

First Meeting of National Focal Points
for the Priority Actions Programme

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PRIORITY ACTIONS PROGRAMME IN TOURISM /A Proposal/

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This proposal is based on the following documents:

- /i/ "Elements for Feasibility Study for the Development of a Regional Co-operative Project on Tourism and Impact of Tourism on Mediterranean Environment" /PAP/RAC, Geneva, 13-14 November 1980/;
- /ii/ "Report of the Consultation on the Tourism Component of the PAP" /Geneva, 13-14 November 1980/;
- /iii/ "Realizacija i razvoj Programa prioritetnih akcija /Realization and Development of the Priority Actions Programme/", PAP/RAC, November 1982; and
- /iv/ "A Possible Approach to the Development of the Priority Action on Tourism" /PAP/RAC, November 1982/.

1. Carrying Capacity

The crucial element of the entire concept underlying the Priority Actions Programme in tourism is the carrying capacity of a recipient area /the Mediterranean Basin in this particular case/ to sustain tourism development. Since this development /similar to that of any other socio-economic activity/ contains economic, socio-cultural and environmental /in the sense of spatial-ecological/ aspects⁺, the carrying capacity with which it is

confronted may likewise be viewed as economic, socio-cultural and environmental. Of course, this compartmentalization of the notion of carrying capacity is only allowed from the methodological standpoint and can hardly be justified in real life /e.g. a new mode of transport - such as the use of airplanes - affects an area with regard to all of the above-mentioned aspects/.

Furthermore, it is possible to identify major components of each of the above-mentioned "types" of the carrying capacity /again, in strictly methodological terms/, as this has already been undertaken in the previous documents. They are listed as follows:

/a/ Economic capacity

- available financial resources /i.e. both internal and external the use of which is justifiable on the basis of their "opportunity cost"/;
- available manpower /i.e. domestic as well as immigrant, applying also the "opportunity-cost" principle/;
- interindustrial linkages /inputs/ that may be profitably established with /derived from/ other economic activities in an area over and above the level required for normal functioning of the local economy; and
- import capability of an area, measured against the need to maintain stable /or not to aggravate the already existing imbalance in/ external trade relations.

/b/ Socio-cultural capacity

- the size of the "innovative" impact as regards the patterns of production/consumption, education, housing, beliefs, etc. which may be sustained by a local community without being perceived as detrimental to their well-being; and
- the level of usage of historical and cultural heritage at which positive effects /financial, educational, cultural/ outweigh the negative ones /physical degradation, loss of access, proliferation of faked pieces of art and/or industrially produced souvenirs/.

/c/ Environmental capacity

- spatial /determined by the size and quality of the available open space, physical infrastructure and building sites, but also subject to the prevailing town-planning and architectural patterns/; and
- ecological /dependent on the absorption capabilities of terrestrial, marine/fresh water and air ecosystems as regards the emission of solid, liquid and gaseous wastes and exhausts, including the effects brought about by thermal and lighting changes, noise and fresh water consumption/.

2. Tourist Impacts

Once that the carrying capacity of an area with respect to tourism /or to nay other development activity, for that matter/ has been defined in the above-outlined terms, the next step is then to identify major tourist impacts which are likely to put it to test, that is, to endanger the state of its overall equilibrium /seen as the interplay of economic, socio-cultural and environmental aspects/. These impacts are already implicit in the preceding outline and may be summarized in the following fashion:

/a/ Economic impacts

- financial requirements /capital investments, operational costs, wages and salaries, environmental protection costs, etc./;
- manpower requirements; and
- inputs sought from other economic activities /either as intersectorial exchanges within a local, regional and national economy, or in the form of foreign trade/.

/b/ Socio-cultural impacts

- patterns of consumption, leisure, beliefs and of life attitudes in general introduced by foreign visitors into a local tourist-receiving community; and

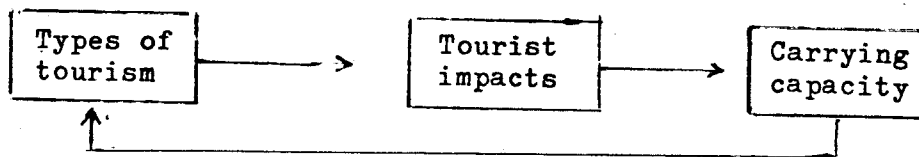
- visits paid by tourists to local historical and cultural assets, with the concomitant activities /taking not only of photographs but also of "souvenirs", display of behaviour not always respectful of either cultural, socio-political or religious significance of particular local monuments, etc./.

/c/ Environmental impacts

- patterns of land-use /both for the construction of facilities and supporting infrastructure and for the benefit of tourists pursuing leisure and other assorted activities/;
- pressures exerted upon particular ecological subsystems by means of various tourism-induced activities /waste disposal, fresh water consumption, hunting and fishing, mountaineering, etc./.

3. Types of Tourism

Following the definition of /i/ the carrying capacity of tourist areas and of /ii/ the corresponding tourist impacts, it is necessary to complete this working model with the addition of the types of tourism most common in the Mediterranean, so as to establish the logical and functionally useful interaction outlined below:



That is to say, the practical applicability of this approach lies in the fact that through the establishment of a feed-back loop from the "carrying capacity" box to the "types of tourism" box one gets into the position where he is able to use the carrying capacity concept as a tool by means of which to select those types of tourism /development/ which will be best suited to the given carrying capacity of particular tourist areas.

For this purpose, then, a cursory list of the types of the Mediterranean tourism could read as follows /i.e. denoting as "types" those forms of tourism which can be told apart on the basis of their spatial orientation and socio-economic integration/:

/a/ Coastal tourism

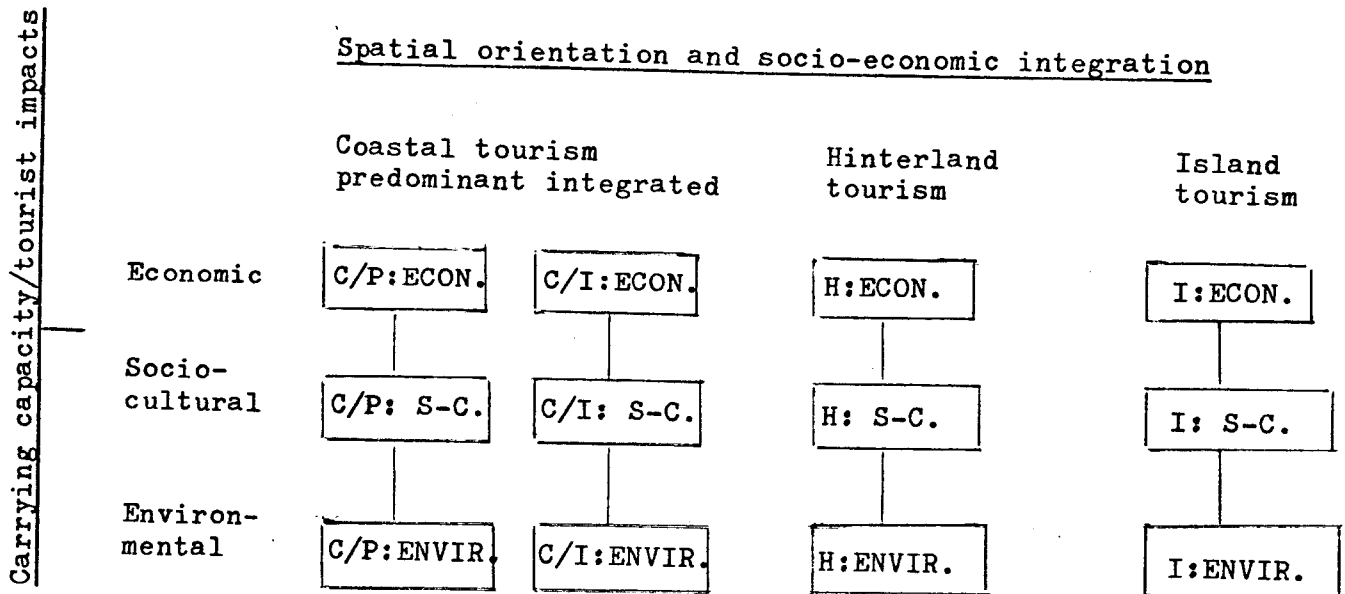
- promoted as the predominant economic activity within a particular area; and
- promoted along with other economic activities in an area.

/b/ Hinterland tourism /mostly promoted in the circumstances of economic underdevelopment and socio-cultural stagnation left behind in the littoralization drive/.

/c/ Island tourism /the situation is similar to that in hinterland areas, but in most cases it is aggravated by limited space and extremely precarious ecological balance of most island ecosystems/.

4. The Choice of Pilot Projects

On the basis of the preceding analytical steps it appears that this should not be too difficult an exercise. That is to say, by a simple integration of the previously ascertained categories it is possible to indicate the following pilot projects most likely to serve best the desired purpose:



Altogether, there are four aggregate pilot projects /encompassing all three categories of impacts within each type of tourism/, or twelve disaggregate pilot projects /referring to particular categories of impacts

within each type of tourism/. Therefore, various combinations of projects are possible, depending on specific needs /e.g. horizontal comparisons of different types of tourism as regards particular impacts upon recipient areas, or vertical comparisons of different impacts exerted by a particular type of tourism/.

Finally, since the basic purpose of such an exercise, according to the document /iii/ mentioned at the beginning, should be to suggest the conceptual approach and the kinds of projects with the help of which the interested Mediterranean states could submit some of their supranational/national/subnational projects /either past, present or future/ as case studies for the development of the Priority Actions Programme, it is hoped that this attempt might be found of some use.

* Political ones are also present, but these are left out being of a higher order and as such non-operational for the purpose of this discussion.

Zagreb, 5 December 1982