

Book review : Routledge Handbook of Trends and Issues in Tourism Sustainability, Planning and Development, Management, and Technology, Edited by Alaistar M. Morrison and Dimitrios Buhalis

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BOOK REVIEW



Routledge Handbook of Trends and Issues in Tourism Sustainability, Planning and Development, Management, and Technology

Edited by Alaistar M. Morrison and Dimitrios Buhalis

Routledge Taylor & Francis Group
LONDON AND NEW YORK

Tourism is an industry that can be understood in different ways and from many perspectives. The editors of this Handbook, Alaistar M. Morrison and Dimitrios Buhalis, focused on four thematic areas, which represent the main parts of the Handbook: Sustainability, Planning and development, Management, and Technology. Each of these thematic areas covered different issues that are discussed by professionals from all over the globe. In total, 83 of them contributed their insights through 38 chapters, i.e. 464 pages. At the very beginning of the Handbook, there are lists of figures and tables, editors, as well as contributors' information and introduction. Indexes are provided at the end of the Handbook.

The Handbook is the second volume published after the first volume entitled Routledge Handbook on Trends and Issues in Global Tourism. Both volumes consist of 78 articles with contributions from 147 authors from more than 30 countries.

The first part of the Handbook, entitled Sustainability, consists of nine articles.

Sustainable tourism, as the authors in this part of the Handbook also claim, is not a form of tourism in itself, but it is necessary to take into consideration the features of sustainability when developing any type of tourism. This means that the stakeholders need to cooperate to achieve the sustainable goals in a tourism destination. According to the United Nations, there are 17 sustainable development goals. The importance of the goals related to the climate change, building areas, i.e. infrastructure that respects sustainability, sustainability in and at sea, and education of tourism staff is confirmed throughout the articles in this part of the Handbook. As the authors (Patterson and Balderas-Cejudo) mention in one of the articles, it is necessary that the people in tourism are educated to pass sustainable behaviour on to future visitors. In this way, the visitors will be encouraged to behave in line with the principles of sustainability in tourist destinations, so the areas will not be ruined, and future generations of visitors can enjoy them as well. Another way the authors mention is to allow the children to be educated during the trips, i.e. outside of school. This would be the best way to educate young future visitors on sustainability during the trip itself, where they could see their parents' example of how to behave towards nature and, in general, towards a new area they come to visit. Additionally, this part of the Handbook, covers fair pricing in tourist destinations, i.e. the prices that are acceptable for both tourists and the local population. The aim is to enable local residents to earn money by providing their services and products, whereby it cannot be allowed that the locals pay more than usual for life's necessities during the tourist season.

The next part of the handbook is entitled Planning and Development and consists of seven individual articles.

The authors of these articles have raised a few critical issues when discussing the development of tourist destinations and emphasised that there is no development without planning. Several articles mention COVID-19, which just shows how much the pandemic shook the tourism industry, i.e. tourism planning and development. In two out of seven articles, the authors (Para-Lopez et al.; Nghia Le) discuss island tourism. Global issues usually have a more negative impact on island tourism, due to its isolated nature, compared to destinations on the mainland. However, it was during the COVID-19 pandemic that visitors more often chose such, more isolated, destinations. This remained even after the pandemic. Rural destinations, discussed in one of the articles, are as specific as the island destinations. As much as it seems that sustainability is supported more in such destinations, it is just as demanding to achieve it alongside tourism.

As marketing in tourism is the most important tool for attracting guests, keeping them, and turning them into loyal customers, it is also mentioned in one of the articles. The authors (Nicely et al.) point out the issue of attracting guests in inappropriate ways, i.e. inappropriate marketing, via social media, various scientific and professional journals, daily news and press releases. The authors analysed 1489 documents and came across the issue of inappropriate marketing in 80 countries so it can be considered a global issue.

It is evident that regardless of the type of issue being discussed, when it comes to developing tourism, cooperation between all the stakeholders is always necessary, as is understanding and desire for the sustainable development of tourism, so future generations could enjoy what today's generation enjoys.

The third part of the Handbook, called Management, includes nine articles.

There is no planning and development without management. Whether this will be done in a sustainable manner depends on

the management as well. People are the ones who create tourism, so cooperation between all the stakeholders is extremely important, as was previously noted. In this part of the Handbook, it is pointed out how important it is to care about people's basic needs so they would be satisfied employees and give the best they can for the development of the society they belong to. In other words, as the authors (Chrostou et al.) mention in one of the articles, the company/hotel/society can't develop and grow toward achieving common goals without individual satisfaction. The COVID-19 pandemic has contributed to the fact that employees, more than ever before, demand respect for both themselves and their work (not being underpaid). The management can and must respect this as to regulate the issue of gender differences. Women represent the majority (54%) of the workforce in tourism in the world but earn on average 14.7% less compared to men.

In this part of the Handbook, the pandemic is also mentioned, but regarding the way of choosing trips after it was over. The management had to adapt because tourists wanted to feel safe, which was possible to achieve with, among other things, all-inclusive arrangements. The reason why visitors choose one hotel over the other mainly depends on the reviews, i.e. electronic word-of-mouth. As the authors (Grace Chan et al.) indicate, young visitors are the ones who more often choose their accommodation in this way, as well as the other features of their trip. Precisely for that reason, the management should use the reviews of their former visitors as guidance for making improvements so future visitors would be (even) more satisfied.

The fourth part of this Handbook is focused on Technology and consists of 13 articles.

The COVID-19 pandemic has contributed to the increased use of technology in general and in tourism, which wouldn't happen as fast as it did if it weren't for the pandemic. Technology is now used to bring reality closer to future visitors through various technological solutions. The authors mention augmented and virtual reality in tourism, destination videos, and so-called travel vlogging. Two of the articles cover the topic of technology in museums, i.e. interactive museums, which are now a popular choice for young people and families with children as well. Just walking around the museum and reading is now outdated; people want to participate, experience something from previous centuries themselves, manage their visit through screens, choose what they want to listen to, and the like. When a specific experience is gained with the help of technology, the adjective "smart" is often added, which the authors (Norizan and Halim) of one of the articles also confirm. Therefore, the entire tourism destination can be a "smart tourism destination" if the concept of developing this destination is such that technology is used for more tourism services.

This Handbook is a successful representation of how the sustainability of a tourism destination cannot be achieved without the cooperation of all the stakeholders in tourism. Planning is necessary, and technology helps in development. Therefore, the Handbook can act as a basis for future research in tourism and given the provided examples related to sustainable tourism, it can also serve as a basis for the development services and new ways of implementing sustainability in tourism destinations.

The Handbook is suitable for both professionals and scientists, as well as for those who reflect in these topics for the first time. The possible shortcomings of this Handbook and similar books lie in the lack of a common conclusion at the end of each part of the book or a summary of the main conclusions at the end of all four parts, based on the questions posed by the editors at the beginning, on which the authors should have focused.

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