GOVERNMENT POLICIES AND THE DEVELOPMENT AND MANAGEMENT OF TOURISM DESTINATIONS: A CASE STUDY OF THE BRAZILIAN POLICIES.

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ABSTRACT

This article explores the fact that economic benefits are seen as the greatest determinant of the interest of developing countries to embrace tourism as a possibility to obtain growth and better standards. In order to evaluate the social and cultural opportunities and risks brought by this content, the study focuses on Brazil (so called) development in terms of tourism and the evolution of the policy adopted in the latest years. Furthermore, the case study sheds light on the positive and negative impacts of the activity caused by the globalisation in a number of perspectives and mainly, questions the real role of the government in managing tourism destinations. In the conclusion it focuses on the need of improving the quality of life for local communities in developing countries as well as the quality of tourists’ experience.

1. INTRODUCTION

Tourism is a growing sector of the economy and therefore attracts the interest of developing countries in need of economic boost. Admittedly, tourism can foster growth and might help the balance of payments by bringing hard currency, as mentioned by many authors (e.g. France, 1997; Jenkins & Lickorish 1997) as well as many other positive impacts. However, most of these countries have not enough expertise, or sometimes no expertise at all in coordinating the introduction and the long-term health of the activity.

As in the beginning the possible havoc of misled administration is hardly believed or possible to foresee, the birth of tourism is regarded as a blessing. Governments advertise and private sector sale the ‘new venture’ while the population watches as if they were not part of the game and begins to profit ‘informally’. It is only by the time the first unwanted effects are noticed that the activity is likely to be considered as an important issue and the destinations may consider the need of an adequate policy and effective planning that protect the interests of the people.

Tourism can effectively become either a blessing or blight, as cited by Poon (1993). Whereas in one hand good examples of prosperity are related to the development of the tourism industry are announced, on the other many surveys point tourists as being the promoters of social and cultural dissatisfaction in local communities (Krippendorf, 1987) and also relate tourism to an economic dependence acting as a form of ‘neocolonialism’ (Britton 1982, 1989; Nash 1989 cited in Wall, 1997).

Matters on Developing Countries and their relation with tourism present a huge field of discussion to be embraced. However, as suggested by the title, it is the intention of this study to cover some of them chosen by a personal view of relevance to a specific country that might be useful to other countries, even though the very concept of developing countries makes generalisation very hard as it will be touched further on. A theoretical threshold about developing countries and globalisation related to tourism will be presented in order to support the further analysis of the Brazilian policies.

2. DEVELOPING COUNTRIES AND TOURISM

With the dissolution of Soviet Union ended what was known as ‘The Second World’ and with it the logic in the term ‘Third World’, although it is still widely used. The third world used to be known as the group of countries that neither belonged to the socialist world nor were members of the OECD countries (Jenkins et al, 1997). The terminology ‘Developing’ and ‘Less Developed’ are used to refer to certain countries related to each other by their levels of development measured by the standards of quality of life. The most regularly adopted is the Gross National Product (GNP) per capita. Whereas the GNP represents a quantifiable number to establish a level of development to a country, the resulting number is an average, therefore not showing the size of the gap between wealth and
poorness. In addition, in developing countries many people derive their earnings from informal activities (Oppermann & Chon, 1997), consequently the results might be far from the actual situation in many cases. Also, the classification of a developing country has an implicit sub-classification, as there are many levels of development (see Jenkins et al, op cit) and is mostly applied to countries in Asia, Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean. They are represented by a wide diversity of countries comprising an unimaginable variety of backgrounds. Although it is impossible to draw a common line to describe the characteristics of such a diverse group, it was cited by Jenkins et al (op cit) developing countries share some common features related basically to an over-dependence in primary products exports, industrialised imports and a vulnerability to the international market prices, quotas and tariffs. Hence the interest of developing countries governments in attracting international tourists, since this can bring hard currency at low costs.

2.1 Attractiveness of Tourism for Developing Countries

According to Oppermann et al (1997) the economic benefits are the prime reason for developing countries to get involved with tourism. It was listed by them as well as by other authors (see Wahab, 1997:130) a number of ‘positive impacts’ of the activity. Among the most common and particularly important are, firstly the attraction that the activity can have on bringing hard currency, as mentioned before. Secondly, the generation of jobs that, even regarded by some authors as being low-level types, is one of the most important outcomes of the activity since most of developing countries – and some of the developed in a lower scale - suffer with unemployment and its social consequences. Thirdly, the multiplying effect that even in domestic tourism can have a huge effect in the economy, especially in big countries with enormous gaps between social-classes such as Brazil, India and others. Authors also tend to consider tourism as a motivator for technological updating. However, if the future brings possibility of wealth distribution and innovation, it can also lead to increase the gap between rich and poor. According to Rorty (1999 cited in Praxedes, 2001) most of the people born in this century will never use a computer neither travel by airplane.

It is important to bear in mind that although the economic factors are the main reason among the developing countries incentive tourism, each of them should focus on its particular approach and search for the benefits that supply their specific needs. Indeed many problems are caused by scarcity of economic resources and therefore could be solved by the income of foreign capital. Nevertheless, some countries can get more social benefits than economic, by the ‘demonstration effect’ (France, 1997) that could attenuate racism or sexism by copying or modelling tourist’s attitude. The tendency of equity can be introduced gradually in some of the most radical regimens as an indirect effect. Others might be culturally favoured by either having access to other languages and cultures or, and more effectively, by the re-birth of the local’s culture pride that the tourist activity regularly brings (Ruschmann, 1997). In addition, in terms of environmental benefits, many sites begin to be protected together with its fauna and flora and many get the chance to be recovered with funds brought by the awareness of their importance created by the tourist demand.

However, if a great range of benefits is brought by tourism, the other side of the coin is also very important. Tourism has a dark side widely discussed nowadays. Economically, for instance, despite all the positive impacts that can be caused by the activity, especially developing countries tend to get dependent on developed markets, generating the previous mentioned ‘neocolonilasm’. Furthermore, the high standards of the facilities required for specific demands together with borrowed capital related to the infrastructure needs to support the activity, tend to generate leakage. That is to say a great part of the foreign money brought by the tourist activity ‘leaks out’ of the country to pay interests, equipments and goods that supply the tourist demand. Also, as a result of globalisation, much of the profits are internationalised returning to the countries where international resorts and tour-operators have their headquarters.

The very characteristics of the tourist demand, like seasonality for example, can create a number of social costs as an outcome of economic matters. As a matter of fact, socially and culturally tourism is
normally associated to appearance or increase in many problems such as prostitution, crime, gambling, decrease of traditional and religious local costumes, as well as some other constraints related to health many times resulting from some of the former mentioned aspects. An important trend is the growing concern about safety in tourism (WTO, 1995) and it can be dramatically affected by social and political instability, situations commonly observed in developing countries.

The adjustment of the activity with the local life can become very significant and is another important current worry about tourism development. A model proposed by Doxel describes the levels of irritation of the local communities towards the tourist cycle, known as ‘Irridex Factor’ and summarized in Shaw and Williams (1997:107).

The ‘irridex factor’ is not a privilege of developing countries destinations. On the opposite it is a matter involving the receiving communities worldwide even in developed and traditional destinations such as London. It presents indicators of the level of satisfaction about the activity from time to time, as could be noticed on the news broadcasted some time ago about the intention of creating a ‘fast-lane’ in Oxford Street pavement so that the locals could avoid the sluggish traffic created by the tourist pedestrians. However, the social impacts are likely to have greater effects in destinations where social problems are highly perceived.

Many undesirable physical effects (Oppermann and Chon, op cit) are also caused by the increasing number of tourists, and each time the concept of carrying capacity - and moreover its applicability to tourism - together with other themes related to the environment are to be noticed (see Butler, 1980; Pearce 1989; Oppermann et al, 1997; France, 1997). Tendencies as environmental awareness and individual travel identified by the World Tourism Organization (WTO, 1995) seem to point the direction to quality instead of quantity, despite the path of growth in number of tourists is maintained. This creates an interesting scenario where tourists even in greater number are more likely to care about the effect of their activity in the receiving communities. The quality of the experience seem to be the goal instead of the time and short term stays and increasing number of holidays a year, related to a tendency of long haul journeys for the next decade create an optimistic perspective for new destinations included in the developing world.

Whether tourism increases or disturbs populations’ quality of life should be among the concerns of people’s representatives, i.e. the governments.

2.2 The raise in interest for leisure and tourism and the role of the Government

Another tendency perceived is the increasing interest of people in leisure and the use of their free time for travel and other pleasant activities (Jenkins et al 1997; De Masi, 1999), governments and the private sector of many countries are eager to convert this tendency to benefit countries’ profits.

It is not supported by international agencies anymore that the National Governments have the total control in their hands and finance institutions tend to give credit to joint activities between private and public sectors (Bigné et al, 2000). Neither government nor the private sector are ideal to be in the lead alone since governments are normally moved by politics and the private sector is definitely profit driven. The third sector is growing in importance, and the NGOs are likely to increase the importance in terms of policy making and public welfare for its ‘non-profit’ and ‘not necessarily political’ nature.

This brings us the question of what is the real role of the Government. If we are giving way to NGOs to care about policy and welfare, what are the elected representatives of the people in charge of doing? The political nature of the governments mixes politics and policies, and sadly in Spanish and Portuguese speaking countries both words have the same translation: ‘política’. In addition, as another result of globalisation (BENI, 2003), governments are decreasing their power compared to big private corporations. As a matter of fact, some corporations have more cash flow than the GNP of some countries they have branches, and this includes the tourism sector.
Moreover, if the attention is shifting to the community (WTO, 1997), how well is it being represented? The interests of local communities in the development of tourism are rising in importance and the concept of sustainability has already a broader meaning in opposition to the excessively environmental of the eighties and nineties, and the economically focused of the sixties and seventies. Everything is important and there should not be a heavier plate in the balance. The notion of sustainability involving socio-cultural, economic and physical matters (Oppermann and Chon, op cit) as well as the interdisciplinary nature of tourism and its relation with other sciences (human, technological, social, and, biological) are being widely recognised, bringing the holistic approach to the development of the activity. Nevertheless, whether representatives are actually representing is a wonder.

Political changes tend to develop new policies and even evolutions can create worries as will be discussed in the following case study.

3. BRAZILIAN TOURISM POLICY AND TOURISM DEVELOPMENT

With the recent change of the Brazilian administration, having the labour party finally reached the power after years of attempting, important changes took place in Brazilian political scene especially in the tourism sector. A new structure has taken place and for the first time the Country has been given a Tourism Ministry not shared with any other like Sports or Commerce and Industry as it used to be.

If in the one hand this autonomy brought new perspectives for the activity, on the other the previous policy have been discontinued, or has evolved according to the current Government.

Some of the main changes will be discussed in order to analyse the current policies adopted.

3.1 Background for the recent Tourism Development

Even though tourism is still not among the main activities in the Brazilian economy, it is not possible to say the activity is recent in the country. Tourism development followed the trend of many other countries, beginning with leisure travels and short breaks for the aristocracy in the 19th and early 20th centuries, and with the (discreet) mass tourism of the second half of the last century.

As many other Latin American countries, we suffered a long period of dictatorship, and the late National Tourism Administration (now National Tourism Board) EMBRATUR was created in the late 1960s, during the dictatorial regimen. At that time the organisation had much more power than nowadays, dictating the pace of tourism development, regulating and controlling the offer. Policy-makers were from the public sector and the creation of any establishment had to be in tune with legal standards and classified by the Government by type and category.

After the 1980s, when democracy was regained, neither registration nor classification was compulsory anymore and the offer ceased to be controlled by EMBRATUR. The NTA still played an important role in advising investors but its power began to fade. During this transition period tourism suffered a considerable drop, either by the lack of effective policies or by the lack of reliable information.

Finally in the latter part of the 1990s, came a period of stability with president Cardoso being elected twice in a row, fact that created a political continuation for eight years. During this period, in 1996, the National Policy for Tourism was released (BENI, 2001), adopting the characteristics of the social-democrat party, i.e. decentralisation and private/public partnerships. In Santana’s (2000) words:

With the introduction of the PNT (National Tourism Policy), Brazil has for the first time a clear national policy for tourism, which had as macro strategies: the planning, development, and promotion of tourism through the articulation of the government and the private sector; the implementation of basic and tourism infrastructure; the training of human resources in
However, due to the size of the country, divided in states, and especially the fact that democracy allowed the creation of great number of political parties, the former tourism public structure that used to dictate rules starting from the federal government to the state government so that the states would widespread to the municipalities, would no longer work for political reasons.

Furthermore, with the evolution of the tourism thinking worldwide shifting the attention to the community, the need to reach the smallest administrative portion of the state, namely the municipality, was notorious. Due to this situation and following the WTO’s instructions a huge programme was developed in order to disseminate the National Policy directly to the communities, through the city councils, called *Programa Nacional de Municipalização do Turismo - PNMT* (National Programme for Tourism Municipalisation).

**Diagram 1: Political-Administrative Subordination Flow**

The objectives of PNMT were fivefold, (1) Decentralization, (2) Human Resource Training, (3) Collaboration among the communities, public and private sectors, (4) Sustainability and (5) Social equity (WTO, 1997). The local agents should be municipal civil servants and the training was through workshops in three phases. After trained these agents were made responsible for publicising the information and the city should create a Tourism Council with representatives from the local government, the private sector and from the community. The Council should guide the local tourism policy and manage the Municipal Tourism Fund.

According to Beni (2003), since its early start PNMT lacked in information, due to the fact that it should have been preceded by a full inventory of the offer. Nevertheless, the scope of the programme still places it at the top of tourism public initiatives ever. Nearly 2,000 cities have adopted the methodology which has performed a considerable change in the Brazilian Tourism Map.

Nonetheless, as time went by the programme presented some imperfections and needed arrangements, essentially because it was superficial in terms of planning; reducing the objectives to what was feasible
to be done locally. In addition, it has shown to be effective only in small cities, up to 200,000 inhabitants as in larger cities the councils tended to have too many representatives resulting difficult to interact. Moreover, it was perceived (not only in Brazil) that local attractions are hardly ever enough to attract a considerable demand, and the programme should go through some changes.

Besides, as the government party lost the election in 2002, a new phase for tourism began in the country and the changes were substantial.

3.2 Current tourism structure

After the 2002 elections, Lula da Silva, from the labour party (PT) was made President. Among the number of changes performed by the first socialist government in years, the Ministry of Tourism conquered its independence from other issues. Never in Brazilian administration history has tourism been given so much importance (at least in terms of structure, as it will be touched later in this article).

One of the first acts of the new Ministry was to release the first Brazilian National Tourism Plan 2003-2007 (PNT), in April 2003. This Plan brought the new tourism policy as well as the current Public Tourism Structure, presented in the diagram below:

![Diagram 2: Current Ministerial Structure for Tourism in Brazil](http://www.embratur.gov.br/0-catalogo-documentos/Anuario/PNT-Ingles.pdf)

According to the diagram above, the Ministry of Tourism is advised by two administrative bodies, namely, the Forum of State Secretaries, formed by the chairmen of each Tourism State Secretariat; and the National Tourism Council, formed by representatives of the tourism industry at the national level, other Ministries, Academy and some other labour associations, as follows:
Table 1: Organisation Members of the National Tourism Council

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Amazon Bank – BABA;</th>
<th>Bank of the Brazilian Northeast – BNB;</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Brazilian Association of Amusement Parks – ADIBRA;</td>
<td>Brazilian Association of Bachelor’s in Tourism – ABHTUR;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brazilian Association of Best Age (Third Age) Clubs – ABCMI NACIONAL;</td>
<td>Brazilian Association of Camping – ABRCAMPING;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brazilian Association of Car Rentals – ABLA;</td>
<td>Brazilian Association of Convention Centres – ABRACCEF;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brazilian Association of Events – ABEOC;</td>
<td>Brazilian Association of Gastronomy, Hospitality and Tourism Entities – ABRESI;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brazilian Association of Hotel Industry – ABIH;</td>
<td>Brazilian Association of Regional Air Transport – ABIETAR;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brazilian Association of Resorts – ABRI;</td>
<td>Brazilian Association of Restaurants and Entertainment Enterprises – ABRASEL;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brazilian Association of Rural Tourism – ABRATUR;</td>
<td>Brazilian Association of Tourism Transport – ANTTUR;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brazilian Association of Tourism Journalists – ABRAJET;</td>
<td>Brazilian Bank – BB;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brazilian Federation of Convention &amp; Visitors Bureau – FBC&amp;VB;</td>
<td>Brazilian Incoming Tour Operators – BITO;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brazilian Service for Commerce – SENAC;</td>
<td>Brazilian Service for Small Business Development Support – SEBRAE;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brazilian Union of Fair Promoters;</td>
<td>CAIXA Federal Bank;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAIXA Federal Bank;</td>
<td>Indications of the Brazilian President (3 persons)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ministry of Agricultural Development – MDA;</td>
<td>Ministry of Culture – MINC;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ministry of Defence – MID;</td>
<td>Ministry of Development, Industry and Foreign Trade – MDIC;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ministry of Finance – MF;</td>
<td>Ministry of Foreign Affairs – MRE;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ministry of Justice – MJ;</td>
<td>Ministry of Labour – MTE;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ministry of National Integration – MIN;</td>
<td>Ministry of Planning, Budget and Management – MPO;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ministry of the Environment – MMA;</td>
<td>Ministry of Transport – MT;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Commerce Confederation – CNC;</td>
<td>National Tourism Board – EMBRATUR;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Economic and Social Development Bank – BNDES;</td>
<td>National Tourism Secretaries and Directors Forum – FORNATUR;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Federation of Hotels, Restaurants, Bars and similar – FNHRBS;</td>
<td>National Union of Airline Companies – SNEA;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Federation of Tour Guides – FENAGTUR;</td>
<td>Presidency Representative - Casa Civil da Presidência da República;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Federation of Tourism – FENACTUR;</td>
<td>Youth Hostels Federation – FBAJ;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Ministry of Tourism

As seen in the table above the Council is very well represented, having a variety of tourism industry associations, financial and government bodies, as well as the media and members of the academic sector.

However, despite the popular approach of the administration, no representative comes from the society, or from the environmental or cultural areas. This turns the Council into a public-private representative body and might bias the development in the long term.

In addition to these two new advisory bodies, other structural changes were made to the National Tourism Administration that migrated from EMBRATUR to new secretariats as follows:

The Ministry’s structure is made up by bodies for direct and immediate assistance to the Minister, in addition to the following bodies aimed at its final mission:

a) Secretariat of Tourism Policies: its main competences are "the drafting, preparation, evaluation and monitoring of the National Tourism Policy, according to the guidelines proposed by the National Tourism Council", as well as to articulate the institutional and international relationships required for conducting such Policy.

b) Secretariat for Programmes for the Development of Tourism: is responsible for carrying out actions for the stimulation of public and private initiatives that may encourage, stimulate, promote investments in articulation with the Regional Development Programmes, as well as for supporting and promoting the production and commercialization of products associated with tourism and the qualification of services. (MTUR, 2003)

The former NTA, EMBRATUR, was converted to a ‘quasi-governmental institution whose field of competence is to promote, publicise and support the commercialisation of tourism products, services and destinations, domestically and abroad’ (MTUR, op cit) therefore focusing in promotion.
It is important to note that with this new structure the tourism public policy flow returns partly to the model adopted before the creation of the Municipalisation Programme (PNMT). That is to say, even though the top decisions are decentralised, the Federal Government uses the states to distribute the decisions to the local level. It is curious to notice that somehow a popular government elected by democracy readopts a structure created during the dictatorship.

### 3.3 Present Policies

In addition to the administrative restructure came along the new Policies, in order to modernise the tourism thinking in Brazil. The new policy has been developed viewing tourism as an economic sector, and even the government’s drivers described in the plan have a social outcome through economic healing, namely (1) reduction of regional and social inequalities, (2) income generation and distribution, (3) generation of employment and occupation, and (4) level the balance of payments (MTUR, 2003). Interestingly, for a socialist government, the overall goals are extremely demand driven, being (a) to develop quality Brazilian tourism products, contemplating our regional, cultural and natural diversity, and (b) to stimulate and facilitate the consumption of Brazilian tourism products by the national and international markets. Not even the specific goals (that do no lead to achieve the overall goals as would be expected but conversely include new goals) contemplate the improvement of quality of life of local communities and welfare through tourism positive impacts – even economic ones. According to Bigné et al (2000), government driven policies either tend to care about social welfare or to generating taxes. It is worrying that the public-private nature of structure of the current tourism sector described above point out the second option, since only one of the audacious targets focus on social improvements, and even this one is related to generation of new jobs and occupations. These targets are:

- To acquire conditions to generate 1,200,000 new jobs and occupations,
- To increase the number of foreign tourists on Brazil to 9 million
- To generate US 8 billion of foreign exchange credits
- To increase the number of passengers on domestic flights to 65 million
- To expand the Brazilian tourist offering, developing at least three good products on each State and on the Distrito Federal (Federal District).

The risk of setting such daring targets is what to do to achieve them. Taking the number of foreign tourist as an example, only twice in all Brazilian tourism history the number of tourists exceeded the five million mark, as shown in the table below:

**Table 2: Number of International Tourist Arrivals by year since 1970**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ARRIVALS</td>
<td>249,960</td>
<td>287,926</td>
<td>342,961</td>
<td>399,127</td>
<td>480,267</td>
<td>517,967</td>
<td>555,967</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ARRIVALS</td>
<td>684,596</td>
<td>784,316</td>
<td>1,091,299</td>
<td>1,325,422</td>
<td>1,457,879</td>
<td>1,546,681</td>
<td>1,620,621</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ARRIVALS</td>
<td>1,505,726</td>
<td>1,735,912</td>
<td>1,934,019</td>
<td>1,329,053</td>
<td>1,742,919</td>
<td>1,462,879</td>
<td>1,091,047</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ARRIVALS</td>
<td>1,228,178</td>
<td>1,692,078</td>
<td>1,641,130</td>
<td>1,657,310</td>
<td>1,591,416</td>
<td>2,066,501</td>
<td>2,569,598</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ARRIVALS</td>
<td>1998</td>
<td>1999</td>
<td>2000</td>
<td>2001</td>
<td>2002</td>
<td>2003</td>
<td>2004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ARRIVALS</td>
<td>4,833,684</td>
<td>5,107,149</td>
<td>5,513,842</td>
<td>4,472,575</td>
<td>3,783,406</td>
<td>4,098,590</td>
<td>4,099,590</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: EMBRATUR

Even classic theories relating the number of tourist with tourism development, such as Butler’s Tourism Product Life Cycle (BUTLER, 1980) have been reviewed and quantity has not been related to quality for a long time already. Increasing the number of tourists to this amount in such a short time scope will make necessary the use of strategies related to mass tourism development that has proved bringing more damage than benefits to destinations. That is to say, the Country would be going to the opposite direction of the current tendencies in tourism development. It looks as if, in terms of government policy Brazil is going through what Hall (2001) called boosterism.
One of the indicators that this policy might be heading the country to mass tourism is the increasing number of charter flights arrivals in Brazil and the promotion towards foreign Tour Operators, which can create overdependence in foreign investments (TRIBE, 1999). Due to the size of the country and the inefficient domestic transport system, package tours and charter flights tend to create enclaves instead of spreading development throughout the country. It is true that foreign tourists bring hard currency and this is positive for the balance of payments. However, due to the fact that most of the charter and tour operators company are foreign multinationals, the negative outcomes are twofold: (1) a great part of the money is left in the origin or leaks out to the companies’ headquarters, and (2) the level of competitiveness of these companies can limit the growth of local initiatives. An example of this last situation is that, as announced in the Ministry website, 29 foreign airlines are flying to Brazil, which is good news. But the bad news is that from the four Brazilian Airlines that used have international flights, two went bankrupt and one is in serious crisis. Of course the situation has not been caused exclusively by the increase of foreign market share, but it probably did not help to prevent it.

Nonetheless, it is not the intention to suggest that Brazil should lock out international investors. As any other developing country foreign investments are fairly needed (BIGNÉ et al, op cit). However, not only the country but the products themselves are also ‘developing products’, and even though Brazil has a large number of tourism graduation courses, very few of them train for specialised operational skills. A fast growth might mean that the country might need to import workforce or that the level of services might be poor. The concern here is about the need to create a domestic structure that can support the raise of tourism before an explosion of tourist arrival, and that preferably this growth happen smoothly. Since tourism destinations are easily replaceable (Lickorish and Jenkins, 1997), bad quality products mean unsustainable tourism.

As a matter of fact, in a country with such a gap between rich and poverty, domestic tourism could play an important role in distributing wealth that should not be overlooked. And what comes to domestic tourism in the current policy, PNMT evolved from Municipal to Regional level, and the new programme is called Programa de Regionalização do Turismo: Roteiros do Brasil (Tourism Regionalization Programme: Brazilian Routes), in order to enhance the attractiveness of tourism destinations by clustering regional products.

The new Programme is very well conceived, adopting throughout the Country modern concepts adapted from successful experiences from around the world and that had been successful in the southernmost state of Brazil in previous years. However it is still lacking in terms of feasibility, due to the fact that there are not many regional government bodies within the states in Brazil. And, even if there were, the regional attractions might not necessarily coincide with regional administrations, as happens for instance in Santa Catarina, which is a southern state divided in regions. In this state, many regional destinations overlap administrative regions and the products have to be managed independently from the formal state division.

Furthermore, some regions decided to create Regional Councils, based on the fusion of the former municipal structures. However, to increase the difficulty, as PNMT ceased to be for it was the previous government’s former policy, many cities discontinued their Councils. As a result, other stances of governance are being proposed by the Federal Government in order to tackle the situation and the first remarkable outcome is being presented at the first Brazilian Tourism Fair, that will take place in São Paulo, in June. At this fair, called ‘Salão Brasileiro de Turismo’, each state will show their new products, i.e. routes that are going to be presented to Brazilian and foreign Tour Operators in order to renew the national tourism supply.

3.4 Final considerations about the Tourism Plan.

It is important to take into consideration that as mentioned before tourism is not a recent activity in Brazil, this is the first initiative in terms of having an actual Master Plan. Any critics to its contents can
diminish the importance of its existence, and the research intention is to point out possibilities of improvement, and does not mean to question its relevance.

Even the mass tourism approach can be fruitful if it is planned and developed in such a way that its evolution can be controlled in a near future, since the hard currency is now needed. However, the negative effects mentioned cannot be neither prevented nor controlled by a four year scope plan, and this is matter of huge importance. Long term planning should support the development of tourism in Brazil; otherwise the country can become too vulnerable in terms of economic interests.

Last but not least, the community should be the main beneficiary of tourism development and treated like an important actors of the process (GANDARA, 2004; WTO, 1997), as all other stakeholders. It is not possible to develop a destination without the approval of the community or overlooking their opinion. Tourism is an activity performed by people and with people and to people, and both tourists and hosts should be at the same side enjoying its benefits. In that sense, both groups should be heard and taken into consideration when such an important development tool is conceived.

4. CONCLUSION

Tourism is an activity can bring many advantages for the developing countries, easily perceived in national economies, but also and as a consequence in the socio-cultural and physical effects. Although it is important that an adequate policy is developed in order to avoid the negative impacts of the activity that are not few - conversely from what was believed in the early years of the activity as we know today. Special attention must be taken in defining objectives and being sure that the community is participating and benefiting from the activity. Unfortunately, although over the last few years Brazil has been developing tourism policies it is still not possible to say that this is tradition in the country.

Strangely, even though there has been an incredible growth in the number of tourism graduate courses, neither have many of those focused on public policy nor have the academy or tourism graduates participated intensively in policy-making in its various levels. Not many researches have been released in the country about this matter and there is a clear need to approximate theory with the actual Brazilian tourism development to avoid reproducing mistakes that might have occurred elsewhere in the past. In this sense, this research intends to call attention to the need of involving tourism researches in broader fields of study, as well as in depth studies in this proposed area.

Moreover, it is time the Government intensifies its role of policy-making focusing on the population welfare. Before having well defined policies and rules it is not safe to share the responsibility with the private sector due to its profit driven nature. It is not likely that without proper incentive the industry will develop a high level of social responsibility on its own, especially when it comes to companies with no historical attachments to the country. In addition, political discontinuation should not mean policy discontinuation, and both meanings of the word ‘política’ should not compete with each other.

Even though sustainability might be utopia, it achievement must never be given up. Boff (1999) states that ‘there is no such thing as development per se but a society that opt by its wanted and needed type of development. Therefore the issue should be to create a sustainable society and a sustainable planet that could integrally develop’, therefore sustainability is everyone’s concern.

The tourist activity represents a great opportunity for Brazil and according to the WTO researches the international demand becomes more interested in long hauls journeys. As a result many new markets can profit, and hopefully many of them in the developing countries provoking a greater distribution of wealth. Also in this sense, domestic tourism should be taken well care of, in order to achieve social inclusion and policy-making should focus mainly in local autochthons’ welfare. As cited by Oppermann & Chon (1997), the domestic market in some countries can be even more important than the international ones, especially for the multiplying effect. If it is possible that tourism helps to diminish the distance between classes it is most certainly worth trying.
Especially in the developing countries and moreover in new destinations, there is the chance of avoiding to repeat the mistakes made in the past in tourist areas like some of the cited by Krippendorf (1987) in the late eighties. The activity has to bring and increase welfare, and generalise as well as distribute its benefits as much as possible in order to be legitimate otherwise its incentive should be reconsidered due to the negative impacts known to be related to tourism.

**BIBLIOGRAPHY**


