



Information Paper

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The Indian Ocean tsunami

Tourism as an alternative livelihood option – Ensuring incorporation of environmental considerations in associated reconstruction and rehabilitation

Introduction

In the post-tsunami reconstruction effort, significant attention is being paid to identifying and implementing strategies that provide alternative and sustainable livelihoods for people in the affected areas. One such alternative is tourism. This paper provides some general practical guidance for establishing or re-establishing sustainable tourism during reconstruction and rehabilitation phases in the aftermath of the Indian Ocean tsunami. It is intended as a supplement to the IUCN information paper entitled: *“Recovery from the Indian Ocean Tsunami - Guidance For Ecosystem Rehabilitation Incorporating Livelihoods Concerns.”* (Available from the IUCN tsunami website: <http://iucn.org/tsunami>) and will also be accompanied by more specific guidance documents on a country-specific basis relating to issues of reconstruction and infrastructure development.

While development of tourism is one option to provide opportunities for local people to re-establish their lives, a key concern is the appropriate interaction between ecosystem function rehabilitation, tourism reconstruction and poverty alleviation. If the post-tsunami efforts are to enhance the sustainability of the tourism industry in the region, decision-makers may benefit from guidance in the planning for reconstruction and rehabilitation.

Broadly speaking, government decision-makers will focus on a broader region or area and address the many linkages to government policies and regulations, other sectors and communities. Business decision-makers will tend to focus on their tourist enterprises, the areas proximate to these enterprises and the linkages critical to connecting customers and suppliers to these enterprises. Both, however, should be aware of what each other is doing and the impact of their actions on ecosystems that sustain tourism and local people.

For both government and business decision-makers there are essentially four steps in the reconstruction process:

1. Gathering baseline information
2. Setting priorities
3. Managing implementation
4. Ongoing monitoring and adaptive management

1. Gathering baseline information

If tourism was part of the livelihoods framework prior to the tsunami, a key question that needs to be answered is “How sustainable was tourism before the tsunami, in terms of location, infrastructure, visitor volume/patterns of use, material supply, production processes and so on?” In answering this

question, it will be important to ensure both inclusion of all relevant stakeholders in the consultation and decision-making at the appropriate level.

Whether or not tourism was present in the area before the tsunami, decision-makers will need to ask questions relating to policies, laws and regulations as well as practicalities of the situation under consideration. For businesses, the baseline information needs to also focus on the particulars of the project/site. The information gathered should cover several levels of jurisdiction (see table).

International Level	- Is the situation under consideration relevant to international obligations, policies, and guidance including: - Multilateral agreements such as the Convention on Biological Diversity - International business 'best practice' standards - relevant international policies affecting finance, trade, employment and local development
National Level	- Are there relevant national policies, laws and regulations, biodiversity strategies and action plans? Specifically: - Is an environmental impact assessment for reconstruction and rehabilitation work required? - Are there relevant tourism-relevant national policies, laws and regulations, tourism strategies and action plans? - What types of funding are available for reconstruction and rehabilitation?
Regional/Local Level	- Does the situation under consideration relate to regional/local laws and regulations, regional/local biodiversity strategies and action plans? - What is the ecological status of the situation under consideration and what are the options for eco-sensitive reconstruction and rehabilitation? - Does the business relate to regional/local biodiversity strategies and action plans or regional/local tourism strategies and action plans? - Are the key stakeholders at the regional/local level identified and included in consultations? - Is regional/local funding available for reconstruction and rehabilitation? - What are the critical regional/local sustainable livelihood issues during reconstruction and rehabilitation? - Is the (re)development compatible with local traditions and customs?
Project/Site Level	- Are there internationally-recognised threatened species or ecosystems in the situation under consideration? - Is there a specific biodiversity and/ or tourism strategy & management plan? - What are the ecological and biodiversity linkages during the planning, procurement, reconstruction and rehabilitation, and operation phases? - What are the critical local livelihood issues during project/site level reconstruction and rehabilitation? Are there established procedures and practises for benefit sharing? - What measures can be taken to minimize risks to local communities during reconstruction and rehabilitation? - What measures are being taken to avoid introduction of invasive alien species during and after the (re)development phase?

2. Setting priorities and objectives

The main goal of reconstruction and rehabilitation efforts should be to enhance the positive benefits to ecosystems and development. Given the severity of the situation and the circumstances and opportunities for tourism vis a vis other options for livelihood restoration, specific priorities need to be set. Identifying priorities should be based on objectives that have been specified as a result of full stakeholder consultation. These objectives should include clear activities and the timelines. They should be performance-based or process-based as required and they should be set through a consultative process involving all relevant stakeholders, especially the tourism industry and the local communities that are or may be affected by tourism reconstruction. .

The following questions could be used to help establish if tourism can be considered as one of the priorities for a restoration plan

- What contribution can the tourism-related reconstruction and rehabilitation business make to the conservation of ecosystems and biodiversity as compared to other types of reconstruction?
- What are the plans for use of biological resources during reconstruction and rehabilitation? For example, how will the use of non-renewable sources of energy and raw materials be minimised, or how will sources of pollution be eliminated? Will post-reconstruction use also be sustainable?
- How will the different stakeholders involved in the tourism-related efforts share in the benefits during and after the reconstruction and rehabilitation?
- How will the costs of reconstruction and rehabilitation efforts be shared internationally, nationally and locally?

3. Assessing and managing implementation

Implementation assessment and management is essential to avoid or minimize any potential damage to ecosystems and sustainable use from tourism reconstruction and rehabilitation. Existing environmental impact assessment and management regulations may not be sufficient to address the complex array of impacts on ecosystems and communities. Thus stakeholders, and especially governments decision-makers who regulate tourism development will need to consider various adaptive approaches for the assessment and management of the implementation phase.

The general guidance on implementation will have to be fine-tuned for the unique circumstances and needs of each particular country and situation. Country-specific recommendations and resources relating to the post-tsunami reconstruction effort in Sri Lanka include:

- After the tsunami: Materials for reconstruction – environmental issues - <http://www.iucn.org/tsunami/docs/ip-materials-reconstruction.pdf>
- After the tsunami: Where to reconstruct – environmental issues - <http://www.iucn.org/tsunami/docs/ip-where-reconstruct.pdf>
- After the tsunami: Dealing with Invasive alien species - <http://www.iucn.org/tsunami/docs/ip-ias.pdf>

Business decision makers, in particular, need to review several specific aspects of the planned reconstruction and rehabilitation including

Procurement processes should include eco-sensitive procurement practices such as use of local materials from sustainably managed sources.

Operating processes should identify technologies that will promote harmonisation of the project with the restored and rehabilitated landscape and local communities including eco-friendly power generation, reduction of water consumption, re-use or re-cycling of materials, and environmentally responsible waste disposal.

Sales and marketing plans should identify opportunities which enhance awareness, understanding and interest in sustainable reconstruction and rehabilitation.

Stakeholder involvement and capacity building plans should include mechanisms whereby local voices can be heard and concerns addressed. In addition, it would be important to identify skills and experience available in the region/locality to allow employment of locals at all levels of the reconstruction and rehabilitation process.

Financial management should include identification of possible sources of international, national and regional support (e.g. grants or tax incentives) for reconstruction and rehabilitation.

Public relations and communications plans should review existing local information and promotional mechanisms and devise strategies for local environmental education and awareness-raising during reconstruction and rehabilitation.

Decision-makers, both in government and business, may want to consider adoption of an international standard for assessing and managing the implementation of the reconstruction and rehabilitation. By adopting an international standard, it is more likely that key stakeholders – including international donors and investors – will be able to assess progress and provide constructive guidance for rapid adaptive management. Two possibilities for such standards include the Blue Flag scheme, based on compliance with criteria covering water quality, environmental education and information, environmental management and safety and services (<http://www.blueflag.org/>) and Green Globe 21 *<http://www.greenglobe21.com/>) which has a design and construction standard and an ecotourism standard that may be useful.:

Whatever standards and indicators are chosen for assessing and managing implementation, they should be (a) quantitative, (b) easily measurable, (c) relevant to set priorities and objectives, (d) sensitive to changes, (e) reliable over time, and (f) inexpensive to use.

4. Monitoring for adaptive management

A monitoring and control system for tourism reconstruction is a key component of any plan. Long-term monitoring and assessment are necessary in relation to the impacts of tourism on ecosystems and biodiversity. In the case of post-tsunami efforts, however, short-term monitoring is a critical element of implementing adaptive management. Further details on adaptive management are available in IUCN's guidance document "Recovery from the Indian Ocean Tsunami - Guidance For Ecosystem Rehabilitation Incorporating Livelihoods Concerns." (Available at: <http://iucn.org/tsunami>)

Resource Documents & Websites for More Information

Assessments of tsunami impacts

- After the Tsunami – Rapid Environmental Assessment Report, UNEP Tsunami Response, www.unep.org/tsunami
- IUCN Tsunami Response, <http://iucn.org/tsunami/>

Post-tsunami reconstruction and tourism, including environmental considerations

- Rebuilding after the Tsunami, Environment Foundation Ltd (Sri Lanka), <http://www.efl.lk/tsunami.html>
- Sri Lanka Coastal Resources Management Program, University of Road Island Coastal Resources Center, http://www.crc.uri.edu/index.php?filespec=live_data.php&actid=65
- Natural Disasters and Tourism, Harold Goodwin, (received by email on 01 March 2005)

Monitoring and Evaluation approaches

- Guidelines for Monitoring and Evaluation for Biodiversity Projects, World Bank Global Environment Division, [http://lnweb18.worldbank.org/ESSD/envext.nsf/45ByDocName/MEGuidelinesforBiodiversityProject%201998/\\$FILE/M&EGuidelinesforBiodiversity.pdf](http://lnweb18.worldbank.org/ESSD/envext.nsf/45ByDocName/MEGuidelinesforBiodiversityProject%201998/$FILE/M&EGuidelinesforBiodiversity.pdf)

General Guidance on Sustainable Tourism approaches

- *Guidelines on Biodiversity and Tourism Development, Biological Diversity and Tourism – Convention on Biological Diversity, <http://www.biodiv.org/programmes/socio-eco/tourism/default.asp>
- *Green Globe 21 Design and Construct Standard, *Green Globe 21 Company Standard, *Green Globe 21 Ecotourism Standard, <http://www.greenglobe.org/>
- Guidelines for Community-Based Ecotourism Development, WWF UK, http://www.wwf.org.uk/filelibrary/pdf/community_based_ecotourism.pdf
- *Integrating Biodiversity into the Tourism Sector: Best Practice Guidelines Report submitted to UNEP/UNDP/GEF/BPSP, H Ceballos-Lascurain, www.biodiv.org/doc/case-studies/tour/cs-tour-unep.pdf
- Island Sustainable Tourism, website of the International Scientific Council for Island Development, <http://www.insula.org/tourism/>
- *A Practical Guide to Good Practice: Managing Environmental Impacts In The Marine Recreation Sector, Tour Operators Initiative, Center for Environmental Leadership in Business, http://www.toinitiative.org/supply_chain/MarineRecreationGuide.pdf
- Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas, IUCN http://www.iucn.org/themes/wcpa/pubs/pdfs/tourism_guidelines.pdf

- Tourism, Ecotourism and Protected Areas, *Edited by Hector Ceballos-Lascurain*, <http://www.iucn.org/bookstore/pro-areas-1.htm>
- What Tourism Managers Need to Know, World Tourism Organisation, <http://www.world-tourism.org/cgi-bin/infoshop.storefront/EN/product/1020-1>

National / Local level

- Guidelines for Coastal Tourism Development in Tanzania, Government of Tanzania Ministry of Natural Resources and Tourism
- National Responsible Tourism Guidelines For South Africa, <http://www.nri.org/NRET/guidelines1.pdf>
- *Tsunami Relief for the Tourism Sector – Phuket Action Plan, World Tourism Organisation, www.world-tourism.org

Tourism organisations

- International Centre for Responsible Tourism, <http://www.zoo.co.uk/~z0007842/index.htm>
- The International Ecotourism Society (TIES), <http://www.ecotourism.org/>
- The Responsible Tourism Partnership, <http://www.responsibletourismpartnership.org/>
- The Travel Foundation, <http://www.thetravelfoundation.org.uk>
- Tour Operators Initiative for Sustainable Development, <http://www.toinitiative.org/>
- Tourism Concern, <http://www.tourismconcern.org.uk/>
- UNEP Tourism, www.uneptie.org/tourism

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Created in 1948, IUCN - The World Conservation Union brings together 79 States, 114 Government agencies, 800 plus NGO's, and some 10,000 scientists and experts from 181 countries in a unique worldwide partnership. IUCN's mission is to influence, encourage and assist societies throughout the world to conserve the integrity and diversity of nature and to ensure that any use of natural resources is equitable and ecologically sustainable.

IUCN is the world's largest environmental knowledge network and has helped over 75 countries to prepare and implement national conservation and biodiversity strategies. IUCN is a multicultural, multilingual organization with 1000 staff located in 62 countries. Its headquarters are in Gland, Switzerland.