**Finding Another Wave:**

**The Need for Ecotourism Principles in International Surf Culture**

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**Substantial Research Paper**

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Introduction:

There is a growing debate surrounding the impacts of surfing tourism in the developing world. This dialogue emphasizes the need to deconstruct two major myths surrounding the activity – that surfing tourism is inherently benign and that surf utopias exist. When aggregated, these myths contribute to perpetuating a negative spiral within the industry where tourists do not understand the increasingly destructive ramifications of their travel decisions and outsiders develop ever-more romantic views of the idyllic surfing life.

There is, however, great reason to be concerned. For the last century, people in the developed world have been engaged in recreational surfing. The activity was essentially discovered through travelers' explorations, and surfing is laden with a rich history of pursuit of dreamlike like surf conditions throughout the world, a quest that is perpetuated by film and print media. As a result, surfing tourism is the fastest growing sector of a rapidly expanding multi-billion dollar global surf industry (Warshaw, 2004). Surfing is now a highly industrialized sub-sector of the broader tourism industry that supports well over two hundred and fifty specialized travel agencies worldwide (Borden, 2005; Warshaw, 2004). This statistic omits the near-unquantifiable number of independent surf charter boat and excursion operators throughout the world. The number of operators is perhaps less significant than the speed, ease, and frequency in which information about new surf locations spread. Idyllic surf conditions that were once protected through secrecy are now being exposed in the surf media, web-blogs and by entrepreneurs. Not only are secrets about old surf treasures coming out, but with new technological advancements, specifically in satellite imagery, new surf areas are being discovered much more rapidly than ever before. A feature on the popular surf website, "Surfline" recently showed how this technology was used to find optimal surf conditions at previously un-surfed points in Western Sahara (Cataldi 2009). The central problem is that as new destinations come online in increasingly remote locations, indigenous communities will be subjected to a model of tourism development that has repeatedly failed local people, their cultures, economies, and environments (Ponting 2008).

Notwithstanding, surfing tourism remains one of the largest, most understudied niche industries in tourism.  While many think that surfing tourists come mainly from the U.S and Australia the scope actually spans many other countries.  There are well established surf communities throughout the east and west coasts of the United States, the west costs of the UK, Portugal, France, and Spain, and just about every coast in South Africa, Australia and New Zealand.  The point is that there are many affluent societies with surfers – for a multitude of reasons that will be mentioned throughout this paper – traveling to surf different waves around the world.   With this paper, I will argue for the necessity to situate surfing tourism within the ecotourism dialogue as one the most important nature/adventure based subsets in the industry.  Within this discussion, however, I will argue that following the practical dogma of ecotourism is not enough without examining the contradictions associated with pursuing ecotourism within a free market framework. Even in surfing tourism, unfettered market forces lead to the exploitation of local resources and will not in-and-of-themselves bring about the dispersion of equitable benefits.  A case study of the Mentawaii Islands, Indonesia will be presented to serve as empirical evidence supporting the notion that unregulated markets often lead to a spiral towards a 'tragedy of the commons' scenario, where no one wins in the long run.

This is not meant to be a doomsday piece, and there are signs that surfing tourism is shifting towards sustainability.  In Papua New Guinea, a surf association has formed to promote the tenets of ecotourism and NGO involvement has helped to form volunteer surf tourism destinations in impoverished coastal areas of Peru and Nicaragua.  These efforts must, however, be put in context as outliers within the broader surfing tourism sphere.  A tremendous amount of research and subsequent change will still need to occur to increase the presence of sustainable surf travel sites – destinations that can boost the economic benefits earned by local people; and serve as locations for healthy educational and cultural transfers.

The move toward "true ecotourism" within the surfing industry involves a complex transition dependent upon multiple reinforcing factors.  This idea of impact spirals will essentially frame the structure of this paper.  Tourism commons literature will be presented to expose the nature of unregulated market forces to cause a series of reinforcing transitions leading to harmful stagnation in surf destinations (Briassoulis 2002; Butler 1980; etc).  The overall goal of this

paper will then be to highlight the necessity to deconstruct two critical notions that can inspire positive reinforcing shifts toward responsible tourism practices within the surf subculture. The first step will be to expose why ecotourism fails to provide results as a development tool when rooted in freemarket logic before presenting a worthy ecotourism aim for surfing tourism. Secondly, it will be crucial to understand the concept of surfing tourism space as a Nirvana construct. The latter will help us to move towards a universal understanding of implications surrounding the creation of tourism bubbles. The lofty overarching purpose of this work is to inspire governments, social entrepreneurs and NGOs to help establish meaningful regulations in budding surf destinations before it is too late, to inspire surf tourists to demand travel experiences that improve the conditions of the local people where they surf; and for international civil society organizations to adopt sustainable tourism into their missions statements and further the cause.

The tenets of ecotourism provide an ideological blueprint for responsible tourism throughout the developing world. The first task, in Chapter One, will be to discuss the multiple channels converging to explain the origins of ecotourism. This will reveal the current free market bias within much of modern day ecotourism and the ramifications of this in surfing tourism in a significant subset.

The second chapter will provide a narrative history of surf subculture in order to expose inextricable between surfing and tourism. Within this context it will also be crucial to expose how the evolution of the activity has led to a situation where tourism providers attempt to package and market destinations as utopian surf experiences.

The third chapter will present the Mentawaii islands case study. This will help empirically to demonstrate how free market approaches to surf tourism will fail to bring meaningful benefits to local populations as wave resources are colonized by wealthy foreign entrepreneurs. In closing, this paper will catalog the current international surf civil society and illuminate the void of codified recommendations for sustainable surf tourism. In its totality, this work will expose the need for the adoption of holistic ecotourism tenets within international surf civil society organizations.

# Chapter 1:  A Brief History of Tourism and Development

Tourism and Development

It is impossible to know precisely when tourism as we know it began.  Herodotus, circa 500 BC, was the first to travel from Greece to places such as the Nile River and Babylon documenting their physical and cultural aspects.  His writings suggest that prior to his travels wealthy Greeks would often vacation to thermal baths, drawn to their natural beauty as havens to relax and reflect (Redfield 1985).  The chariots of Antiquity may have been replaced with the jumbo jets and cruise liners of today, but people are still traveling and natural beauty is still one of the main impetuses for the activity.  People are traveling so much that tourism has become one of the world's dominant industries.  Tourism now accounts for more than US$3 billion a day in export earning dispersed throughout the globe (UNWTO 2008).  This is more than US$1 trillion a year and for many developing countries is the largest export earning source.  Further, in 1999 tourism was named the world's largest employer accounting for 10 percent of jobs globally (Honey 1999).

Due largely to tourism's economic potential, key players in the international development field have been prescribing tourism around the globe as a means help lift struggling countries out of poverty.  A brief history of international development can help to explain how tourism policy changes along with the dominant paradigm.  As we trace the foundations of tourism as a development tool to the contemporary application of this concept we will reach a crucial crossroads.  This work will expose the contradictory nature of Western development institutions that espouse ecotourism as a development tool (as the rhetoric in international forums suggest) when the goals of ecotourism – as outlined by the Ecotourism Society – are inherently contrary to free market logic. This brief historical context will trace how the concept of development has changed considerably since the mainstream inception of the practice following World War II, but free market theory remains as the philosophical underpinning.  Before the incongruence between this underlying economic theory and ecotourism can be exposed and frame this debate, the evolution of tourism within development theory cannot be ignored.

The victors of the Second World War were left to mend a world in tatters. The two main challenges that emerged in the mid 1960's were how to rebuild Europe and how to transition from a war against fascism and communism to a war against poverty. At this time, the concept of the "Third World" was constructed to homogenize poverty and to give poverty a recognizable face (Escobar 1995). The Third World became a threat to global prosperity because chronic conditions of poverty, hunger and social unrest where noted for their potential to disrupt prosperity in the West.

The Bretton Woods conference in 1944 was the key gathering to address this new Third World concept. At this meeting in New Hampshire, the pending victors of WWII congregated to decide how to reconstruct Europe and to achieve global prosperity by alleviating poverty in the developing world. Paramount to achieving peace was found to be the creation of a global financial architecture comprising of the International Bank of Reconstruction and Development (IBRD now housed within the World Bank), the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT now within the WTO), and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in order to ensure stability and avert conflict.

The "Washington Consensus," or "Free Trade Doctrine," was the underlying philosophy in the formation of these institutions and the global order they perpetuate. The concluding hypothesis of this doctrine is rooted in the idea that every county can achieve gains in national income if the free market is allowed to guide international transactions and that this process inevitably leads to the most efficient outcome. In order to achieve this laissez fair market orientation, trade barriers must be removed, currencies easily exchanged, and domestic markets must be opened up to outside competition.

Development efforts in the 1950 and 1960 were mainly focused on the reconstruction of Europe and the mid1960s and into the 1970s structural adjustment policies geared towards Third World poverty alleviation. Large projects were synonymous with structural adjustment policies as a means to help shock economies out of poverty. This basically followed the logic that immense poverty needed a big response. Mega projects were the major component of the "top down"

approach to development, where large infrastructural projects funded from abroad were thought to have trickle down benefits to the local population (Escobar 1995).

Tourism worked well within the structural adjustment development philosophy because viable destinations need not just hotels, but also airports, roads and utilities. Tourism was thought to have great potential to provide incentives for foreign developers to invest in infrastructure improvements and to serve as a source of employment for the local population. Between 1969 and 1979, the World Bank loaned about US $450 million directly to governments for twenty-four tourism projects (referred to as tourism plants) in eighteen developing countries (Honey 1999). Beginning in the early 1980s the bank linked its loans to structural adjustment policies that forced poor countries to cut spending on social programs, to privatize, and open there economies to foreign investment and trade (Honey 1999). Tourism remained as a large sector to absorb these funds and was also pushed as part of participating countries' export promotion and debt repayment strategy. Enlo (1990) wrote, that at this time the international politics of debt and the international pursuit of pleasure became "tightly knotted together."

This bigger the better ethos in development furthered conventional mass tourism. Large foreign-owned luxury hotels were constructed that effectively insulated guests from the local population so tourists could seek the four S's (sun, sea, sand, and sex) without obstruction. Airports were built and upgraded to accommodate these tourists, roads were improved to link tourists to their enclave resorts and utilities were upgraded to provide modern comforts. The locals were thought to benefit from employment as well as with access to the new infrastructure. For local governments this concept showed great promise to increase GDP and employment in a non-extractive way, therefore early mass tourism was often welcomed more than shunned.

Despite the appeal, conventional tourism and structural adjustment programs contributed to what some have dubbed the "lost decade" of international development (Pyatt 1991). Too many dollars leaked out of the host countries and too few leaked into the local communities. At this time statistics show that upwards of 90 percent of the dollars spent in this industry were shared manly between airlines, cruise lines, and luxury hotels (Honey 1999). Further, these three sectors of the industry were dominated by multi-national corporations which actually limited the

amount of benefit to any nation. The local populations did typically receive some employment in menial service jobs and they also gained market access for their handicrafts. These minimal benefits, however, far from compensated for the environmental and social degradation associated with mass tourism and public sentiment was growing in opposition to the structural adjustment phase of tourism by the mid 1980s.

First, large resorts were put in places with inadequate sewage and solid waste disposal systems while developers did little to upgrade these services. This highlights a key discrepancy with the free market systems during the 1980s (and in many respects today) that it generally failed to consider pollution as a cost of doing business. This led to a situation where large external tourism operators where able to gain exorbitant profits while shifting their pollution and social costs onto the local population. In developed countries, with strong legal systems, there are some safeguards against such injustices, but where institutions were lacking, mass tourism exploited these loopholes.

Secondly, jobs in tourism competed with integral domestic industries, which often led to increased import demand. This phenomenon led to both social stratification and market vulnerability. The development paradigm at this time failed to recognize the importance of diversification, mainly due to favoring the idea of comparative advantage. This is a concept emanating from the Washington Consensus that encourages countries to specialize in producing whatever it is they can at the lowest relative opportunity cost. Comparative advantage, popularized by David Ricardo, basically states that when countries specialize at whatever it is that they can do the best they will prosper. Perpetually warm, sunny and undeveloped destinations where consequently thought to have a comparative advantage as tourist havens.

Social and economic theorists have been critiquing comparative advantage theory since its inception. These counter-theories suggest that specialization in any one industry such as tourism pulls resources out of other industries (such as agriculture or fisheries) and into an industry that is dependent upon export earnings and foreign capital infusion. This becomes an issue when consumer preferences or demand shifts away from tourism in certain areas and these countries are left ill-equipped to produce vital goods and compete in the market place. When this occurs

growth is stifled, leaving countries worse off than before development (Hubbell 2008).  This idea was effectively presented in the documentary "Life and Debt" released in 2001.  With Jamaica as the case study, this film shows how the comparative advantage structure (including tourism) that international development institutions encouraged for the county, led to greater income inequality and deeper poverty.

Transition to sustainable development and ecotourism

In 1980, religious leaders from around the world convened a conference in Manila to address the impact of tourism on the poor.  The Manila Declaration on World Tourism is perhaps most famous for directly stating that "tourism does more harm than good to people and societies in the Third World" (Nicholson-Lord, 1997).  The wording within this declaration quite explicitly highlights the cultural and environmental damage associated with prior tourism, but does not dismiss the potential for tourism to help promote economic equality and cultural understanding among nations.  This conference was mainly geared towards ending cultural atrocities such as sex tourism and other forms of exploitation, but reaffirmed tourism as a fundamental right and a means to distribute foreign exchange to areas with little or no other market-ready resources.

The World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED) convened in 1987 to address the concerns emanating from the Manila Declaration and many other similar conventions highlighting parallel negligence in many sectors of the globalizing economy.  The key document produced at this meeting became known as the Brundtland Report and is credited with popularizing the term "sustainable development" so commonly used today in the development discourse.  This is the idea that a country can satisfy today's needs without compromising needs of future generations.  Paramount to achieving this intergenerational equity is the concept of conserving natural resources and biodiversity, which permits resource extraction only up to the point where renewable resources can successfully regenerate themselves.  The concept of sustainable development essentially worked in conjunction with the Manila Declaration to highlight the environmental decay caused by development and urged practices that encouraged economic development without these negative externalities.  Essentially, WCED used the environment as a lens to discuss the negative effects of development.  This furthered the idea that

when the natural environment is not over-extracted, exploited or polluted in connection with development that local populations will garner economic and social benefits.

This movement towards sustainable development ushered in a new way of doing old things. Under this umbrella, lagging countries must still focus on Western style development, but do so in a way that does not harm the natural world. Sustainable development initially became modeled after the U.S. national park system (Igoe 2004). Under this scheme, certain areas around the world became designated for protection to nurture their natural beauty and biodiversity. This was mainly fashioned in an E.O Wilsonian mentality that there are biodiversity hotspots, mostly in impoverished equatorial regions, that must be preserved. This led to the incorporation of an ethos of "fences and fines" which expelled indigenous populations from their land and placed stress on areas outside of these parks (Igoe 2004). Development workers quickly realized that local communities need to be incorporated or these parks would not be legitimate.

In 1992, the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), otherwise known as the Rio Summit, reinforced this concept by requiring signatory parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity to establish a system of parks and protected areas and promote appropriate development polices in and around these areas that would contribute to the conservation of biological diversity (Borgerhoff-Mulder & Copollo 2005). Tourism became the key policy solution to promote protected areas. Tourism was thought to provide economic incentives for people around parks to have a stake in their legitimacy. Basically, it was thought that by allowing foreigners to pay fees to visit these parks there would be three key benefits. First, the park fees would contribute to the necessary management and enforcement of these protected areas. Second, tourists would have to stay in areas around the park that would increase revenue and employment and give the community a vested interest in protecting the parks. Last, this tourist industry would provide further environmental benefits as a smokeless/non-extractive industry alternative in these regions.

This is admittedly an inference, but tourism may have played a large role in the vast expansion of protected areas throughout the world as a mechanism for legitimizing the space. To get a sense

of the figures involved, there were 1 million square kilometers of protected areas in 1962 when the first World Parks Conference convened and since that time land protection has increased thirteen fold (Green & Paine 1997).  Currently terrestrial and marine reserves cover 7.9 percent and 0.5 percent of the Earth's land and sea area (Borgerhoff-Mulder & Copollo 2005).  Here, one can extrapolate the amount of tourism it would necessitate to provide the economic incentives to safeguard against encroachments on all of that protected land.  This became the basis to incorporate stakeholder theory into tourism implementation as a way to understand what was causing local people to revolt against protected areas and how to thwart this resistance.  Honey (1999) adds that this stakeholder theory (that people will protect what they receive value from) has dovetailed with economic development theories holding that the road out of poverty must begin at, not simply trickle down to, the local community level.

Ecotourism was the name given to tourism with a focus on environmental protection and quickly grew in popularity in conjunction with WCED and the Rio Summit (Honey 1999).  In the 1980s, the concept of ecotourism began to take hold in East and South Africa as well as in the Galapagos Islands in Latin America.  At this time, building on the stakeholder concept that people needed to derive value in order to protect ecosystems, ecotourism added the need for tourism to be environmentally sensitive, low impact, and culturally sensitive.  Further, tourism should help to espouse the idea of equality among nations from the Manila Declaration through educating tourist as well as local communities about one another.

Multilateral Aid Institutions were quick once again to adopt tourism (but this time ecotourism) as a worthy policy directive simultaneously to appease the environmental movement and recoup mounting debt payments owed by the developing world.  According to Honey (1999), the World Bank first mentioned the need to include local people in the planning and benefits of tourism and to provide rural development investments in areas surrounding national parks to prevent encroachment in 1986 (pg 16).  Following this in 1990, the World Bank together with the United Nations set up the Global Environmental Facility (GEF) to help implement global environmental conventions agreed upon in Rio.  One of the GEF's four focal areas is protecting biodiversity through, "the development of environmentally sensitive nature-based tourism" and "participatory schemes for sustainable natural resource management, including…..local communities,

indigenous groups, and other sectors of society" (GEF 1996). USAID was also a large player and by the mid-1990 had 105 projects (totaling more than 2 building in funding) with ecotourism components (Honey 1999). USAID and the World Bank continued to espouse a combination of the private sector, free trade, foreign investments, and expanded exports as the main engine for growth, and growth as the main driver for environmental protection. Ecotourism was coddled as a means to incorporate the totality of this mentality and projects continue to spread throughout the world.

Moving from nature and adventure tourism to ecotourism

The origins of nature tourism and the transition to ecotourism in many respects helped to propel to the shift from tourism to ecotourism on the international development agenda. As mentioned in the last section, nature tourism may have begun as early as ancient Greece, but its western roots originate in the late 19th Century with the early birdwatchers of the Audubon Society and the Sierra Club, who had a common mission to spark curiosity for nature and traveling to do so (Honey 1999). The Sierra Club's Outing Program (one of the first organized domestic nature tourism enterprises) began in 1901 with expeditions of 100 hikers accompanied by guide and chefs who trekked the backcountry wilderness of the Sierra Nevada. The Sierra Club intended their guided hikes to inspire advocacy for forest preservation. It is beyond the scope of this piece to speculate as to whether advocacy was inspired, but these "High Trips" as they become known, ballooned in popularity, enough so that by 1936 travelers were beginning to demand a more intimate nature experience and Sierra Club members were beginning to see destruction caused by these large convoys (Cohen 1988).

This scenario is a common theme in nature tourism history. People are drawn to the promise of peace and serenity that the common construct of nature is thought to embody, but tend to find more cars, lines, pollution, and noise then they anticipated. Visitors to the National Park System in the US rose by 20 percent in the decade 1980-1990, from about 190 million to more than 250 million (Honey 1999 pg 10). A New York Times article form 1995 illustrates the destructive nature of the increasing number of visitors to the Grand Canyon National Park around this time frame. According to this press report, rangers had to kill dozens of mule deer that became

hooked on the snack food tourists fed them, which destroyed their natural ability to digest vegetation (NYT 1995). The idea that even tourists with good intentions can cause negative environmental externalities was sewn in the fabric of the tourism discourse around this time. And in the 1990s ecotourism was beginning to catch steam as the need to prevent similar adverse effects on habitats and wildlife from human pleasure seeking in nature.

Perhaps more importantly to this work, crowding conditions in the developed world's "wilderness" areas coupled with the booms in information technology and easy access to transport facilitated an exodus of the nature tourist abroad. This worked temporarily to deflect the experience of crowding and adverse environmental effects that uncontrolled tourism can cause. As we have seen in the last section, however, the adverse effects of nature tourist fleeing the crowded experiences in their home countries began to coalesce in the developing world, affecting local communities abroad both economically and socially.

Similar trends can be found in adventure or activity based tourism. Just as nature tourism is rooted in the idea emanating from western countries in the twentieth century that there are restorative and medicinal benefits to balancing the ardor of work, life in the city, and/or the pollution in industrial areas, so too are recreational pursuits (Jennings 2007). Adventure-based tourism is rooted in the ethos that just "going" is not enough; there must be a "doing" component. Many adventure-based activities, including kayaking, hiking, and surfing – amongst others – have been growing in the West along with rising per capita incomes. This type of activity cannot be holistically severed from nature tourism in that so many of the activities are dependent upon natural settings. Adventure or activity-based tourism is an important element of this discourse because there in an extra incentive to travel in that different parts of the earth offer different terrain. For example, a kayaker from Colorado may gain excitement from charging the rivers of Costa Rica for a multitude of reasons. They are experiencing new terrains, seeing different wildlife, and experiencing a different culture, all of which are important in differing degrees to different adventure tourists. Similarly to nature tourism, as the number of adventure tourists began to increase, signs that various forms of adventure tourism were beginning to destroy the very aspects that made destinations desirable facilitated in undercurrent for sustainable travel reform.

Ecotourism

The International Ecotourism Society (TIES) is most often cited throughout the tourism discourse as the key civil society organization attempting to improve tourism practices worldwide. This NGO has recognized the parallels between nature and adventure tourism and seeks to underline the tenants for sustainable travel alluded to in WCED (1987) and helped to frame the tourism dialogue within the Earth summit. Although many partial definitions of ecotourism have already been mentioned it is important to add the formal definition as outlined by TIES. "Ecotourism is responsible travel to natural areas that conserves the environment and improves the well-being of local people" (TIES 1990). The organization further elaborates six keys to achieving the mission outlined in the definition.

- Minimize Impact
- Build environmental and cultural awareness and respect
- Provide positive experiences for both visitors and hosts
- Provide direct financial benefits for conservation
- Provide financial benefits and empowerment for local people
- Raise sensitivity to host countries' political, environmental, and social climate.

(This inarguably outlines a noble standard to guide tourism practices and further reference to "true ecotourism" in this paper will draw on this definition.) The empirical track record of ecotourism from the first documented attempt to aggregate this mission in the Galapagos Islands until now has proven wildly ineffective (Honey 1999; Duffy 2002). This failure has occurred for a multitude of reason in multiple different places, but the free-trade economic philosophy guiding the transition to responsible tourism most aptly explains the inability of developing countries to realize the goals set forth by the ecotourism society. This free market approach extends beyond the international aid agencies and is accepted and disseminated by my many leading NGOs in the field including TIES and Rainforest Alliance. These ecotourism promoters suggest that it is an apolitical business, based simply on consumer choice that will benefit

development and environmental conservation, while conveniently providing some revenue for the host countries as well (Duffy 2002).

This philosophy has become synonymous with elaborate rating schemes that seek to differentiate tourism providers in terms of their environmental and social stewardship. While principles such as ensuring local employment are within these rating schemes, they are often criticized for not requiring higher level employment, local ownership, or even meaningful environmental protection in certain instances (Duffy 2002). For example, one point can be earned in the Rainforest Alliances ecotourism rating system in Costa Rica for putting up signs suggesting that water is saved when towels are reused. This example highlights a key point of contention within the market based ecotourism paradigm in that it opens up the avenues for egregious green-washing and that it promotes mere cost saving business initiatives under the guise of community betterment. Travelers are mis-educated about the realities within the areas they visit and believe they are bettering the communities they visit by using their towels one extra time.

With this work I hope to differentiate between market driven and civil society approaches to ecotourism. This will I hope show that impassioned civil society movements towards sustainable tourism practices are more likely to influence tourism behavior then market based approaches that typically attempt to disguise cost cutting measures as sustainability. The surf civil society has a strong anti pollution influence (Surfer Against Sewage UK based and Surfrider Foundation in US) and also and strong presence in protecting quality surf from coastal development (Save the Waves Coalition), but ecotourism has been isolated to a few marginal attempts without international civil society support. For this to change, more work in this field must be researched and published.

Surfing Tourism Lagging in Sustainability

Surf tourism is a form of travel that blurs the lines between nature and adventure tourism. Buckley (2002), places surf tourism in a category with photo safaris, sport fishing, mountaineering, and scuba diving. He umbrellas them under the title "nature-based adventure tourism" and speaks to the effects that crowding can have to limit tourist enjoyment and burden

local societies with harmful environmental and social effects.  This nature-based adventure tourism label is not without dispute, others argue that surf tourism is a sub-set of marine tourism (Jennings 2007; Poizat-Newcomb 1999) and others claim that it is branch of sport tourism (Farmer 1992).  Rather than chiming in on this debate, this work will focus on tourism as hybrid form of tourism best explained as blend between nature and adventure motivations.  Dolnicar's (2003) research on surf tourists reveals the motives of a wide sample of surfers and illuminates the importance of both a healthy natural environment as well as quality of waves for riding.

Surfing is the imagery that propels a global industry traded on stock exchanges around the world valued at US$7.48 billion in 2006 (Viejo 2007).  The International Surfing Association (ISA) estimates that 23 million people surf worldwide and that this is a low estimate given the impossibility to quantify the speed at which the sport is spreading to regions with a dearth of statistical information (Warshaw 2004).  Global surfing tourism has grown in proportion to the scale of growth in the broader surf industry to likely minimum of US $250 million annually and this fails to encapsulate the tremendous number of people that do not travel specifically to surf but take lessons or visit a surf camp during their travels (Ponting 2008).

These numbers show the large economic impact that surf can have, but fail to derive meaningful estimates of the environmental harm the industry causes.  For example, if we assume that there are 23 million surfers worldwide, then we must assume there are somewhere between 23 and 100 million surfboards.  Avid surfers tend to have a variety of surfboards known as a quiver; this can help them to match the proper board with the conditions in the ocean in order to increase their performance level.  For a brief summation, these are principally long (8ft or more) and short (between 5 and 7ft) boards.  Long-boards resemble the original planks used by the native Polynesians and are typically used for gliding on smaller waves and using the force of the wave to move with the surf.  Short-boards are used for high performance maneuvers and are typically what professionals use in competitions.  There are also guns (long and skinny boards), for riding huge surf over 10ft in height.  There are fish and other hybrid boards for beginners and for performance maneuvering in smaller surf.  In addition boards can either have one, two, three, or four fins and a variety of tail shapes for added variability of performance.  Jennings (2007), studying surf in England alone found that in 1981, there were 21 importers/manufacturers of

surfboards offering 58 different types of surfboards (different in number of fins, style, size and tail shape). By 1984, there were 49 different companies manufacturing or importing 178 different boards in the British market (Jennings 2007 pg 103). Since then number of producers has dwindled as some have expanded and bought out others, but the product diversity and quantity of sales continues to grow.

These boards are made from polyurethane or polystyrene foam covered with layers of fiberglass, cloth, and polyester or epoxy resin. In short that is a tremendous amount of surfboards made out of harmful composite materials. Waste in the production of these materials is not recyclable and the shaping process entails a great deal of waste creation as surfboards are shaped out of larger pieces of blank foam. Further, surfboard life depends on the frequency of use, so avid surfers may feel compelled to upgrade their surfboards every five months or so, while sporadic surfers may use the same board for a number of years. In addition, surfing in water colder than 70 degrees Fahrenheit typically necessitates the use of a wetsuit. Wetsuits are typically made from either 100 percent Neoprene or a blend of Neoprene and Butyl Rubber. In California, one of the most densely surf populated areas of the world, cold water temperatures typically necessitate year-round wetsuit use with the exception of summer months in the southernmost counties. Again wetsuit life depends on use and care, but typically a suit is good for around 2 years before stretching occurs and water infiltration becomes high rendering them inefficient at keeping surfers warm. Although currently un-quantified, surfing waste would be compelling study when production waste is combined with the volume of broken boards, weathered wetsuits, snapped leashes and camping waste. This paragraph is simply meant to extrapolate the environmental degradations associated with surfing materials, but quantifiable data is needed offer stronger case for understanding the true environmental impacts of surfing.

In addition to the high environmental impact of surfing equipment estimated above, surfers burn a tremendous amount of fossil fuels in their pursuit of the perfect wave. Surfers from the developed world fly to every island chain and continent on earth (with the exception of Antarctica). Even though surfing as an activity does not require many inputs, after surfers fly to their destinations they hire cars and boats and usually travel long distances to get from the airport

to the coasts, then typically travel quite substantially to surf as many breaks as they can in the area during the course of their stay.

As we will see in Indonesia, surfing charter boats negatively impact reefs when they drop anchor and local populations rarely benefit if at all from the activity happening in their territories.  Local societies feel powerless over the colonization of their wave resources and this helps to reinforce poverty.

In sum, surf tourism is one of the many adventure-activity-nature based tourism hybrids.  As we have seen, surfing tourism deserves special attention for many reasons, the first being the size of the industry, the second is its perceived natural and cultural benevolence, and third the inherent traveling requisite associated with the activity.  Another crucial aspect contributing to the nature of this study is that fact that despite a strong environmental civil society in the surf world there has been no attempt to codify normative codes for responsible surf tourism as had occurred in other nature-adventure tourisms that Buckley (2002) mentions.

SCUBA Establishing Ecotourism Guidelines

Project AWARE, a civil society SUBA organization has recently codified a normative code to boost sustainability within the activity.  They have specifically targeted ecotourism as significant activity to boost economic development in biologically diverse marine areas.  This code specifies that SCUBA tourists should patronize locally owned lodging, leave reefs in better condition than they found it, report incidence, encourage others to follow the code and also provides list of providers encompassing all of these aims listed below.

As an Ecotourist, you should….

1.  Enjoy nature, but don't chase or touch animals
2.  Not remove anything that is part of the natural environment
3.  Urge your guides to act responsibly and tip them for their cooperation
4.  Stay on the trails or other designated areas and leave the site cleaner than when you found it
5.  Report environmental damages to authorities and encourage responsible behavior in others
6.  Patronize locall owned business, but avoid item made from endangerd species, threatened species, coral or tropical hardwoods
7.  Interact with and show respect for local people, their culture and their traditions.  Talk with them about environmental issues affecting their area.  Visitors respecting a destination is key to ecotourism.
8.  Protect threatened fisheries by choosing seafood items caught or harvested from sustainable native fish populations
9.  Practice buoyancy control skills in a pool or sandy area before swimming near a coral reef or any sensitive environment.  Make sure your equipment is secured, you're weighted properly and be careful not to touch, stand on or collect coral
10. Be an AWARW dive – enroll in a Project AWARE Specialty course to increase your knowledge about the environment and learn sustainable dive practice knowledge
11. Participate in local conservation activities when available and support established parks and reserves

(https://www.projectaware.org/english/templates/info.aspx?id=557)

This movement has been adopted by PADI (the most used) and other diving certification programs to ensure that all certified divers have knowledge of sustainable scuba practices including tourism.  This is not to suggest that these tenets are perfect and that they in themselves can ensure sustainability, but it shows how an informed civil society movement can permeate throughout an activity similar to surfing.  While surfing and scuba have never been compared specifically, surfing is an older activity, with arguably more participants, given cheaper equipment and current fashion for surfing.  The aim of this work is to foster a similar movement towards sustainability education that can promote the permeation of ecotourism practices throughout the surf subculture much as has occurred in scuba.  This will necessitate reconciling myths that surfing is inherently ecotouristic and clarifying the difference between the tenets of ecotourism from its actual/real world implementation.

Conclusion

The first chapter was a simple representation of how tourism continues to be adopted as a development tool and its implementation changes along with changing paradigms. Under the structural adjustment phase of development, tourism was mainly seen as a tool to promote capital infusion in poor regions of the world. The focus of international development institutions then shifted to sustainable development and ecotourism was seen as a means to gain revenue to operate protected areas where governments lacked the adequate funds to do so. This main point that I wish to emphasize is that this transition was rather seamless. The idea of protected areas was already well enshrined in the West and pushing that agenda on the developing world was not contentious within the dominant paradigm. Further, this chapter also revealed how ecotourism was evolving throughout many other channels and explains how, when taken together, ecotourism was quite a natural progression.

Currently, the development rhetoric is shifting towards favoring community based development programs which reach beyond simply attempting to attract funds to areas and protecting isolated parcels of land. This should be seen as a critical crossroads because the current Western development paradigm and the key ecotourism institutions continue to espouse free market competition when holistic community betterment would entail local prioritization. Some civil society movements – as in scuba – are attempting to addresses best practices, but this moves beyond a solely free-market approach, which I will argue is essential. The Mentawai Islands case study presented in the third chapter will expose the reality that when tourism resources are open to a competitive market, these resources are exploited by well-capitalized foreign entrepreneurs and local people will forever remain on the sidelines. This argument is borrowed from Gunnar Myrdal (1957) and other economists who suggest that the free market may be effective at guiding transaction between similarly wealthy countries, but fails to produce results when there is inequality amongst trading partners.

For this reason, this work will essentially argue for governments and civil society organizations to inspire market interventions to provide protection from unfair competition and promote effective resource management schemes in early surf tourism destinations. At the very least,

they should facilitate an agreement on surf tourism sustainability tenets that can be spread throughout the surf subculture.

The next section will provide a narrative history of surfing to expose two key contextual ideas that will frame this work.  The first will be to expose how in search of higher profits, surf tourism entrepreneurs borrow from the fascination with early surf pioneer expeditions to market their destinations as fictitious wonderlands (Ponting 2003).  The second purpose of this narrative is to illuminate the channels within the surf civil society that could adopt and promote tourism practices focused on improving local communities.

Chapter 2: Narrative history of surfing, the surf subculture, and surf tourism

Introduction: Defining the vocabulary that will be used

Surfing's origin lies with the pre-modern Pacific island peoples of Hawaii or perhaps the Marquesas. Documentation of Captain Cook's first visit to Hawaii, in 1778, reveals an at first sight Western infatuation with the activity (Finney & Huston 1996). I doubt, however, the seamen who first viewed these tribal people "dancing on waves" with an overwhelming sense of surprise and awe could have predicted that the sport would become the globalized international phenomenon it is now. Some conservatively estimate that the global surf industry (travel, apparel and equipment) is worth upwards of billion dollars annually (Fluker 2003).

Before discussing surf tourism specifically, it is crucial to examine the surf subculture and how travel has become inextricably linked to the hobby. The Mentawai's case study will then help to expose how the 'business-class' version of the surfing tourist space initially constructed by surf explorers of the 1960s and 70s serves the marketing purposes of tour operators, the media and surf wear manufacturers (Ponting & Wearing 2005). In essence this phenomenon commodifies the experience of surf exploration, which harmfully excludes the realities of the local populations and contributes to the failure of surf tourism to bring economic development to impoverished and remote regions of the world.

Ford and Brown (2006) argue that the best way to understand the surf subculture is through tracking a narrative history of the activity. First, however, I find it crucial to briefly explain why the term "activity" is so often used in the surf dialogue as opposed to limiting terms such as sport or hobby. This is mainly because surfers partake in the activity for a multitude of different reason and characterization depends on level of engagement at any particular time. Farmer (1992) explains that people can be motivated so surf as either a hobby, a sport, or form of play and can change roles depending on the setting in which they are surfing. Take a surf competition for example: in this setting surfers are directly competing in an institutionalized version of the

sport against one another. However, when these participants are surfing in a non-competitive setting at another date and time, they may just be out enjoying the water with their friends (play). It is beyond the scope of this work to dig too deeply in the rich topic of recreational motivations, but it is important to understand that surfing is a complex activity. This work will focus on the concept that surfing is an essential form of identity for participants that helps to shape how they engage with society and make critical decisions (Farmer 1992; Ford & Brown 2006).

The goal here is essentially to tell the story of surfing. This narrative methodology is particularly useful in the analysis of individuals' involvement in surfing and can encompass everything from the initial attractions, to socialization, and even help us to understand changing levels of engagement (Ford & Brown 2006). This practice can be useful in proposing values and behaviors for a particular subculture. The goal of this is to show how interwoven the idea of surf tourism is to this subculture and also to trace how the nature of surf travel itself has changed from the time of its inception.

For the purposes of this work, the term subculture refers to cultural variants displayed by certain segments of the population. Subcultures are distinguished not by one or two isolated traits - they constitute relatively cohesive social systems (Jenks 2005). They are worlds within the larger world of our national cultures (Komarovsky & Sargent 1949. 143) and the same can be said for international subcultures such as surfing. As the story of surfing is told in this section, the role that the surf civil society, surf media, and more recently the surf apparel and tourism providers have in perpetuating anti-norms and in some cases movements towards rather than away from greater cultural norms. The goal is to look beyond mere discrepancies between the mainstream and the surf subculture and to reveal further the systematic strategies that they employ to guarantee a reproduction of those inconsistencies. Admittedly, this type of theory necessitates a great deal of generalization in that neither greater cultures nor subcultures are perfectly homogenous, but examining surfing as a subculture can denote valuable insights and understandings with regard to surfing behavior and particularly travel decisions.

Brief narrative history of surfing:

While it is impossible to know exactly when and where the activity began, most of what we know comes from First Lieutenant James King's two page account of the activity circa 1779, when he took over James Cook's fleet traveling from England in search of the Northwest Passage. Here is a passage from King's log that depicts how enshrined surfing was in the Hawaiian culture before widespread colonial influence:

> *But a diversion the most common is upon the Water, where there is a very great Sea, and surf breaking on the Shore. The Men sometimes 20 or 30 go without the Swell of the Surf, & lay themselves flat upon an oval piece of plan about their Size and breadth, they keep their legs close on top of it, & their Arms are us'd to guide the plank, thye wait the time of the greatest Swell that sets on Shore, & altogether push forward with their Arms to keep on its top, it sends them in with a most astonishing Velocity, & the great art is to guide the plan so as always to keep it in a proper direction on the top of the Swell, & as it alters its direct. If the Swell drives him close to the rocks before he is overtaken by its break, he is much prais'd. On first seeing this very dangerous diversion I did not conceive it possible but that some of them must be dashed to mummy against the sharp rocks, but just before they reach the shore, if they are very near, they quit their plank, & dive under till the Surf is broke, when the piece of plank is sent many yards by the force of the Surf from the beach. The greatest number are generally overtaken by the break of the swell, the force of which they avoid, diving and swimming under the water out of its impulse. By such like exercises, these men may be said to be almost amphibious. The Women could swim off to the Ship, & continue half a day in the Water, & afterwards return. The above diversion is only intended as an amusement, not a tryal of skill, & in a gentle swell that sets on must I conceive be very pleasant, at least they seem to feel a great pleasure in the motion which this Exercise gives.*

At this time, surfing was a cornerstone in the existing Hawaiian culture. Hawaii was ruled by a code of taboos that guided all aspects of life and even attempted to predict and anticipate favorable surf conditions (Marcus 2009). Kings and chiefs were known for their surfing ability and overall mobility in the water. There was strict delineation within the culture between chiefs and commoners, but everyone was permitted to enjoy surfing when the waves were favorable.

Surfing as a ritual for tribal camaraderie and entertainment for kings and commoners alike diminished in the succeeding years as colonial influence brought new technologies, religions, and ideas to Hawaii. The Calvinist Christian Missionaries arrived in 1820 and explicitly discouraged native Hawaiians from surfing (Marcus 2009). In addition to moving the islanders away from polytheism and their old ways of life, missionaries preached the concepts that Hawaiians should wear more clothes and learn to read and right, work more and play less. This illuminates the social incongruence between the Western cultural norms emanating from early colonial capitalism and surf culture, an idea that permeates throughout the majority of this narrative. In this first clash, an existing surf culture was shunned for being unproductive in a society moving towards consumerism.

With the onset of Western disease and the sport being dubbed blasphemous, surfing was relegated to the margins. Around the late 1800s to early 1900s the only people surfing were a handful of Hawaiians and a few western visitors including Mark Twain and Jack London (Marcus 2009). The remaining clique of Hawaiian surfers at this time banded to form the Waikiki Swimming Club. This brings home the second notable element of the early surf subculture and the tendency of social outliers to form groups to help protect and justify their pursuit while reinstalling camaraderie in an activity that is by nature individualistic (Ford & Brown 2006).

Surf Adoption in the west: birth of surf tourism

The reason a scant pre-modern history of Hawaii is mentioned above for the purposes of this work is three fold. The first is to expose the clash between surfing and dominant Western culture, the second is to emphasize the inextricable link between surfing and tourism, and lastly to highlight the importance of group formation within the subculture. This section will focus on the first two of these three points and the last chapter will discuss the surf civil society in greater detail borrowing from this narrative history.

As mentioned above, surfing was discovered by western explorers and attempted by Mark Twain and Jack London and many others upon their travels. In 1911 London even published a novel *The Cruise of the Snark,* with a chapter entitled "surfing: the royal sport." Given the nature of this piece I will as attempt to leave characterization out of the surfing narrative. I use London here only as a key link to surfing's adoption in California. Basically, London had discovered what many American developers canoodling in Hawaii had already, that surfing is fascinating and can attract people. Going along with this concept the developer of the Redondo-Los Angeles Railway brought the best Hawaiian surfer he could find (James Freeth) to put on a wave riding display to promote the opening of the railroad in 1907. Another Hawaiian surfer was brought to Australia a few years later and began a similar revolution. To say the very least the two initial attempts to use surfing as a marketing tool were widely successful as people throughout California and Australia began picking up boards and trying what they witnessed. Current surf marketing may have changed a bit, but its effectiveness has not changed.

Ford and Brown (2006) trace this chronology rather eloquently to help understand the cultural undercurrent that accompanies these milestones and brings us up to date with our current discussion.

> *The narrative history of surfing's beginnings in the island of the Pacific, is imbued with notions of pantheistic spirituality, courage and harmony with nature, which resonated with Western romantic sensibilities. The demise of surfing during the nineteenth century missionary period may well have contributed to surfing culture's anti-establishment ethos and suspicion of repressive social tendencies. Surfing's rebirth in the early twentieth century allowed the expression of such sentiments more positively, in terms of an association with surfing with fun, hedonism and freedom, beyond societal conventions.* (Pg. 29)

In the latter portion of this passage, Ford and Brown (2006) are describing the period between the 1900s and 1950s when the surf as a lifestyle mentality was reborn and enshrined into the growing surf culture. The tenets of this lifestyle included romance, beautiful natural surroundings, danger, physical prowess, and escapism (George 1999). Also at this time, images

were beginning to portray surfing heroism and surfers began to surf bigger and bigger waves. The amalgamation of these cultural images began to appear throughout the media and even began to pave the way for surf specific periodicals.

Following this in the late 1960s surfing embodied the growing counter culture in the US. "Soul surfing" emphasized a reinterpretation of the values of spirituality, aesthetics and the quest for inner peace and authenticity (Ford & Brown 2006). This facilitated a growing popularity with surfing and in the face of postwar prosperity and capitalistic expansion, presented a business opportunity to package these values of authenticity and distinctness. The main avenues for surfing's commodification came in many forms such as music, movies, magazines, and improved board designs and technologies.

In relating these ideas of commodification to surf tourism specifically, there is perhaps no greater influence than the documentary film *Endless Summer* (1964). At this time, California surfers were still exploring the Californian coast in search of new waves and traveling back and forth from Hawaii to experience surfing sessions at the activity's origin. The commonplace of these activities led Bruce Brown on a quest to raise the bar of authenticity within the surf culture. Brown, an avid surfer, decided to take surf legends Mike Hynson and Robert August on a quest to find the perfect wave in areas previously un-surfed and to film the 'surfari'. The film depicted their travels to empty waves in New Zealand, South Africa, Tahiti and Ghana and showed images of indigenous tribal people's enthusiasm and warm response to the activity. The sold out movie theatres were signs of surfs profitability and increased the number of entrepreneurs seeking to cash in the sports dream like image. This film also led to the popularization of surf travel by glorifying the experience of surfing alone in uncharted territories. The documentary disseminated the idea that the world is a big place with seemingly endless coastlines and there are rewards for being adventurous and traveling to surf. Ormrod (2005: pg 42) writes this about the film:

> What everyone picked up was the beauty of surfing, the harmonious union of man and nature, the adventure implicit in riding waves no one surfed before, and the sense of freedom to be found away from civilization's complexity.

This quote describes how *The Endless Summer* popularized the desire to travel to remote areas away from "civilization" in order to experience a pure surfing experience. This film and its influence on the subculture lay the foundation for the tourism bubble that will be discussed in the following section. Basically as other surfers sought their own authentic endless summer-esque surf experience they began to visit areas of the world previously untouched (at the very least un-surfed) by the outside world and eventually found ways to package and sell these surf adventures to make them available to larger, less adventurous audiences and to earn profits.

In the timeframe between the 1960s and the present, many more changes within the subculture began to occur. With commodification breeding further popularity, the surf culture began to undergo a schism that more accurately depicts the current subculture and differentiates the current scene from its more homogenous predecessor. Part of the surf subculture began to adopt a more commercial friendly version of the activity that led to the codification of surf maneuvers for scoring (sportization) while those who maintained the sole surfing ethic reacted by straying even further from this norm (Ford & Brown 2006). While some surfers began to embrace the capitalist/technological society others began straying as far from it as possible attempting to keep the spirit of authenticity alive. Despite this great divide within the subculture, the emphasis on consumption and leisure rather than work remains a commonality. This is the idea that is most apt to consider surfing in terms of the consumption of a lifestyle, with reference to the choices made regarding work type and general expenditure to enable the, often extensive, time commitment involved in following the waves (Gelder 1997). The majority of surfers regardless of their motivation for the activity deviate from cultural norms in that they often sacrifice money and stability for access to their hobby.

With surfing spreading between the 1950's and now, crowding as a general theme within the subculture and as a motivation to travel is becoming bigger than any non-surfer could ever imagine. While there are thousands of miles of coastline in the world, it takes a special mix of factors such as sandbar formations, wind conditions, typical swell directions and shoreline angle to designate a quality surf-break. Taking the Californian coast as an example, even though it boasts an incredible number of high-quality surfing breaks in comparison to many coastlines

around the world, in total these breaks represent only a tiny fraction of the entire coast (Shaw & Black 2002). Despite the limited number of surf breaks, a report from Australia in 2005 suggests that 2.8 million Aussies surfed that year, which according to this study presents a growth rate of nearly 10 percent per annum for participants (Sweeny 2005 Fluker 2003). Even though there have not been many studies to empirically quantify the number of surfers worldwide, this trend in Australia is a valuable proxy to indicate the crucial concept that for whatever reason, the number of surfers are growing and there is a finite number of quality wave resources on Earth.

Crowding has led to what Ford and Brown refer to as 'surf rage' and 'localism' at many of the prominent surf breaks throughout the world. This crowd related phenomenon has become emblematic of what many call surfing's cultural decline (Young 2001; Ford & Brown 2006). Localism refers to an incidence when people who have surfed a particular break for a considerable amount of time seek to dictate control over how the wave is used. Surf rage is the definition for activities such as leash cutting and fist fights that break out when respect is not shown to the locals out in a surf line up. Many surfers travel in order to avoid the stress involved with these localized breaks.

Regardless of where western surfers derive their passion from and where they stand on the ideological spectrum, chances are surf travel is a big portion of their lives. While this can only be inferred given the lack of data on this subject, any traveling surfer will tell you intuitively that the numbers are increasing and they are doing so rapidly. This is not a positive or negative phenomenon in and of itself, but it is important to first show why surfers are often viewed as a benign/low impact portion of tourism and then move on to discuss how surf tourism in a particular case has failed to significantly benefit the local inhabitants in Indonesia.

Psychographic profile of surf tourists: ecotourists?

Dolnicar's (2003) study on surf tourism demographics is one of the few studies, if not the only one, that seeks to test the viability and frequency of the aforementioned sub-cultural travel motivations. Through his survey of 430 international surf tourists he found that empty waves, secret-ness of the location, seasonality, and the quality of the natural environment (in that order)

where the most desired characteristics of a surf destination across the board and were characteristics deemed important by the majority of the respondents.  He further breaks up the respondents in to four distinct psychographic profiles he titles, price conscious safety seekers (15%), luxury surfers (19%), price conscious adventurers (24%), and radical adventurers (19%). His graphs are copied below:

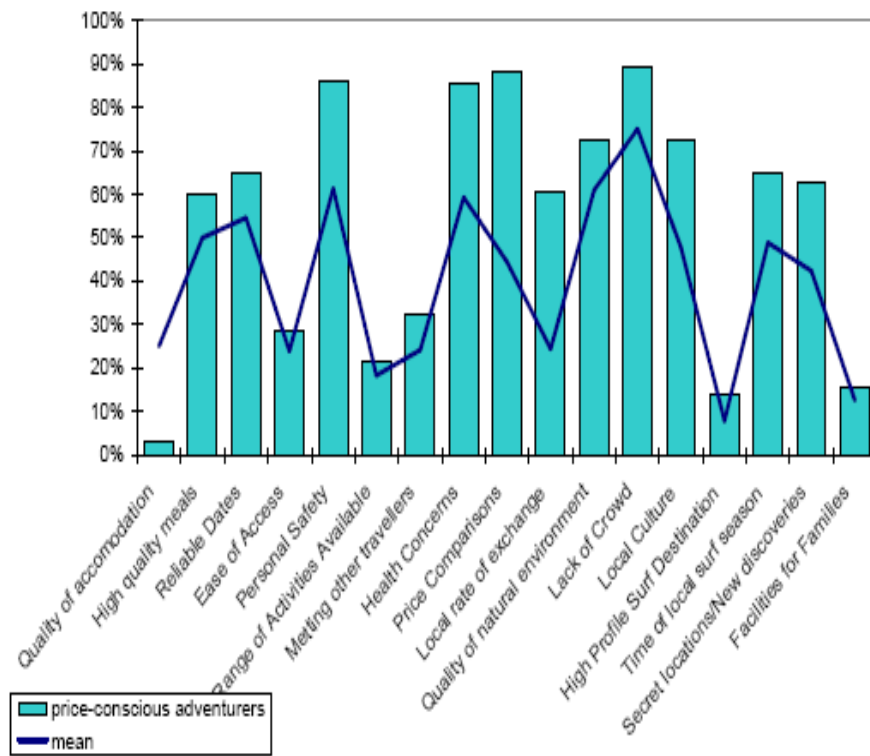## Figure 3: Psychographic profile of the price-conscious adventurers

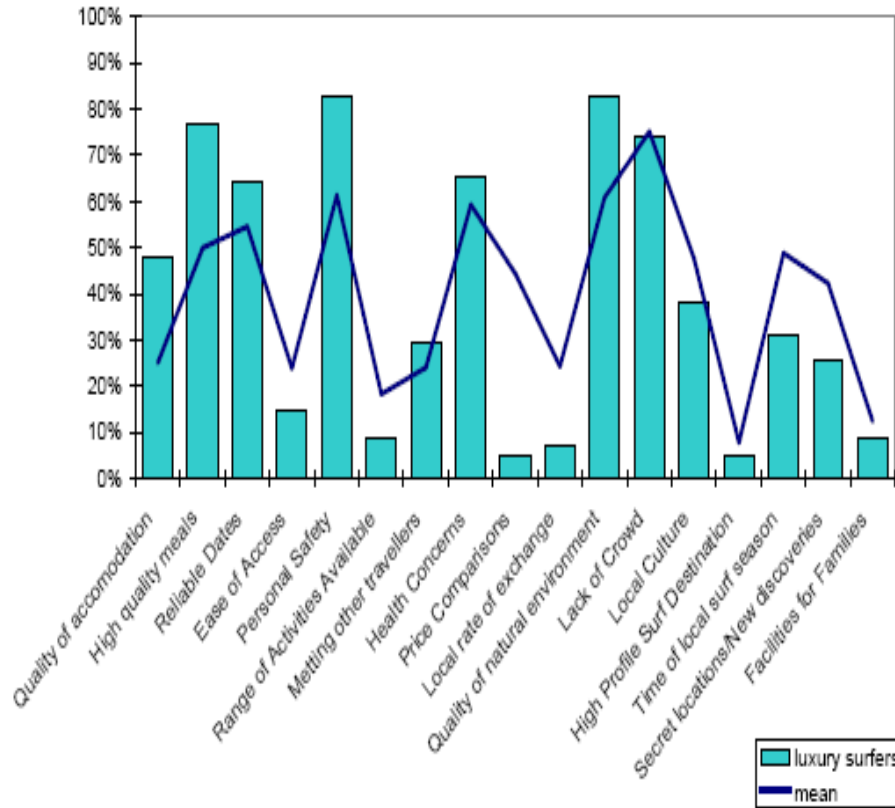## Figure 2: Psychographic profile of the luxury surfers



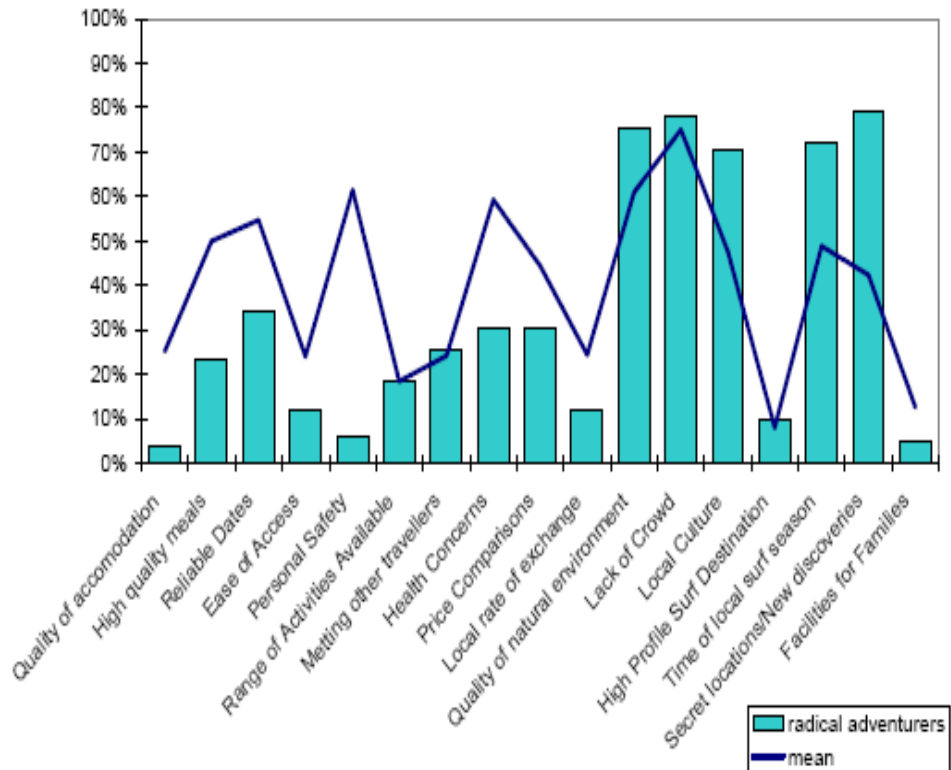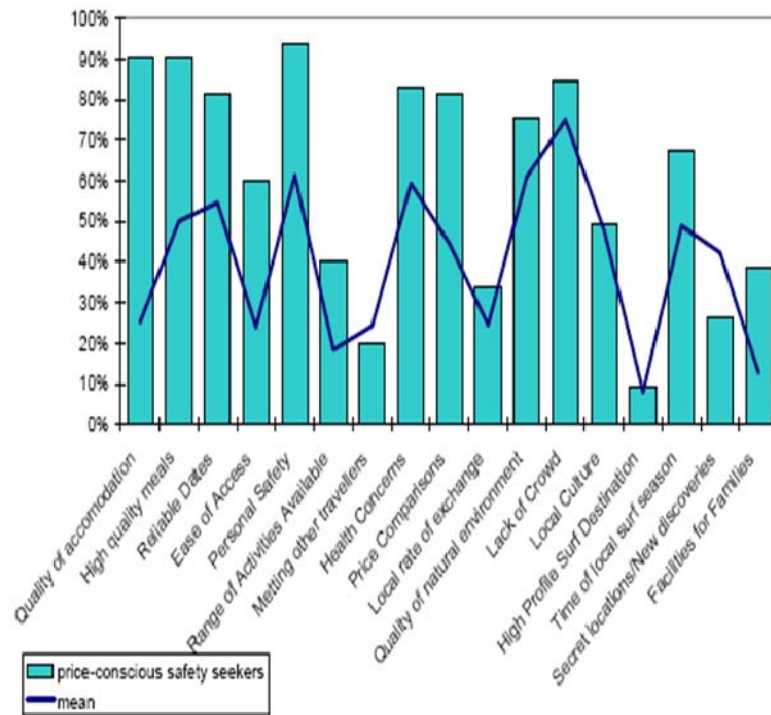## Figure 5: Psychographic profile of the radical adventurers

## Figure 1: Psychographic profile of the price-conscious safety seekers



Environmental quality, local culture and remoteness are considered important, which reveals why surf tourism can in most cases be considered ecotourism. Surfers will go to great lengths to avoid crowds and experience a pristine environment, making them ideal candidates for channeling foreign currency into remote areas otherwise lacking significant draw.

Further, Dolnicar explains how luxury surfers are the most likely to repeat visits to a surf destination that meets their standards than any other group and are willing to pay more than other groups to do so. In essence, then, we learn that surfers have an aversion for crowds, appreciate environmental quality, and will travel to remote areas, making them ideal ecotourists. However, the next chapter will examine how often what it is that makes specific destinations desirable can significantly contribute to their demise. What we will learn is that although surf tourists may claim to desire characteristics similar ecotourism, surf tourism fails to bring meaningful benefits to popular destinations.

Chapter 3: Mentawai Islands case study: Manufactured Utopias

Introduction

Indonesia is the best known, longest lived and highest volume developing country destination for surfing (Buckley 2002). The Mentawais are an archipelago consisting of four main islands and scores of smaller islands in the Indonesian northwest. This area is known throughout the surf world for being the most wave rich destination on earth (Warshaw, 2004). This is more than a myth considering the complex combination of swell, local wind conditions and favorable shaped reefs, which manufacture some of the most consistent and best waves on earth for riding.

Ponting (2008) describes in great detail how this combination of factors aggregate to provide the consistency and quality of waves listed above. Essentially, the swell for the Mentawai Island is generated by deep low pressure systems around latitude 40 degrees south – know in meteorological terms as the Roaring 40's – that track east to west. The Mentawai's geographical isolation exposes this archipelago to swell from form anywhere in the 39 million square kilometers of Indian Ocean between the west coast of Australia and the east coast of Africa (Ponting 2008). These swells are created when winds over the sea mostly originating in the roaring 40 blow in the same direction for a long period of time forming ground swells. This happens quite often, especially May through October (southern hemisphere winter), and when these large swells, with tremendous speed and height hit the Mentawai's shallow reefs without the impediment of a continental shelf to slow them down – large waves ensue. Barrel or tube rides – when surfers can ride face of a wave (area that has not yet broken) and become enveloped by the wave as they continue to ride it – typically occur where jagged reefs meet swells at an angle where deep water quickly turns shallow. Offshore winds are another factor that opens the face of a wave for riding and with the Mentawai's location in the Inter-tropical Convergence Zone (ITCZ), light winds are typical and directions constantly shift exposing different breaks to offshore winds at different times of the day. The Mentawai archipelago is riddled with thousands of bays, estuary mouths, reef passes and points and because it is open to so many

different swells from different directions and light variable winds, there is always a few natural location that are providing optimal surf conditions.
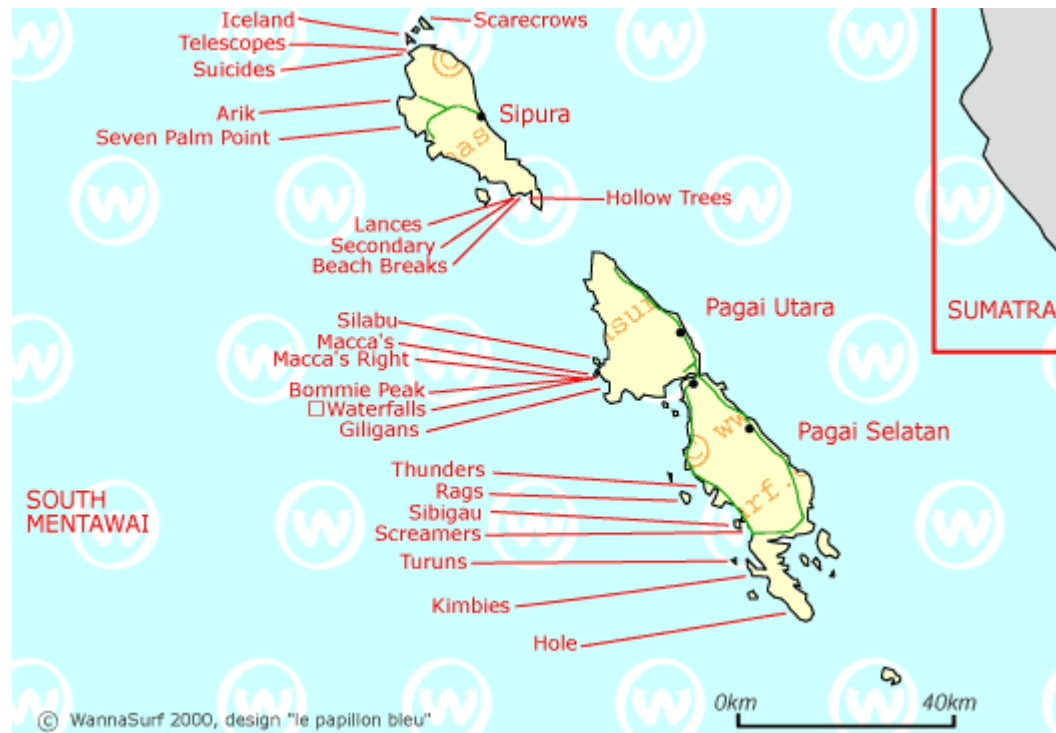


Wannasurf.com (2000) shows the multiple surf breaks in the Mentawai region

Despite the natural wave abundance in this area of the world up until 1995 there was virtually zero surf tourism in the Mentawai Islands. Prior to surf tourism development, Siberut (the most northerly island in the Mentawai's nearly 130 km off the coast of west Sumatra), received the majority of international attention in the archipelago (Persoon 2003). This island has an approximate area of 500,800 hectares and in the late 1990s the population was estimated to be around 22,500 (Bakker 1999). This is the most populous island in the chain and 90% of the population is indigenous Mentawaians.

Pre Surf Development Phase:

Ethnographic research in this area suggests that the Mentawaians traditionally lived in small settlement (uma) and met subsistence needs by hunting and gathering domestic chickens and pigs and though the shifting cultivation of perennial crops (sago was the staple) (Bakkar 1999; ),

Persoon 2003).  Persoon (2003), highlights the most remarkable part of this system is the lack of fire.  The vegetation is not burned after it has been cut and this provided a protective layer keeping the fertile soil from eroding and facilitated a steady plant and fruit growing process.

These people were pantheistic and believed that all living things had souls including plants and natural forces.  Shaman maintained the balance between the world of the living and deceased ancestors and performed rituals at times of death or sickness (Ponting 2008).  This way of life was largely uninhibited until the Dutch colonial administration established a military outpost on the island in the late 20th century and imposed system of social organization based on the installation of village leaders (Ponting 2008).

During WWII, the Dutch fled Siberut and the Japanese occupied the island between 1942 and 1945.  In the wake of the war, the Dutch did not attempt to re-colonize the area and Indonesian independence was declared in 1945 formally freeing the archipelago from colonial rule (Bakker 1999).  The Indonesian government set out to eliminate the backwardness keeping the Mentawais from developing and instill a sense of Indonesianess in the area.  There was no official policy for doing this, but the traditional ways were seen as impediments to meaningful development and the West Sumatran Provincial government sought to force the small settlement to congregate into larger organized villages and to adopt an official religion.  Bakker (1999) postulates that due to pigs being a staple to the Mentawaian diet that Christianity was selected despite Minangkabau traders lobbying for Islam and Germans for Protestantism.  This was all a part of a development program for the masyarakat terasing (isolated people) aimed at bringing the Mentawaians into the mainstream Indonesian social and economic life as soon as possible (Persoon 2003).

Here it becomes evident that despite the Mentawai island chain's geographic isolation; there also exists a deep-seated colonial influence.  This isolation may not have insolated the area from colonialism, but effectively resulted in high levels of species endemism and indigenous flora and fauna.  Twenty fauna species are known to be endemic to the Mentawais including four primate species (Ponting 2008).  Couple this with diverse mixture of primary and secondary forests,

freshwater resources, and an extensive mangrove network and the high conservation value of the island becomes evident.

The Indonesian government granted logging concessions on Siberut in the early 1970 despite the unique endemism and considered the primary forests in the Mentawais as Indonesian property. These logging efforts devastated the ecosystem, while bringing no benefits whatsoever to the Mentawaians.  Despite this, there was little opposition; Persoon (2003) credits this to the lack of organization of the isolated tribal groups more than to apathy toward the activity of the loggers. Persoon (2003) further explains that throughout the history in this area there has always been an attitude of conflict avoidance by means of retreat or simple giving in, which he calls unobtrusive non-compliance.  Threat of force has typically been sufficient in the area to impose policies that affect the local people and their environment.  The logging activity required a tremendous amount of land to operate, which necessitated displacing Mentawaians and moving societal organization from shifting cultivation techniques to permanent agriculturists – cultivating rice and leading regular village lives (Persoon 2003).  Repressive tactics and tax revenues from the logging companies helped to facilitate this process.

Around 1980, however, the ecotourism boom coupled with NGO movements to secure protected areas and biodiversity ushered in a new call to "Save Siberut."  One of the first moves was made by the WWF when they rallied in an attempt to preserve and expand a small reserve that was the habitat for the four endemic primate species.  Due to lack of funding, WWF involvement was short-lived and their campaign ended in 1982, however they were able to raise awareness and pass the torch to other international and Indonesian Conservation organization including SKEPHI (Indonesian Network or Tropical Conservation).  This strong conservationist lobby was able to stave off attempts at putting a palm oil plantation in Siberut and also attempts to re-instill onerous logging concessions in 1993.  In Jakarta at this time, the Indonesian President signed an agreement to terminate all logging concession and turn roughly half of the island into national park with the majority of funding coming from the Asian Development Bank (ADB 1995).

Tourism became a major part of this development strategy, which should not be surprising given the attention paid to this subject as shown in the first chapter.  Land reforms were made to situate

native Mentawaians on the degraded patches left from the logging industry and ecotourism dollars were thought to pay for, rather than force compliance as in the past. The problem was that Mentawaians were not educated on how to conduct their own tourism operations and strategies and this allowed for the tourism value to leak off of the island much as the logging revenues. The Minangkabau's from West Sumatra mainly facilitated and profited off of the Siberut's tourist appeal and the tourism was successfully branded as jungle tracking through Stone Age culture. They mainly organized guided jungle and cultural tours, which offered to transport tourists from the airport to various Mentawai islands for week-long stays. Siberut began to appear in all of the Indonesian and Adventure Guide books. In the mid 1990s a few thousand tourists visited the island and the revenues were integral in maintaining the park.

Attendance at Mentawaian ritual ceremonies and gatherings were free of charge and were the main draw to the area. Mentawaians only received a small bit of revenue for selling handicrafts to tourists, which only amounted to a few dollars per tourist and most Mentawaians lives off less than two dollars per day and experience fifty percent infant mortality rates (Sills 1998). This poverty helped to preserve the poverty that appealed to the western tourists, but failed to deliver meaningful development in the area. The Asian Forest Fires of 1997-1998 which reaped havoc in Kalimantan, Sumatra, Sulawesi, Irian Jaya, Papua New Guinea, Bali, Lombock, and Sarawak, Malaysia also devastated Siberut and other Mentawai Islands. Official government estimates peg the area affected at 1.85 million acres (750,000 ha), environmental organizations like the national environmental group WAHLI (the Indonesian Forum for Environment) say at least 4.2 million acres (1,714,000 ha) went up in smoke, and by mid-1998 the estimate had climbed beyond 5 million ha (12.4 million acres) (Mongabay). This natural disaster crippled tourism viability for a few years to follow until the rebirth of Mentawaian tourism in another form.

Mentawai Surfing Tourism:

In the early 1970s and 1980s, Australian surfers were already quite familiar with taking surf pilgrimages to Bali. This movement paralleled the soul surfer movement in the US with trips to Hawaii and Mexico as mentioned in Chapter 2, but for the Aussies, Indonesia was much more accessible. It was a chance to for surfers to gain temporary freedom from their crowded home

breaks and leave their growing consumerist homelands behind for an authentic experience. As Bali began to grow passé and saturated, adventurous Aussies took the Endless Summer mentality to the open ocean in search of a new Mecca.

In 1980 a group of Australian surfers, Scott Wakefield, Chris Goodnow and Tony Fitzpatrick, headed northwest of Bali, unsure of what they would find. They ended up camping around the Islands for five weeks surfing a multitude of different waves in the area including the now famous break Macaronis on Pasangan Island near the village of Silabu (Warshaw 2004). For the following ten years, that was pretty much the trend. Word of mouth led scattered groups of surfers to camp on the Mentawai islands by night and explore the surf by day. At this time, pioneers began naming the waves (Lances Right, John Candy, Chubbies) they believed they were the first to surf and the seeds for colonizing the resource were planted. Shortly thereafter, in 1993, salvage diver Martin Daley decided to use his salvage boat to take charters full of professional surfers and surfing's corporate elites to surf the breaks in the Mentawai Islands (Ponting 2008). During an interview with SurferMag (2003) Daley mentions that his intentions were to keep the Mentawais a secret for high paying surf elites and his crew, but with the amount of attention the Mentawais began to get from professionals and industry moguls, it was only a matter of time before the secret got out. He claims the location of the first few pictures from the islands that appeared in surf magazines where kept undisclosed. Eventually, however, pictures were sold to magazines and a film came out showcasing the diversity of waves in the area and the secret was out.

In 1994, two Australian-owned companies, Surf Travel Company (STC) and Great Breaks International (GBI) entered Daley's market offering similar live-aboard boat excursions (Daley 2005). These companies were already operational and were able quickly to mobilize and capitalize off the increased demand for surfing in the Mentawais brought on by the surf films and images leaking out of the area. Following this in1995, the U.S. company Good Sumatran Surf Charters entered the scene and from then on operator numbers began to grow rapidly to a point of saturation (Ponting 2008). In the short time period from 1995-2000 the industry mushroomed from 3 boats to 27 official charter boats, one land based resort, 3-4 local boats carrying surfing tourists, and several home stay facilities Ponting 2008). Of these 27 official charter boats 19

(70%) were owned by the four operators previously mentioned (Daley, STC, GBI, and Good Sumatran Surf charter) – all of which were foreign owned.  The majority of the other independent boats were either run by the Minangkabau, the Sumatran Dataks, Niassans, Javanese or the Chinese.

The four influential surf companies that pioneered the industry in the region began to integrate their services and marketing efforts to reduce costs and increase their market share.  This is another commonality within the free market approach to development that it often leads to oligopolistic competition.  This is a situation similar to what multinational corporations do in order to achieve economies of scale.  Basically, tour operators can achieve higher gains as the size of their operation grows, efforts are integrated, and market share increases.  This process also makes it harder for smaller local entrepreneurs to enter the market once it becomes dominated by large industries that promote luxury tourism in the area.  Local operators simply cannot provide similar conveniences at a comparable cost.

In 2000, overcrowding became commonplace and the market saturation began hurting visitor numbers, especially for repeat tourists who were found to be the highest paying lot of surfing tourists (Dolnicar 2003).  Industry operators felt they had too large a stake the Mentawaian surf industry and began pushing for regulation to somehow limit the number of operators bringing surfers to the area breaks.  The operators have spent years marketing their product in the Mentawais and an unspoiled/un-crowded surf utopia and this image needed to be protected. They used their muscle to convince the Mentawai Bupati (governing body) to introduce a ZAP (Zone Agreement Permits) policy to monitor crowds.  This agreement established a controlled zone that encompasses the majority of the premiere waves including Playgrounds, Lances Right and Left, and Macaronis.  GBI in conjunction with their local partner organization Mentawai Wisata Bahari (MWB), were given the rights to oversee this controlled zone and collect $5 USD per day from surfers in the area and to attempt to register every boat (Ponting 2008).  Industry members outside of the nexus of control avoided this effort considering it unfair, ineffectual, and unenforceable.

The Bupati in this area were quick to realize the ineffectiveness of ZAP and decided that it would be best to try to move tourism operations from sea to land. The thought was that by granting wave rights to landholders adjacent to them that this would provide incentives for foreigners to buy and develop land. There are currently eight foreign-owned land-based resorts in the Mentawais and more are planned. Management schemes and legal battles are pending, but as of 2008 none have been consistently enforced. To conclude this section, surf tourism in the Mentawais was very fast growing and reached a point of stagnation nearly seven years after the first operations began. Now, local Mentawaians are beginning to complain that they are not receiving benefits comparable to the collective industry earnings. Further, as numbers increase the area is beginning to attract a higher volume of lower paying tourist and industry leaders are struggling to find ways to keep the nirvana dream alive.

Tragedy of the tourism commons theory to ground case study

The surfing tourism industry in the Mentawais is far different from the jungle backpacking industry (which continues to a smaller degree) mentioned previously. Believe it or not, surf tourism actually provides fewer benefits to the local Mentawaians. The multiple natural forces converging to create optimal surfing conditions mentioned in the opening section explains the up-market nature of the tourism industry. Early entrepreneurs saw the surfing potential in this region to be of unparalleled consistency and marketed the destination as a high end surf retreat. The Mentawais tourism sector relies heavily on what Ponting (2008) calls a tripartite marketing synergy between surf wear manufacturers, the surf media, and surf tour operators. Ponting's dissertation (2008), discusses how this marketing synergy helps to create nirvanistic expectations for surf tourist and multiple factors are put to work to reinforce a tourism bubble in the Mentawais that insulates tourist from the on ground realities. The creation of this Nirvana effectively reinforces itself as surf tourists experience waves and take photographs of themselves mimicking spreads in major surf magazines and videos. The dissemination of these images by tour operators and in web blogs perpetuates the utopian myth and further stimulates demand for this wonderland product, which tour operators creatively continue to supply. But how much demand can an area absorb? Waves are a finite open access resource that will be exploited if unmanaged as they have been the Mentawais. Now, as locals are begging to share a piece of the

pie, existing operators are looking to control access to waves and restrict new enterprises from entering the market.

Butler's (1980) Tourism Area Life Cycle Model (TALC) simplistically reveals why unmanaged tourist destinations tend to move along a continuum towards stagnation. His model provides a framework for explaining how the free market approach to tourism development in the Mentawais led to such a mess and can help move towards the discussion of an ecotourism approach to surf tourism that is not constrained by *laissez faire* logic. In order to do so, it is crucial to understand how the open access nature of tourism resource – especially waves – if left unmanaged will lead to a plethora of negative externalities in host countries.

When tourists travel to a particular destination they are consuming both tangible and intangible resources. Many of these resources are used by tourists in common with other tourists and simultaneously between competing tourist groups and locals. These resources are in essence considered open access because they are usually indivisible and their boundaries are difficult to delineate. Conventional open access resources are air, the atmosphere, water resources, oceans, ecosystems, fisheries, forests, wildlife, grazing fields and irrigation systems (Berkes 1998). All are known for being characterized by subtractability and non-excludability. The first term implies rivalry amongst potential users, meaning one person's use affects another's ability to use a resource. This is most evident in surfing given that one surfer's use of a wave restricts others' ability to use that same wave. Non-excludability is perhaps a bit easier to understand in that it just means that access is not restricted and anyone can use the resources as they please.

Jafari (1982) compiled a list of the open access resources that are applicable to the tourism discourse. He called these background tourism elements (BTEs) which can be understood as the sum total of resources in a host area: specifically, the natural, socio-cultural, and built attractions. These can include everything from the way an area smells to perceptions of crowding and infrastructural decay. Therefore, the tourism commons comprises the whole spectrum of resources in a host area and their surrounding region (Braissoulis 2002). Because there is rivalry amongst users for these resources and exclusion is difficult, Hardin's original thesis predicts that these resources will inevitably lead to overuse, decay, and a depleted value to the area in general.

This idea is mainly predicated on the economic assumption that if resources use is not restricted, people have an incentive to overuse them because future use is uncertain. Consumers will use more than what is optimal or sustainable in the present, because future use is not guaranteed and they do not want to miss out. BTEs are also important for local agriculture, mining, and manufacturing. This places greater pressure for land use changes that can hurt the economic returns associated with the tourism landscape. Therefore land use conflicts, overuse and infrastructural expansion combine to create a degraded tourism landscape when BTEs are left as open access; this ultimately leads to a stagnation and destruction.

Empirical research tends to demonstrate how open access resources are typically overused and degraded. Feeny (1990) suggests that Hardin's work was merely a thought experiment, but empirical data from the twenty years following the 1968 publication of "Tragedy of the Commons" indicates that open access resources are almost always overused. While Feeny (1990) moves on to suggest that open access is often created from disbanding communal property rights, he also suggests that ocean resources all almost always by nature; open access.

Waves are an important common pool resource to consider amongst this arsenal of BTEs mentioned above, especially because they are the main draw for tourism to certain areas. And while there are thousands of miles of coastline in the world, it takes a special mix of factors such as sandbar formations, wind conditions, typical swell directions and shoreline angle to truly designate a quality surf break. Taking the California coast as an example, even though it boasts an incredible number of high-quality surfing breaks in comparison to many coastlines around the world, in total these breaks represent only a tiny fraction of the entire coast (Shaw & Black 2002).

Surf breaks vary in terms of how many people can enjoy them at a given time. But there is no escaping the idea that only one person can ride a specific wave at a given time. For outdoor recreation, participants' perspectives of crowding depend on individual normative standards, coping behaviors and trade-offs as well as actual conditions at the time (Manning, 1999). Buckley (2002) speaks to the topic of crowding in his study of surf breaks in the Mentawi islands in Indonesia. He claims that crowding in surfing can be judged on a personal basis by how many

waves must be forgone because someone else is riding a wave that you could have caught otherwise. Crowding in the water depletes user utility and surfers are not likely to re-visit an area where crowding was experienced. They are also likely to spread the word of their experience, which could further damage the reputation of the area in question. Crowds in the water also diminish the quality of the tourist experience on the land because as waves get crowded so do the local amenities. As people experience crowding and the word spreads, high paying tourist will travel elsewhere in search of a more exclusive surf experience. On islands like Bali, tourism will remain at a point of stagnation riddled with a high quantity of low paying tourists.

Tourism Area Life Cycle
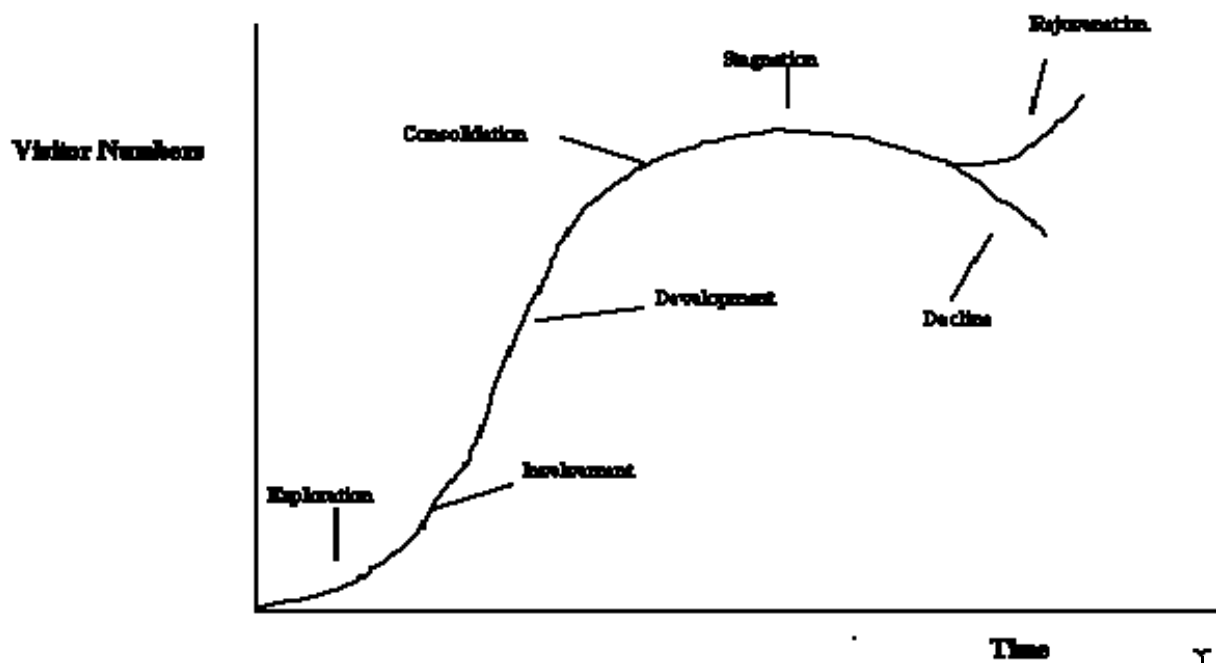


When considering surf destinations, waves are the most crucial background tourism element. Therefore, when overexploitation of waves occurs this depletes the quality of the tourist experience in the entire area and can lead to stagnation. In order to gain a better understanding of why this occurs, it is important to generally understand Butler's TALC model. Cooper and Jackson use Butler's model to show how every remote destination begins at the exploration phase with a small number of visitors who are adventurous by nature and have an aversion for

institutionalized travel.  Numbers are restricted by lack of access and facilities and travelers have a tremendous amount of interaction with the local residents.  Like the initial tourism stage in the Mentawais.  Before luxury operators set up, visitors where chartering local fishing boats and staying in local villages or camping.

Following this is the involvement stage.  In this stage, locals or early foreign entrepreneurs begin to provide visitors with amenities and start advertizing the destination.  This leads to an increase in the regular number of tourists and the formation of a tourist season.  A market for the destination emerges and pressures may be placed on the public sector to provide infrastructure.

The development stage follows the involvement stage.  In this stage large numbers of visitors begin to arrive and control of the industry shifts away from locals to external companies with more capital to provide up to date facilities, which alter the appearance of the destination.  With increased popularity, the destination is likely to suffer a change in quality through problems of overuse and deterioration of environmental quality and facilities.  Cooper & Jackson (1998) contend that regional and national planning and control will become necessary to ameliorate these problems.

Next comes the consolidation stage, where the rate of increase in visitors has declined, but total numbers are increasing to the point where they exceed permanent residents.  "The destination is now a fully fledged part of the tourism industry, with an identifiable recreational business district" (Cooper and Jackson 1989).  This stage is marked by diminishing returns, or where tourists continue to visit the destination, but at a decreasing rate.

Lastly, a destination reaches the stagnation stage that I have been mentioning throughout this piece.  Peak numbers have been reached and the destination is no longer considered fashionable.  It relies on repeat visits from more conservative travelers and major efforts are needed to maintain the number of visits.  Now the destination also has to deal with a slew of environmental, social, and economic problems.  Further, the area is dependent upon tourism and will resist measure for impeding the number of visitors.  From this point the area can either reinvent itself or decline.

Butler admits that this is a simplified model that does not offer policy suggestions, but the model is useful because any destination can be placed somewhere on the continuum. More importantly it teaches that if BTEs are left as open access resources, the tourism commons will fall victim to Harden's tragedy. The key is to restrict access to whatever is the main attraction to the area in order to freeze development at a desirable stage in Butler's model. Cooper & Jackson argue that progression along this model can be slowed, but not halted. I would argue, however, that with a proper management scheme and with sound ecotourism principles guiding civil society pressure on the subculture and tourism providers, that surf tourism can provide meaningful benefits to destinations in the developing world.

## Chapter 4: Future of Surf Tourism

### Introduction

This closing chapter will mainly focus on two issues. The first is what happens if a free-market tourism model is left to guide surfing tourism as it continues to expand to new areas? The second part will look at the opportunity for positive change; mainly through social entrepreneurship coupled with the addition of surf ecotourism into the global civil society organizations. Social entrepreneurship in this sense means that the surf tourism would be created with community betterment as the sought after bottom line. Adding ecotourism in the civil society would follow a similar path to Project AWARE for scuba. The key is that for this to function properly, leaps must be taken to move beyond a free market approach to surf tourism where local prioritization is considered paramount by all parties involved.

### Destinations in Danger

The first to speak of is Papua New Guinea (PNG). This archipelago is often compared to Indonesia in terms of wave quality and diversity. PNG is open to similar swells as the Mentawais and has its own array of reefs, bays, points, and estuaries to help form good waves for surfing. PNG has been called one of the last surfing frontiers and this area seeks to either lose or gain tremendously from its waves resources.

The Surf Association of Papua New Guinea (SAPNG) was formed by a native Papua New Guinean (Andrew Abel) who spent a large portion of his youth in Australia. He sees surfs potential to provide valuable ecotourism revenue to his deeply impoverished homeland (Lyons 2008). He and his fellow board members in SAPNG also claim to have learned from the mistakes in the Mentawai islands and have put forth their own guidelines for making sure locals benefit from their wave resources. It is hard to tell if this is a genuine attempt at ecotourism and research is needed in this area. Many Australians are board members and advertisements do not look much different from what you would have seen in the early years in the Mentawais. Quotes

from the SAPNG website like, we "will take you to the more remote islands where there are no other surfers, no other boats, no crowds, just you and your mates" and "see it and experience it now before everyone else finds out about it," show parallels to the marketing schemes used in the Mentawais.

There is also talk of a pro-series surf contest to take place in PNG in the near future, this will surely put the area on the map and attract more attention to the archipelago from the surf media and industry manufacturers. (Ponting 2009 email transaction). The SAPNG seems to have the right mission in mind, but they will need help from the local government and international surf civil society in order to adapt the proper management scheme and ensure local benefits. As the Mentawais have shown, this is easy when it is a small industry, but as demand increase, so does the difficulty in ensuring local social, economic and environmental benefits. This would be a very interesting case study to monitor as it moves from the discovery phase along Butler's (1980) TALC model.

While PNG is perhaps the most similar case to the Mentawais, this is not the only location where waves are in danger of exploitation. Throughout Central and South America there are scores of popular waves getting crowded as surf tourism increases, causing adventurous tourist to seek new wave terrain. Try surfing at Santa Catalina in Panama (most popular wave with much of the nearby lodging foreign owned) and you will see why people are migrating further south to undeveloped areas such as Cambutal. If you have visited Sunzal, in the Libertad Province of El Salvador, after fighting for waves with 40-60 people at any giving time it becomes evident why new locations in the area are being sought out and advertized. Further, crowds in Morocco, Africa's premier surf destination situated on almost the same latitudinal coordinates as California, are forcing explores to search further south and satellite technology is easing this possibility.

Mentioning these locations is merely scratching the surface of what is out there in terms of undeveloped surf destinations. The key is that there are abundant wave resources in the world and a free market approach to surf tourism will inevitably marginalize the local people where these waves are situated, as in the Mentawais where surf charters can cost up to $20,000 US a

day while the locals experience fifty percent mortality rates (Lyons 2009). The value added from surf tourism needs to stay at home and this is going to take drastic reorientations of surf tourism supply and demand.

Organizations like Waves of Optimism in Nicaragua and Waves for Development in Lobito, Peru are attempting to use volunteer tourism as a way to keep income from tourism home and for it to be used for community development and education. I would argue that these attempts are crucial and show that there is growing concern amongst surf tourism operators that change needs to come. Volunteer tourism, might be one of the most effective models for surf tourism, but a few isolated attempts in small geographic regions cannot keep pace with the speed in which new locations are discovered and visited. Deep rooted civil society changes are needed for this to increase in popularity and boost user demand for these types of activities.

The void and opportunity within the international surf civil society

The international surf civil society is strong, but almost entirely based in the developed world and geared towards the protection of wave resources and the environment. These organizations almost always favor wave resources over development projects and have rallied effective campaigns to clean up beaches, protect wave from development, and ensure equitable beach access. The chart on the following page depicts a brief attempt to codify this civil society, but is solely based on available internet research. Some of the organizations listed here take on a variety of issues not listed in the chart, but this presentation does depict the major emphasis in each of their mission statements. Despite the traveling requisite within surfing, not one organization mentions adopting ecotourism as a worthy mission. Save the Waves Coalition, catalogs endangered waves throughout the world (at risk of costal development) without ever mentioning the people in these regions and what is best for them.

| Name | Location (s) | Membership | Mission |
|---|---|---|---|
| Surfrider Foundation | US, France, Germany, Spain, Portugal, Italy, Japan, Brazil, Australia | More than 50,000 members world wide | Clean Water, Beach access, preservation, protecting special places. |
| International Surf Association | 50 nations around the world. | 50 member nations (need 75 to become and Olympic activity. | Establish rules for international contests, promote surfing everywhere in the world, include surf in Olympics. |
| Save the waves Coalition | Throughout the world | Small staff dedicated to locating waves in danger of coastal development | Environmental coalition, dedicated to preserving worlds surf spots and surrounding environments. |
| Surfers against Sewage | Mainly UK based | More than 20,000 members | Clean safe recreational waters.  Free from effluents, toxics, marine litter, and nuclear waste. |

For micro tourism efforts such as SAPNG, Waves of Optimism, and Waves for Development to become successful and become joined by others, the international surf civil society must adopt best practices for surf tourism that are focused on improving the local societies where these waves are situated.  Awareness and activism must spread the word that a free-market approach to tourism will fail to incorporate locals and that they will bear the brunt of the costs associated with foreign tourism operations on their land and oceans.  The activities in the ocean can no longer be divorced from the on the ground realities in the developing world.  We need to begin this movement right here and now before more areas are exploited to a point of almost irreversible damage.  I have focused on the international surf civil society incorporating worthy ecotourism tenets as an essential first step towards better practices in the future, but in the end governments and international aid agencies must also help regulate the industry.

## Conclusion

Rather than arguing for or against the need for an entire paradigm shift, this paper essentially is arguing for the promotion of local protectionism in early tourism developments. This is an idea that simply incorporating stakeholders to have a vested interest in protecting areas that serve to enhance attractive investments from foreign operators leads to economic leakage and is not focused on the long run. That unregulated free markets lead to the concentration of wealth with those who are already wealthy and furthers income gaps rather than narrows them and moves toward equity as sustainable development suggests (Myrdal 1967). If sustainable development is truly to begin moving from a strict environmental focus to a community focus, sole reliance on market forces will continue to be inadequate.

Initial tourism developers must have a vested interest in the community that they operate in and there must be built-in institutional safeguards to ensure that community development is the paramount aim of tourism much as what Abel is attempting with SAPNG. This work focused solely on surf tourism as a unique case study to help illustrate why the free market approach to tourism development fails to result in sustainability for local people. Tourism providers in the current system are encouraged to metamorphose the tourist experience into a product divorced from the real circumstances in localities they are situated. This is self-reinforcing because tourists in turn tend to seek these glorified experiences which facilitate their persistence. As we saw, this leads to local exclusion of benefits and to a lack of an educational element which are two of the main ecotourism guidelines as put forth by the Ecotourism Society. This desired exclusion promotes external ownership and unfettered market forces, which effectively leads to the colonization of wave resources.

The other idea central to understanding the ineffectiveness of unregulated free market tourism promotion is the tragedy of the tourism commons concept (Butler 2002; Cooper & Jackson 1989; Briassoulis 2002; Berkes 1999; Jafari 1982). These scholars built off Hardin's infamous, "Tragedy of the Commons" to show how many of the resources involved in tourism are open access in nature and are often exploited when unregulated. Waves, the object of every surfers desire, are certainly one such resources and will be presented in this work accordingly. This

paper examined how local prioritization is necessary to ensure that local entrepreneurs and community members can harness the control of these resources and benefit from their use. Building off the Mentawai Islands case study we saw how unfettered market forces led to foreigner control of wave resource and how this led to exploitation. So many foreign operators are now involved in providing surf tours in the Mentawai's that the quality of the experience is diminishing due to overcrowding in surf areas and operators are looking for ways for more stringent resource rights that will further restrict locals from earning benefits from their resources. While there are people working on strategies in the Mentawai's (Ponting 2005; Buckley 2002) this work advocates focusing on the avoidance of similar issues in new surf destinations off into the future – specifically in Papua New Guinea – which possesses many similar characteristics to the Mentawai Islands.

 If the same free market system guides tourism developments in these newly discovered areas around the world it will once again lead to local exclusion and a failure to ensure that locals benefit from their wave resources. Development institutions have to truly empower local entrepreneurs in order to achieve this sustainability and because local entrepreneurs cannot fairly compete with the level of capital controlled by foreign operators this necessitates some degree of early stage protection. Currently this concept is explicitly deemed unlawful by the WTO, which exposes the counterfactual nature of free-market logic and sustainable surf tourism development.

In order to get the stage of protection, I am arguing for the international surf civil society to adopt best practices for surf ecotourism. This can help raise awareness and bust the bubbles associated with surf tourism and also help promote destinations with worthy frameworks for improving the bottom line for local people. This sea change is happening, but needs a jolt. Surf tourism is a huge industry and is not inherently socially and environmentally benign. It has tremendous potential to better local communities because surf tourists are willing to travel to the most remote areas of the world and sacrifice modern amenities for good waves. This will not happen, however, without changing how surf tourism is viewed throughout the subculture. This paper has argued for an informed civil society and more social entrepreneurs as the keys to linking surfing tourism towards sustainability. I argue this is an imperative and cannot happen if we expect sustainability to happen on its own.

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