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**Irish model of sustainable tourism applied to developing
countries**

Master Thesis

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I declare in lieu of oath that I wrote this thesis myself. All information derived from the work of others has been acknowledged in the text and in a list of references is given.

Olomouc, March 30, 2014

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signature

Abstract

Tourism is possibly the fastest growing industry in the world, because the number of international arrivals grows every year. Tourism is an integral part of the life of citizens of the developed world. It is a possible source of economic growth for areas unsuited to industrial development, peripheral areas and for countries lacking natural resources. Tourism is, in some literature, called a “Marshall Plan for developing countries”.

Tourism in Ireland has had many social and economic benefits for the country’s development. It is an important sector of the economy in areas where employment in other industries is difficult. In particular, tourism has had a critical influence on rural development and economic growth.

This paper examines the concept that Ireland and developing countries have more in common than may be thought. The crucial point, which this work addresses, is to analyse the developmental path taken by an agricultural country, exemplified by Ireland, resulting in it becoming one of the richest countries in the world. This analysis is undertaken from the perspective of tourism development.

The purpose of this paper is to analyse the similarities which Irish tourism development has with tourism development in developing countries. The most important points in the history of Irish tourism are examined. The work also provides a description of the obstacles developing countries face in terms of tourism development. In conclusion, this paper proposes several examples of sustainable tourism practice which could be transferable from the Irish context to emerging countries.

Key words: tourism, sustainable tourism, Ireland, developing countries

Abstrakt

Cestovní ruch je pravděpodobně nejrychleji rostoucím průmyslem na světě, vzhledem ke každoročnímu nárůstu počtu turistů. Turismus je nedílnou součástí života obyvatel rozvinutých zemí. Je to možný zdroj ekonomického růstu pro oblasti, které jsou nevhodné k industriálnímu rozvoji, pro okrajové oblasti s obtížným přístupem k jádru a pro země, které neoplývají přírodními zdroji. V literatuře se cestovní ruch někdy pojmenovává jako “Marshallův plán pro rozvojové země”.

Pro Irsko byl cestovní ruch vždy v mnohém prospěšný pro rozvoj země. Je to významný ekonomický sektor v místech, kde je možnost zaměstnání v jiných oborech obtížná. V Irsku měl cestovní ruch především zásadní dopad na rozvoj venkova a na ekonomický růst státu.

Tato práce zkoumá myšlenku, že Irsko a rozvojové země mají mnoho společného, než je patrné na první pohled. Zásadním bodem, ke kterému se tato práce vztahuje, je zanalyzovat cestu rozvoje zemědělského státu, v tomto případě Irska, které se později stalo jednou z nejbohatších zemí na světě. Tato analýza bude provedena na příkladu cestovního ruchu.

Cílem práce je zanalyzovat podobnosti rozvoje cestovního ruchu v Irsku s rozvojem turismu v rozvojových zemích. Budou prozkoumány nejdůležitější události v historii rozvoje irského turismu. Práce také obsahuje popis překážek, kterým musí rozvojové země čelit při vlastním rozvoji cestovního ruchu. Na závěr jsou uvedeny návrhy několika postupů udržitelného cestovního ruchu v Irsku, které by mohly být použity v rozvojových zemích.

Klíčová slova: cestovní ruch, udržitelný cestovní ruch, Irsko, rozvojové země

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List of Abbreviations

3S tourism	sun-sand-sea tourism
AfDB	African Development Bank
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
BEN	Burren Ecotourism Network
EU	European Union
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment
GDP	Gross domestic product
GSTC	Global Sustainable Tourism Criteria
IGTOA	International Galapagos Tour Operators Association
IRA	Irish Republican Army
ITA	Irish Tourist Association
ITB	Irish Tourist Board
IUOTO	International Union of Official Travel Organizations
LDCs	Less developed countries
NGOs	Non-governmental organizations
NITB	Northern Ireland Tourist Board
NP	National park
ODA	Official development aid
SME	Small and medium enterprise
STEP	Sustainable Tourism-Eliminating Poverty
TIES	The International Ecotourism Society
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
UNDP	UN Development Programme
UNE	UN Environmental Programme
UNESCO	UN Educational, Scientific & Cultural Organization
UNWTO	UN World Tourism Organization

USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WB	World Bank
WTTC	World Travel and Tourism Council
WWF	World Wildlife Fund

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1 INTRODUCTION

When Ireland joined the European Union in 1976, it was one of the countries of the Community where agriculture was the predominant sector which contributed to the economy. In the intervening years, Ireland has become one of the most prosperous countries in the world, its economy transformed from a dependence on agriculture to one based on a successful tertiary sector. Nowadays, agriculture still plays an important role in the Irish economy but high technology industries, the pharmaceutical industry and tourism are the key activities which make the most significant contribution to Ireland's GDP.

For many developing countries agricultural production is still a predominant sector, with very many people dependent on it for their livelihoods. It also generates the highest revenues for the economy in the least developed countries. Besides agriculture, mining and services are the next biggest contributors to these economies. While tourism is, in almost every developing country, a major driver for government revenues, it is still, generally, very underdeveloped and underestimated by governments in the least developed countries.

This paper examines the concept that Ireland and developing countries have more in common than may be thought. The crucial point, which this work addresses, is to analyse the developmental path taken by an agricultural country, exemplified by Ireland, resulting in it becoming one of the richest countries in the world. This is achieved from the perspective of tourism development as the lens of analysis and through this lens the question of whether potential exists for developing countries to follow some steps taken by Ireland in the development of their own tourism potential is explored. The primary focus is, thus, on sustainable tourism development as a tool for growth.

The paper aims to first give a general introduction to the role of international tourism in the global economy. It then sets out to describe the development of Irish tourism, setting its development in the historical, political, geographical and social context of the country up to the mid-2000s. Chapter 6 describes and analyses the current strategies which Ireland has adopted for developing its tourism industry, focusing specifically on sustainable tourism in the case study of the Burren and Cliffs of Moher. Chapter 7 then analyses the development of tourism in less developed countries and the regional patterns of tourism are discussed. This chapter also includes a case study of Madagascar illustrating and highlighting important key points. The following chapter, chapter 8, identifies and discusses the constraints which hinder the development of sustainable tourism in LDCs. Throughout the research there is a clear focus on extracting and conceptualising themes which are evident from Ireland's experience and of applying the learning from these themes to the situation in LDCs. Consequently, the learning

from the analysis is synthesised in chapter 9, where conclusions are drawn based on the research and where recommendations are presented, with the intention that they may be of benefit to LDCs in developing sustainable tourism.

2 METHODOLOGY

2.1 Research objectives and methodology selection

Re-stating the research question, this work seeks to examine how Ireland’s experience in developing its tourist industry in a sustainable way may yield lessons which would be of benefit to less developed countries. Robson (2011) identifies four themes which underpin all research: exploratory; descriptive; explanatory and emancipatory. These themes are described in detail in Table 1.

Table 1: Outline of different types of research

Exploratory
To find out what is happening, particularly in little-understood situations
To seek new insights and ask questions
To assess phenomena in a new light
To generate ideas and hypotheses for future research
Almost exclusively of flexible design
Descriptive
To portray an accurate profile of persons, events or situations
Requires previous knowledge of situation for appropriate information gathering
May be flexible and/or fixed design
Explanatory
Seeks explanations traditionally but not always in the form of causal relationships
To explain patterns relating to the phenomenon being researched
To identify relationships between aspects of the phenomenon
May be flexible and/or fixed design
Emancipatory
To create opportunities and the will to engage in social action
Almost exclusively of flexible design

(Source: Robson, 2011)

The assumptions which are at the foundation of this work relate to how Ireland's experience and the nature of its context and development trajectory can be applicable to less developed countries (LDCs)¹. Consequently, this work falls into the categories of exploratory, descriptive and explanatory, with the accurate profiling of the countries being a significant descriptive component and the identification of relationships between the development of sustainable tourism and the steps which countries, and particularly Ireland, have taken. Therefore, it becomes evident that this work requires a significant corpus of description based on a range of sources of evidence.

Lijphart (1971:682) identified a number of different methodological approaches which have validity in research: experimental, statistical and case study methods. To these he also added the comparative method as being a method which validly and reliably may be used to interrogate and research a phenomenon. Thus, it becomes clear that comparative analysis is a methodology which has traction and acceptance as a means of conducting and framing research. The unit of analysis which is used in this research is that of the country bounds comparisons of political and social systems. It is such systems which support the development of sustainable tourism and it is for these reasons that this research adopts a comparative approach, comparing and contrasting Ireland and less developed countries.

The rationale for selecting Ireland is clear cut and has been mentioned in the Introduction to this thesis. First, Ireland offers an example which shares historical similarities with the colonial background of many less developed countries. Secondly, Ireland has had a development trajectory from an agrarian to a service-based economy, a trajectory which is akin to that to which less developed countries are aspiring. Thirdly, Ireland's political history, its war of independence and subsequent civil war, have many resonances with experiences from LDCs. Finally, Ireland is possessed of significant attributes which mean that it has the potential to develop a range of tourism opportunities, meaning that much may be learned from its experiences in attempting to do so.

2.2 Use of case studies

While this study compares a number of countries, one of the limitations which potentially may arise from such an approach is that of the analysis being constrained because it does not have depth. Therefore, this research has approached this issue by using a number of supporting case

¹ For the purposes of the thesis, the abbreviation LDCs means less developed countries, if not otherwise specified.

studies. These case studies enable the formation of a deeper understanding of the processes and elements which contribute to and hinder the development of sustainable tourism. The first case study may be found in chapter 6 and it deals with a specific region in Ireland, the Burren and Cliffs of Moher. For balance, a second case study is presented and this may be found in chapter 7. This case study deals with a developing country, Madagascar. One point of consideration is the decision to use a single country, Ireland, as the main basis for the analysis. Such an approach is referred to as “thick description” (Landman, 2008) and it is often used to confirm or to infer theory, usually based on a country’s history or specific context, such as is the case in this research.

2.3 Data sources

This paper is based upon academic research of relevant literature, related to tourism, sustainable tourism and tourism development in developing countries. It draws on a wide range of information sources, collecting data from peer-reviewed journal articles, printed books, electronic resources, newspaper articles, brochures and audio tracks. In addition, numerical data is drawn from a variety of databases such as the UNWTO Statistical division, WTTC and World Bank datasets as well as datasets drawn from national statistics agencies, such as the Irish Central Statistics Office (CSO). The paper includes graphs, tables, photos and additional figures, some of these are included in the text; the rest may be found in the appendices.

The case study of the Burren and Cliffs of Moher Geopark is based on several sources of information, including data gathered at the Sustainable Tourism Conference, held on 17 and 18 October 2013 in Ennistymon, Co. Clare, Ireland which I attended. In addition, I conducted primary research during a field trip study which took place contemporaneous to the conference.

2.4 Limitations of the methodology

One of the main limitations of the methodological approach which this research uses is that the researcher is intrinsically enmeshed within the data collection and analysis processes, becoming part of the fabric of the research. This means that there is a clear need for a researcher to *“engage in on-going self-reflection to ensure that they take personal biases, world-views, and assumptions into account while collecting, interpreting, and analysing data”* (Suddaby, 2006: 639). Thus, the first limitation of the methodology is that which arises from the researcher’s

own interpretation of the data. However, this limitation may be overcome by careful and objective analysis and reflection.

Notwithstanding the limitation mentioned above, the main limitation associated with this methodology is that which relates to confusion about the levels of analysis. This means that conclusions which may be drawn based on one unit of analysis may not be applicable at another level of analysis (Hantrais, 2009: 55). For example, an ecological fallacy is where an inference about, say a region, is derived based on data for a larger unit, such as a country. An individualistic fallacy is the opposite and it arises when inferences are drawn about larger units based on a smaller unit, a lesser level as it were. Thus, this work has endeavoured to choose carefully how it applied the lessons which were learned in one context to a different context. For that reason, the themes which emerged were examined to ensure that they had applicability in a different context. With such a careful approach to this work there is therefore confidence in its robust nature, its validity and its reliability.

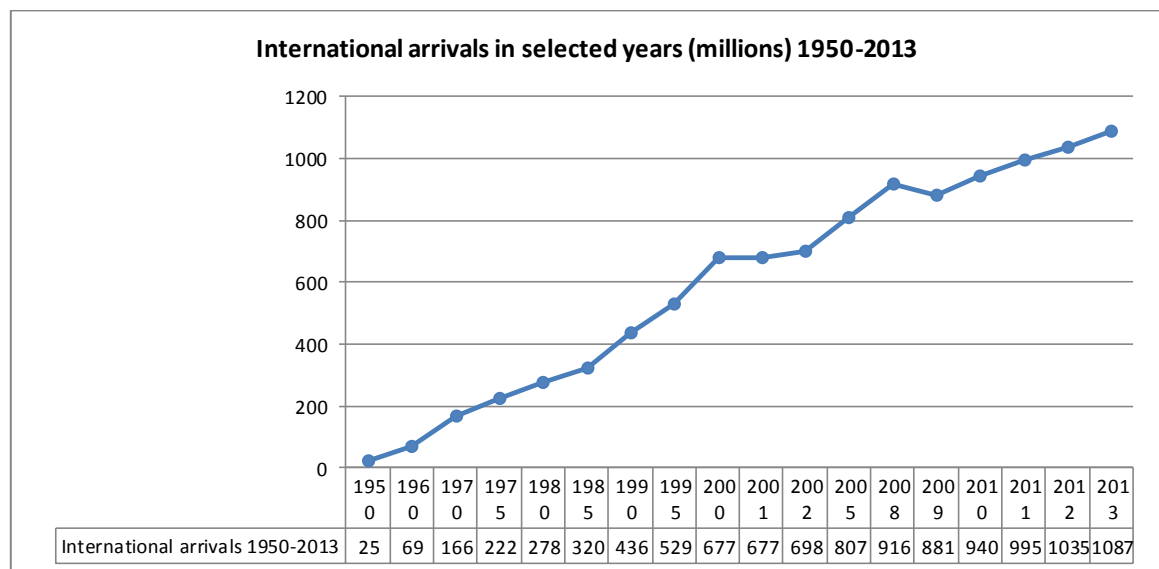
3 INTERNATIONAL TOURISM

According to the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), tourism is, globally, one of the largest economic sectors, a major source of employment and a key export sector. The UNWTO believes that tourism holds the potential to assist developing countries in poverty eradication. Tourism is a viable and sustainable option for many poor countries as a source of foreign capital (FDI).

The role of tourism in the global economy is described in the latest study from the UNWTO (2013). It states that tourism creates 9% of world GDP, 6% of world trade; and that every 11th person is employed in the travel and tourism sector. The total global export income produced by tourism was \$1.3 trillion, and represented 6% of exports of least developed countries (LDCs). It is therefore evident that tourism plays a significant role in the overall global economy as well as being an important component of the economies of LDCs.

One striking element of international tourism is the dramatic increase from 1950, when there were approximately 25 million international arrivals, to 980 million arrivals in 2010. In 2012, the total number of international tourists reached over one billion for a single year for the first time in history. In 2013, it was 1,087 million international tourists (UNWTO). The increase of tourists worldwide is shown in Graph 1.

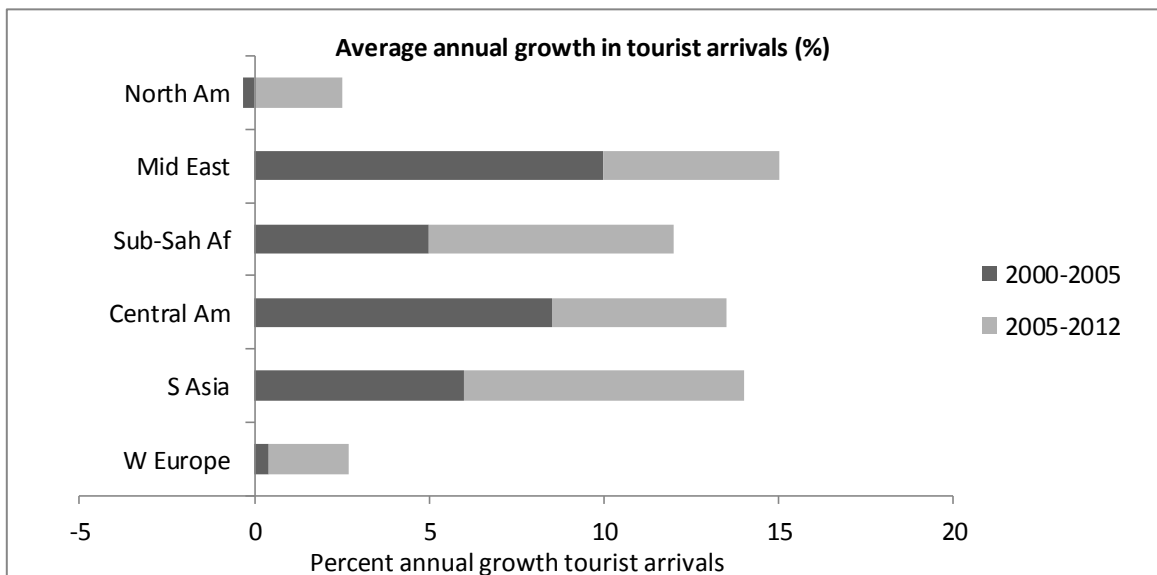
Graph 1: International arrivals in selected years 1950-2013



(Data collected from UNWTO Tourism Highlights 2013 and Tourism market Trends 2006)

Another five to six million tourists are estimated to travel within their own countries. It is estimated that between 2010 and 2030, emerging economies will, for the first time, receive more international tourist arrivals than advanced economies (UNWTO, 2013). Only several international events have had an impact which has resulted in a downturn in the growth of tourism in the post-war era. These events have included recessions in the 1980s and in 2008, the Gulf War in 1991 and the terrorist attacks of 2001. This indicates the robust nature of the growth trajectory in global tourism and suggests that the economic benefits associated with tourism should follow a similar robust growth path. Though Europe still receives most visitors, it has been South-east Asia from the 1980s and the Middle East along with African countries from the 1990s which have experienced rapid average annual growth of international tourist arrivals. This represents a shift in tourism patterns from traditional markets to emerging markets in developing countries. Whereas tourist arrivals in advanced economies grow annually by 2.5% on average, arrivals into emerging economies grow by 5% (during the period 2005-2012). More significant are the differences within regions. For comparison, Graph 2 shows the annual growth in selected regions during two periods.

Graph 2: The average annual growth of tourist arrivals



(Source: UNWTO Tourism Highlights 2006 and 2013)

Graph 2 is showing the annual growth of tourist arrivals in selected regions during two monitored periods; between 2000 and 2005 and between 2005 and 2012. It is clear from the graph, that regions of the developing world were growing more significantly than countries of advanced economies, such as Western Europe and North America. North America experienced a decline in tourist arrivals during 2000 and 2005. It is evident that tourists visit developing

regions more than the developed. This means that tourism has large potential to contribute to the economies of developing countries and to help them grow.

4 SUSTAINABLE TOURISM

Sustainable tourism is not a special form of tourism; it is a concept within the tourism industry which has been developing over the last two decades. Like sustainable development, the aim of sustainable tourism is to ensure that all three pillars of sustainability (economic, environmental and social prosperity) will be reached and that development brings positive effects to local communities, as well as for tourists themselves, without threatening the natural resources.

Among the first definitions of sustainable tourism was that suggested by Butler (1993, in Butler 1999), who characterises the term as:

Tourism which is developed and maintained in an area (community, environment) in such a manner and at such a scale that it remains viable over an indefinite period and does not degrade or alter the environment (human and physical) in which it exists to such a degree that it prohibits the successful development and well-being of other activities and processes.

However, Butler and some other researchers contested the use of the term “sustainable”, arguing that potentially any tourism, even mass tourism, can be sustainable, if managed in an appropriate way within sustainable settings (Weaver, 1998). Moreover, from a pragmatic viewpoint, mass tourism will not disappear and the trend does not rule out that any form of sustainable tourism may become a mass tourism too. Weaver (1998) also points out, that alternative forms of tourism opposed to mass tourism could theoretically include sex-tourism, illegal hunting expeditions or exclusive resort enclaves. All of these forms of tourism deepen the negative impact on the host society and the destination.

Following the premises of sustainable development, UNWTO (2005) characterised sustainable tourism as:

Tourism that takes full account of its current and future economic, social and environmental impacts, addressing the needs of visitors, the industry, the environment and host communities.

Of particular importance in this definition is the inclusive nature of how the needs of visitors, industry, the environment and host communities are conceived. However, the language which the definition uses has some weaknesses as it requires sustainable tourism to only take account, rather than to specifically take action.

UNESCO (2010) uses the definition given below:

Sustainable tourism is tourism that respects both local people and the traveller, cultural heritage and the environment.

The UNESCO definition is well aligned to the UNWTO definition in its principled approach. However, in introducing the concept of respect and the implicit understanding that each of those, local people, travellers, and the environment, mentioned in the definition have rights, there is an apparent lack of clarity around how those rights should be balanced if they were to fall into conflict.

One approach of helping local authorities to better understand and operationalise sustainable tourism is that taken by the UNWTO which has worked on several guidebooks for local authorities to develop sustainable tourism. According to the UNWTO, the principles to develop tourism in a sustainable way are:

- Make optimal use of natural sources, maintaining natural ecological processes, and helping to conserve natural heritage and biodiversity
- Respect the socio –cultural heritage of host communities, conserve their living environment, traditional values and contribute to inter-cultural tolerance
- Ensure viable, long-lasting economic growth, providing socio-economic benefits which are fairly distributed among all stakeholders, stable employment and income-earning opportunities, and contribute to poverty alleviation

(UNWTO, 2005)

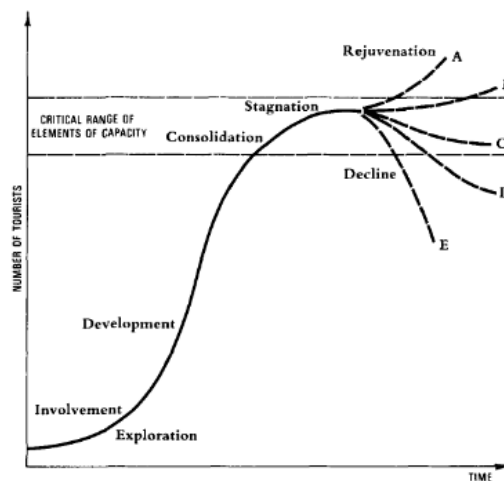
Sustainable tourism development requires participation from all stakeholders in decision-making processes. It should also provide satisfactory experiences for tourists and help to raise awareness about environmental and cultural issues of the host communities. Sustainable tourism development is a long process and it is necessary to constantly monitor and evaluate the impacts of tourist activities in the areas and to introduce preventative measures when necessary.

Sustainable tourism is characterised by alternative activities attracting the tourists (mostly nature-related activities), having educational purpose; and small or medium-size types of accommodation, such as guest houses, bed and breakfast, cottages, and farms. In addition, local products are prioritized over imported goods. The areas where sustainable development is practiced are protected from overgrazing. These areas use, instead, a controlled harvest, sustainable agricultural methods and commercial farming, such as bee-keeping. The social benefits of sustainable tourism relate to the effects arising from increased public awareness about cultural and environmental issues. Indeed, education is a key tool in the arsenal of those who promote and use sustainable tourism. By influencing, through education, how people relate

to the area which they are visiting the practitioners of sustainable tourism are ensuring that elements of respect which are inherent to the definitions already discussed remain at the core of the tourist experience. Additionally, education has the added benefit that it has persuasive power to influence how those who experience sustainable tourism behave subsequently. For example, they may find themselves more inclined to seek other similar tourist experiences as well as more aware, at a policy level, of the benefits of supporting sustainable policies.

In Butler's sequence of his famous publication *Tourist Area Lifecycle* (1980) there is a clear path which destinations tend to take during their development and this is shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Tourist Destination Lifecycle



(Butler: *The Concept of a Tourist Area Cycle of Evolution*, 1980)

The authenticity of the destination may be included in the first two stages. These two stages are very common for tourism in developing countries. *Exploration* and *involvement stages* are defined by a high degree of relationship between locals and visitors, and thus a basic tourist market is organised. When a destination reaches a *development stage*, tourism development becomes very fast, with a rapid decline of local control over the industry as more external organizations are involved. In the following stages, the number of tourists exceeds the number of the local population, and the destination becomes heavily dependent on the flow of tourists, resulting eventually in the destination becoming unattractive for visitors.

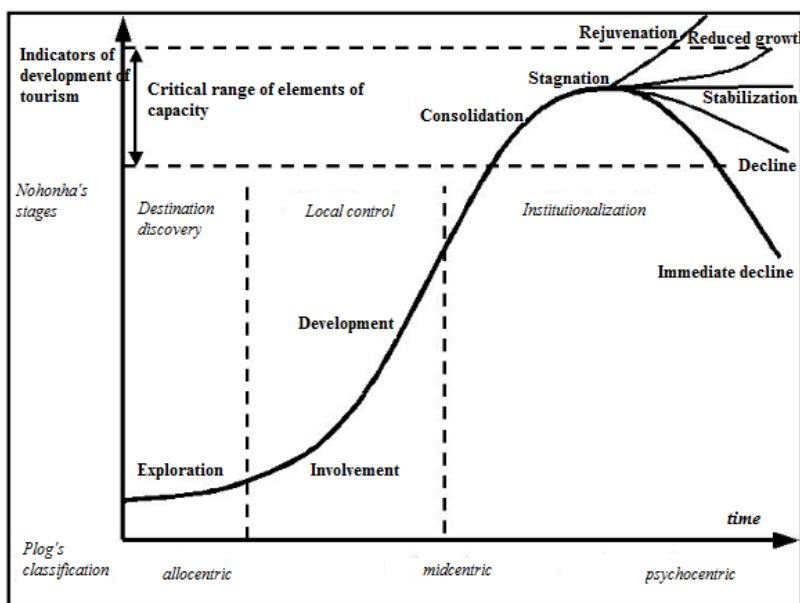
In the main, the absence of mass tourism is usually due to factors such as isolation from tourist markets, inadequate infrastructure, and a lack of accommodation facilities. So, there is a difference between circumstantial and deliberate tourism. Deliberate sustainable tourism takes a long-term view and it places the interest of the local community at the centre of the decisions which are made. For example, such tourism is prepared to forego the benefits associated with rapid growth in tourist numbers if such growth would be detrimental to the community or the

environment (Weaver, 1998). On the other hand, Butler (1980) avers that all forms of tourism are a source of change for a host community. The aim of sustainable tourism is to ensure that these changes will have a positive impact on the local society.

Butler's hypothesis is a good tool for predicting tourism development in a mass-tourism destination. It is difficult to use the model for sustainable tourism destination as such destinations do not undergo last stages of stagnation and decline. However, it is geographic context and socio-economic and political environments what determines the changes in the tourist destination life cycle. Some critics also argue that the Butler's concept lacks several factors which influence the stage of development. Among these factors are: diversification of the destinations, selection of indicators of changes in a destination, absence of time intervals for each stage, specification of geographical unit. The limited use of the model for planning tourism development and monitoring of the impacts of tourism are other arguments against the model.

For sustainable tourism destinations, the character of tourists and carrying capacity are the crucial segments of the management of the destination. Destination life cycle connects with the concept of carrying capacity and the pace of the destination development. Tooman (1997, in Pásková, 2009) says that the economic benefits of tourism activities for the host community after the *involvement stage* can only occur if the destination development is controlled and the economic diversification of the region is preserved. The admissible employment of the territory is then the crucial indicator of sustainability of a destination. Figure 2 shows changes to Butler's concept according to Pásková (2009) when the destination's development is influenced by the type of tourist.

Figure 2: Tourist Destination Lifecycle with a predominant type of tourists



(Source: Pásková, 2009- compilation of Butler (1980), Noronha (1976), Plog (1973))

To develop a sustainable tourism destination you have to balance the effects of tourism activities with the environment. This is a process of finding the best possible compromise between the benefits of tourism and minimisation of the impact. This is called tourism impact optimisation and is achieved through destination management, public enlightenment, community involvement in tourism, constant monitoring of tourism impacts, assessment of degree of carrying capacity and coordination among destination stakeholders at all levels.

Monitoring is managed with the help of sustainable tourism indicators, developed by UNWTO in 1992 (Pásková, 2009). There are ten indicators which are divided into two groups. *Key indicators* can be used for every destination; and these are elements such as protected areas, social impacts, intensity of use, waste management or customer satisfaction. Specific indicators are developed for specific destinations, such as small islands, protected areas, mountain regions or coastal areas. The impact of tourism development is measured by quantitative and qualitative data and indicators. Use of the indicators can prevent undesirable situation at the destination. Among deliberate tools of sustainable tourism belong Eco labelling and certification.

4.1 Types of alternative tourism

There are several types and many variations of sustainable travel developed during recent years. The most widely known approach towards sustainable tourism, which is currently very popular, is *ecotourism*. Ecotourism shares similar goals to sustainable tourism: environmental protection, and the well-being of local people who benefit from tourist activities. But it generally may be described as any form of holiday in natural surroundings which has a minimal impact on the environment. Because of this broad definition, other sub-categories have been used: geotourism, nature-based tourism, pro-poor tourism, adventure tourism, agro-tourism etc. Most of them have the same core purpose but still slightly differ.

The first attempt to define ecotourism was by a Mexican conservationist, Héctor Ceballos-Lascuaráin in 1983. Because of dissension in the interpretation of ecotourism there was a period where there was much contested discussion and ten years later the term was revised to:

Ecotourism is environmentally responsible travel and visitation to relatively undisturbed natural areas, in order to enjoy, study, and appreciate nature (and any accompanying cultural features – both past and present), that promotes conservation, has low negative visitor impact, and provides for beneficially active socio-economic involvement of local populations.

(Ceballos-Lacuaráin, 1996)

This definition was adopted by many governments, NGOs, scientists, and international organizations.

The International Ecotourism Society (TIES, 1990) defines ecotourism as:

Responsible travel to natural areas that conserves the environment and improves the well-being of local people.

Both definitions of ecotourism say the same in general, and they both can be found in the literature. Although they both have a positive meaning, the definition given by Ceballos-Lacuaráin is more scientific, seeing nature as a subject of research, and as such it has greater power in providing a frame for research and analysis. On the other hand, the TIES definition is more readily accessible and understandable by the lay reader.

Ecotourism is based on the existence of a network of protected areas where specific activities related to nature are offered, such as bird-watching, safari, caving, trekking; and where nature-focused products exist: Eco lodges, and campsites. Even the most ecologically aware traveller while travelling to remote areas will contribute to CO₂ emissions from their use of air transport, and resulting ozone depletion and other environmental damages. So, while ecotourism has a positive impact on the local environment and community tourists need to be concerned about the means of transport while travelling on ecotourism holidays.

A concept under sustainable tourism is *responsible tourism*, sometimes called *ethical tourism*. Responsible tourists are aware of the potential dangers associated with their activities and the likely impact on the environment and the host communities, and so they choose activities with minimal impact. They inform themselves before travel, they are familiar with the laws of the host country, such as any ban on trafficking of wildlife, and cultural artefacts. These travellers usually seek ecotourism activities, support local producers, and prefer to use public transport if available.

Community-based tourism is another form of sustainable tourism activity. It is a form of tourism where activities are managed and promoted by the community itself and so too is the conservation of the resources on which the people are directly or indirectly dependent. Use of local knowledge is a very important attribute of such service.

So, both responsible and community-based tourism are beneficial forms of tourism. This is because the local community is involved in tourism business, receiving a fair income. Travellers are conscious about maintain a clean environment and authentic culture and this encourages the locals to preserve their natural and cultural heritage.

UNWTO promoted the year 2002 as the International Year of Ecotourism, which put a spotlight on the benefits of ecotourism from a global perspective. The main event of the year was the World Ecotourism Summit held in Québec, Canada, where the *Québec Declaration on Ecotourism* was designed. The report from the summit comprises the guidelines and methods for ecotourism development.

In 2002, at the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg, tourism was given importance in regards to Agenda 21. As a side event of the summit, the Cape Town Conference on Responsible Tourism in Destinations took place where the delegates agreed the Cape Town Declaration. The principles for economic, social, and environmental responsibility of tourism were set down. The aim of the agreement was to “*create better places for people to live in, and better places to visit*” (City of Cape Town, 2014). Thus, sustainable tourism has been characterised as:

- Minimising negative economic, environmental, and social impacts
- Generating greater economic benefits for local people and enhancing the well-being of host communities, improving working conditions and access to the industry
- Involving local people in decisions that affect their lives and life chances
- Making positive contributions to the conservation of natural and cultural heritage, and to the maintenance of the world's diversity
- Providing more enjoyable experiences for tourists through more meaningful connections with local people, and a greater understanding of local cultural, social and environmental issues
- Providing access for physically challenged people
- Being culturally sensitive, engendering respect between tourists and hosts, and building local pride and confidence.

(Cape Town Declaration, 2002)

In 2007, with the cooperation of more than 80 multinational agencies, non-governmental organizations, experts and companies worldwide, a Global Sustainable Tourism Criteria (GSTC) was set up. The GSTC is a set of guidelines defining sustainable tourism and setting a minimum standard of sustainability for tourism businesses across the globe. It encourages stakeholders’ participation, tourism awareness, local community opinion, monitoring, supporting local entrepreneurs and fair trade among other in terms of successful sustainable tourism development.

5 HISTORY OF IRISH TOURISM

This chapter provides an overview of the history of tourism development in Ireland. Tourism has played a significant role in Irish culture, society and economy for well over a century. Nowadays, it is a crucial component of the Irish economy and a part of Irish life. During its evolution, the tourism sector in Ireland has faced many events which the tourism authorities were unable to counter. This chapter serves as an example of the obstacles developing countries might experience and how these obstacles may be addressed during the development of tourism.

5.1 Early development and decline of tourism

In the early stages, tourism in Ireland was shaped by the technological innovations in transport due to the Industrial Revolution in Great Britain. Industrialisation created a new class of urban workers searching for escape from their everyday environment (Furlong, 2009). Development of a railway network in 1830s had an enormous impact on people's ideas about travelling. Trains were a cheap, fast and reliable means of transport. The first railway in Ireland linked Dublin with the seaside district of Kingstown (now Dun Laoghaire). The expansion of railways during the 1850s and 1860s helped to extend the holiday resorts and development of a chain of railway hotels. The railway connection to the seaside town of Bray in 1854 was a starting point for further development as an elegant destination for one-day travellers from the capital Dublin. The place became popular because of its location just 10 miles (approximately 16 kilometres) south of the city and was important for the further development of the area by tours and excursions by foreigners.

So at this initial stage, tourist traffic was made up only of natives and visitors from Britain. The advances of steamships facilitated tourists from the other side of the Atlantic. By the end of the nineteenth century the rapid growth of boat and steamer services operating on the lakes and rivers of Ireland helped to connect all counties up to Belfast and Derry and linked the ports with railways. Consequently, transportation around the island became more accessible.

Another era came with the introduction of cars at the beginning of the twentieth century. It was necessary to develop a proper road system to attract more visitors. However, with the increasing number of motorists the conditions of roads were inadequate and significant amounts of money were spent on maintenance instead of developing new roads. Nevertheless, motor transport played an important part for tourists in exploring rural and remote parts of Ireland and it attracted a new class of tourists. It is evident from this discussion that infrastructure and the

availability of transport played vital roles in both bringing people to the country and enabling them to travel around the country.

Unlike Britain, Ireland did not have a large enough middle-class which could supply sufficient demand for domestic tourism. The country's tourism was significantly dependent on visitors from abroad. Ireland did not have any major resorts of international reputation and so the attractiveness to tourists consisted of natural sites, such as the Giant's Causeway on the Antrim coast, the highlands of Donegal, the lakes of Fermanagh and the lakes of Killarney. Moreover, Ireland was under British rule and the promotion of tourist attractions was highly exceptional. Ireland at that time faced a number of disadvantages. Apart from a tremendous dependence on foreign visitors, and its isolation from mainland Europe, it suffered from an absence of well-known attractions, insufficient accommodation and transport facilities, and the image of a politically unstable country. Frederick W. Crossley, founder of the Irish Tourist Development Association, realized the importance of advertising and in 1894 established a monthly journal, the *Irish Tourist*. Its aims were “to make better known to the world Ireland's charm and beauty, and to attract multitudinous visitors (Furlong, 2009: 20).” Ireland suffered from a poor image of being an undeveloped and violent country at that time, an issue which is relevant for some developing countries.

The visit of Queen Victoria in 1861 and again in 1900 received attention in newspapers all over the world. The authorities became interested in the tourism industry and for the event new hotels were built, the transport system was improved and other facilities provided. But the queen herself noted that the visits were signs of duty, not an amusement. Nevertheless, it was definitely a positive result for the country. If a “celebrity” visits or endorses a destination it is great marketing for a country to become popular. The visit of Edward VII in 1903 meant again great hopes for increasing the number of tourists into Ireland. Unfortunately, he did not receive warm welcome from the nationalists. The mood in Irish society against royalist and representatives of British rule started to endanger the tourism potential of the country.

Despite State support to exploit the potential of tourism circumstances in Europe and later in Ireland led to catastrophic effects on the beginning of the tourism industry. In 1914 World War I broke out in Europe and British visitors stopped arriving to Ireland. There was practically no cross-channel traffic and tourist exchange was happening solely between the Northern Province and the south of Ireland. Civil unrest, followed by Civil War in 1916, and later by the War of Independence was the most destructive time for the country until the establishment of Irish Free State in 1922. In that time, roads and bridges were blown up, hotels closed down and much of the railway network was destroyed. During that time the population suffered from deep poverty. In 1922, the Anglo-Irish Treaty was signed which resulted in the Republic of Ireland being in

economic war with Great Britain and as a result any tourism development was abandoned. The civil unrest continued after independence, which deterred potential visitors, and the country suffered from a lack of investment. The key point here is that stability and a lack of civil unrest are important elements in supporting a tourist industry, a theme which resonates with the experiences of other countries globally.

5.2 New beginning

The first initiative after the establishment of the new state was a private conference held in 1924 by individuals with a vision for a new beginning for the tourism industry. The country suffered from a high unemployment rate, with associated poverty and it seemed that tourism was a potential solution for these problems. The only organisation with governmental approval was the Irish Tourist Association (ITA), set up in 1926. It was an official agency responsible for tourism promotion with its own executive committee, a finance committee, and general purposes committee (Furlong, 2009). The members - railway companies, shipping lines, hoteliers, or commercial concerns among all - paid five pounds per year, as the organisation did not receive any state support. It was a very hard time for tourism development. The committee addressed the industry's problems as follows: shortage of accommodation, lack of improvements and coordination of facilities, and the standard of modern hotel management. Also the image of the country abroad was crucial for attracting more visitors. There was a strong will from the representatives of the association to make tourism a national issue.

By that time, the main focus was on visitors coming from Britain and North America. In 1929, a group of twenty press representatives from Europe, the United States, Japan, Australia, South America and Africa was invited on a visit of primary tourist centres (Furlong, 2009). The visit was intended to lead to promotion and better understanding between Ireland and other countries. The association put a large effort into promoting Ireland by publishing travel literature and maps, and during 1930's ITA opened offices in London, New York, Chicago and San Francisco. What is also interesting is the fact, that Ireland promoted itself abroad as a united island, denying the existence of a separated province, whereas British representatives found this attitude highly unacceptable. What was crucial for the Irish tourism industry was to identify target markets and their expectations. The learning from this is just as valid today as it is crucial that developing countries also engage in marketing in a strategic manner in order to develop tourist potential.

In the 1930s Ireland was hit by enormous unemployment due to the effects of the recession in the USA. The downturn of American tourists meant it became necessary to promote the importance of domestic tourism. As the circumstances of the 1930s did not allow many people

to take holidays, the government recommended the establishment of holiday saving clubs for workers, organized by the ITA. Companies under a piece of Irish legislation, the Employment Act, provided to their employees one week of paid holidays in state-owned resorts, an example of how State-sponsored policies can assist with the development of tourism.

Between 1925 and 1936 the number of British tourists began to increase. In 1936, the first air service between the Irish Free State and Britain began and it seemed that a new era in tourism was about to begin. The tourism industry became a major industry after agriculture in Ireland, but it still did not receive any central state funding. The government considered some policy options, such as the recognition of Irish culture in order to attract more visitors from the United States. However, the number and standard of accommodation was still inadequate, hotels lacked trained staff and guides, and the state did not provide adequate signposting of roads and to the tourist sites. Although, there were plans for new legislation for the industry, the events in Europe in 1938 and 1939 interrupted the promising changes in tourism development in the country once again.

5.3 Years of the Emergency

During the Second World War Ireland was officially neutral, which put the country into isolation. If domestic tourism was only a part of the income generated by the tourism industry, now was the time when the state had to revert to its promotion. Holiday saving clubs filled up the gap after the British and Americans during the war years, and had an enormous effect on the industry. Because of an increasing number of tourists in holiday resorts, new hotels, guesthouses and hostels were opening. Under a Tourist Traffic bill, a new institution, the Irish Tourist Board (ITB), was established. This body carried responsibility for regulation, registration and control in matters of tourist traffic. The Board operated under the control of the Minister for Industry and Commerce. This marks the first foray into the realm of direct State involvement in controlling tourism development, and consequently meant that there would be a beginning focus on policy issues related to tourism.

As international events had an effect on tourism, President De Valera ended the economic war with Britain by signing the Anglo-Irish Agreement in 1938. However, the IRA was still operating, and its actions culminated in several explosions across Britain in 1939. The damage to tourists' perceptions and the promotion of Ireland as a holiday destination was very significant. Many British travel agencies refused to advertise Irish promotional brochures. The IRA raised the unfriendly atmosphere in the society by painting anti-English slogans: "*Down*

with England”, or “*We want no uninvited guests*” (Furlong, 2009). According to hoteliers across Ireland, business fell by 50%. This exemplifies the effect that social and political stability can have on tourism in a country.

During the War hoteliers had to deal with shortages of essential goods, such as soap, meat, butter, alcohol or fuel (Furlong, 2009). These goods were possible to obtain on the black market, and as a result this increased the prices of holidays. A similar situation happened with shortages of essential raw materials which made transport very difficult. Shortages of fuel and widespread unemployment led to increased interest in hiking and cycling. These activities became fashionable at the beginning of the 1940s. Despite the difficult times, the Free State did not stop promoting the country to potential visitors, now focusing on its neighbour, Northern Ireland. Campaigns were broadcast on radios focusing on tourists looking for relaxation. The tenth celebration of St Patrick's Day in 1941 was a great success as all major hotels in Dublin were occupied by visitors from the North (Furlong, 2009). Similarly, with Northern Ireland being in war, the officials from Ulster Tourist Development Association turned their concentration on visitors coming from the Free State.

In 1942, the president requested the Ministry of Industry and Commerce to revise plans for national development and to prepare the list of schemes for post-war development. Tourism was among the priority projects, with an emphasis on promoting the scenic beauty of Ireland. This step was also based on a survey in 26 counties initiated by ITA. The purpose of the survey was to gather all tourist information in each county, such as historic sites, accommodation, sporting facilities, and customs. This information was provided to foreign travel agencies and Irish diplomats in order more easily promote the country to visitors. Tourism was seen as the only way to develop these areas, where agriculture could not achieve a sufficient level, and in parts of the country where “Gaeltacht” language and authentic traditional Irish life could be seen. The underpinning approach to support the development of tourism was one which was driven by data, the data being that which was collected about each county. Indeed, there is much to be said about the benefits of having good quality information which can help to promote the country among domestic and foreign tourists, as well as contributing to a strategic approach to planning, marketing and development.

5.4. Tourism boom

The end of war brought a tremendous arrival of tourists from Great Britain, which in the literature is called “*a flood of Brits*”. Surprisingly, these tourists did not arrive to relax or

admire scenery, but came in search of food, drinks and supplies of clothes. Moreover, Americans and other soldiers were waiting to return home and for many of them it was their first visit to Ireland. Such circumstances helped to show Ireland as friendly and hospitable place.

The boom lasted over the next five years. The increasing number of visitors, on the other hand, caused problems with shortages of suitable accommodation which put off visitors from returning. Some commentators also expressed concerns about the fact, that this heavy-tourism spending would have an impact on prices, and thus increase living costs (Irish Times, 1946, in Furlong 2009). Among citizens, tourism was not seen as positively as it was before war. Others who were opposed to tourism claimed that Irish culture and tradition could be threatened by the number of tourists.

The late 1940s meant extensive competition in tourism, as European countries invested heavily in industry after the war. Despite Ireland's neutrality in the Second World War, the country received a loan of 10 million dollars under the terms of the Marshall Plan. Tourism was chosen because it was the largest single dollar earning source and because 1950 was a pilgrim year and it was expecting to attract visitors (Furlong, 2009). In 1950, the sixteenth General Assembly of the International Union of Official Travel Organisations (IUOTO) was held in Dublin. The event attracted great media attention. The association represented 39 countries around the world and in Dublin nearly one hundred delegates discussed a tourism framework for the international level.

Meanwhile, it was more than clear that Scotland would be the major rival in terms of attractiveness for tourists. Both nations had similarities in their cuisine and landscape, however with improved accommodation and service improvements because of an emphasis on hotel school management in Scotland it appeared that Scotland had the upper hand. This was particularly the case because the lack of trained staff was a big disadvantage for Ireland.

Hotels had lacked educated staff before the war, thus after some discussion the first school of catering was opened in 1940. It was St Mary's College of Domestic Science. After the war, when more and more British tourists were coming, the ITB decided to run new training courses for hotels employees. After the hotel associations' representatives' visit to training centres in Switzerland and UK during 1947, an agreement with the Swiss government about a staff training exchange was arranged. In the next few years similar agreements were made with France and the Netherlands. Having successful results with educating hotel staff, an initiative at Shannon airport led to the establishment of the Shannon Airport Catering Service Staff Training in 1951, providing daily courses and exchange with Swiss hotels. This training centre was later changed to the Shannon College of Hotel Management, the first school of its kind in the

country. The fundamental point here, and one which continues to have relevance as the hotel management school in Shannon continues to operate today, is that high-quality customer service requires a professional approach to training and educating those working in the industry. The Shannon College currently has exchange training centres in countries such as Zambia, Seychelles, the Maldives and Vietnam.

5.5 Years of recognition

In the post-war period the importance of tourism was significant. It was clear that tourism provided long-term potential for the national economy. Moreover, tourism replaced emigrants' remittances as the country's largest source of dollars (Furlong, 2009). This fact was very important for the government as it was considering how to pay off the loan received under the Marshall Plan. While the state recognised the value of tourism it was necessary to consider new needs, legislation and promotion policy for the industry. The need for repayment of funds led to the decisions to exploit Ireland's advantages in the US market with an effective marketing campaign. The proposals were to show images of modern Irish life, far away from the words "lazy", "dirty" and "inefficient". Groups involved in Irish tourism were invited on a joint tour to the USA early in 1950 in order to research potential improvements which could be made in the industry. However, American views about Ireland were not positive. Almost the whole area of the midlands and east coast, except Dublin, were found to be unattractive for Americans. The accommodation with proper hygiene standards was insufficient as well as landing conditions in some airports. For example, it is reported that in the early 1950s there were only twelve rooms in hotels in Dublin with a bath (Zuelow, 2009). The recommendations in the report from the US research visit included the development of car-hire facilities, improving the signposting of places of interest and solving problems with tipping. In 1952, a new statutory body An Board Fáilte was established, responsible for development and operations of tourism industry. The key here is to know who Ireland wanted to bring to the country and after the survey they managed to develop the infrastructure which the visitors required. Thanks to this the country was able to attract more tourists and increase the revenues from tourism.

In tandem with the overall tourism development there was a call for off-season tourist activities. An Tóstal (translated into English as "*Ireland at Home*") was a spring cultural festival designed to attract preferably Irish-American tourists. The aim was to promote Irish life, hospitality and the charm of the nation through cultural and sporting events around the country. The main festival was based in Dublin, but other towns and cities all over Ireland were involved too. Many sport clubs, churches and community organisations, and also politicians participated in

the programme. How big the expectations of the festival were is illustrated by the example of Prime Minister Éamon de Valera who participated in the opening ceremony in Cork, even though he had not been a convinced supporter of the tourism industry during his presidency in the 1920s. The first festival was launched on Easter Sunday in April 1953. Around 170 organisations across the country organised the programme. However, it was not the success the government had hoped for, moreover the press did not help when a small number of events were criticised. Despite the failure and critique, the state representatives pointed out the awakening sense of community cooperation and all preparations for the festival definitely had an effect on people's awareness of tourism importance in the economy. The festival was organised for several years but never attracted really significant number of American tourists. On the other hand, thanks to the angling competitions organised in towns for the festival there was a demand for cheap accommodation, which led to establishment of Bed and Breakfast, an alternative type of accommodation to the hotels (Furlong, 2009). Also many amateur theatre and music festivals (Dublin Theatre Festival, Waterford Festival of Light Opera) attracting thousands of visitors nowadays have their origin at An Tóstal. The festival also helped people to realize the uniqueness and value of their own culture. The level of authenticity is very important for tourists travelling to developing countries. However, to keep that level, local people have to have pride in their own culture which can share with visitors.

The importance of tourism also meant the need to preserve and protect the natural environment and historical and cultural heritage. ITB worked on producing souvenirs of good standard and design. The cooperation of the tourist board with craftsmen, manufacturers and retailers resulted in the production of new types of souvenirs designed in harmony with Irish culture and history. Souvenir shops were opened in other airports outside Dublin and in some tourist places. Other progress in the souvenir industry was a collection of the first mass-produced postcards by British photographer John Hinde. His famous photographs *Six views of Ireland* in 1957 portraying rural Ireland as a paradise country, became a marketing image from that time (Furlong, 2009). The souvenir industry was a significant contributor to national economy by the end of 1950s.

In 1957 tourism was bad on both sides of the island, as the IRA's activities were receiving worldwide publicity. The tourist traffic between North and south also stopped. The Suez crisis led to increasing petrol prices and it decimated the tourist season of motoring holidays and coach tours.

5.6 The Golden era of the 1960s

The 1950s was a time of investments, improvements and better organization of the tourism industry. In the 1960s the trend of increasing interest in travelling were being encouraging. Although, from the 1960s civil disputes among unionists, nationalists and people of the Free State grew stronger, they did not affect the incoming visitor numbers much.

Despite the establishment of several training centres, there was still a constant lack of qualified hotel staff. Other improvements in tourist facilities were necessary to ensure continued growth and prosperity. The range of sports activities had to be increased; and access to places of interest (signposts, roads) provided as well as development of location outside of the major resorts. Ireland was attracting visitors with purpose – scenic beauty, ancient monuments, sport activities, and culture. To attract further visitors it was necessary to extend the range of available activities and ensure that Ireland appealed to a broader international market.

Conference travel was an area which experienced a significant increase in growth. It exclusively took place in Dublin, but the development of incentive holidays was exactly the kind of business the tourist board was seeking. Major companies offered their best employees and their partners a bonus holiday stay. The visitors were mostly tourists in off-season and such holiday offers were located in other parts of the country, outside Dublin. The number of visitors coming to Ireland for the purpose of conferences or incentive holidays rose steadily until the early 1970s. Surprisingly, conference travel was less affected by problems in Northern Ireland than holiday tourists.

Motor traffic between Ireland and United Kingdom increased enormously and both countries heavily invested in improvements to their car ferries and roads. New car ferry routes were opened: Cork – Swansea, Dublin- Liverpool; and also routes between Ireland and France: Rosslare - Le Havre. On existing routes Holyhead – Dun Laoghaire and Fishguard – Rosslare extra car space was added, as well as on Aer Lingus air ferry. For passengers without cars, coach services were introduced connecting Ireland with Paris and Glasgow.

Development of inland waterways was another initiative during the tourism boom. The rivers were used for fishing and holiday cruises. This type of business had a great effect on the development of the midland regions. Suddenly, there was a demand for accommodation, boats, roads and other facilities. However, with the growing number of services provided on the waterways, pollution of fishery resources was growing too. Thus, there is much benefit which can accrue from having a planned approach to tourism rather than allowing it develop in an uncoordinated manner, and then suffer the negative effects as described here.

Having known that tourists were coming to Ireland with purpose, the tourist board stressed the importance of preserving natural beauty, and cultural and historical heritage. From the 1950s a lot of money was spent on renovation works and care of national monuments. In the 1960s any development plans were subject to advice from the ITB giving recommendations how to build hotels or other houses in the countryside to protect natural resources. Strong emphasis was on coastline protection as the board helped local authorities with planning and future development there. Preservation of scenic areas, wildlife and geological locations was continuous concern in order to prevent future social and environmental problems.

In the mid-1960s there was a pattern of change in tourist habits. Demographic reports showed growing numbers of the population under 30 which meant an increasing demand for active holidays; motoring holidays, shorter stays in one place, demand for higher standards of accommodation, and a tendency of visitors to regard Ireland as a geographical unit (Furlong, 2009). The Republic of Ireland was seeking cross-border cooperation with the Northern Ireland tourist organisation (Northern Ireland Tourist Board, NITB) from 1959. However, the efforts to promote both countries in overseas markets together had been always stopped by authorities of the NITB. From 1965 some joint initiatives and conferences were held, mostly focused on cooperation among regions close to the border. After some difficulties also some all-Ireland promotional materials, maps and literature for North America were published. The joint cooperation of tourist bodies continued, with extension to the Australian market, and the establishment of a common hotel grading system.

In order to better organise the tourism industry, the ITA was decentralized and split into eight Regional Tourism Organisations (RTOs) in 1964. Local authorities played an important role in regional planning, securing accommodation, and they also took over the administration of some tourist attractions, namely the information centre at Newgrange, and James Joyce's tower in Sandycove.

By 1967, tourism represented the largest single item in international trade (Furlong, 2009). Tourism played a more important role in the national economy than in other countries of Europe, except for Spain and Austria (Board Fáilte, Annual Report March 1968, in Furlong 2009). The severe economic situation in Britain that year reduced visitor numbers from Northern Ireland significantly. During that year, the Irish tourism started to experience reduced numbers of visitors and increasing political problems. The hope for attracting new foreign visitors was the visit of former French president Charles de Gaulle in late 1960s. Nevertheless, very difficult time for tourism Ireland was ahead.

5.7 The Troubles of the 1970s and 1980s

By 1969 the violence negatively affected the number of visitors. Terrorist activities in Northern Ireland escalated during the 1970s. The political situation in the North radically affected tourism in both countries. Despite the enormous reduction in the numbers of tourists, local citizens still could benefit from tourism development which was repeatedly emphasised by the government when outlining its spending on tourism projects. Tourism provided thousands of permanent and seasonal jobs. But with the unstable environment inside the province it was almost impossible to sell Ireland as a friendly and peaceful holiday destination.

Meanwhile, a new cohort of travellers arrived in the country. Students came to Ireland for summer courses of the Gaelic language, literature and other organised programmes. Especially North American and French students became important clients. New materials and information about educational programmes, hostelling or places of interest were published. In 1971, more than 30,000 students came to Ireland (Board Fáilte Annual Report 1972, in Furlong 2009).

An additional initiative, which focused on the growing number of different types of visitors throughout the 1960s, meant that it was necessary to bring some innovations to the types and distribution of accommodation. From 1970 traditional cottages were built in villages predominantly on the west coast. These buildings were offered for rent to long-stay tourists.

According to a five-year *Tourism Development Plan (1976 – 1980)* a lot of emphasis was put on environment protection and conservation (Furlong 2009). Special focus was on conserving scenic routes and wildlife. Killarney National Park and Derrynane National Park were established during the 1970s. The environmental issues which the government had to deal with were water pollution, and littering. The creation of the development plan was an important step in bringing about a coordinated and strategic approach to tourism development. The fact that sustainability issues started to be important to the government meant that tourism could now begin to develop in a systematic and planned way, one which had the support of government policies, and potentially the capability to access resources because of the interest shown by the government.

Nevertheless, the best way to protect the environment in Ireland was developed in an unusual way. A competition called *Tidy Towns*, sponsored by ITB, had started in the late 1950s and it is still going on nowadays. Its primary aim is to find the best place to live as well as encouraging people to improve their environment and keep their town clean and attractive to visit. A winner was awarded a cash prize and a plaque. The board encouraged the local municipalities to keep the towns clean, develop green spaces, town parks, grow trees and flowers, preserve historical

buildings and make the town colourful in other ways. By 1960 there were over 200 competitors, with interest growing every year. Now the number of entries is about 700 on average.

Global recession from the mid-1970s, rising unemployment and inflation along with fear of IRA activities meant that tourism in the Republic suffered during these years. While the visit of the pope that year helped to attract many visitors to the country negative media publicity about the troubles in the North spoiled the image of a friendly and safe country during all of the 1970s. Due to civil unrest there was a decline in the number of visitors, consolidated in late 1970s. In addition, the global recession meant another period of loss. On the other hand, when Ireland joined the EU in 1976 it started to receive structural support and investments to support infrastructure development, all of which were supportive of tourism development.

At the beginning of the 1980s a new wave of bad publicity related to the IRA hunger strikers was a major block for faster recovery in tourist numbers and promoting Ireland. Worldwide tourism went through a hard time. People were looking for less expensive accommodation, shorter stays and were generally less spending. *The Programme for National Recovery 1988-1993* identified tourism as a major instrument of national and regional economic and social development. However, it is clear that under external forces to tourism industry it is necessary not to rely only on one major source of income. Domestic tourism cannot really replace the incomes generated from foreign investments. This is a lesson which emphasises that LDCs also have to diversify the economic activities.

5.8 Celtic Tiger era until the global recession

The period from the late 1980s through the 1990s was the most prosperous time for tourism in Ireland. The earnings from the travel and tourism sector converted the balance of payments deficit into a surplus in three of those years (Furlong, 2009). Tourism was promoted as a key contributor to the national economy. During the 1990s there was 70% growth in employment in the tourism sector (National Tourism Policy Review, 2004). Total visitor numbers increased by 91% between 1990 and 2002. Provision of funding through Operational Programmes had a significant effect on transformation of the industry.

The growth of Dublin as a popular tourist spot was significant in the 1990s. The low-cost access was a key factor to make the capital a destination for weekend stays. Before that time, the south-western part of Ireland was more visited because of its international reputation for scenic beauty. Improvements and competitiveness in air service and added transatlantic flights were a key determinant for future development of tourism in Ireland in that decade. Low-cost air fares

were available and Ireland started to be attractive for all different groups of travellers. Also the capacity of sea ferries grew which was crucial for access for passengers with cars from mainland Europe. Thus, travel connectivity enables tourism expansions. On the other hand, a lack of connected destinations means for LDCs that people might go where they can go rather than where they would like to go. A good example of this is Ryanair, which created new tourist destinations simply by opening new routes and making them accessible at affordable prices.

The government started to use the St Patrick's Day festival as a showcase of Irish culture, pride and energy of "*Irishness*" in 1996. Soon it became the biggest tourist attraction of the year. The question of the impact of tourism impact on the traditional culture has been debated with reference to the St Patrick's Day festival. Some commentators have raised the fear that foreign influence can bring a change in people's perception of cultural assets. It can destroy the authenticity of. The process by which there is a loss of authenticity is called commodification, and describes a stage when tourism turns local cultures into commodities, and traditional rituals or festival are reduced and accommodated to satisfy tourists' expectations (UNEP, 2014). This, for instance, can be an example of the St Patrick's parade. The parade attracts more citizens now than in the 1930s when the celebration had its meaning. Secondly, bigger and greater parades are organised in many American cities than in Irish towns. For Ireland it is a signal that the original purpose of the festival loses its uniqueness and it becomes a mass-tourism activity. This can result in a decline, over time, in tourist numbers due to loss of attractiveness. If less developed countries lose their cultural heritage, they may also lose the visitors.

In the late 1990s especially western and south-western parts of the country (Connemara, Cliffs of Moher, Dingle Peninsula, Ring of Kerry) were identified as sensitive areas due to significant pressure from tourism on both environment and local population. Ireland offered a wide range of tourist activities and most of them (fishing, hiking, river cruising) were crucially dependent on an unpolluted environment. As a result tourist authorities' development plans have had to ensure that the carrying capacity of the natural areas cannot be exceeded while the number of tourists has to be optimised.

In the 1990s a tradition of walking festivals started. Hill walking became popular in Ireland in the late 1990s and the first half of the new millennium. Walking festivals are hosted by local walking clubs and communities. They last between two to four days and can be held all year round. The walks are suitable for walkers of all levels, from family-friendly walks to experienced walkers. It is an opportunity to explore the Irish countryside. All walks are guided by local hill walkers so the participants have a great opportunity to learn about history, culture, archaeology and fauna and flora of the place. The festivals are a good example of how to support domestic tourism because people can appreciate the beauty of their own country and

they might want to explore other parts. Moreover, it helps to support local businesses, local production and increases an awareness of Irish culture, habits or biodiversity.

2001 was a year of terrorist attacks in the US and foot-and-mouth disease hit Ireland. These two events had an impact on a slowdown in tourism worldwide as well as domestically. The number of jobs provided by tourism dropped, and overseas visitor numbers decreased. New destinations in emerging countries in central and Eastern Europe appeared and became big competitors to the traditional ones. These events show again how the fragile tourism industry is. Many people who were dependent on it had to emigrate, a peculiar element of Irish society, which has a long history of re-balancing the workforce by means of emigration. For example, the economic recession of 2008 resulted in a 300% increase in emigration from Ireland in 2012 compared with 2006 (UCC, 2014). Thus, LDCs should be alert to the vulnerability of the industry and always diversify the opportunity for economic income.

Currently, two official state bodies operate in the tourism sector. A new phase in tourism promotion began as an official body of North/South cooperation was established under Northern Ireland Peace Agreement from 1998. *Tourism Ireland* is the company responsible for overseas promotion of Ireland as a single destination and it began operation in 2002. *Fáilte Ireland*, another official tourism authority, was established in 2003 to support the development of the industry, providing business advisory services, training, planning and marketing the destination at national level. Fáilte Ireland launched its website *Discover Ireland* in 2007 where consumers can find useful information about places, events, accommodation offers etc. when travelling in the country.

In the *National Development Plan 2000-2006*, the government shifted the prime tourism policy objective from job creation to sustained foreign revenue earnings with a growing emphasis on sustainable development, reflecting the need to ensure that the benefits are distributed throughout the country while alleviating any negative environmental impacts.

5.9 Summary of Irish tourism development

The outcomes of international events of the last 60 years illustrate how vulnerable the tourism industry is and no nation has the future under its control. The experience of Ireland is very much similar to what LDCs experience in the destination development.

The era up to WWI was a time when the provision of tourist amenities was just a mean of how to support individuals' own income with some extra money. The benefits of tourism were not

even in the minds of the majority of the people and Ireland was everything but a potential tourist destination. After the destruction throughout the country during the civil war, the development of tourism was not a priority for the Free State government.

After the establishment of the Republic of Ireland, it was an irony, that people who were advertising Ireland to mainly British visitors, were the same who fought against the British influence over the country. On the other hand, it was also a time when the first development of holiday resorts began in order to attract foreign visitors. However, any formation of coherent campaigning tourism was a result of private efforts of businessmen.

The potential of tourism made its ways on to the political agenda in the 1930s. Especially during WW II it started to become clear how important the revenues from tourism were in the national economy. Incoming visitors were replaced by domestic tourists and the most significant initiative was the introduction of holiday saving clubs during war years.

The boom of tourism in the post-war period was ensured thanks to a loan under the Marshall Plan in 1948. The government recognised tourism as a crucial contributor to the economy. It was a time of heavy investment and development of the industry and the introduction of new initiatives. Focus was placed on exploiting tourism as a dollar-earning source. To secure this it was necessary to professionalise the sector by educating hotel staff and management and structuring the tourist organisations. On the other hand, at the same time, the first concerns about the influence of tourism on society and culture appeared.

The decade of the 1960s was a time of an enormous growth for tourism, with lots of improvements and dramatic success. New types of tourists were coming to Ireland, and the demand for new activities and the search for more exclusive locations enabled the development of less visited parts of the country. Cross-border cooperation with Northern Ireland was finalised and both countries started to promote the island as one destination. Attempts to protect the environment were taken in order to preserve the country's beauty which had been one of the reasons why tourists came to the country.

The civil unrest in the North in the 1970s and fear of overspill of the violence into the Republic meant a dramatic fall in the number of tourists. The poor image of the country abroad decimated the growth of the industry. The global recession resulted in significant fluctuations for the next few years.

At the beginning of the 1980s tourism in Ireland was still hit by a poor image of the country abroad due to violence in Northern Ireland. After joining the EU, Ireland was eligible to funding under several Structural Funds. The money has been used to support the country's

competitiveness in international market, attract investors and increase employment. Better times came again in the 1990s during the Celtic Tiger period. Tourist arrivals grew significantly during the 1990s and 2000s. The question of sustainable development and environmental protection within a country started to be a key determinant for future development.

6 CURRENT STRATEGIES FOR SUSTAINABLE TOURISM IN IRELAND

The first publication on sustainable development policy in Ireland was produced in 1997. The goals of *Sustainable Development: A Strategy for Ireland* was to deliver policies supporting the three pillars of sustainability and establishes national instruments for environmental protection and sustainable development. Tourism was among the key sectors considered in the strategy. Land use is a crucial component of further development and Ireland is different to many other European countries. Land loss is not due to any human settlements, but rather it is because of demands for retail centres, recreational places and business parks in the outskirts of urban population centres. According to the *Strategy*, the development of tourism had to be discussed with the Department of the Environment in developing a land use policy for planning. Protecting the environment and culture have been key issues for future tourism development. Also the intensification of agriculture in the past brought some concerns about environmental degradation; however, the reform of the EU Common Agriculture Policy enabled the development of other types of land use, such as organic farming, forestry, wind energy and agri-tourism.

The actions proposed in the *Strategy* were taken with a view to harmonising the linkages between tourism, communities and the environment. Some restrictions had to be applied to certain unsustainable leisure activities in sensitive areas, such as coastal zones or areas with special habitat protection. These included the use of jet skis or horse riding on dunes. Environmental management, “green housekeeping” had been implemented in tourism-related facilities, such as the promotion of energy efficiency and conserving water use in tourist accommodation. Use of efficient lighting in historic buildings was encouraged, as well as in tourist offices and visitor centres. The use of recycled paper on promotion materials was implemented. The impetus for these initiatives derives from the strategy and the benefits of the resulting actions are clear. Thus, there is much that may be said in favour of adopting a cohesive approach that is guided by a strategy which derives from stakeholder engagement and from the support of regional and central government. The multiplicity of areas which the strategy addressed would have been much more difficult to address if the initiatives had been allowed to progress solely as a result of market forces. Instead, the use of a strategic approach is one which demonstrates the beneficial role which active and engaged participation by government, businesses and communities can achieve.

To better understand what sustainable tourism means in Ireland, a case study of the Burren region was conducted. Sustainable tourism is a strategic approach, but it is important to see it in

practice. Therefore, this research selected the Burren region as an exemplar of sustainable tourism. It is an exemplar because people in the Burren deliberately choose to follow environmentally conscious tourism development instead of mass and uncontrolled. They are personally involved in the decision making process, support local businesses and environmental awareness among tourists and the community.

6.1 Case study: The Burren and Cliffs of Moher Geopark

The Burren is a unique limestone Karst landscape formed about 359 - 299 million years ago, located in the west coast of Ireland. Because of its rocky composition it looks like a moon landscape. The historical and archaeological sites found in the Burren region date back 6000 years. The stone walls which pass through the Burren are about 1600 years old. The landscape started to be formed in the Ice Age, and during its evolution, it became a home for arctic, Mediterranean and Alpine plants. The Burren is a very delicate landscape which is a result of its limestone origins. Hydrological dynamics has a significant influence on the form of the Burren, which can be seen in the photos in the Appendix. The landscape consists of system of dolines, polje, dry valleys and turloughs (seasonal lakes), along with underground cave systems. The Burren is extremely prone to pollution. There is only one surface river in the north of the region, and if that is polluted the pollution is transmitted for many kilometres throughout the Burren. A small area in the south-eastern part of the region was proclaimed as the Burren National Park in 1991 (National Parks and Wildlife Service, 2012).

The Burren is a mecca of sustainable tourism in Ireland. It is an example of where it was possible to interface all aspects of tourism in a way that was beneficial to both the local community and the environment. The core success lies in the collective effort of the locals to exploit the potential of the natural beauty of the destination without threatening the environment in which they have been living. Since 2006, when the National Development Programme started in the Burren under the operation of Fáilte Ireland, there has been a much more collaborative approach between the stakeholder groups. The Burren is a place where tourism activities are happening in the backyard of every resident of the region. Everyone here is working for the same goal and so it is natural to support each other. In sustainable tourism in the Burren, all stakeholders are involved in decision-making processes and they are invited to participate in the projects. The Burren has its own Advisory Group consisting of representatives from tourism agencies, farming, transport, education, arts, and heritage. The role of the group is to consult on development in the Burren at the county level.

6.1.1 Burren Ecotourism Network and Cliffs of Moher Visitor Centre

Burren Ecotourism Network (BEN) is a network of tourism enterprises with the aim to establish the Burren as a premier sustainable tourism region and ensure that future economic and social growth will benefit local communities, the natural and cultural heritage and the environment. The objective is to ensure, that each visitor will have a memorable holiday which in turn supports sustainability and conservation of the local community. Community work is evident in every “corner” of the Burren. People here are determined to provide a visitor with locally produced food, handmade products and an exciting environment. They all care to promote a high standard of sustainability and an important part for the businesses is to receive eco-certification. The Burren is part of Ecotourism Ireland, promoting well-developed eco-tourist destinations. The ecotourism labels are shown in the Appendix.

The Cliffs of Moher is Ireland’s most visited natural site with over 800,000 visitors annually (Fáilte Ireland, 2013). In the Appendix there are photos of them. The management of the Cliffs of Moher Visitor Centre is focused on principles of ecotourism that benefit the visitors and local community as well as minimising the impact on the environment. The Centre has implemented a strong environmental policy, focusing on waste reduction, and energy efficiency. The Cliffs of Moher are a Special Protected Area under European legislation. They are an important place due to presence of large number of birds and a breeding site for seabirds.

BEN and the Cliffs of Moher Visitor Centre joined in cooperation in 2008 as both organizations aim to promote responsible tourism. Their aim is to collectively develop and promote the Burren as a sustainable destination, with an emphasis on capacity building, and care for the landscape. The Burren and Cliffs of Moher region has achieved UNESCO recognition with Global Geopark status granted in 2011. The geopark is a place of significant geological and cultural heritage of international importance. The purpose of geoparks is to facilitate research and encourage knowledge in areas concerning the impacts of natural hazards and climate change. The status is assessed every four years. The Geopark is also a member of European Geoparks Network.

The Burren and Cliffs of Moher Geopark have also received funding support from the EU LIFE project for the period 2012-2017. The LIFE project supports 20 farmers modelling sustainable farming practices. The main objective is to develop partnership between conservation and tourism interests in the region. Through the project, people in the Burren want to achieve a model for sustainable tourism development of the destination; and to develop a model which would be transferrable to other destinations.

The actions taken to develop a sustainable tourism destination are:

1. Developing a critical mass of businesses practicing sustainable development in the region, through training, networking, benchmarking, certification
2. Develop three zones of the Burren as demonstration sites addressing access, capacity, management and monitoring issues
3. Create a long-term conservation management model between local tourism businesses and conservation activists

The Burren is already divided into three areas, where different approaches towards sustainability and development have to be taken. The areas are: *coastal road*, *archaeological zone* and *eastern Burren*.

The first zone is the most visited area along the coast, leading from Kinvara to the Cliffs of Moher. It is a part of the planned project Wild Atlantic Way route, a road along the west coast of Ireland stretching from Donegal to West Cork. The coastal road in the Burren is defined with heavy traffic in the tourist season. For the villages along the road it has also the highest economic impact on the region. There is an environmental policy in place which does not allow making any significant changes to the landscape. For example, the hedges falling into the road and make it difficult for drivers' visibility cannot be cut during the nesting season for birds. Coach and individual tourism is very common in the season and there are only a few places where people can stop and visit some parts of the Burren and enjoy the sea view. Again, due to environmental policy, no parking space can be built along the narrow roads.

The second zone is the inner area of the Burren. Visitors can find many archaeological monuments, do hillwalking, or other activities offered by many providers. However, the area is quite large and it is advised to hire a car to see as much as possible. A typical tourist does not stay in the Burren and only passes through on the way to the Cliffs of Moher.

The third zone is a national park in the eastern part of the region. There are narrow roads, heavily farmed lands, but also the most navigated walking paths with well-preserved flora. This is a so-called "learning landscape". Tourists get a chance to see the rural lifestyle and learn a lot about the destination in this part, as most of the guided tours are organized here.

6.1.2 Community involvement

The key issue here is that almost all tourism development has to get permission from the land owners. In the Burren, all land is privately owned. From the beginning of the current decision-making processes, the local community identifies priorities which will benefit their social,

economic and environmental well-being and future sustainable development. This involves partnership between land owners, communities, local businesses, tourism agencies, farmers, transport providers, universities and interest groups. Walking paths are, for instance, being built with the help of locals. The conservation volunteers gathered under the Burrenbeo Trust are engaged in collecting litter, invasive hazel scrub clearance or stone walls repair all year around.

Leamaneh Castle is one of the first monuments visitors see when entering the Burren. It is located near a busy road and there is no car park nearby. The castle stands on private land which means that to access it is illegal. Additionally, while the site has historical and archaeological value, the land around it is being farmed. There are currently negotiations between land owners and construction companies about whether to make the site more accessible and allow visitors to wander around or to preserve it as a heritage site and not allow visitors to access the site. Another question is the possibility of building a carpark. For example, parking for coaches would require a large area of the private land and the location just next to a busy road is not the best location. On the contrary, from previous experience, the management of the Geopark encourages building at one point near a couple of sites together, because it has a less harmful impact on the environment.

For those who want to provide accommodation in the region an environmental policy also applies. It involves monitoring energy and water consumption under the Environmental Action Plan, managing waste water and retaining appropriate documentation. Owners agree on sustainable practice in the tourism industry which includes encouraging sustainable transport for tourists and prioritizing local food producers in their businesses.

6.1.3 Sample of activities and places of interest

There are numerous places to visit and a wide range of activities offered around the Burren. The Boghill Centre was established in 1993 and it works as a sustainable complex of educational, cultural and eco-training programmes. The centre organises a wide range of courses, conferences and events varying from traditional Irish music, yoga retreats, and holistic workshops to sustainable building practices. The owners grow organic fruit and vegetables, they have an orchard, breed pigs and chickens; all of which are sourced for dishes for the visitors. There is also a nature trail, stone circle, a reed labyrinth, a wildlife pond and native woodland areas. The visitors can optionally stay in a hostel accommodation.

Doolin is a small coastal village known for its traditional Irish music atmosphere. It has also another attraction – the longest free hanging stalactite in the Northern hemisphere. The Doolin Cave is a family-run business, developed as a tourist attraction. A nature trail of indigenous

plant species and a back yard with indigenous feral goat, sheep and cow breeds has opened recently. The family's house has been turned into a visitor centre designed as an eco-friendly building with a grass roof and natural lighting.

The Burren Outdoor Education Centre was set up in the 1980s and offers wide range of outdoor activities, such as kayaking, caving, hill walking, climbing, and surfing. Local knowledge of botany, geology, archaeology and history is incorporated into tourists' activities through many local guides. Also, it is possible to observe local farming methods. Members of Clare Farm Heritage Tours organize tours for visitors to allow them gain an overview of the land and the importance of protecting it. Contrary to what may be expected, farming is the best way how to cultivate and maintain the ecosystem diversity in the Burren.

Caherconnell Stone Fort is an exceptionally well-preserved ringfort in the centre of the Burren region. As with many other heritage sites in the Burren, the fort is on privately owned land. A farming family has turned this archaeological site on their land into a business. Several excavations have been undertaken and the owners needed to get permission to build a visitor centre near the fort. The area is also used as a research site for university students of archaeology. The owners offer additional summer schools for those interested in archaeology and geology, which has a positive spin-off effect on other businesses in the Burren, especially on pubs and local food producers. The business also hosts sheep dog demonstrations, and it produces local foodstuffs which are sold.

6.1.4 Problems associated with transport and tourism

Coach tourism is a very common way to explore the Burren. The local business is called Burren Coaches and has been operating since 1975. However, the heavy traffic in the tourist season is a big problem in the Burren. The Burren is mostly inhabited by farming families which need access to the fields. As the roads are very narrow, the visitors quite often do not have other choice than to park in front of the gate to the field. This is very annoying for farmers. Furthermore, tourists usually park along the roads this can result in roads being blocked for farm vehicles. Secondly, the traffic causes problems to successful cattle management, as it is not unusual to see cows crossing the roads.

Another problem associated with traffic is campervan tourists. While there are parking places for camper vans there are no facilities such as water or sanitary facilities for the visitors. Toilet facilities are a big issue as some of them are open only during certain periods of time. Toilet sites are actually very limited across the Burren due to the strict environmental policy which requires extensive research prior to any development. Waste and litter management is

insufficient, and not only at camp sites but also at the beaches. Illegal camping often occurs. Antisocial behaviour from campers can be irritating for the locals. Barriers to prevent campervans entering certain spots close to the villages have been suggested, but on the other hand this proposal was seen as potentially reducing tourists' interest in spending holidays in the region.

6.1.4 Intangible heritage of the Burren

Apart from traditional Irish music, food is an important part of the intangible heritage in the Burren. All restaurants, hotels and small cafés try to source ingredients from small local producers as much as possible. Some use home grown ingredients (herbs, fruit, vegetables) and breed pigs, ducks, hens, sheep and other animals. Some enterprises make their own beer or ice cream.

From a marketing point of view, the management at the Burren and Cliffs of Moher Geopark aims to attract as many visitor types as possible. They try to expand the range of tourist activities which would attract tourists other than just seekers of natural beauty. The Burren Food Trail is a new initiative launched in 2013. There are 24 food producers, restaurants, pubs and cafes involved in the project where visitors can get a first-hand experience of high quality food, tours of the farms where the food is produced or participate in workshops about cheese or chocolate making. For the tourist season from April to October there is a new themed food event called Burren Food Trail Mondays. The aim is to provide an opportunity for people to interact with the food producers and attract them to visit the Burren and try outdoor activities. For example, one evening will be focused on bees, the flora on which they are dependent, with a honey and local herb supper included (Burren Ecotourism, 2013).

A business which has won international recognition and numerous awards is The Burren Smokehouse. It is another family business producing high quality smoked salmon, mackerel, trout and cheese. The Burren Smokehouse products can be found in speciality shops around Ireland, as well as in London, the USA, Berlin or Kuwait (The Burren, 2013).

The sustainable tourism development in the Burren is an example of a successful long-term project. It is evident that people here are committed to benefitting from tourism which has a low environmental impact. Sustainable tourism in the region is important for rural development. It supports SME development, local employment, education and partnership between stakeholders and outside groups. The culture and natural heritage is very well-preserved here. The status of UNESCO Geopark is evidence of good practice in terms of provision of tourist activities as well as nature conservation for research purposes.

7 TOURISM IN LESS DEVELOPED COUNTRIES

Tourism is one of the fastest growing industries in many developing countries and if planned and managed well, it can play a significant role in a country's economic, social, cultural, environmental, and political development. In some cases, tourism can help to change a perception of country's image after violent conflicts. Such examples would be Rwanda or the now rediscovered Cambodia.

The World Bank uses tourism as a tool for growth and improved livelihoods in its strategic projects in Africa where opportunity for this sector is still underdeveloped. In 2009, 78% poverty reduction strategy papers (PRSPs) emphasised or prioritized tourism, however only 30% of Country Assistance Strategies (CASs) identified tourism as a priority (Africa Region Tourism Strategy, 2010).

At the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg in 2002, UNWTO announced its own initiatives promoting tourism as a tool for poverty reduction. ST-EP (Sustainable Tourism-Eliminating Poverty) is focused on enhancing the UNWTO work to encourage sustainable tourism with activities that specifically alleviate poverty, deliver development and create jobs for people living on less than a dollar a day (UNWTO, 2014). The projects range from training local guides in Cameroon to promoting the Great Himalayan Trail in Nepal. Currently, there are over 100 projects in 34 countries.

In the newly adopted resolution (*Promotion of ecotourism for poverty eradication and environment protection, 2012*), the UN considers ecotourism as a key tool to eradicate poverty and protect the environment. Tourism is seen to have a positive impact on education, job creation, income generation and ecotourism creates significant opportunities for environmental protection, wise biodiversity use, as well as protection of the rights of local and indigenous communities and encouraging them and tourists to respect and preserve the natural and cultural heritage.

The growth of tourism development is not shared equally even within the LDCs at regional and national level. For example, in Africa, three countries (Egypt, Morocco and Tunisia) share 40% of total tourism arrivals in the continent. Even more significant is the situation in South East Asia where Malaysia and Thailand share 56% of all arrivals into the region. Furthermore, tourism tends to be concentrated in few major urban centres and coastal areas (Weaver, 1998). That is, for example the case of Bali in Indonesia, Goa in India, or Cancún in Mexico. On the

other hand, the economy of a large number of small islands, such as Seychelles (25% of GDP)², the Maldives (22% of GDP), Cape Verde (15% of GDP) or Fiji (13% of GDP), is based on tourism which means that any fluctuation in tourist demand or any event which would influence the industry can have catastrophic consequences for the whole country.

Despite the impact of tourism on poverty alleviation, many developing countries do not benefit from its economic potential. Often rich countries are able to realize the advantages of tourism for the economy. However, the central governments of poorer countries usually lack educated and professional staffs, there can be a lack of environmental laws and regulations, and development is land-intensive, poorly planned and managed. Most importantly, local communities are often excluded from participation in the business. Mostly foreign companies succeed in the industry of the host countries or only a small group of elites have influence over the tourism sector. Many of the LDCs are exposed to numerous variable leakages, which reduce the possibility to fully exploit the tourism potential. And so, unplanned tourism development can lead to very harmful impacts.

UNEP divides these impacts into three groups: environmental, socio-cultural, and economic. Table 2 shows each group of negative impacts of tourism in detail. The environmental impacts of tourism are usually the first to be seen (water pollution or deforestation due to the construction of tourist infrastructure) whereas the impacts on local communities are not as readily apparent. However, host communities are the weaker players in tourism development, because they are sensitive to even small changes in their value system and behaviour. According to UNEP's findings, the negative economic impacts of tourism often have hidden costs. As mostly foreign subjects (airlines, hotel chains, travel companies) operate in a less developed country's tourism, only part of the revenues actually remain in the host country's economy. For example, in Zanzibar, Tanzania, only about 10.2% of the total tourism income goes directly to poor local people (Steck et al, 2010, in UNEP 2011: 424). Jonathan Mitchell from Overseas Development Institute mentioned during an interview for The Guardian newspaper in 2011, that 50% of the total cost of holidays in developing countries is spent on transport to a country. From the remaining 50% about one quarter goes to local economy. While the negative impacts of tourism can be seen in destinations all over the world, according to Weaver (1998) there is evidence, that the environmental, social and economic problems associated with rapid tourism development are more visible, and have more severe consequences within peripheral areas, such as LDCs than they do within the developed world.

² Based on data from WTTC, 2014

Table 2: Negative impacts of tourism

Environmental impacts	Socio-cultural impacts	Economic impacts
Depletion of natural resources (water, energy, food, raw materials)	Change or loss of indigenous identity and values	Leakage effect of tourists expenditure from host country
Land degradation	Culture clashes (religion, language, lifestyle...)	Enclave tourism (cruise ships, all-inclusive packages)
Pollution (air, water, noise, sewage)	Social stress and irritation to tourist behaviour	Infrastructure cost
Solid waste and littering production	Deprivation of locals from access	Increase in prices
Physical impacts on landscapes	Ethical issues (prostitution, child labour, crime)	Economic dependence on tourism
Biodiversity and ecosystem loss	Resettlement and displacement of communities	Seasonality of jobs
Depletion of ozone layer and climate change		Volatility of demand

Tourism can contribute to environmental protection because to be sustainable, tourism has to be balanced by conservation. Importantly, tourism is a vital source of employment in local communities both directly and indirectly. As direct employment in the industry is relatively low, indirect employment is, on the contrary, very high in some countries. For example, in Jamaica, direct employment in tourism provides about 7% of all jobs, whereas the indirect support of jobs is 25.4 % (WTTC, 2014). Furthermore, tourism encourages the recognition of the value of authenticity and traditions and it supports intercultural dialogue. Tourism also promotes peace among countries, enabling their citizens to gain a better understanding of each other and their different cultures, thereby reducing prejudice. Lastly, the industry generates foreign exchange earnings necessary for growth and investment into other sectors. The positive impacts of tourism are shown in Table 3.

Table 3: Positive impacts of tourism

Environmental impacts	Socio-cultural impacts	Economic impacts
Biodiversity and habitat protection	Preservation of historical and cultural resources	Source of revenue and FDI
Monitoring the carrying capacity of the destination	Revitalization of traditions and ceremonies	Employment
Alternative agricultural methods, agro-tourism	Facilitator of peace	Stimulation of SME growth
	Prestige of the destination	Export diversification
	Environmental and cultural awareness	Infrastructure
	Development of skills among employees in tourism	Periphery and rural development

For many developing countries tourism is one of the very few tertiary sectors possible to develop in peripheral or other disadvantageous locations and which brings a sustainable source of income for host communities. For example, the island of Dominica in the Caribbean Sea cannot compete with other Caribbean islands providing sun-sea-sand tourism due to its eastern location in the Sea, absence of white-sand beaches, mainly mountainous and forest coverage, and vulnerability to hurricanes. Instead of it, the marketing strategy is to promote the island as an alternative tourist destination where visitors can still experience pristine rain forests, volcanic lakes, hot springs and rich wildlife. The obstacles of geographical isolation and inaccessibility can, therefore, produce a high-quality tourism product in places with limited development options (Scott in Brown and Hall, 2000).

7.1 Sustainable tourism in the regions of less developed countries

The development of alternative types of tourism in less developed countries and its importance is not a new phenomenon for the international society. Among the first tourism-related conferences about LDCs was the World Consultation on Leisure Tourism in 1969 in Tutzing, Germany, convened by the World Council of Churches. The power of tourism was recognised among the speakers hand-in-hand with the challenge of the ethics of travel across the wide range of destinations (Weaver, 1998). A conference in Penang, Malaysia, in 1977 was focused specifically on tourism in less developed countries. During the conference, which was sponsored by the Christian Conference in Asia, a code of ethics for tourists travelling to less developed countries was promulgated.

The prevalence of sociocultural issues caused by unsustainable tourism development was a major reason to look for more appropriate types of tourism in LDCs. However, ironically, the existence of alternative tourism is dependent on developed conventional tourism, considering that some form of sustainable tourism is usually located in the remote interiors. Ecotourism can actually benefit from the association with conventional tourism.

7.1.1 Africa

Tourism in Africa differs as much as the continent itself. There are several groups of countries where tourism activities are located. The first group includes countries in North Africa where mass tourism is already developed. These countries are Egypt, Tunisia and Morocco where tourism is mainly centralised into coastal locations or around the Red Sea, Mediterranean Sea and Atlantic Ocean. The second group consists of small islands which are heavily dependent on tourism activities and where recreational tourism is predominant. Seychelles, Mauritius and Zanzibar (despite being part of Tanzania) are among the most developed tourist destinations. However, the consequences of mass tourism development on the environment and society in

these countries are very unlikely to influence sufficiently the willingness of local governments to develop alternative forms of tourism.

The third group are countries which have large networks of protected areas, developed tourist infrastructure and services, where the development of some form of sustainable tourism (primary ecotourism) has already begun. Despite the landlocked position within the continent, Rwanda and Uganda developed a famous ecotourism programme in Volcanoes NP and Ruwenzori Mountains NP both bordering Virunga NP in DR Congo. The main attraction is the population of mountain gorillas. There is not only environmental protection secured through the visitors' fee for accessing the parks, but tourism contributes also to sustainable employment opportunity for local people, as the tour guide service, rangers and other staff positions are roles reserved solely for members of tribes living in the NP.

Other countries with a long tradition of ecotourism are Tanzania, Botswana, Kenya, South Africa, Zambia and Namibia. The growth of ecotourism in these countries is steady; however, tourist arrivals are concentrated only into a few centres with good accessibility, such as Kruger NP in South Africa, and Victoria Falls in Zambia.

Another group would be countries in which some form of sustainable tourism is developed, focused on natural and cultural tourism, however, still remain small compare to its potential. Among countries belonging to this group would be Ethiopia (cultural heritage sites), Cameroon (wildlife), Mozambique (protected areas) and Madagascar (biodiversity).

The last group are countries without significant tourism activities at present or countries unsuitable for the tourism development due to its geographical, environmental or political isolation. For example, the spillover effect of genocide in Rwanda in 1994 had a devastating effect on main tourist attraction in Democratic Republic of Congo – mountain gorillas in Virunga NP. The park was hit by extensive removal of firewood, killing of game for meat and enormous land pressure of incoming refugees from Rwanda. The situation was settled again in 2007, when a massive reform programme of park restoration and biodiversity protection was implemented. Despite the stabilization of the country after civil war, political instability remains. Other countries where the potential tourism development was interrupted due to political isolation are Zimbabwe and Central African Republic. The Saharan countries of Chad, Niger, Sudan or South Sudan as well as Somalia are countries which are not suitable for tourism activities because of the topographical conditions, remoteness, lack of infrastructure and political turmoil.

7.1.2 Latin America

Conventional tourism in the Americas is located around major urban centres (Mexico City, Buenos Aires, Rio de Janeiro), coastal resorts (Cancun, Acapulco) and Caribbean islands (Barbados, the Bahamas, the Dominican Republic). Except for Mexico, the Caribbean and a few Central American states (Panama) where the majority of visitors are from the United States, the tourism flow is intraregional.

Costa Rica on the other hand, is known for being a pioneer in ecotourism. The country was transformed into a laboratory of “green” tourism in the mid-1980s (Honey, 2008). Unlike other countries in the world, Costa Rica has had governmental support, investment and reorganization of the industry since the beginning of development in order to be a prime eco tourist destination. In opposition to nature-related activities in Costa Rica, a coastline megaresort Papagayo is a typical sun-sand-sea (3S) holiday destination with complexes of luxury hotels, swimming pools, golf courses and other tourist facilities. Despite this “sin” against sustainable development, there are restrictions for beach and marine development. For example, Hotel Punta Islita introduced own sustainable initiative to employ 80 per cent of local people as well as source food from local suppliers, and it has built a recycling centre (Hickman, 2008).

Similarly, other countries of Central America, such as Nicaragua and Guatemala, have great potential for culture-oriented tourism and strong support for ecotourism and community-based tourism. Tourism is seen as a primary development strategy leading to poverty reduction through job creation and participation in market (Ferguson, 2010). For instance, the Inter-American Development Bank and Global Environment Facility (2014) are helping Guatemala to protect the largest Central America’s protected area, the Maya Biosphere Reserve. The forest and archaeological sites are under pressure from illegal activities and uncontrolled settlement. The aim of the plan in the reserve is to strengthen the participation in conservation and support the creation of tourist routes in order to benefit local communities from the tourism activities.

The combination of diverse cultural and historical sites after Mayan, Aztec and Inca civilizations in Mexico, Peru and Central America and natural beauty spots in Ecuador (volcanoes, rainforest), Brazil (Amazon rainforest), Venezuela (waterfalls, Table Mountains) or Bolivia (Altiplano), has the potential to attract more visitors than just those sites which would normally attract 3S tourists. However, even in such protected places as the Galapagos Islands the fauna and flora is threatened by introduced species (cats, pigs, goats) which have severe impacts on the biodiversity. Due to population growth, unsustainable fishing, inadequate governmental transparency and tourism impacts, UNESCO added the Galapagos Islands on the List of World Heritage in Danger in 2007 (IGTOA, 2014). It was removed from the list in 2010; however, the problems still exist. Almost the whole of South America is under constant threat

of environmental damage caused by illegal logging, mining, oil exploitation, and extensive agriculture.

Belize has the best prerequisites to develop a truly sustainable tourism. Tourism is the second priority in the governmental plan for the country's development, coming after agriculture. The biodiversity, coral reef, extensive network of protected areas, relatively high forest cover, historic ruins of Mayan civilization, environmental protection legislature (e.g. ban on bottom trawling) and the involvement of marginalized Garifuna tribes into community-based tourism are the assets which can promote successful sustainable tourism development.

7.1.3 Southeast and South Asia

Southeast Asia and India have been developed as backpacker tourist destinations since the 1970s and they still gain from this image. In 2011, South Asia, followed by Southeast Asia, were the fastest growing destinations in the world in terms of tourist arrivals (+12% and +10%). The following year, Southeast Asia was again the fastest growing sub-region in the world (+9%) and grew by 10% again in 2013. On the contrary, Middle East has not recovered after political unrest of previous years and remains the only region with a decline or no growth of tourist arrivals (- 5% in 2012, 0% in 2013)³.

Beach tourism is still dominant in Thailand, the Maldives, Sri Lanka, whereas Nepal is famous for trek expeditions. An important part of tourism in Asia is religious tourism during Islam and Hindu festivals, which especially contribute to an increase in domestic tourism.

Emerging countries, such Vietnam, Sri Lanka and the Philippines have begun to heavily invest in the tourism sector, unfortunately not always in a sustainable manner. Fast and unplanned development of hotels, golf centres, international airports and other tourist infrastructure have been criticized even by senior representatives of the travel industry. For example, the challenges which affect sustainable development in Vietnam were raised by delegates at the Conference on Responsible Tourism Policy in 2013 (Vietnam National Administration of Tourism, 2013).

On the other side there are countries which are untouched by ongoing tourist activities. For example, Bangladesh remains largely unexplored as a tourist destination and it could utilise this as a great opportunity for economic development through tourism (UNWTO, 2013). As a further example, Laos is another less-visited country, although it has one of the most pristine landscapes in Southeast Asia, diverse wildlife and culture and system of protected areas. These attributes could serve as key elements for development of sustainable tourism.

³ All data are retrieved from UNWTO Tourism Highlights, 2013

The *Mekong Discovery Trail* is a project focusing on sustainable tourism development, employment, alleviating poverty in the provinces and environment protection of Mekong River in Northeast Cambodia. This project was launched in 2007 with support of UNWTO's STEP initiative. The aim is to first develop the area for individual travellers in order to increase visitor's length of stay which would create opportunity for greater development.

7.2 Case study: Madagascar

Madagascar has been selected as an example to illustrate the potential of sustainable tourism activity in less developed countries. While it is one of the poorest countries in the world it is, on the other hand, enormously rich in biodiversity, this is the main attraction of the island. A tourism sector exists but it is largely underdeveloped. A richness of natural beauty is common for a majority of LDCs and these countries, like Madagascar, also lack planned development of tourism activities. The study illustrates the main obstacles for a poor country like Madagascar to develop its tourism industry.

7.2.1 Madagascar

Madagascar is the fourth largest island in the world. It is located in the Indian Ocean, about 400 km south-west from the coast of Mozambique. Madagascar is one of the poorest and least developed countries in the world. The country ranks 151st out of 187 countries in human development index (UNDP, 2012). According to WB (2010) up to 81% of the population lived below poverty line (\$1.25 a day). In 2012 GDP per capita was only \$447 (WB) which ranks Madagascar among the ten poorest countries in the world.

Madagascar, like many developing countries, has huge natural resources. The country is a world leading exporter of sapphires. Emeralds, gold, nickel, tin, chrome and graphite are also mined in large amounts. Oil sands reserves can be found here as well, however, the extraction process is too expensive and only a small amount of oil has been produced. Agriculture is also important to Madagascar. Vanilla is a major export commodity for the island, followed by clove and coffee. Nevertheless, Madagascar's greatest wealth is the richness of its biodiversity, as it is referred to as a *hotspot*, where 90% of all animal and plant species cannot be found anywhere else on the planet. Despite enormous natural resources, Madagascar cannot exploit its potential and remains poor. This is a theme for numerous countries, and rather than intensifying their industrial efforts to extract natural resources, something which is fraught with the risk of exploitation by outside companies, tourism can a potentially significant source of income.

7.2.2 An overview of tourism in Madagascar

Tourism and agriculture are the two biggest contributors to GDP, with tourism accounting directly and indirectly for 15% (WTTC, 2013). Despite this fact, tourism in Madagascar is

underdeveloped and very small in comparison with the neighbouring countries of the Indian Ocean region, Seychelles and Mauritius. There is huge potential for tourism development, but the country lacks in accommodation capacity, quality and availability of infrastructure, trained and skilled labour in the sector, and it is facing an increase in the number of species becoming endangered and growing habitat loss. The main goal for tourists is to see the unique ecosystem of Madagascar. Tourism is based on ecotourism (bird and whale watching, lemurs, coral reefs), and leisure (beaches, diving). There are 21 national parks and other protected areas in Madagascar, representing 3% of the total country area (WB, 2003). Six parks are joined into one large protected area called *Atsinanana Rainforest*, which has been on the UNESCO World Heritage List since 2007. Madagascar may in time become a new target for cruises and increased tourism diversification. Unfortunately, the ports are de facto undeveloped.

According to tourist destination lifecycle, Madagascar belongs in the second stage – involvement. The tourist activities have become organized, market promoted, and the local people have started to provide some basic tourist facilities. Madagascar could have reached the next stage – development – however, the process of growth was interrupted by a coup d'état in 2009 and the tourism industry stagnated from that time.

Since the 1990s tourism has been one of the key strategic plans for poverty alleviation. After the coup in 2009, the number of tourists decreased with 2009 registering more than 50% decline compared to 2008. In 2008 Madagascar welcomed 375,000 visitors, whereas there were only 163,000 visitors in 2009 (World Statistics Pocketbook 2009 and 2010). In 2010, 196,000 tourists arrived, and in 2011 it was 225,000 (World Statistics Pocketbook, 2013). Current political instability is one of the causes for slow tourism development.

7.2.3 Factors leading to slow development

Many large international organizations (UNDP, WB, EU) are involved in programs supporting the development of tourism in collaboration with the Ministry of Tourism of Madagascar and they help to co-create strategic plans for its development. Even though great efforts have been made by the state and international organizations, a competitive tourism sector has not yet been developed. Here are the main causes of this problem which were defined by WB.

7.2.3.1 Deforestation

According to the latest data (UN, 2014), about 22% of the area of Madagascar was forested, of which less than 10% is the original tropical forest (Conservation International, 2012). Forest protection should be a key priority for the development of tourism. Instead of that, large-scale deforestation is happening in Madagascar. The main reason is simply that people have no other choice to raise income for their own living. Furthermore, the rural poor population lives near national parks and protected areas, and because there is no reliable monitoring in these areas,

deforestation is neither easy to stop nor control. High population growth is one of the main drivers of deforestation. Deforestation also causes soil erosion. The threat of erosion increases during cyclones and floods season. Tropical wood used for export is processed near watercourses and waste from processing ends up in rivers which leads to pollution of watercourses. The traditional method of land acquisition is slash and burn. Until people have alternative sources of income that will have at least the same revenue as the cultivation of the land thus obtained, burning of tropical rain forests will continue.

Other causes of deforestation are: illegal logging, charcoal production and forest clearing for precious timber. During the administration of former president Marc Ravalomanana tourism and environment protection became key strategies for development of the country. Under the Durban Vision from 2003, the president promised to triple the area of protected lands to 10% (Clayton, 2011). On one hand, the proclamation of new protected areas has helped to decrease the loss of the ecosystem, but on the other hand the area of land suitable for agriculture has reduced and so poverty has deepened.

Deforestation has resulted in the loss of habitat for plants and animals. By comparing statistical data from the years 2006 - 2012 we would find out that the number of threatened species is increasing. In 2006 there were 538 endangered species, in 2008 there were 638 species and 856 species in 2012 (World Statistics Pocketbook 2006, 2009, 2013). Preserving forests is crucial for the development of tourism in Madagascar, if the country wants to be an ecotourism destination. For further tourism development it is necessary to undertake studies on the carrying capacity of the environment to maintain the balance in the environment and in order to avoid resource depletion.

7.2.3.2 Human capital

Only 65% of the population is literate in Madagascar (World Factbook, 2014). This poses a major problem for the development of any sector. Madagascar is facing a shortage of qualified staff, even in sectors such as handicrafts. The Government itself is currently not interested in the development of human capital, only 3% of the state GDP goes to education (World Statistics Pocketbook, 2013).

The main language in Madagascar is French, and hardly any of the citizens can speak any other language. Even educated people in government are not able to communicate well in English, which is another obstacle to attracting more tourists from countries other than France, who constitute the majority of foreign visitors. The Ministry of Tourism is responsible for marketing, tourism development, as well as environment conservation. However, the administration is limited by the professional capacities of those in management positions.

The Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Report measures the factors and policies that contribute to the attractiveness and improvement of the tourist industry in comparison with other states. According to the study from 2013, Madagascar scored 131th out of 140th countries. Among the most important areas that have an impact on the overall development of the country and at the same time show the worst results include: political and government instability, inadequately educated workforce, health and hygiene (primary access to drinking water), inadequate transport infrastructure, coverage of telecommunications networks and number of threaten species of animals and plants.

7.2.3.3 Political situation

Until 2009, the socio-economic situation in Madagascar had been developing positively. During the reign of President Ravolamanana the country attracted large investment projects of strong international organizations, led by the World Bank Group. Projects were mainly related to infrastructure, building a tourist capacity, institution building, technical support in agriculture, food security and many other sectors (WB Projects, 2012).

After the coup in 2009 there was a fundamental change in the relationship of international organizations and institutions with Madagascar resulting in negative consequences for the country. Immediately after the coup, the country had many sanctions imposed by the EU, UN, USA, France and other countries. Madagascar was also excluded from African Union and Southern African Development Community (SADC). Secondly, the country was suspended from official development assistance (main donors are the WB, EU, USAID and AfDB), which had a huge impact on the country where half of the budget depended on ODA (official development aid). Thirdly, the largest donor, the World Bank suspended implementation of large quantities of its own projects in Madagascar and the number of people below the poverty line increased. Since legitimate presidential elections in 2011, only some of the sanctions have been released, the membership in African organizations restored and only a few projects implemented. However, the ODA has not returned to the same levels as before the crisis and the country has shrunk into harsher poverty. Due to the uncertain political environment, the country does not attract foreign direct investment.

7.2.3.4 Infrastructure

According to the World Factbook, (CIA, 2014) there are 83 airports, only 26 have a paved runway, 854 km of railway lines, 34,000 km of roads, of which only 5,600 km are paved and 13 ports.

The only way to get to Madagascar is by air. A monopoly on transportation to / from Madagascar is enjoyed by Air France (from Europe) and Air Madagascar (from South Africa). Because there is no competition between carriers, flights are very expensive. UNDP study in

2011 showed that up to 60% of total travel costs is used to purchase a ticket. Due to very poor road infrastructure, citizens are dependent on the use of air transport inside the state. The situation is similar, ticket prices are very high, and only a small percentage of people can afford to travel. This barrier makes Madagascar almost an exclusive destination for very wealthy people. Domestic flights are often delayed or canceled, which may discourage potential visitors.

Many tourist attractions are difficult to access, especially due to the very poor road conditions. The connector between the north and the south, where there is a high concentration of tourist attractions, is unsatisfactory. The northwestern coast, which is often hit by cyclones, has many damaged or non-existent roads. In the rainy season from January to March many unpaved roads flood and become isolated from the rest of the country. The railway system is underdeveloped; there are only two separate routes in operation.

Ports are largely neglected. The only developed port is port Toamasina in the east. There is a huge need to improve facilities and conditions of the ports and prepare them specifically for tourist purposes if Madagascar is going to be new cruise destination.

7.2.4 Conclusion

Madagascar could become one of the most popular ecotourism destinations but it currently has a long journey before it can claim to have achieved this. As you can see, the most fundamental obstacle to the development of tourism is bad governance. If there was a government that recognized tourism as a key sector for the country's development, the investments would generate revenues and foreign investment; and the standard of living would improve. People can improve their skills through training and language courses and better education would play a key role in achieving this. Good infrastructure helps to get goods to distant markets and in the case of Madagascar there is a need to improve the basic infrastructure. As a result of sustainable tourism development the environment would be protected, because people would understand its value, and they would realize that they could benefit themselves as well as the whole economy of the country.

For any development in Madagascar it is crucial to stabilize the government, invest in infrastructure development and protect the environment. Since the 1990s tourism has become one of the largest contributors to GDP. If the current government recognizes this sector as crucial, the development of tourism will run more efficiently.

8 CONSTRAINTS ON SUSTAINABLE TOURISM DEVELOPMENT IN LESS DEVELOPED COUNTRIES

This section of the thesis considers and analyses the issues which constrain the development of tourism in LDCs. It does this from two perspectives. First, it addresses considerations related to factors inherent to LDCs themselves. Then, it analyses the factors which are associated with tourists and their characteristics. Given the fact that at least in half of the less developed countries, tourism is among the top three export sectors, the impact of tourism sector on a country's economy should be significant.

As it is clear from the case study of Madagascar and from the summary of developing regions, the potential of sustainable tourism development in LDCs is huge. In almost all countries, there are national parks and other protected areas. The countries also abound with large biodiversity and existence of other cultural and natural attractions. They already have developed a range of ecotourism activities. So why in many LDCs where the tourism resources could be a comparative advantage, are the activities limited to only a few places, minimally benefit the local population and do not have a beneficial impact on the state economy? This question is explored in the following sections, which address the constraints which hinder the development of sustainable tourism.

8.1 Political instability

Political unrest is common for many developing countries, predominantly African states. And tourism is highly vulnerable to political instability, although business travel is more resilient. Violent events have a major impact on tourism market perception. Most often, the violence is concentrated only in a certain area (city, province, and region) and does not affect directly the visitors. However, there exists a danger of conflict spillover into areas visited by tourists, for example as is currently the case of the tourist resort Taba in Egypt. Preoccupation with the safety of tourists results in travel warnings which can have devastating consequences for a state's economy in many poor countries. In some countries tourists can even be a target in order to attract media attention for the nation's issues. These attacks upon tourists or foreign visitors are usually well publicized. The most publicized case of attacks targeting tourists was the Bali bombing in 2002. 202 people of different nationalities were killed during terrorist attacks upon a club and bar in Kuta Beach. International tourism in Bali plummeted practically immediately. Hotel occupancy dropped by 80% and tourist arrivals by 70% in the following year after bombing. According to Bali Tourism Board (2014), nearly 300,000 less international tourists arrived to Bali in 2003. The Indonesian government had to encourage domestic tourists to spend

holidays on the island (Gelineau, Karmini, 2012). Pacific Asia Travel Association together with Balinese tourism authorities had to work hard to restore a reputation of Bali as a safe and tourist welcoming destinations (Bierman, 2012). The fears of similar attacks in the region resulted in travel warnings from many western governments. These had severe impacts on the South Asian travel industry. ASEAN engaged with the western countries in reviewing the potential threats in order to prevent the fall of tourism industry in the whole region. Concerning these few examples of the effects of political turmoil, two major consequences are related to political instability.

8.1.1 Negative image

In the Western world, there is an image that all Africa is constantly one big battlefield. But in Africa there are many countries which are well developed, but unfortunately political instability of one country has negative effect on neighbouring countries. African countries, such as Angola or Sierra Leone still suffer from negative images associated with past violence. However, while the situation is currently stable and economic growth is evident, these countries can hardly be perceived as tourists' destinations. On the other hand, other countries can benefit from the regional instability, as tourism will spill over to different region. That was a case of Caribbean during 1980s when tourists massively started to spend holidays there instead of coming to Central America which went through long period of coups.

8.1.2 Personal safety

When travelling abroad, personal safety is the biggest concern for tourists. As small crimes, like petty crime or pickpocketing, can happen in every village of generally safe countries, the risk of personal attack is a major issue. Threats to personal safety are very much connected with the continuing prevalence of instability inside a country. Tourists as well as local citizens have been threatened for instance during guerrilla warfare in Colombia and Peru. Safety issues also have to be considered for countries with a high propensity to coups d'état, predominantly Latin American countries, such as Nicaragua and Honduras. Civil unrest, demonstrations and internal relations can affect the overall situation in a country. For example, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic strongly advises not to travel to Afghanistan, Pakistan, Yemen and some parts of Lebanon due to the threat of terrorist attacks. The safety situation does not allow travelling to the Central African Republic. Such places are then practically unsuitable for tourism activities. The Ministry also warns against kidnap of foreigners in Niger, Nigeria, Mali, and Chad and newly in Tunisia on the borders with Algeria and Libya. Islamic separatism in the province of Mindanao in the Philippines and Aceh in Indonesia is a current example of potential conflict which may influence the tourism sector in a whole country. The ability to maintain stability is a key factor for presence of tourists. On the other hand, the large area and remoteness of many places inside the countries mean that it is very hard to control the crime.

8.2 Natural hazards

When a developing country is hit by a natural disaster, it usually has catastrophic effects on the whole country, both economic and environmental. There are thousands of deaths and millions of displaced. Among the most devastating disasters in recent history were: hurricane Mitch in Honduras in 1998, floods in Bangladesh in 1998, tsunami in 2004, earthquake in Kashmir in Pakistan in 2005, cyclone Nargis in Myanmar in 2008, floods in Pakistan in 2010, earthquake in Haiti in 2010, and typhoon Haiyan in the Philippines in 2013. Developing nations have fewer resources to help them to cope with the damage, and the recovery can last for many years. The reconstruction of tourist facilities in a relatively short time is problematic as such countries need to allocate the funds to secure basic human needs. However, the example of post-tsunami tourist records of Sri Lanka, Bali and Thailand show that the devastation of beaches and hotels had almost zero effect on visitors coming to the countries. The number of tourists coming after the disaster returned to previous levels within two years. More importantly, the decline of tourists in the next year after the disaster was not as severe as the decline of tourist arrivals after incidents directly targeting tourists.

8.3 Diseases

Tourists might be discouraged from travelling to developing countries also because of the presence of serious diseases. Many of the countries located in tropical or subtropical zones have the highest incidence of diseases, such as malaria, ebola, yellow fever, dengue, Chagas disease or lieshmaniasis and schistosomiasis. The risk of infection is low because tourists have access to the treatment before the actual travel and when in developing countries they care about hygienic habits. According to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic (2014), there is currently an increased risk of incidence of cholera (Namibia) and bubonic plague (Madagascar). However, increased international air travel and tourism to tropical countries have raised the incidence of such diseases in regions other than those in the risky zones. International tourism is hit when an infection (and does not have to be only tropical) becomes an epidemic. For example, SARS in China in 2002 resulted in infection gradually spreading across Southeast Asia, North Africa, Europe and Middle East during 2004 to 2006. The most recent risk of an epidemic was swine flu which started in Mexico and hit the world between 2009 and 2010.

8.4 Habitat and biodiversity loss

The diversity of wild fauna and flora is threatened by illegal activities, such as wildlife trade, poaching, killing animals for trophies, or for medicine purposes (rhino horns, various tiger parts, elephant tusks). From the tourism perspective, habitat destruction leads to the loss of attractive wildlife which is crucial for attracting visitors. Also, the habitat loss leads to scarcity of unprotected lands suitable for preservation. Habitat loss also harms balance in the ecosystem which has impacts on livelihoods. Because of high levels of soil erosion in Bolivia, local farmers produce low harvests and struggle to feed themselves every year. Pollution from mining negatively affected the quality of water. Philippines, Indonesia and Malaysia are affected by deforestation as much as the Amazon's countries. Coral reefs, one of the most sensitive ecosystems, are in danger due to climate changes and tourism.

8.5 Rapid population growth

Rain forests of Brazil and Ecuador are rich for high levels of endemism but these indigenous species are rapidly disappearing. Ecosystems are being destroyed for grazing, mining, and timber collection. The ecosystem loss is a response to resource demands. Demands for meat, biofuels, transportation and large-scale energy projects, overgrazing and human settlement contribute to deforestation of the Amazon rainforest and increase pressure on the natural resources and environment (WWF, 2014). More and more people are dependent on the resources which are unsustainably exploited in developing countries. Growing population, agricultural expansion, logging etc. cause pressure to natural environments. This again leads to loss of natural landscapes which are attractive for tourists.

8.6 Over-visitation

Some of the places of tourist interest are so popular that this results in a high concentration of tourists during peak season. Exceeding the destination's carrying capacity leads to unplanned sprawl of tourist services very near the visited location, this increases pressure on the territory. High concentration of tourists is no longer sustainable. The over-visitation of one place represents a gradual transfer to mass tourism. It is more important for the destination's management to be able to persuade visitors to stay longer, rather than attract more tourists. The

over-visitation of few places also creates economic inequality within the country. The income revenue remains in few high-profiled destinations (e.g. Machu Picchu, Kruger NP, coastal areas of Egypt) and does not spread into whole country. According to a report of National Service of Protected Areas by the State, the visitor capacity at Machu Picchu in 2012 was exceeded by 32%.

8.7 Isolation from major tourism markets

Generally, developing countries remain developing because of their geographical isolation from the economically strong markets. There are two exceptions: North Africa, which belongs to the external zone of Europe; and the Caribbean thanks to its proximity to North America. The pattern of tourist arrivals into other developing regions is internal. And so, developing countries and potential tourists from advanced economies are dependent on air connections, coach tours and cruise routes of other nations. For example, Mozambique has only one connection with Portugal, all other flights are regional (Lonely Planet, 2014). A similar situation applies to Cambodia, where flights between the country and Europe or North America do not exist and tourists are advised to travel via Thailand. A different situation is evident in South America which has good connectivity with major American and European airports.

8.8 Lack of infrastructure, inaccessibility

A well-developed infrastructure is rare in many developing countries. The case study of Madagascar showed how limited transportation can be. The size of a country and long distances between places of interest might discourage potential visitors from taking the journey. Well known monuments, national parks, historical sites etc. are serviced by good accessibility, whereas less visited places remain without sufficient transport connection. Moreover, the place becomes isolated during rainy season when the road conditions do not allow the transport. Richter (in Harrison, 1992) suggests that the transport system has to be developed to supplement local needs, which can be used by tourists as well.

8.9 Lack of funding and institutional regulations

The formal institutional support of tourism development is high because many developing countries rank tourism among their economic priorities. In Africa, countries such as Sierra Leone, Cote d'Ivoire or Angola, which are definitely not the tourist destinations, have ministers for tourism. This is compared to the EU-28, where half of the member states do not have specialized Ministry of Tourism. However, only some authorities in LDCs really plan and control the development. The governments give approval to build luxury resorts which are difficult to maintain and finance. For example, Vietnam started to build a massive entertainment complex Happyland for \$2 billion in 2011. The opening was planned for April 2014. However, in late 2012 some news broke that the investors were struggling with gathering the required capital. In 2013 the authorities of Long An Province where the park is located said, that the pace of construction was being slowed, it was 2 - 3% completed compared to expectations of 10% (TalkVietnam, 2013). Later that year the project was suspended. This illustrates the importance of ensuring there are robust monitoring systems in place for tourist developments. For example, from the perspective environmental stability it is necessary to monitor tourism impact on a destination. One example of this is the regulations and restrictions which are placed on visitors to especially crucial in vulnerable places, such as the Galapagos Islands.

8.10 Lack of educated staff

Unfortunately, in many countries, nature is still a source for exploitation, not protection or sustainable management. Low awareness among staff of national parks and other protected areas of environmental issues and the reasons to support wildlife can lead to informal sector development within these areas. Unlicensed guides, illegal excursions, illegal hunting in national parks and other protected areas; and pavement sellers are results of weak management. For example in Arenal Volcano NP near La Fortuna in Costa Rica, the only requirement for tour guide positions was be able to speak English (Hickman, 2008). The establishment of protected areas brings an opposite concern to local people. For locals it means denying access to resources they have been using for generations. These people need compensation for lost livelihoods. They must appreciate and benefit from the forest-park area. The best practice would be to involve them in the travel sector in positions where they could use their knowledge of the place where they have lived. British NGO Tourism Concern campaigns for fair wages for workers in tourism industry. Firstly, it would minimise illegal practices of staff workers and

labour exploitation. Secondly, when an employer invests in the employees it leads to proper training, as he will want the business to perform well.

8.11 Exclusion of locals, economic leakages

There are two opposite approaches of local communities being involved in tourism matters. The first approach includes those people, who want to be involved in tourism activities as a source of income, but are excluded. The second group consists of people and tribes who are unpremeditated part of tourism development, but for whom tourism is a curse. Neither way is sustainable.

Because only certain and often small groups of locals have access to resources, the majority of local citizens are automatically excluded from direct participation in tourism. Due to a high degree of corruption in most developing countries, it is easy for rich elites to buy lands and properties for tourism development. Clientelism and political patronage enables those who are powerful to find the partners with capital. Foreign companies are a rich source of capital and governments of developing countries do their best to attract the companies into the country. However, the revenue from tourism remains within foreign companies and only a portion stays in the local economy. It means that the biggest beneficiaries will be large developer groups, large hotel chains and mass industry. The result of this policy is economic leakages, when the local economy loses enormous amounts of money. The construction of hotel complexes and resorts lead to creating tourist “enclaves”, because locals have only limited access to these areas. Only a few locals actually work directly in the tourism sector which creates social inequality within the society. All-inclusive types of holidays are according to Tourism Concern (2012) the worst example of diminishing local businesses. The majority of the tourists stay in hotels using restaurant facilities for the whole length of their holidays. There is a minimum social and economic exchange between local people and the visitors.

Crater Ngorongoro in Tanzania has been a homeland of the Maasai tribe for centuries. They have balanced the ecosystem stability through their sustainable grazing method. However, under Julius Nyerere’s socialism programme during the 1970s the Maasai were excluded from the crater and this area, as well as many other areas settled by the Maasai, was transformed to a protected area. Those who remain struggle with water shortages for cattle herds in the dry and least fertile areas. On the contrary, luxury hotels have been built on the crater rim where there is enough water for a hotel’s guests. Very few jobs were offered to the Maasai in the Ngorongoro conservation area (Renton, 2009). Interestingly, the life of the Maasai is not tourism, it is their cattle. Their land rights were violated and they have been evicted from areas suitable for grazing. The reason is so that tourists have a comfortable experience of observing the wildlife.

Moreover, the Maasai have never been asked to negotiate the terms over the land rights. The plan to grab additional 1,500 km² from the Maasai in the name of conservation was released in March 2013. Thankfully, the eviction plan was refused by the Tanzanian prime minister in September 2013. A similar story of restricted access to their ancestral lands is a case of the Bushmen in Central Kalahari Game Reserve in Botswana (Survival International, 2014). The Bushmen are accused of poaching; however game hunting is their main livelihood. The ban on hunting in the name of conservation will lead to The Survival International's campaign draw attention at this year's New York Travel Show and ITB Berlin, asking for a travel boycott to Botswana until the rights are given back to the Bushmen tribe.

9 CONCLUSIONS

This thesis sought to provide descriptive analysis of the factors which were inherent to Ireland's development of its tourist sector, those factors which are relevant to the development of tourism in LDCs and to focus specifically on the issue of sustainable tourism. This work, in setting out the conclusions, aims to highlight key points where learning may be taken from Ireland's development trajectory and applied to LDCs. In developing recommendations from this work there is also a need to offer a word of caution about the risks associated with applying learning from one context to a different context, without giving consideration to understanding where the contexts are similar and where they are different. Thus, these recommendations should be interpreted as being context specific and they are intended to be read in a thematic manner, as they set out important elements which contribute to, and militate against the development of sustainable tourism practices in LDCs.

Learning from the Irish experience spans a number of thematic headings and these are presented here as: geographical conditions; social aspects; economic perspective; governance and policy; stability; education and training; partnership; environmental policy; authenticity and marketing. The issues which this research surfaced in each of these areas are now addressed systematically.

Geographical conditions

Both Ireland and developing countries are peripheral regions. This leads to a form of dependency on neighbouring countries and on foreign visitors. However, while the Irish economy is advanced its tourist market is small. On the contrary, many developing countries have a big market potential for domestic tourism, but the low purchasing parity make them dependent on foreign tourists as well. The peripheral nature of Ireland meant that it did not have a strong trading or industrial base as there was not much merchant activity in its early history. In some respects, it may then be argued that its agrarian roots arose because of its peripheral nature and that this is something which is reflective of LDCs. One of the effects of not having much by way of an industrial or trade base is that there tends to be little investment and thus infrastructure is not well developed. Ireland successfully addressed this issue as it plotted its path to improving its tourist facilities. The Irish infrastructure network was poor until the government recognized tourism as a vital source of employment and foreign revenue. When new roads were built and existing roads improved, the country was able to attract a new type of tourist: motor tourists. With a better road network, tourists could visit also remote areas of Ireland which helped to increase tourism in rural parts. Later, more facilities for cars were provided, such as car ferries. However, the learning for LDCs is that this is a long-term project

as major capital infrastructure requires a long development time and needs much expertise around how to best achieve it without having detrimental social and environmental effects.

Social aspects

Both Ireland and the majority of developing countries are influenced by their colonial heritage. However, there were severe consequences of that in many LDCs; the benefit in tourism terms is a widely-spoken language. As this heritage is more obvious in Africa and Latin America than in Asia, it generally helps to develop market relations. Ties with former colonial powers determine the early stages of tourism development.

Cultural heritage is rich in both areas of this research. A question which arises from Ireland's development from its rural basis is that of how far a developing country will go in terms of development and the potential loss of authenticity. Despite the enormous economic growth during the Celtic Tiger period, Ireland still remains a "country of farmers". Tangible and intangible heritage is a major part of a nation and developing countries have to consider the threat to it while addressing the often competing demands for increased tourism development.

In a negative way, Ireland and many LDCs have an experience with warfare. The consequences on tourism are severe. Political instability has a negative effect on overall economic performance and livelihoods of the inhabitants. Negative image might influence the country's attraction for many years. Thus, there is much benefit which can accrue from developing policies which seek harmony of relationships within a country and with its neighbours. Indeed, for LDCs there may be benefit which could be gained from cooperating on tourism development as some countries may share natural sites or other ties which could result in beneficial synergies. Such a development would be reflective of the benefits which were achieved when Ireland and Northern Ireland began to cooperate to develop their tourism industries.

Economic perspective

Neither Ireland nor developing countries are likely to be a mainstream tourist destination. It is evident that some localities within a country might become heavily visited when compared with the rest of the country. One cannot imagine tourists going to Ireland without a visit of Dublin. For 3S tourists, places like Bali, the beaches of Thailand or the Maldives are already mass-tourism destinations. The spread of tourists into the country is therefore limited, because visitors usually tend to go to those must-see locations.

Businesses involved in tourism in Ireland are mainly small or medium enterprises. SMEs are also predominant in less developed countries. However, the potential of rapid tourism

development attracts foreign companies and large hotel chains which can have a damaging effect on society, the environment and the economy of developing countries, a point which is evident from table 2, outlining the negative effects of tourism in chapter 7.

Based on an analysis of the evidence the key elements which could contribute to tourism developments in less developed countries are:

Governance and policy

Ireland began to formulate tourism policy when the government started to address the issue of development strategies. Challenges arise for LDCs due to the absence of such tourism policies and in instances where LDCs have policies in place they tend to be weak and not strategic in nature. Ireland was a poor country for many decades. It went through several phases before recognizing tourism as a priority sector. However, with the governmental framework, lots of positive changes were made, such as infrastructure development, accommodation and promotion in order to attract tourists.

Stability

No matter where tourists go they want to feel secure. Thus, political stability has a crucial role in tourism development. After the civil war in the Republic of Ireland, the infrastructure was destroyed and the country had to start to re-build its industries. It takes a long time to recover from war and this leads to slow progress which has a negative impact on the population for many years. Secondly, with an unstable environment it is impossible to promote a country as a holiday destination. Stability encourages the tourism flow and can help a less developed country to change its image, as is happening in Cambodia for instance.

Partnership

Community involvement in sustainable tourism is one of the crucial components of a successful tourism industry. The sense of community is very much integrated in the Irish lifestyle. On the contrary, many people are excluded from tourism businesses in LDCs. This leads to economic leakages and social stress.

Environmental policy

A clean environment and landscape beauty is also common to Ireland and LDCs. In most areas of developing countries natural beauty and outdoor activities are the main attractions for tourists. Similarly, the most visited place in Ireland, besides Dublin, is the Cliffs of Moher. There are similarities between Ireland and LDCs in terms of the development of environmental policy. It is important for less developed countries to have such a policy, because similar to

Ireland, they have the experience of exploitation from outside forces. When Ireland did not have any coherent environmental policy, the country faced poor water quality, water pollution from ships, problems with littering, and a decrease in biodiversity. As a consequence it was recognised that environmental protection needed to be given importance in order to attract visitors. Consequently, the governments of LDCs should recognise environmental protection as a priority.

Education and training

Ireland lacked educated and trained staff for many decades. However, tourists expected certain standards and these expectations came from tourists' experiences in different destinations. After recognising the importance of providing a good service to tourists, more centralised training was provided. The result is the Shannon College of Hotel Management, which has recently joined in cooperation with the government of the Seychelles and other developing countries. With educated staff the sector will perform better and it also supports the growth of tourism.

Authenticity

Rurality is common for Ireland as well as for LDCs. It is a prerequisite that the country still retains its authenticity. While the trend is to search for new and more exotic experiences, authenticity of the destination is a significant comparative advantage. For LDCs it is a key consideration which must be borne in mind to avoid becoming too commercial. Irish people are very proud of their culture and it is one of the reasons why tourists are attracted to Ireland. The government supports the traditions through courses in the Irish language, Irish dance and the country organizes many festivals where the national culture is shown with pride. Changing cultural habits could mean losing potential visitors. Unfortunately, in many developing countries, the indigenous tribes with a unique lifestyle are restricted from tourist areas; such was the example of the Maasai in Tanzania.

Marketing

For successful marketing promotion, the tourism authorities must know their target market, the needs of the market, and they must tailor their services according to those needs. A good tool is to conduct a survey in the intended tourist market, as Ireland did with the US market. LDCs should first focus on neighbouring countries in their promotion. Secondly, there is merit in targeting markets in those countries with which LDCs have connections due to historical relations. To find a "selling image" of the destination is another aspect of successful marketing. Since the 1950s Ireland has been promoted as a place where the countryside is the last paradise everybody should experience.

It is clear from this research that Ireland and LDCs have much in common. The potential of tourism to support economic and social growth and development has been well established and consequently LDCs would benefit from focusing their efforts on developing their tourism industries. The challenge which this research explored was that of learning how sustainable tourism may be developed. The lessons which have been learned from Ireland, it is hoped, will be of benefit to LDCs as they seek to improve their tourism industries in a way which is beneficial for the environment, the people and the country, essentially meaning sustainable tourism development.

10 APPENDIX

Photo 1: Burren



(Photos: Author)

Photo 2: Burren



Figure 3: Burren Ecotourism label



(Source: Burren Ecotourism, 2013)

Figure 4: Ecotourism Ireland



(Source: EcoTourism Ireland, 2014)

Photo 3: Cliffs of Moher



(Photo: Author)

Photo 4: Cliffs of Moher



(Photo: Author)

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