

MANILA DECLARATION ON THE SOCIAL IMPACT OF TOURISM

(1997)

We, the representatives of governments and private groups from 77 countries and territories, gathered for the World Tourism Leaders' Meeting on the Social Impact of Tourism, under the joint auspices of the World Tourism Organization (WTO) and the Government of the Republic of the Philippines,

Having Discussed the social impact of tourism and considered how to maximize their positive aspects and minimize their negative effects,

Believing that tourism will continue to generate substantial economic and social benefits for communities and countries and that it is not the sole cause of social problems attributed to or associated with it,

Being determined to remove the social abuses and exploitation arising from, associated with or occasioned by tourism and its related activities,

Hereby commit ourselves to:

1. Support greater involvement of communities in the planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation processes of tourism policies, programs and projects within the context of national objectives and priorities, and for this purpose introduce community awareness campaigns to inform people of the benefits to be gained from tourism development;

2. Improve people's standard of living through tourism by providing economic and social opportunities for wider participation and, wherever possible and acceptable, dispersal of tourism activities and destinations to outlying areas to increase rural incomes;

3. Ensure that tourism development planning preserve the legacy, heritage and integrity of tourism destinations worldwide and respect the social and cultural norms of society, particularly among the indigenous communities and to this end, control the rate of growth of the tourism sector where it may jeopardize local communities and social values;

4. Cooperate with and encourage the business community engaged in tourism and the travel trade to create the right image and develop appropriate marketing tools for the destination countries, and to undertake education, information and communication services to sensitize visitors to the culture and behavioral expectations of host communities;

5. Recognize the role of human resources development in tourism and establish long-term programmes that support greater employment of the local labor force in tourism and provide appropriate measures as well as opportunities for a greater and more positive participation of women and youth;

6. Enhance and strengthen international coordination and monitoring systems through liaison and networking among governments, private sector and concerned parties with a view to promoting the positive aspects and eradicating the negative impacts of tourism;

7. Further mobilize local and international support to prevent and control tourism-related abuse and exploitation of people, particularly women and children and other disadvantaged groups;

8. Encourage governments to promulgate and enforce legal regimes, both in the domestic and multilateral arenas, in order to eliminate undesirable social consequences of tourism through, among others, agreements that deprive malefactors of any safe haven anywhere;

9. Take into account the importance of tourism in the context of Agenda 21, for tourism is a major source of development but like other sectors, it uses resources and generates wastes and in the process creates not only social and cultural but also environmental costs and benefits, of which the effects on biodiversity and fragile eco-systems like coral reefs, archaeological sites, mountains, coastal areas and wetlands constitute a particular concern and pose the imperative of having the world celebrate and, more importantly, observe the tenets of eco-tourism; and

10. Work towards the formulation and eventual adoption of a Global Code of Ethics for Tourism.

Adopted in Manila, Philippines on 22 May 1997.