed:

Benefit and distribution of earnings and profits. Brandon (1996) emphasises that if earnings from reserves with inadequate tourism management are not reinvested into the park then the tourism makes little contribution to the conservation of the biodiversity. In most cases the revenues from ecotourism are too low to compensate for expenditures and management costs of the nature conservation authorities. Only nature tourism could generate substantial revenues – although with activities which are not necessarily ecologically orientated and, therefore, contribute further to the destruction of the environment.

Ecotourism and forest protection. The main business goal in ecotourism as in most other profit-making businesses is that of making profits quickly and not the long-term protection of the environmental and nature conservation (Giannecchini 1993, quoted in Deardon, 1997). Therefore, the scope for a direct positive interaction between ecotourism and forest protection is limited and should not be overestimated. Should ecotourism

be promoted, then an efficient monitoring system must be put in place in order to see any negative effects early. In addition, Brandon (1996) emphasises the need for governments and local stakeholders to strictly monitor the activities of private tourism agents with regard to their environmental and cultural impacts. These recommendations reveal the powerful position of the tourism industry compared to the weak negotiating position of the local population.

The goals of ecotourism, forest protection and profit orientated business are difficult to align

Economic effects on agricultural livelihoods. Most projects' high expectations on ecotourism as an income generating activity which might strengthen the interests of the local population in forest protection have largely been disappointed. Also within the local population the motivation to protect quickly evaporates if the expected profits fail to appear. As a fact, the local population is rarely involved in the touristic development of their region. As a rule, the largest portion of the profits from the tourist business will be skimmed off by enterprises operating internationally, travel agents working supra-regionally and state authorities, who sell, for example, hunting licenses and the entrance permits for the reserves. The local population profits mainly by seasonal, low paid jobs or, where there is community based management, by the provision of infrastructure like schools, streets, health services etc.

If the profits remain in the communities, distribution problems can appear and often only a few households profit which leads to social differentiation. Powerful individuals or groups can try to secure material advantages for themselves. Also different levels of prestige and knowledge can lead to social differentiation and so trigger rivalries and conflicts in the communities. The distribution is also unbalanced within households if, for example, only male members of the family participate in the benefits when they work as forest guides.

The following example from Ecuador shows how indigenous groups organise themselves in order to share in the benefits of ecotourism.

The Case of the Reserva Cuyabeno, Ecuador

Local population often does not benefit from tourist business

Indian communities organise themselves

The Reserva Cuyabeno is an inhabited protected area ("Espacio Con Habitantes") similar to over 85% of Latin-American national parks. The spacious rainforest area is in the region where three countries meet, Peru, Colombia and Ecuador. It is characterised by lagoons and a very high biodiversity. For the development of tourism Cuyabeno is an exemplary case as the main focus of the tourist activities target the Indian population of the central zone. This applies equally to the strategies of the government and the private businessmen. The transition zones of the reserve, which are settlement areas for immigrated "Colonos" (settlers), are only marginally included in tourism promotion projects.

In the Reserva Cuyabeno (Ecuador) the state development strategies are centred on the Indian population in the core zone

Tourism agencies and Indian communities

The Indian communities living in the reserve have been involved in tourism activities since long. They work as employees for tourist agencies and run their own businesses like selling handicrafts or offer guided tours which they organise. Although the wages are low, the new income sources have brought some villages a certain wealth. This has led to processes of social differentiation. The three ethnic groups of the area have different experiences of the tourist sector:

The Cofanes have enforced an exclusive right for utilisation of a spacious territory. The village of the Cofanes maintain four lodges which can accommodate up to 16 people. These are rented out directly to the tourism companies which have been licensed to use the Reserva. The Cofanes participate in the decisions about the programme which is offered to the tourists during their stay in their territory. Twice a week a market is held in a small museum outside the village where the villagers in their traditional dresses sell handicrafts to tourists. These sales provide the Cofanes with more income than all the other branches of the tourism business, such as providing accommodation, guided tours, boat trips and trekking. Ecotourism has contributed here to the strengthening of traditional elements and to the consolidation of cultural identity.

Ecotourism has strengthened the cultural identity of the Cofanes

The Sionas try to monopolise the services offered in their area. Shipments in canoes, accommodation and guided tours are offered, and all immigrants living in the transition zone are excluded from participating in this work. The responsibility for the tours lies with the 13 tour agencies operating in the area. A large part of the profit also remains with these operators. The Sionas plan to manage the complete tourist business by themselves at a later stage.

Sixty to ninety per cent of the male Quichuas, a third Indian group, work for one of the large Ecuadorian tourism agencies on a seasonal basis. At present the Quichuas try to make themselves independent of the tourism agency by building accommodation and other infrastructural facilities as well as offering their own tours.

Ecotourism in Cuyabeno

For the indigenous population living in the reserve tourism has already become an essential economic factor and offers an alternative to other, frequently unsustainable income generating activities like hunting, farming, livestock breeding or employment in the petro-

leum industry. The fact that the indigenous population value their own traditions more highly is very significant. The ecotourists' desire to experience the nature of the rainforest and the adapted lifestyle of the Indians with their traditions means an enhancement of the status of their own culture when compared to that of the immigrated settlers.

Social and cultural impacts. The negative effects of mass tourism on the social and cultural development are known. Small scale ecotourism surely has less serious consequences. The initial enthusiasm of the local population is, however, often lost if negative social and cultural changes appear, like local inflation to "tourist prices", change in values, cultural estrangement, prostitution and drugs (Lash 1997, Pleumaron 1997). It was also observed that the participation of the younger generation is low if the profit for the individual households is too low (Pleumaron 1997). This again indicates the narrow economic limits of ecotourism. An example from South Africa proves that ecotourism can also have negative consequences.

The Case of the Reserve Kosi Bay, South Africa

Tourist development needs strong villages

Despite active support through local NGOs the interest of the inhabitants of Kosi Bay in developing the potential for tourism of the reserve is limited. They are afraid of the behaviour of the tourists. The unpleasant experiences in the past, particularly during the apartheid regime, include the excessive alcohol consumption of the visitors, harassment of women and wicked jokes about the "savages". At present co-operation with the partners from the NGOs offers them protection and security.

The self-confidence and the problem solving capacity of the villagers has to increase in Kosi Bay. On the side of the regional state institutions there is the task to ensure that the rule of law is guaranteed – if necessary with sanctions.

Limitations of the promotion of ecotourism

At project level the experiences show that the socio-economically sustainable and sound development of tourism is faced with the same

problems as rural development in general. Problems which repeatedly appear are:

- **Personnel factors:** staff shortages, unqualified staff, low motivation, low staff salaries, staff morale and attitude encourage privileges and corruption.
- **Limited ability to participate:** the local population has limited or no experience of participation in decision and development processes; oligarchic, authoritarian structures of decision making.
- **A wide range of parties involved with contradictory interests:** tourists, tour operators, guides, transport companies, government tourist offices, government authorities for nature conservation, local organisations, national government etc. (see also the following diagram "Stakeholders in the nature tourism system" from AG Ökotourismus 1995).

*Many participants
– many interests*

Participants in the nature tourism system

Many of the stakeholders in tourist activities in are the same for nature tourism and ecotourism. The differences only occur because of their different ecological, social, cultural and economical aims and consequences (after: AG Ökotourismus 1995).

The Case Endau Rompin National Park, Malaysia

Conflicts of interests between the involved parties

The Endau Rompin National Park was set up in 1993 in the rainforest of the low lands of west Malaysia. The area is outstanding be-

Primarily the local population suffers from shortages in supply and waste created by tourist activities

cause of its extreme species diversity. At present tourism is in its initial phase and faces widely varying interests of the stakeholders. The relationships between the local population and the tourism agency, on the one hand, and the conservation authorities on the other hand, are highly conflictive.

Arguments between the population and tour operators arise, for example, because guides or carriers are paid the "market price", which the villagers consider too little for their services. Considering the profit margins of the organisers these accusations are certainly justified. Another conflict arises because some visitors come with very high expectations of the "attractiveness" of the visited region. As the advertisements of the organisers do not always agree with the reality, tourists complain to the local guides.

The local population often suffers most from shortages in supply and inadequate disposal facilities. The water supply of the villagers is impaired, they injure themselves on glass and tins, they must live with the increasing rubbish in their surroundings and with the pollution of their waters.

Conflicts arise between the local population and the conservation authorities if, for example, construction contracts are awarded to non-local building contractors which are supposedly more technically qualified than the local small scale businessman. Since the regulations for the allocation of contracts favour non-local enterprises, local workers remain unemployed. A further conflict ignited over the access road of a village in the region. The road was destroyed by the lorries of the building firm. Claims for compensation of damage by the local people were ignored because the park administration stands on the side of the building firm which refuses to pay compensation (Stecker 1996)

The impacts described above show how energy can be mobilised despite possible negative tendencies in the competition of the use of the potentials of tourism.

Ecotourism only a niche product?

The regional effects of ecotourism have to be evaluated depending on the orientation and organisation of the different projects. From the examples mentioned and the literature it becomes obvious that there is only a niche in the market for ecotourism. With the increasing general interest in nature its chances of growth climb. It can be successful in certain places and situations. However not too high expectations should be placed on it. The opportunities need to be determined in a project specific way based on sound analyses.

The support offered by development projects should primarily support the target groups which are less able to compete in the free market. The members of rural livelihood systems and their organisations are rarely confident enough to be independent actors. The development of civil society needs to be supported by non-profit programmes or state organisations. Generally it will be difficult to obtain widely effective benefits from ecotourism. There is also the danger that successful ecotourism

goes beyond the limits set by nature conservation and the social carrying capacity of the area.

If the local peoples' share of the benefit should be sustainably increased and the social and cultural negative effects be limited, then the communities have to be actively involved and their bargaining position must be strengthened.

*Strengthen the
negotiating po-
sition of the
village commu-
nities*

Promotion of tourism should be support the local people so that they are able to gain access to the potential sources of income. The conditions which are required to effectively support ecotourism to the direct benefit of agricultural livelihood systems will be presented in the next section.

3.3 Conditions for successful support activities

Successful ecotourism promotion to the benefit of rural livelihood systems in transition zones requires the following conditions:

- The local population has a certain autonomy over their land and stable land tenure systems. Particularly stable social (traditional) groups are able to decide on the extent and type of tourism they want. Such groups are also more capable of developing their own infrastructure for tourists or to co-operate with tourism agencies. Or they allocate their rights to enterprises and for this receive financial income (compare the example "Indian communities organise themselves " in Section 3.2).
- Within the social groups primarily the younger and more educated representatives are able to act as entrepreneurs and to co-operate both with villagers and with outsiders. However the traditional structures of authority do not always allow this. "Who the 'true' representatives of the different group of interests are" is a question which is difficult to answer for outsiders. Primarily, incoherent social groups have a weak negotiating position against state organisations and tourist agencies. Their interests are rarely taken into account. Analysis and strengthening of the social organisations are, therefore, central to any support programme (compare example "Conflicts of interests between the parties involved" in Section 3.2).
- The improvements in infrastructure were carried out predominantly as a "joint venture" or in partnership with tourism agencies since the necessary capital was usually not available and only the partner awarded credit-worthiness. The benefits for the local population were highest if the local groups mobilised the resources and managed them by themselves. This worked well, where tourism already existed and this "local" or "spontaneous" tourism only had to be extended. In such cases there are plenty of possibilities for co-operation between the various, government, private

*First and foremost it is
the younger and more
educated who are in
the position of acting as
entrepreneurs*

*Incoherent social
groups have weak
negotiating positions*

The national planning of tourism should support local ecotourism

and local stakeholders (Compare the example "The tourism co-operative COOPRENA in Costa Rica" in Section 4.3).

- Most successful were those projects where local ecotourism was supported by the state with national planning of tourism and coordination of activities. National and local initiatives were integrated when their priorities were aligned.
- From experience it seems that tourism development for the benefit of the local population is only possible if the local population is involved in the planning right from the start and the tourism is subject to the control of governmental institutions for conservation and institutions for development.

The support of ecotourism in reserves, its transition and buffer zones generally seems only ecologically, economically and socially favourably if:

- The possibility of additional income exists as measures for compensating losses due to restrictions by protection efforts for the individual, the family and the community.
- The interests and potentials of the local population are appreciated by the other stakeholders involved.
- All interest groups of government, private and NGO sector participate.
- New forms of participation, negotiation, conflict resolution and/or formation of consensus are introduced to support the necessary complex integration processes

The last point in particular touches an essential opportunity for development projects in the field of promoting ecotourism.

Introduce new forms of participation and procedures for the management of conflicts and the negotiation of consensus

3.4 Opportunities for ecotourism promotion

The conditions discussed above allow the following opportunities for ecotourism promotion in development projects to be identified:

Strengthening the negotiating position of the local population

- Village-level organisational development is of central importance for the transition zone development. This should lead to establishing of new channels of communication, a better articulating of interests. New procedures of participation and methods of negotiation should contribute to the strengthening of the community both internally and externally, constructively resolve conflicts and overcome constraints.
- Village organisations need, initially and during the course of negotiations with the various parties, advice and support. For example: legal

Strengthen internally, constructively resolve conflicts and overcome constraints

Village organisations need external support

advice, advice about land tenure, identification of suitable co-operation partners, negotiation about benefit sharing etc. For example, projects can support villages during negotiations with authorities about securing land rights, about sustainable use of the forest areas and the control of side-effects of tourism.

Project staff can strengthen farmers in their negotiations with bureaucrats

Education and advisory services for the local population in the trade and services sector

- Education and training of local groups and the staff of park authorities in ecotourism services, for example management of accommodation, tour bookings, logistics, calculations of costs, personnel management, dealing with visitors from foreign cultures, catering for tourist groups, first aid, foreign languages etc.
- Advise and support for advertising campaigns for environmental and ecotourism.
- Advise and support for the construction of suitable infrastructural facilities. This includes: assessment of the suitability of an area and its requirements, building of overnight accommodation and sanitary facilities, energy supply with alternative sources of energy, ecologically sound development of trails and observation posts, use of resource conserving possibilities of transport.

Training and further education of local groups as well as park personnel

A monitoring system should be worked out

- Advisory services on environment and nature conservation: courses for local guides, advise on setting-up of visitor and information centres or nature trails
- Advise on monitoring systems for the effects of tourism on social and cultural conditions as well as on the fauna and flora of the nature reserve.

Advising the local population on the development of potentials

- Identification of products and services which are attractive for tourists as well as corresponding methods of marketing
- Support of self-help groups in the planning and implementation of complementary activities.

Advising authorities and other government institutions in the design of conducive policies

- Securing land rights and utilisation, both traditional and legal rights.
- Reconciliation of national and local priorities, transfer of rights to villages, legal and actual protection of rights and duties of the partners.
- Control of the development and use of the reserve by the private sector, protection of the rights of the local population, sanctioning of encroachments and breaches of contract.
- Making the nature conservation regulations more flexible towards the transferral of land rights and duties of protection to villages.
- Development of national strategies and policies for the integration of ecotourism into transition zone development and forest protection.
- Systems of monitoring the environmental impact.
- Co-ordination with other tourism projects.

3.5 Building negotiation structures and distributing tasks

In the management of protected areas, buffer zones and the development of transition zones far more stakeholders are involved than in sectorial development projects. If measures for the development of ecotourism are planned all parties should participate in round-table discussions (compare GTZ, 1994). Such type of discussions should go along with the

complete cycle of planning, implementation and evaluation. The tasks of the different actors could be the following:

Round table discussions involve everyone

- **Government agencies** like ministries and authorities for tourism, nature conservation, forest and protected area management and representatives of the regional governments could clarify the current limitations and opportunities and create the legal and planning framework conditions. Within this the park authorities could clarify how the incoming fees and the state subsidies will be managed (redistribution possibilities), the protection of the legal and planning framework conditions with other government authorities, as well as the awarding of licences/concessions for the use of the reserve; regulation of access.
- **Tourism companies** could assess the probability of success of various investments, provide training in marketing, provide management experience and knowledge of managing accommodation, catering, transport, guided tours, and advertising. Efforts should be made to cooperate with local communities and to support the existing structures.
- **NGOs:** concession holders for certain ways of use, co-ordination of the activities in the tourist zone, participation in carrying capacity and environmental impact assessments, execution of training and further education courses; at the same time implement regional, national or internationally oriented NGOs usually function as mediators and produce international publicity; they can develop additional sources of finance and can bring in further know-how .

Government authorities should create positive framework conditions

Tourism agencies assess the prospects of success

*additional sources of
finance*

*Development projects
should facilitate decision-making processes
and implement conflict
management*

- **Local communities:** Subgroups or local NGOs play a direct part as independent suppliers of products and services or indirectly as holders of rights of the development of the potential for tourism.
- **Development projects** could initiate the co-ordination and decision-making processes and facilitate in the initial phase between the participants. Specific contributions should be made where, in the course of the planning and implementation process, a need for consultancy, training, moderation or conflict management arises.

The next section shows how these functions described above can gradually, together with the people involved, be implemented into a strategy.

4. Development of a strategy for promotion of ecotourism

A strategy for promoting ecotourism which includes all parties can be developed by following the five working steps below. The steps are structured as follows:

1. Assessment of the potential for tourism
2. Clarification of the different ideas and interests
3. Negotiation of the interests of the different participants
4. Identification, planning and implementation of pilot measures
5. Evaluation and learning cycles (reviewing plans in the light of experiences).

These working steps are not necessarily applied in this order but can also overlap or run in parallel depending on the situation. Negotiations about the interests of the different participants are necessary right from the start of the project.

All stakeholders are involved in assessing the potential for tourism in the region

Overview 1: Criteria for the assessment of the potential for tourism

- natural environment: high species diversity, large mammals, abundance of birds, visibility of game; various landscapes, rare botanical and geological features;
- acceptance of tourists by the local population, interest in providing guides, catering and accommodation;
- additional attractions: archaeological sites and objects, buildings, indigenous cultures, possibility for swimming, other sporting activities;
- accessibility and infrastructure: proximity to international airports, accessibility by domestic flights or good road connections, hygienic, acceptable accommodation and catering;
- climate: not too high temperatures, air humidity and precipitation;
- political and social conditions: stable political and social conditions, personal security;
- seasonal accessibility (at distinctive rainy or dry seasons), and the visibility of game

4.1 Assessment of the potential for tourism

The potential for tourism at different levels is determined in the first working step. With the participation of all stakeholders it should be first clarified whether the area is suitable for the development of tourism and for which form of tourism. The protection status, the ecological sensitivity, the attractiveness for tourists and the potential demand should be taken into account.

In the table different methods are associated with the objectives and contents of the promotion concept. More detailed information can be found in the other LISTRA concept elements which can be ordered from LISTRA (further information at the end of this publication).

Assessing of the potential for tourism

Objectives and contents	Methods
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clarification whether the development of tourism is possible with the current protection status and, if yes, to what extent and how 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analysis of the legal and policy framework
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assessment of the ecological carrying capacity, setting of initial parameters for the establishment of limits of the carrying capacity and for a later monitoring system 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Physical assessment of the area Screening of available literature Discussions with experts and residents (analyses of situation and potential)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assessment of the potential for tourism in the area including the current level of development for tourism and the chances of success for the introduction of ecotourism 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Source/market analyses, identification of regional and national potentials and competing areas. First analysis of the target area according to the criteria in Overview 3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> clarification of how prepared, in principle, the population and individual participants are. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Individual and group discussions General and culturally orientated information meetings

To promote tourism one must have access to the customers in the countries of their origin. By setting-up marketing structures early the probability is increased that the desired kind of tourists in sufficient numbers appear on-site. The ideal is that many tourists book holidays and that these are evenly spread throughout the year.

During the phase of assessing the potential for tourism it may be the task of technical co-operation projects to initiate discussions to find out the basic possibilities and interests. If this first initiative receives a positive response, then ecotourism can be suggested to the local population as an option.

*Initiate processes
of discussion in the
villages*

4.2 Clarification of the different ideas and interests

In the second phase an intensive process of discussion should be initiated in the villages during which the local population is informed of the positive and negative effects of tourism. The reflection of their own position and the anticipation of the effect of planned projects are prerequisites for making decisions and creating commitment on possible development options. A method to achieve this, for example, is to initiate excursions of village delegations to tourist areas and projects. Such look and learn tours enable the villagers to get exposed to similar developments elsewhere and to develop clear ideas of the potential for tourism in their area. This helps to exchange ideas about the direction of the activities and to reach a consensus.

Consider effects and results of one's own planning in advance

The 'clarification phase' should also bring about orientation on the type (private or co-operative) and extent of the active participation of the villagers in operating tourist facilities (accommodation, catering), in the production and marketing of handicrafts and food (e.g. local vegetables, meat and honey). This also might include services like guided forest tours as well as participation in tasks like guarding parks or safeguarding wildlife are. The specific impacts on certain groups (e.g. women, teenagers, and marginalised groups) should be taken into account.

Take consequences for women, teenagers and marginalised groups into account

In regions with large numbers of immigrated people their particular interests and competencies should be included (e.g. as forest guides or experts in particular ecosystems). Conflicts should be brought out openly during negotiations.

At village level this process can help to analyse and discuss the social differentiation of the local actors with respect to their interests, functions and roles. This leads to an ongoing process of local organisational development. It aims to strengthen co-operation and the negotiating position of the villagers.

During the process of clarification of interests, suggestions on benefit sharing between park authorities, private tourism companies and the villagers. A part of the fees, payments and tax revenues for example can be used for improving the infrastructure (energy, water, health, education). The clarification process also reveals the gaps in the know how between established tourism organisers and villagers and allows to identify areas for further training and education. This phase finally opens the possibility to think about first measures and to make suggestions about their planning and implementation.

Clarification of the different ideas and interests

Objectives and contents	Methods
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information, reflection and discussion about potential innovations in the village, anticipation of possible consequences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Village workshops • Excursions / look & learn tours to other projects
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support of economic initiatives of farming and household systems, as well as small industries 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workshops • Advise /consultation • Excursions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support of the village-level organisational development • Increasing negotiation skills and the bargaining position within the complex set-up of stakeholders. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analyses of stakeholder interests • Workshops • Conflict management and mediation (negotiations with Win-Win options)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Networking between the regional actors (co-ordination and co-operation) for the development of a package for ecotourism which is appropriate for the region 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Round table discussions • Workshops • Excursions

*Develop an
package for ecotourism
for the
region*

Inter-village co-ordination may be necessary if several villages are involved in a possible development of tourism or are in competition with each other. The regional administration plays the important role of ensuring that other villages can participate and benefits are shared evenly within the region. A further important task of the regional planning authority would be to develop a package for ecotourism by co-ordinating various projects, interests and stakeholders in order to co-ordinate similar projects more effectively.

The clearer the ideas of the local population are and the better these positions are articulated and represented, the more promising is their chance to get their ideas accepted in the network of stakeholders. All of the interests and demands of communities and individual farmers identified and agreed upon in the clarification phase can be brought into negotiations with other participants in the next phase.

The ideas and interests of other actors and their possible roles and responsibility should also be clarified in this phase. Potentially suitable partner organisations and co-operation partners for the management of ecotourism should be identified.

The results of this phase in which the interests and potentials of possible partners are clarified for the development of ecotourism are the basis for the next step: negotiation of the different interests.

Inter-village co-ordination

4.3 Negotiation of interests of the different stakeholders

Ecotourism can in some cases generate high profits. Therefore it might be difficult to get the various participants around one round table. The representatives of the local population generally have a weak position against state authorities and tourist agencies. Here the negotiating skills of project staff are in great demand. In this phase their primary task consists of creating a platform for negotiation processes amongst the participants. A local forum for the development of ecotourism can serve as an instrument for this. Only if the common interests of the participants, or their inherent cohesion are strong enough, will such a forum develop spontaneously. Particularly during the initial phase of such a process, support and moderation of the meetings are the main task of the project.

Project workers can create a "platform" for negotiation processes, promote and moderate meetings

The following interests could be the object of the negotiations:

- Support and legal protection of private and co-operative organisational structures of the population in order to be able to utilise the economic potential of the development of tourism.
- Support of production and marketing of local products and local handicrafts to improve and diversify incomes and to strengthen the cultural identity of the local population.

- Employment of the villagers in work for nature conservation and tourism sectors e.g. park wardens, wildlife wardens, guides with knowledge of natural history or in the catering trade.
- Indirect community benefit through fees, payments and tax incomes of the park authorities as well as that of the private tourism enterprises in order to improve the infrastructure (energy, water, health, education); negotiation of the benefit sharing.
- Carrying out training and further education courses in order to reduce the gap in knowledge and skills between established organisers and the villagers.

A variety of different interests have to be negotiated

The role of tourism enterprises, and government conservation and development authorities should be clarified

The possibility to achieve incomes from ecotourism is of central importance for the rural households - also in order to compensate for potential restrictions of use². Therefore the affected livelihoods must have sufficient possibilities for discussion, decision making and steering as from the planning stage. This can be institutionalised via the negotiating platform.

It is also important to clarify the particular roles of tourism enterprises, governmental conservation and development institutions as well as development projects. A private-sector enterprise will not take over any charitable development tasks. For the tourist industry, participation of the

² See LISTRA (1997): Compensation for resource use restrictions.

village population is not valuable either, especially this causes delays in the decision-making processes. Technical co-operation can make an important contribution to this field by convincing the governmental institutions that the local population is an essential partner for the development of the potential for ecotourism. Development co-operation can contribute to the implementation of this conviction and anchor it in law. At a different level, technical co-operation can support village-level interest groups in consensus finding, in their articulation of interests as well as in their independent organisation and execution of activities in ecotourism.

Negotiation of interests of the different stakeholders

Objectives and contents	Methods
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clarification of roles of the stakeholders, establishing negotiating platforms • Aim for the most secure protection e.g. legal protection/contracts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local forum for the development of ecotourism • Moderation and negotiation processes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distribution of the profits and burdens which is as just as possible 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishment of distribution, control, sanctioning and compensation mechanisms
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greatest possible say of the population 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • round table discussions or similar • Local forum for the development of ecotourism
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthen the self-help potential for private initiatives of ecotourism businesses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workshops and training • Advisory service on small business development

Tourist companies will only invest in the education and training of local staff if they see it to be an alternative with lower costs and risks. Surely it is not desirable to relieve the blossoming field of tourism of the cost of training costs with the funds of development co-operation. Here specific solutions have to be found which neither undermine the self-help potential of the population nor relieve the tourism industry of their responsibility.

The co-operative COOPRENA tries in Costa Rica to unite the various interests to the welfare of the local population.



**The Case:
"Tourism Co-operative" of COOPRENA in Costa Rica**

COOPRENA (*Cooperativa Red Nacional De Ecoturismo*) was founded in 1994. The co-operative offers organisational services for tourism and by doing so provides the local population with access to private-sector profits. It is a local organisation and mediates as an "alternative tourist company" between the market and the local communities/projects.

Their primary objective is to promote the twelve co-operatives, which are mainly agricultural and forestry orientated, for the development of naturally and socially sound tourism. Ecotourism should be the driving force to improve the standard of living through sustainable community development.

Most members are *in remote peripheral rural regions*. They still have intact and attractive natural areas like rainforests, mangroves, marshes and seaside areas. Some areas have the status of a reserve. Through ecotourism their areas should be put under protection and generate alternative income.

In the initial phase COOPRENA financed itself with loans and international aid. FECOOPA, which is the national umbrella organisation of "self-governing co-operatives", of which COOPRENA is a member, helped with setting up the organisational structure.

The objective is the cost recovery for the extensive services that COOPRENA provides. Therefore, the different co-operatives pay a certain amount for each tourist. A travel agency in the capital San José is planned.

Services offered by COOPRENA to its member co-operatives

- Arranging loans for the costs of target group analyses, feasibility studies, local infrastructure for tourist
- Advisory services and training of individual members and co-operatives
- Networking (regular meetings, information services, radio installations, small transporters)
- Linking with international contacts
- Development of a marketable product (round trips, individual tours etc.)
- Design and distribution of advertising, public relations (leaflets, newspaper articles, internet page)
- Travel agency services (organising of tours, customer service)

In 1997 six co-operatives could offer lodging, boarding and different tours as a package. **Target groups** are university employees, teachers, students and volunteers as well as self-employed persons. The services offered are in the lower to middle price range (full board 30-40 US dollar/day). COOPRENA has completed the initial setting-up phase and is now in the **probation phase**. In this phase it will be decided whether access to national and international markets will provide a sufficient number of customers for nature and ecotourism.

(C. Kolbe 1997)

4.4 Implementation of pilot measures

If a fundamental agreement could be reached, pilot measures are carried out as a fourth step. Initially it is advisable to work with a smaller groups of interested villagers. A monitoring system should be established to recognise negative and positive social, ecological and economic effects. To monitor these effects, indicators need to be negotiated together with the pilot group and other stakeholders. Participatory methods and instruments to be applied in monitoring are introduced in the communities. The principles of self-responsibility, use of own resources and self-help should be promoted.

Carry out pilot measures and negotiate indicators for the monitoring system

4.5 Evaluation and learning cycles

In the next step the implemented pilot measures are evaluated by all the stakeholders. The focus should be on the consideration of the interests of the agricultural livelihoods which were identified at the beginning and on push and pull factors which have appeared. In addition, it should be considered whether the basic hypothesis is confirmed - that with measures which promote tourism the local population's interest in nature conservation increases.

Implementation and evaluation of testing measures

Objectives and contents	Methods
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction to ecotourism • Improvement of income • Strengthening the protection of forests and resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working with small groups of people • Pilot measures
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishing a functional and accepted monitoring system for the evaluation of negative and positive consequences/ degree of the achievement of the aim • Considering whether expansion of the activities is possible • Joint learning processes • Exchange of experiences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participative monitoring • Evaluations • Informal observation • Group discussions • Workshops • Village workshops • Expert consultations

The evaluation is not limited to a control of the planning but is used as an instrument to incorporate experiences into the further development of the strategy. In this way it can contribute to a cyclic learning process of everyone involved. Based on the evaluation, new activities are planned.

Develop strategies iteratively through increasing experien-
--

The suggested steps can be implemented in a flexible manner and tailored to specific contexts. All steps should be regarded as activities which are ongoing and interlinked with each other. As they are considered as learning processes, experiences should be regularly incorporated in the local, regional, national and international strategy discussions about the role of ecotourism in supporting development and forest conservation.³

5. Integration into regional rural development and national planning of tourism

Ecotourism is a field in which national and international institutions supporting development efforts co-operate with private sector enterprises.

Right from the preparation phase the development of ecotourism should be embedded in the regional rural development as well as the sectoral development. Earnings from ecotourism can only become driving development forces at local and regional levels if the economic and infrastructural development is also promoted in other fields - agriculture and forestry, trade and construction industry, street and road construction. It should not be forgotten, however, that the development of infrastructure can endanger the protection of forest (which is the real objective) if the increased attractiveness of a region leads to immigration.

The problems going along with ecotourism within the development of transition zones and the variety of the groups involved require an all-embracing co-ordination of various development strategies and planning at national level. With small countries the need also exists for co-ordination at the supranational level. Overview 3 shows starting-points for this.

Whether interventions at national level are necessary very much depends on the extent of the planned activities. With small scale activities, as ecotourism was defined in the beginning, it should be critically assessed whether support through government advisors is necessary to create favourable framework conditions. This effort should be sensibly related to the potential benefit.

Overview 2: Starting-points for the integration of ecotourism into regional rural development

³ See LISTRA (1997): Joint Learning for Change - Concept Element 7. The paper presents a methodic procedure for developing and introducing innovations.

Include the support of ecotourism in the regional rural development programme strategy

... and also integrate it into national plans

- **improvement of the co-operation** between the local conservation authorities and other regional sector departments (development and infrastructure: roads, energy and water supply).
- **Linkages and exchange** to existing tourist centres (for example to already developed seaside resorts at the coast) to open additional markets for ecotourism.
- **Co-ordination of existing** regional rural development plans and buffer / transition zone management with the requirements of the ecotourism in the area.
- **Support of farming** and the promotion of agricultural products in the region which can contribute to a reduction in the dependence on food imports for the tourism sector (e.g. fruits, vegetables, rice, dairy products).
- **Awarding of contracts** for the building and maintenance of tourist infrastructure to companies in the region (building and construction trade, boat building, road construction, energy and water supply).
- Support of the cultivation and processing of **non-timber forest products** which are traditionally used in the region in arts and crafts and the production of souvenirs.

Overview 3: Entry points for the integration of ecotourism projects into national development strategies

- **Creation of a national ecotourism plan:** improve the distribution of nature tourists within the country to avoid visitor densities which are too high for one region.
- **Possibility of controlling and steering** locally undesired forms of tourism into better suited areas.
- **Support of inland tourism** and with that a wider distribution of the multiplier effects by diversifying the economic basis in the rural area.
- **Formation of an "Ecotourism Council"** ("Consejo Nacional De Ecoturismo") for the improvement of the super-sectoral co-ordination of all relevant participants.
- Inclusion of the **aims of ecotourism** in national policies and legislation.
- Elaboration of **marketing programmes** which are co-ordinated with tourism in reserves, as well as buffer and transition zones.
- **Improvement of education** for groups relevant to tourism in central and decentralised locations to compensate for deficiencies in training – especially of the rural villagers with respect to tourist services.

6. Conclusion

The contribution of ecotourism to the incomes of rural livelihoods is an incentive to them to protect the forest in a sustainable way. The development of ecotourism requires a balance to harmonise the different objectives. These are:

- the provision of fair incomes to rural livelihoods while promoting private-sector profits,
- Balancing of the interests of village communities, authorities and enterprises,
- Protection of nature and cultural identity and simultaneously satisfying the needs of tourists.

This is a tricky task. It requires confidence and patience from all stakeholders in the search for solutions from which every partner gains.

How large the contribution from ecotourism can be depends primarily on the number of interested tourists. The possible effects should not be overestimated. Many potential sites will not be in the position to bring existing contrary interests into harmony and develop a marketable product. If too high expectations are aroused and not realised, frustrations can lead to stakeholders working against each other. When incomes do not increase, the interest of the local population in protecting the forest sinks even lower than before and the threat to the forest is even greater. If the option of ecotourism in transition zones around tropical forests is handled carefully and far-sightedly, it creates new possibilities for selected sites: for the population arise new possibilities of income from ecotourism. Simultaneously it can create incentives to protect the natural resources and with that to make a basis for the sustainable protection of tropical forests by the local population.

References

The listed literature is available at LISTRA

- Amend, S.; Amend, T. (eds.) (1995): National Parks without People? The South American Experience. IUCN, Gland-Switzerland.
- Arbeitsgruppe Ökotourismus (1995): Ökotourismus als Instrument des Naturschutzes?: Möglichkeiten zur Erhöhung der Attraktivität von Naturschutzvorhaben. BMZ (Ed.) Weltforum Verlag München, Köln, London.
- BMZ (ed.) (1993): Tourismus in Entwicklungsländer. Bundesministerium für wirtschaftliche Zusammenarbeit, Bonn.
- Brandon, K. (1996): Ecotourism and Conservation. A Review of Key Issues. Environment Department Paper No. 33. The World Bank. Washington, DC.
- Cater, E. (1997): Ecotourism: Dimensions of Sustainability. Paper presented at the International Seminar on Ecotourism for Forest Conservation and Community Development. Chiang Mai, Thailand.
- Ceballos-Lascuráin (1996): Tourism, ecotourism, and protected areas: The State of nature-based tourism around the world and guidelines for its development. IUCN, Gland-Switzerland.
- Chudintra, S. (1993): Nature Tourism Profile: Thailand. In J. Nenon and P.B. Durst (Eds.) Nature Tourism in Asia: Opportunities and Constraints for Conservation and Economic Development. US Dept. for Agriculture and US Agency for International Development. Washington, DC. pp. 31–41.
- Cochrane, J. (1997): Factors Influencing Ecotourism Development in Small Forest, Relint Communities: A Case Study of Bromo-Tengger-Semery National Park, East Java, Indonesia. Paper presented at the International Seminar on Ecotourism for Forest Conservation and Community Development. Chiang Mai, Thailand.
- Dearden, P. (1997): Carrying Capacity and Environmental Aspects Concerning Ecotourism. Paper presented at the International Seminar on Ecotourism for Forest Conservation and Community Development. Chiang Mai, Thailand.
- Ellenberg, L. (1993): Naturschutz und Technische Zusammenarbeit. In: Geographische Rundschau 45 (1993), pp. 290–300.
- Ellenberg, L.; Ernst, R. A. (Eds.) (1996): Naturschutz durch Tourismus. Tagungsbericht, 9.-12. Mai 1996, Island Vilm. Humboldt-Universität, Institut der Geographie, Berlin.

- Emphandhu, D. and S. Chettamart, (1997): What Makes for a Viable Ecotourism Site? Paper presented at the International Seminar on Ecotourism for Forest Conservation and Community Development. Chiang Mai, Thailand.
- Fletcher, P. (1997): The Lower Kinanbatangan: The Importance of Community Consultations in Ecotourism Development. Paper presented at the International Seminar on Ecotourism for Forest Conservation and Community Development. Chiang Mai, Thailand.
- Ghurmi, G. (1997): King Mahendra Trust for Nature Conservation (KMTNC) Experience's with Ecotourism. Paper presented at the International Seminar on Ecotourism for Forest Conservation and Community Development. Chiang Mai, Thailand.
- GTZ (ed.) (1994): Der Runde Tisch als Programm? Möglichkeiten und Grenzen der Institutionenförderung im Spannungsfeld von Umwelt und Entwicklung. Publikationsreihe 402/94 -4d PVI, Eschborn.
- GTZ (ed.) (1995): Biologische Vielfalt erhalten! Eine Aufgabe der Entwicklungszusammenarbeit. Publikationsreihe 402/95-15d Biodiv., Eschborn.
- Homma, K. O. (1996): Modernization and Technological Dualism in the Extractive Economy in Amazonia. In M. Ruiz Pérez and J. E. M. Arnold (eds.), Current Issues in Non-Timber Forest Products Research. Center for International Forestry Research, Bogor, Indonesia. pp. 59–81.
- Kolbe, C. (1997): Neue Akteure im Ökotourismus am Beispiel von Costa Rica. Diplomthesis in the department Landschaftsarchitektur und Umweltentwicklung of Universität Hannover, Institut für Landesplanung und Raumforschung (unpublished).
- Laarman, J. and H. Gregersen (1994): Making Nature-based Tourism Contribute to Sustainable Development: A Policy Framework. Draft Policy Review. EPAT/MUCIA/USAID.
- Laarman, J. G. and P. B. Durst. Nature Tourism as a Tool for Economic Development and Conservation of Natural Resources. In J. Nenon and P. B. Durst (Eds.), Nature Tourism in Asia: Opportunities and Constraints for Conservation and Economic Development. US Dept. for Agriculture and US Agency for International Development. Washington, DC. pp. 1–18.
- Lash, G. (1997): What is Ecotourism? What are the Realistic Expectations of Ecotourism? Paper presented at the International Seminar on Ecotourism for Forest Conservation and Community Development. Chiang Mai, Thailand.
- McNeely, J. A. (1995): Expanding Partnerships in Conservation. IUCN. Island Press, Washington, D.C.; Covelo, Ca, USA.

- Müller, B. (1994): Ökotourismus in Entwicklungsländern: Umweltpolitische Leerformel oder wirksame Regionalentwicklungsstrategie. In: Domrös, M.; Klaer, W. (eds.) (1994): Commemorative volume for Erdmann Gormsen for his 65th Birthday. Mainzer Geographische Studien.
- Pleumarom, A. (1997): Open Questions Concerning the Concept, Policies and Practice of Ecotourism. Paper presented at the International Seminar on Ecotourism for Forest Conservation and Community Development. Chiang Mai, Thailand.
- Rijal, A. (1997): The Bagmara Community Forest: An Example of the Linkage between Communities and Ecotourism, Chitwan National Park, Nepal. Paper presented at the International Seminar on Ecotourism for Forest Conservation and Community Development. Chiang Mai, Thailand.
- Steck, B. (1995): Ökotourismus auf der Insel Ometepe im Nicaraguasee: Chancen und Gefahren für den Ressourcenschutz in Mittelamerika. Diplomthesis at the department Geowissenschaften of Johannes Gutenberg-Universität Mainz, Institut für Geographie (unpublished).
- Stecker, B. (1996): Ökotourismus: Potential für Schutz und nachhaltige Nutzung der Tropenwälder. Eine Fallstudie aus dem Nationalpark Taman Negara und Endau-Rompin in Malaysia. GTZ-Tropenökologisches Begleitprogramm, Eschborn.
- Terzich, M. (1997): Improvements in Visitor Information and Resource Protection to Support Ecotourism in Two Indonesian Parks: A Case Study of Cooperative Efforts between the USDA Forest Service and Ministry of Forestry, Indonesia. Paper presented at the International Seminar on Ecotourism for Forest Conservation and Community Development. Chiang Mai, Thailand.
- TES (eds.) (1993): Ecotourism: A Guide for Nature Tour Operators. The Ecotourism Society. North Bennington, USA.
- Theophile, K. (1995): The Forest as a Business. *Journal of Forestry*. March 1995: 25-27.
- Viste, M. (1997): Local People's Participation in Ecotourism at the Calauit Game Preserve and Wildlife Sanctuary. Paper presented at the International Seminar on Ecotourism for Forest Conservation and Community Development. Chiang Mai, Thailand.
- Vorlaufer, K. (1996): Tourismus in Entwicklungsländern: Möglichkeiten und Grenzen einer nachhaltigen Entwicklung durch Fremdenverkehr. Darmstadt.
- WTO / UNEP (1992): Guidelines: Development of National Parks and Protected Areas for Tourism. Madrid and Paris.