
PREFACE

This special issue is dedicated to the topic of Sustainable Tourism and comprises a selection of papers presented at the Conference that took place in Valencia, co-organised by the Complutense University of Madrid, the Wessex Institute of Technology and the Polytechnic University of Valencia.

Nowadays, tourism is an important component of development, not only in economic terms, but also for knowledge and human welfare. New forms of economic development and increasing wealth of human societies depend on tourism.

The tourism industry has nevertheless given rise to some serious problems, including social costs and economic impacts. Many ancient local cultures are in danger of losing their identities as their societies have oriented their economy only to this industry.

Both material and cultural landscapes have paid a high price for some forms of tourism. These problems will persist if economic benefit is the only target, leading to economic gains that eventually become ruinous.

It is also a grave error to disregard the fact that visitors nowadays are increasingly demanding in cultural and environmental terms.

On the other hand, many historic agricultural districts have maintained or even recovered their local population numbers through intelligent tourism strategies focused on nature and rural culture. Natural landscapes and bio-diversity are becoming increasingly valued.

The papers comprising this issue respond to some of those concerns and strategies in an effort to find ways to protect the natural and cultural landscapes, trying to minimise the adverse effects of tourism.

The Editors
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