

Nom del diàleg: Turisme, diversitat cultural i desenvolupament

Data: 14 Juliol

Sessió: La responsabilitat social del turisme

Ponent: Jean Claude Baumgarten



The role of the Private Sector
Jean-Claude Baumgarten, President, WTTC

FOREWORD

Over the past few years, the Travel & Tourism industry has had to contend with a series of unprecedented challenges. International events, such as terrorism and SARS, and economic turbulence have led to significant changes in Travel & Tourism demand. At the same time, international events have acted as a catalyst, accelerating fundamental changes in market behaviour and travel patterns that have been slowly emerging over the past decade.

While business plans have become increasingly short term, more and more governments are starting to realize that they cannot leave Travel & Tourism growth to chance. This emerging global consciousness represents a great opportunity for our industry. At the conclusion of the third Global Travel & Tourism Summit held in May 2003, more than 500 of the world's most influential business and political leaders called on WTTC to create a new vision and strategy for Travel & Tourism. A vision that would involve a coherent partnership between all stakeholders, public and private, to strengthen industry efforts and turn future challenges into opportunities. The *Blueprint for New Tourism* is WTTC's response to this historic call to action.

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THE NEED FOR NEW TOURISM

New Tourism dares to embrace a new dimension of Travel & Tourism. It is a mature response to a more complex world. Global consciousness of the importance of tourism has triggered a fresh look at the opportunities it represents. New Tourism is a new sense of coherent partnership between the private sector and public authorities. It is geared to delivering commercially successful products – but in a way that ensures benefits for everyone. New Tourism looks beyond short-term considerations. It focuses on benefits not only for people who travel, but also for people in the communities they visit, and for their respective natural, social and cultural environments. Travel & Tourism means jobs. A World-wide community of a quarter of a billion people working in the Travel & Tourism Sector by the end of this decade – with the firm prospect of sustainable growth in the future.

This *Blueprint for New Tourism* sets out the vision – and issues a call to action, for business and for the world beyond business.

1. Governments recognizing Travel & Tourism as a top priority
2. Business balancing economics with people, culture and environment
3. A shared pursuit of long-term growth and prosperity

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THE NEW CHALLENGE

Facing these challenges, there has been a growing emphasis by world leaders on the need for long-term ‘sustainable development’ – pursuing needed economic growth in the present, while preserving the natural and human environment on which quality of life and future growth depend. This has been the subject of two successive world summits: the 1992 Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro and the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg, South Africa.

THE BUSINESS RESPONSE: From Corporate Philanthropy to Corporate Social Responsibility

Many companies have a long tradition of corporate philanthropy, taking a portion of their profits and returning it to society as charitable contributions to a variety of causes. However, with the emergence in the last decade of a global market-based economy, there is a growing consensus that the private sector has a larger role to play.

It is recognized that companies have social responsibilities that go well beyond their commercial duties and the traditional role of wealth generation and profit making. There is increasing interest in their capacity to help mitigate the negative aspects of globalization and proactively address issues facing society.

The new standard is for business to exercise ‘corporate social responsibility’ (CSR). While there is no single definition of CSR, it clearly does not refer just to

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charitable contributions detached from a company's core business. It means adopting open and transparent business practices that are based on ethical values. It means responsibly managing all aspects of operations for their impact not just on shareholders, but also on employees, communities and the environment. Ultimately, CSR is about delivering sustainable value to society at large, as well as to shareholders, for the long-term benefit of both.

There is evidence that various 'stakeholders' in the global market – business, consumers, investors, employees, governments and local communities – are beginning to make choices that reflect this new standard: polls indicate that some consumers are making product choices based in part on the producer's ethical reputation; socially responsible investing is on the rise, as witnessed by the growth in the FTSE4Good index and the Dow Jones Sustainability Group Index; and voluntary guidelines by governments and non-governmental organizations are proliferating.

In the private sector, many businesses, including the majority of FTSE 100 companies in the UK, now include social and environmental commitments in their core mission statements. A growing number are also adopting 'triple bottom line reporting' in which social and environmental results are measured and reported next to financial results.

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TRAVEL & TOURISM: Part of the Solution

Because of its size and its interconnectedness with all parts of the economy, Travel & Tourism is one of the largest sources of economic activity in the world. At the same time, it can be an important force for sustainability by raising living standards in under-developed areas, promoting preservation of the natural and human environment and providing a vehicle for peaceful international exchange. Travel & Tourism can be part of the solution to the world's challenges because of these key characteristics, which I will describe:

- As one of the world's largest and fastest growing industries, Travel & Tourism is, and will continue to be, a significant source of growth and prosperity worldwide.

Using Tourism Satellite Accounting, an accredited econometric tool, WTTC each year measures the full economic impact of Travel & Tourism in over 174 national economies. The results have shown that this impact is far greater than had previously been expected. According to WTTC research, Travel & Tourism generates economic activity worldwide representing over ten per cent of total global GDP. The industry also accounts for over 215 million jobs (direct and indirect).

With 4.5 per cent growth forecast per annum for the next ten years, Travel & Tourism is not only one of the world's largest, but one of its fastest growing industries.

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- Travel & Tourism can help raise living standards and alleviate poverty in underdeveloped areas.

Present in local communities throughout the globe, Travel & Tourism is often an early investor and one of the few sources of economic activity in some of the world's least developed areas. As a consequence, it can raise incomes and contribute to poverty alleviation by:

1. Stimulating the development of infrastructure that underpins the entire economy, including: transport such as airports, seaports and roads, public utilities to supply water and power and recreational facilities such as parks, stadiums and museums.
2. Generating demand for a wide variety of locally supplied goods and services, providing jobs and training for local people and opportunities for entrepreneurs;
3. Employing women, youth, the unskilled and people in rural and remote areas, who might otherwise have few opportunities.

Travel & Tourism is regarded as the best development option in many emerging economies, an effective way of utilizing their natural and cultural resources to create jobs and wealth. The share of international tourism arrivals to developing countries grew from 19 per cent in 1980 to 30 per cent in 2000.

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- Travel & Tourism provides powerful market incentives to protect and preserve fragile eco-systems, endangered wildlife and unique cultural heritage.

Travel & Tourism's 'product' is the places that people visit. Protecting destination communities – the people, their unique cultures and beautiful natural settings – is critical. Failure to maintain their well-being destroys the very attractions on which the industry depends directly for success. Unfortunately, this lesson has often been learned the hard way, after damage to local environments, for example, or after a decline in local community conditions has led to a reduction in tourism.

For governments, tourism can represent an alternative 'use' for natural and cultural resources that might otherwise be destroyed – by land development, by illegal activities such as wildlife poaching and the looting of ancient cultural sites, or through neglect. Tourism often provides a better economic return on these valuable assets, while rewarding their long-term preservation.

- As a primary medium of international exchange, Travel & Tourism brings people from diverse cultures together.

In a very real way, Travel & Tourism depends on international peace and prosperity. By creating opportunities for hosts and visitors to learn about each other and share experiences, tourism can even contribute to international

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understanding and cooperation and, in the long term, has the potential to build bridges of peace.

For all these reasons, the Travel & Tourism industry has a vital stake and a critical role to play in helping to address the challenges now facing the world, contributing to development that is economically, environmentally and socially sustainable.

PROGRESS TO DATE

Making Travel & Tourism work for everyone requires the active engagement of all stakeholders – governments, businesses, local communities and the travelling public.

While governments have begun to understand the contribution that the industry can make to sustainable development, their record in adopting appropriate policies to encourage sustainable, economically viable tourism is mixed. For progress to be made, the Travel & Tourism private sector must play a central role.

Between the 1992 Rio Earth Summit and the World Summit on Sustainable Development in 2002, considerable advances were made towards sustainability in the Travel & Tourism industry:

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- Many Travel & Tourism companies have integrated environmental protection into their operations, mitigating their impact on fragile eco-systems and scarce resources.
- Some companies are also addressing their economic, social and cultural impact on host communities, for example: working with public authorities to ensure that plans for tourism growth are compatible with development goals; actively promoting locally based tourism related businesses; training local people for employment in management positions; educating visitors about local conservation issues; and promoting culturally-sensitive tourism activities.
- A wide variety of cross-industry programmes – such as global funds and foundations, eco-labels and certification schemes, codes of conduct, and awards – have been set up to further encourage sustainable Travel & Tourism company practices.
- The industry as a whole has contributed proactively to the global dialogue on sustainable development, making concrete proposals for how it can help implement Agenda 21.

But while these are important steps, they are not enough. The response of the Travel & Tourism industry is still piecemeal and change is relatively slow. One reason for this is the highly fragmented nature of the industry, the great majority of which consists of small and medium sized businesses scattered across the globe, often running on fragile operating margins.

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The real challenge is to move beyond the current *ad hoc* approach, to evolve new patterns of Travel & Tourism business that integrate social, economic, and environmental sustainability and to encourage a vast and fragmented industry to follow suit. In short, what is required is a greater leadership in corporate social responsibility within the Travel & Tourism industry.

SOCIAL CORPORATE LEADERSHIP: The Business Case

Greater Corporate Social Leadership within Travel & Tourism is vital to the industry's future because it will help ensure thriving, attractive and welcoming destination communities that will draw visitors, the basis for long term growth and profitability. Creating a positive environment for tourism in the long term will require the entire industry to adopt responsible, sustainable practices.

Not only is corporate social leadership important for the good of the industry as a whole, it is also becoming a competitive issue for individual companies. Those companies with a reputation for social leadership today will be the winners of tomorrow. Travel & Tourism's corporate social leaders will:

- Be favoured by a growing number of national government authorities and local communities who are prioritizing sustainable tourism that benefits destinations;

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- Build brand value and win market share with the growing number of environmentally and socially conscious tourists and other travellers;
- Attract socially conscious investors, improving access to capital and building share value;
- Enhance their ability to recruit, motivate and retain employees, both in destination communities and throughout the organization;
- Be better positioned to assess and respond to risks and opportunities in the market.

A voluntary approach is crucial. To take advantage of what business has to offer – entrepreneurship, innovation, and management capability – companies must be free to choose how they respond to community needs as the competitive market dictates. Attempting to regulate social responsibility would not only be impractical, given the diverse needs of different communities, it would undermine the personal commitment and creativity that fuel it.

Companies that take the lead now will find themselves at a competitive advantage in five years. Incorporating environmental and social issues into the bottom line makes business sense and doing it now will serve shareholders in the long term.

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WTTC encourages its Members and the key players of the industry to show corporate social leadership and integrate this social and environmental focus into its core values and operations to ensure the sustainable long term growth and development of the Travel & Tourism industry.