
Chapter 19

Appropriate Tourism Impact Assessment: A Case Study of Kaniki Point Resort, Palawan, Philippines

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There is a growing gap in the developing world between the accumulated information generated by tourism research and its practical application. Nowhere is this gap more apparent than in the relationship between tourism and its impacts on natural and human environments. This case study presents a practical model for impact assessment adapted for tourism development in LDCs, as a way to close the gap between knowledge (tourism research) and action (effective decision making and management). Appropriate Tourism Impact Assessment (ATIA) is a field methodology designed to assist decision-makers, project developers, and affected communities, to recognize local problems and assist in their remediation. ATIA can help create and maintain tourism sustainability in the developing world.

Kaniki Point Resort was a proposed ecotourism and scuba-diving project in the Philippines (Figure 19.1). The case study is a practical application of ATIA, to illustrate the opportunities and constraints of managing tourism impacts in a developing world setting. Impact assessment at an early stage of development is important to responsible tourism planning.

Tourism, Impacts, and the Developing World

Tourism researchers have conducted extensive research in tourism impacts (e.g., E. Cohen, 1978; Mieczkowski, 1995). Recently, academics and practitioners have come to a general agreement that these impacts should be addressed by applying a balanced planning approach to development: planning that incorporates public participation and issues of sustainability (e.g., Inskeep, 1991). Unfortunately, balanced planning in the developing world is rarely achieved (but see Long, 1993b; Trousdale, 1996), and the literature is still replete with developing world case

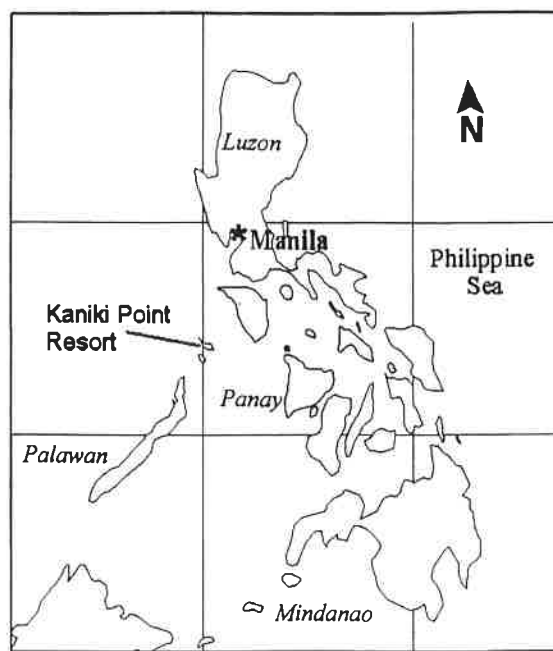


Figure 19.1. Map of the Philippines and Kaniki Point Resort.

studies chronicling failures in tourism development (e.g., R. Sofield, 1990). The fundamental reason for these failures is an ill-defined "messianic faith" in economic growth that negates the consideration of tourism's known adverse effects. Furthermore, developing countries often lack a participatory governance structure, strong regulations, enforcement capabilities, technical and managerial expertise, and the political will required to pursue a balanced planning approach. In an increasingly competitive marketplace, business promotion tends to displace the thoughtful anticipation of how to avoid tourism's negative externalities.

However, as countries gain experience with tourism, there is a growing recognition that anticipatory control of development impacts will lead to a better "quality of life," which is the underlying goal of development. This recognition is manifest as formal, informal, and ad hoc use of impact assessment applied within broader development processes (Abracosa & Ortolano, 1987). As a concept, impact assessment is familiar to many involved with tourism development (e.g., developers, funding organizations, professional planners, local governments, NGOs, community groups).

Impact Assessment: Trends and Opportunities

Impact assessment is a formalized set of procedures that seeks to identify, evaluate, and predict the sociocultural, biophysical, and economic impacts resulting from a proposed project, program, or policy. Recommendations are then made for appropriate mitigation and communicated to the appropriate decision-makers (unfortunately, not necessarily the public, as is the case in the Philippines where

assessment documents are not made public). Impact assessment is often referred to as environmental impact assessment (EIA) or simply as environmental assessment (EA), although these labels tend to reflect procedures with a narrower focus on environmental and social impacts (World Bank, 1991).

The past three decades have seen a steady evolution in impact assessment, widening the range of techniques to include complex matrix analysis, expert systems, mathematical modeling, numerical simulation, quantitative risk assessment, and GIS applications. However, these increasingly sophisticated techniques are so expensive and often generate such voluminous reports that they obscure the assessment's use as a decision-aiding tool. Evidence from evaluations of impact assessment in developing countries suggests that expensive and time-consuming techniques are unlikely to be of much practical value in an operational sense (Bisset, 1987). Although strong regulations and policies may be in place, agencies are unlikely to have the budgets, staff, expertise, or political power to enforce them (Brillantes, 1993). As early as 1990, leaders in the field were recommending that impact assessments should regain focus on "the identification of ecological and social *issues* and *implications* of proposed directions in development" (original emphasis, Sadler, 1990). Impact assessment needs to be recast to reflect the reality that the regulations, policies, and laws in developed countries do not directly translate in the developing world. Faced with these limitations, agencies tend to concentrate their efforts on politically palatable projects or projects deemed to have potentially major impacts (e.g., heavy industry and dams), leaving many tourism projects relatively free of regulatory controls.

Without a realistic threat of enforcement, project developers simply comply with mandated procedures without substantive follow through, or else ignore impact assessment completely. This can be attributed to several perceptions:

- a general distrust of most environmental planning, which is often seen as an expensive regulatory nuisance needed for project approval that may also radically alter the project developer's "resort vision";
- ignorance about the beneficial impact assessment can make to project development;
- a desire to keep front-end costs at a minimum, especially when requisite engineering and economic analyses have been completed.

In other words, a cursory glance through the lens of a developer suggests that it often makes more sense to "ask forgiveness rather than permission" by developing first and addressing regulations later, if at all. In 1987, the Anuha Island Resort in the Solomon Islands was closed and later burned to the ground because indigenous concerns were subordinated to the will of a corporate resort owner (Roughan, 1990). In Mexico, the idea for a golf course and condominium development in Tepoztlan was abandoned after police shot a protester. On the coast of Quintana Roo (see Chapter 9), the construction of a cruise ship pier near Cancún is now an international environmental issue because of its potentially adverse impacts on the area's highly valued coral reef ecosystems (Patterson, 1996). Considering the growing influence of the tourism industry throughout the developing world, it is important to examine potential roles for impact assessment in tourism development.

ATIA as a Practical Alternative

The implementation of full-scale, conventional impact assessment processes is constrained by many factors that make ATIA an attractive alternative, particularly in less developed regions. The legal and practical reality of any impact assessment procedure typically involves considerable expense and is largely focused on the legislated requirements, regulated processes, and factual data. In addition, impact assessment often takes the place of a complete planning process. ATIA distinguishes itself from a standard impact assessment by considering both the technical issues and also the values of stakeholders (parties that are interested in, or affected by, the project). ATIA broadens the developer perspective through a partnership approach to assessment. Therefore, ATIA is unique. It dovetails the strongest recommendations from the impact assessment literature (focus on issues and implications) with the tourism planning literature (need for better planning that incorporates community interests). Combined, this approach is consistent with most legislated requirements (environmental certificates/permits) and has a high probability of being implemented (by educating and building the capacity of the developer in environmental management). The role of the impact analyst(s) in ATIA is critical in developing confidence from all stakeholders as to the value of the approach. In addition, the analyst(s) must have facilitation skills as well as knowledge of tourism and impact assessment. An ATIA analyst should:

- incorporate community participation and a focus on stakeholder values as well as technical data;
- make explicit efforts to incorporate learning for all stakeholders into the process;
- take a partnership approach with the developer, which not only educates but also informs and increases environmental management skills.

Simply put, ATIA can quickly and effectively provide a structured understanding of a project development that incorporates technical aspects and addresses the concerns and values of interested or affected parties. Within the national and local context, an ATIA: (1) provides a systematic overview of the site characteristics; (2) provides the current project status; (3) provides the probable impacts from alternative project options; and (4) outlines an appropriate monitoring and mitigation program from project inception through operation (see Asia Development Bank, 1991).

By using available resources and simple procedures such as checklists, matrices, and unstructured interviews, ATIA can help focus the dialogue surrounding a proposed project by providing a more informed decision-making environment that helps avoid shallow, polarized debate. Ideally, any impact assessment should occur at the prefeasibility stage before the final design and engineering is completed, when alternatives can still be considered. Nevertheless, consideration of impacts should never be discouraged. An ATIA can be performed at any point in time, or in discrete stages throughout the project development and operations (World Bank, 1991).

An essential ATIA task is to identify the most important impacts that warrant more detailed study or special attention from project management. To assist with this process of identification, Ahmad and Sammy (1985) have suggested six helpful impact criteria:

- the magnitude (amount of change);
- the extent (area affected);
- the significance (how important);
- the special sensitivity (country or regional concerns);
- the time frame (duration);
- the irreversibility (permanence of change).

The use of these criteria in the assessment can conserve valuable resources by concentrating on important information gaps and issues of critical community concern.

Using an Active Approach

Enforcement is a prominent issue. In the developing world, impact assessments are usually developer funded. For an ATIA to be effective it must seek the cooperation (or "buy in") by demonstrating to the developer the value to him, and to the community, of the assessment procedure, the study results, and subsequent recommendations. The impact analyst(s) should take an active approach to the project's positive impacts and promote the ATIA as a beneficial management tool, rather than simply a regulatory hurdle. This is contrary to a prevailing emphasis that regards impact assessment as a method to counter the adverse impacts of tourism (e.g., Ioannides, 1995). The ATIA provides a formal mechanism to demonstrate development benefits that would: (1) initiate local government and community support early in the process; (2) avoid costly environmental remediation or social compensation after the fact; (3) preserve the tourist product (the biophysical and sociocultural environment); (4) avoid costly delays in implementation due to unanticipated environmental problems or regulatory demands; and (5) increase goodwill and improve marketability.

The extensive tourism literature provides reasonable parameters to evaluate specific project impacts (Table 19.1). However, these general impacts, derived from field studies, must be sensibly contextualized with the type and scale of project being proposed and site-specific information (sociocultural, biophysical, economic, political, and regulatory). To achieve this, it is imperative to conduct physical site assessments, elicit information about local systems, and determine fundamental community concerns. Perhaps most importantly, an active approach to ATIA should foster learning, facilitate meaningful communication, and promote partnership between the developer, local governments, and communities.

The ATIA is an important step in beginning to address tradeoffs associated with change: what is likely to be gained and lost through different courses of action, and what is preferred from different stakeholder perspectives. The case study of Kaniki Point Resort describes a practical application of an active approach to an ATIA by detailing the anticipated impacts of the development and highlighting mitigation recommendations and management responses.

The Kaniki Point Resort Case Study

Kaniki Point Resort is being developed as a world class scuba-diving and ecotourism resort (see Figure 19.1). The development is located on the small is-

Table 19.1. Tourism Impacts Considered**Physical Environment**

- Marine flora and fauna
- Terrestrial flora and fauna
- Soil
- Hydrology
- Climate
- Marine and fresh water
- Air

Sociocultural

- Anxiety over change
- Social and employment restructuring
- Migration patterns and changes in land values, use, and ownership
- Improved standard of living
- Changes in political-economic system
- Job satisfaction and income
- Growth in undesirable activities
- Change in value structure
- Receptiveness to change
- Culture as commercial commodity
- Growth in hostility towards tourists
- Access to resources and infrastructure use
- Human health and visual change

Economic Environment

- Job creation and employment increases
- Infusion of hard currency
- Economic diversification and regional distribution
- Seasonal employment
- Leakages
- Increased government revenues
- Lost opportunity costs
- Increased competition

land of Kaniki, near the larger island of Basuanga in the Calaman Group of Palawan in the Philippines. The proposed resort concept also included an agricultural component of primarily fruit-bearing trees (mangos, coconuts). Basuanga is rapidly becoming a popular tourist destination because of the high quality of the natural environment and excellent scuba diving.

In 1995, the developer of Kaniki Point Resort sought an environmental certificate in order to comply with government regulations (something not always done due to lack of government supervision). To obtain the certificate, the developer was required to complete a Project Description, a simplified impact assessment tailored to the Philippines. From a decision-making standpoint, the major constraint of the Project Description was that detailed site drawings were required, precluding the consideration of many design or project alternatives.

The developer attempted the assessment but viewed it as another step in the burdensome ladder of bureaucratic requirements. He perceived the assessment to

be a request to justify the existing concept and not as opportunity to reevaluate and improve the project. Through a chance meeting between EcoPlan International and the developer, EcoPlan International was invited to take part in the assessment process for three main reasons: (1) the Project Description process was challenging and time consuming, (2) the developer felt that an objective expert opinion would hold more weight in the government decision-making process, and (3) the developer recognized potential improvements in the tourism product with expert evaluation.

Area Overview

The entire region of Northern Palawan is undergoing rapid socioeconomic and environmental change. The traditional slow-paced lifestyle is faced with an increasingly dynamic environment. Specifically, the municipality of Basuanga, a poor rural area with a population of just over 12,000, is saddled with high unemployment, compounded by in-migration of people from other resource-deprived regions of the Philippines. Stress on the existing social fabric is also seen in the poor health conditions and lack of adequate infrastructure (most serious being water, sewer, and roads). The primary causes of death include: malaria, acute respiratory infection, diarrhea, parasitism, and anemia or other nutritional deficiencies, all of which are preventable where poverty is reduced and medical access is adequate.

The ocean surrounding Kaniki Island has historically been a primary food source for local *barangay* (village) residents through the harvesting of fish and kelp. Like much of the Philippines, dynamite, cyanide, and illegal net fishing have been common in the area. Local fishers and business interests (i.e., pearl farmers) have successfully fought this illegal activity, preserving large tracts of the marine environment. The terrestrial environment is also beginning to feel the pressures of development, as deforestation is evident.

Site Description

The buildings of Kaniki Point Resort would occupy only 1 hectare of a 20-hectare privately owned waterfront land parcel. Roads and paths would traverse the parcel. Prior to acquisition by the developer, the site was used as agricultural land with poor production, due to lack of irrigation and unwise crop choices. An estimated 80% of the forest had been cleared. Remaining on the site were a few fruit-bearing trees (i.e., mango and coconut) and scattered indigenous trees (i.e., dapidap and *fica*). Hunting was also common on the site, putting stress on wildlife populations.

Kaniki Point Resort Objectives

The first activity of the assessment was to work with the developer to establish well-defined objectives for the development. The result of this exercise explicitly articulated a broad commitment to regional sustainability. It also created a development atmosphere that promoted a greater acceptance of the recommendations made in the final report. In this way, all recommendations could be validated by direct linkages to the developer's original set of objectives (Table 19.2).

Impact Assessment Constraints

One important consideration in the assessment was the fact that Phase I of the project was already under construction. This was clearly a limitation as there was

Table 19.2. Kaniki Point Resort Objectives

Kaniki Point Resort Objectives

- To furnish world-class accommodations in a natural/native setting for domestic and international clients.
 - To supply jobs, education, and training opportunities to local residents in environmental construction, sustainable agriculture, scuba diving, resort service and management, and environmental management.
 - To rehabilitate/reforest the island with valued ecosystem components such as fruit trees, hard wood trees, and other indigenous species.
 - To provide nature trails for guest enjoyment and education.
 - To provide skin-diving and scuba-diving facilities and instruction.
 - To secure and help administer protected status for the coral reef-seagrass ecosystem to the west of the site and for the mangrove ecosystem to the east of the site.
 - To assist local government units (LGUs) with community projects and events.
 - To collaborate with LGUs in the eradication of illegal and disruptive activities (e.g., dynamite and cyanide fishing).
 - To provide a secure livelihood for Kaniki Point Resort owners and workers.
-

little room for altering undesirable consequences from current construction practices. In a perversely positive way, the existing site work did help to ascertain the level of understanding and commitment by the developer to environmentally sensitive development before more building occurred. The Philippine government acts pragmatically in these cases by requesting a description of the current stage of development. Although this is not a desirable circumstance, because any construction will reduce future options, this approach does provide an additional opportunity for existing operations, like Kaniki Point Resort, to come into compliance.

Other limitations included the evolving regulatory environment, the inherent uncertainty in predicting impacts, lack of detailed local and regional data, and a general naiveté concerning tourism development displayed by the local communities. Furthermore, the analysis needed to be sensitive to the important issues and intentions of national legislation including the devolution of powers to local government promulgated through the Local Government Code of 1991 (see Brillantes, 1991) and the establishment of the Palawan Council for Sustainable Development. The new regulations played an important role in the report recommendations. For example, in 1993, the Palawan Council for Sustainable Development adopted "Guidelines for Tourism-Oriented Establishments in Palawan." These guidelines were meant to assist the local government units (LGUs) in developing and adopting their own regulations. When the ATIA report was written, however, no ordinance had been adopted in the Municipality of Basuanga.

Methods

Because very little baseline data existed and there were few financial resources available, costs were kept to a minimum by focusing efforts on critical issues of community concern, using analogous case study research and involving the resort

staff and community members with data collection. Various rapid assessment methods and analytical tools were used to evaluate a broad cross section of potential impacts and integrated qualitative and quantitative predictions (Table 19.3). Critical were the use of formal and informal interviews and site inspections. Two site visits were conducted: the first in May, and a second in August. These visits were used to (1) provide a seasonal perspective (dry season/rainy season); (2) identify impacts; and (3) assess historical and existing environmental conditions. The second visit was also used to address gaps in the data.

Needs Assessment and Regulatory Overview

Tourism development in Northern Palawan was promoted at the national level. These national goals for developing tourism were articulated in *Philippine Tourism Master Plan*; the *National Physical Framework Plan, 1993-2022*, and the Palawan Council for Sustainable Development's *Guidelines for Tourism-Oriented Establishments in the Province of Palawan*. Executive orders recommended that tourism be promoted in less developed areas, such as Basuanga, in order to contribute to regional income distribution and economic diversity. Similar orders promoted foreign investment, and Kaniki Point Resort was a joint Filipino-American enterprise. Conversations with the developer suggested that Kaniki Point Resort's approach to tourism would reflect the intentions of these national mandates.

Locally, there was strong support for the development. Residents and officials were quick to point out that development of Kaniki Point Resort would help alleviate local poverty and economic hardship. Furthermore, some local residents felt that a window of opportunity existed for Kaniki Point Resort to contribute to

Table 19.3. Data Collection and Analysis Methods

Primary

1. Interviews with key governmental officials (both elected and technical experts at the national, provincial, municipal and *barangay* level).
2. Public participation through interviews with informal community leaders and interested or affected residents—often at local community gathering spots in order to incorporate a wide cross section of *barangay* members (gender and age).
3. Visual site inspection and initial resource inventory collection (both terrestrial and aquatic).
4. Ambient water quality sampling and subsequent laboratory analysis.
5. Continued dialogue with project developer, Palawan Council for Sustainable Development, and Department of the Environment and Natural Resources personnel.

Secondary

1. Research and collection of existing statistics, policy, guidelines, and other relevant data.
2. Compilation of documented case study work, focusing on the Philippine and Southeast Asian experience.
3. Interviews with Filipino and international experts.
4. Computer modeling and desk analysis.

long-term economic and environmental sustainability by helping to establish Basuanga as a world-class scuba destination (Figure 19.2).

Environmentally, local officials felt the Kaniki Point Resort development should be committed to Palawan's *Environmentally Critical Areas Network (ECAN)*. Residents and officials largely ignored the potential for negative social impacts, although a few voiced concerns about the rate of change caused by increased tourist influx in the area.

General Impacts and Regional Planning

Overall, the probable impacts from development of Kaniki Point Resort were expected to be beneficial, mitigable, or made insignificant by using appropriate technologies and responsible project planning and management. It was stressed that, above all, a commitment from the project developer to a philosophy of conservation and meaningful dialogue with the local communities underpinned the level of impacts. Many of the biophysical and social impacts identified by local residents and the author transcended the Kaniki Point Resort project, but posed a threat as indirect and cumulative effects of regional development.

Regional planning and management efforts, such as the ECAN, could contribute to sustainable resource use and help direct the local tourism development. Similar



Figure 19.2. Kaniki Point coral gardens. (Photo by Victor Organ)

proactive efforts are needed to combat impacts from tourism growth on regional and local systems. Growth pressures, only in part due to tourism growth, were already evident in shortages of goods, inflation, changes in land use, land values and ownership, and initial signs of crowding. Social as well as biophysical carrying capacity needs to be addressed through growth management controls, especially if the area increases in popularity as a tourist center. Clearly, the newly empowered local government units need to apply regional planning controls (not project specific regulations) to address many of the adverse impacts that were identified during the project assessment.

Matrix Overview of Impacts

Assessments of probable impacts from the Kaniki Point Resort development were detailed in a final report. However, in order to quickly communicate this information, an impact matrix (Table 19.4) was constructed (adapted from Rescan, 1993). This matrix is included in this chapter to illustrate one technique for highlighting impacts from a tourism development.

The table lists the *environmental component* under consideration followed by some of the *possible effects*. Then, the *stage and the associated activities* creating the perturbation are denoted. The fourth column *comments* on some of the potential mitigation measures or concerns specific to the impact. The fifth column denotes the *likelihood* (low, medium, high) of the impact occurring during the

Table 19.4. Sample of Impact Summary Matrix for Kaniki Point Resort

Physical Environment	Possible Effects	Stage	Comments	Occurrence Likelihood
Marine flora and fauna	Reduced illegal fishing through independent monitoring	S, C, O	Train employees and work with local authorities (Bantay Dagat—the local marine police)	High
	Sedimentation and stress on mangrove dependent species from bridge construction and operation	C, O	All in-water construction must be done with extreme sensitivity with use of existing technology (e.g., silt curtains) and depth of channel must be maintained to ensure boat traffic and water exchange needed for ecosystem health	Medium

S = site preparation: clearing, grading, landscaping, and agroforestry.

C = construction: structures, roads, trails, bridges, landscaping, and agroforestry.

O = operation: dining, lodging, scuba diving, hiking, boating, barangay tours, other water sports, and agroforestry.

identified stage, after recommended mitigation measures have been implemented. These measures have not been quantified and represent subjective impressions of impacts. Further scientific study and use of specific expert judgment could yield quantified probability distributions, but were considered inappropriate for this stage of analysis.

Often the likelihood is followed by the stage of the project it reflects (i.e., S = Site Preparation). These estimates are intended to communicate to the reader a qualitative expression of the impact analyst's judgment. No attempt was made in the analysis to assign discrete confidence factors, but very high confidence factors are associated with the high and low likelihood distinctions. Also no clarification was made between "actual risk" and "potential risk." More work would be required to specifically address the impacts from intensity and exposure (over time) with far more attention to cumulative probability of annual occurrence.

Enhancement, Mitigation, and Management Responses

Any human-induced change in the natural environment causes impacts. Even small-scale, environmentally sensitive "ecotourism" developments should be influenced by thoughtful consideration of their potential impacts. Careful design, planning, and the use of appropriate technology can greatly augment the potential benefits, and avoid or reduce potentially adverse consequences. This is clearly illustrated in the simple matrix analysis conducted for Kaniki Point Resort.

Based on the impact assessment recommendations, significant benefits should accrue to the biophysical environment (e.g., through reforestation and rehabilitation of the site), to the social environment (e.g., through increased income, livelihood, and cultural exchange opportunities), and to the economy (e.g., through infusion of hard currency, diversification). The most threatening adverse impacts were expected to come from building, road, and bridge construction. Many socio-cultural impacts would not be specific to Kaniki Point Resort, although the resort would contribute to the cumulative effects of the rapid change in the region. To combat these potential impacts, recommendations were made for Kaniki Point Resort to promote meaningful dialogue with the communities and to become actively involved in regional planning, including the formation of strong regulations, effective enforcement by local government, and cooperation by tourism operators. The most important enhancement, mitigation, and management responses are listed:

- Erosion and sedimentation control techniques (silt curtains, retaining walls/seawalls, accommodating drainage patterns) should be utilized during all potentially disruptive construction and operation activities.
- Due to the uncertainty surrounding tourism development legislation actively being debated, consultation with local government officials should be conducted throughout the development process regarding scale, design modifications, and development standards.
- Employment and investment opportunities should focus on the surrounding communities.

- Substantive and responsive dialogue should be continued with the local communities to incorporate important indigenous knowledge and values in development and management of Kaniki Point Resort.
- Biophysical impacts (through simple surveys and observations) and social impacts (through continued dialogue with communities) should be monitored and managed:

Other, more specific, mitigation recommendations were also made (Table 19.5). The results of the impact assessment supported the issuance of an Environmental

Table 19.5 Specific Mitigation and Management Responses

Physical Environment

- Avoid disturbance or stockpiling materials in natural swales.
- Continue revegetation.
- Use of grading and sedimentation controls: drainage berms, settling basins, retaining walls.
- Special training for hazardous and toxic materials and proper storage facilities.
- Establishment and posting of tourist guidelines.
- For road construction: conduct major earthwork during dry season; follow contours of the land; provide for monsoon season drainage patterns; ensure compact or paved road surface to avoid sedimentation.
- For bridge construction: cut minimal number of mangrove trees; do construction sensitive to mangrove species life cycles; use sedimentation screens; allow for continued flow of water that will avoid scouring.
- For building construction: do major earthwork during dry season; use legal local building materials from a respected source where possible.
- Use standardized sanitation guidelines and facilities:
- Separate organic, inorganic, and toxic wastes and properly recycle, reuse, or dispose.
- Ensure that ecosystem components that depend on ground and surface water have access to resource and avoid excessive use of ground water that might weaken freshwater lens (use rain water collection if necessary).
- For all structures, roads, and bridges: appropriate scale and design standards should be used in conjunction with sensitive landscaping.
- Muffle motors (i.e., the developer had enclosed the generator in a scaled building and this had proven effective at eliminating noise).
- Follow the highest international and local standards concerning site design, planning, and construction.

Sociocultural Economic Environment

- Provide on-site medical facilities and communication/access to hospital.
- Follow the highest international and local standards concerning site design and planning.
- Provide cultural education opportunities for both host and guest populations.
- Train and hire local residents when possible, follow nondiscriminatory hiring practices and pay fair salaries.
- Work with local entrepreneurs to develop spin-off employment (i.e., local nature guides, boatmen, local crafts).
- Reinvest in local area.
- Make efforts to minimize economic leakages.

Compliance Certificate for the development of Kaniki Point Resort contingent upon the implementation of report recommendations. The most important factors contributing to this conclusion were:

1. the degraded existing biophysical environment and the willingness of the project developer to invest the requisite capital needed to rehabilitate the site and surrounding;
2. the fundamental orientation of the resort to ecotourism principles demands specific attention to an authentic and clean environment;
3. the high quality of existing ambient conditions (largely unstressed by excessive natural or man-made perturbations), which should minimize the risk of exceeding ecological system thresholds;
4. the scale of the resort would be sensitive to the natural and sociocultural surroundings;
5. the geographic isolation of the subject site would provide a buffer to both the natural and social environments and provide greater control for social stress-economic benefit tradeoffs;
6. the ability of the project to help alleviate the poverty level socioeconomic conditions of the surrounding rural *barangays*;
7. the area residents' strong support for the project;
8. the contribution of the resort project to national and provincial policy objectives.

Above all, this project was recommended for government certification based on the developer's demonstrated commitment to an ethos of equitable and sustainable development.

Conclusions

The systematic and active approach to the ATIA described in this case study served to: awaken new opportunities for community involvement; to alert the developer to modest changes in design that could have significant positive implications; and to introduce basic mitigation and monitoring programs that would have otherwise been ignored. Although the report was neither a highly technical nor data-intensive assessment, it effectively utilized existing information, perhaps the most important being community participation. Dialogue with the affected community facilitated an important two-way learning process wherein local information and values were expressed by the community and included in the assessment, and information regarding the potential effects from tourism were conveyed by the impact analyst to the communities.

By actively engaging the developer and involving the local government and host communities, the ATIA approach created opportunities to make the critical transition from knowledge to action. For example, by conducting follow-up research on the life cycles of local mangrove species, the project developer will be able to modify the design and timing of bridge construction in a more environmentally sensitive manner. Also, the developer is now working closely with the local governments. Besides contributing to the Environmentally Critical Areas Network, research for the assessment with local environmental officials revealed an oppor-

tunity to become involved with an integrated social forestry program. Finally, Kaniki Point Resort has expanded its communications with local communities. These represent only some of the sensible and inexpensive responses made by the project developer that will make a significant contribution to the sustainability of both the project and the region.

Whether or not all of the recommendations made in the final report will be followed remains unclear. It is equally unclear if a different, less responsive developer would have been as open, forward thinking, and proactive as the developer of Kaniki Point Resort. Nevertheless, the success achieved at Kaniki Point Resort suggests there is both the potential for similar achievements in the future for tourism development and potential applications to many other development projects.

An ATIA tends to be a discrete activity, in terms of both time and place, while human and natural systems are dynamic, change over time, and contribute to incremental movements that are difficult to determine in a "snap-shot" assessment (Hichcock, King, & Parnwell, 1993). Because of this, much legitimate criticism leveled at impact assessment is also true of ATIA and other methods for assessing tourism's impacts. This criticism includes assertions that too often conventional impact assessments are: reactive in nature; come too late in the development process; tend to be overly project or site specific; focus on immediate impacts; contain unconnected partial solution methods; and tend to have a single discipline bias (S. Holtz, 1990).

When impact assessment is effectively integrated with regional planning, however, it can be a valuable tool in the process of moving tourism planning away from anarchy and toward sustainability. Faced with the unique challenges of tourism growth in the developing world, applying an active ATIA approach can provide a practical alternative by making the most of "what is available" in order to encourage integrating, thinking, and learning about the environmental and social values inherent in pursuit of sustainability.

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