Social Entrepreneurship in Tourism

The Conscious Travel Approach

Anna Pollock
Founder, Conscious Travel
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This document forms part of a project undertaken by the Tourism Innovation Partnership for Social Entrepreneurship (TIPSE), a network formed to explore and discuss how education and research within higher education can facilitate social entrepreneurship within the tourism and hospitality sectors. The initial founders of this initiative include three universities and two social enterprises.

THIS PUBLICATION WAS MADE POSSIBLE BY GENEROUS SUPPORT FROM UnLtd AND HEFCE

AUTHORSHIP

This document was prepared by Anna Pollock, Founder of Conscious Travel who retains copyright under a Creative Commons licence.

Its purpose is to stimulate and support further discussion by partners to TIPSE and the opinions and recommendations expressed are not necessarily shared by either the TIPSE partners or sponsors.

This publication is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International License
Social Entrepreneurship in Tourism

The Conscious Travel Approach

Anna Pollock
Founder, Conscious Travel


## Contents

1. **INTRODUCTION**  ......................................................... 3  
   Context ................................................................. 3  
   Scope and Structure .................................................. 5  

2. **INTRODUCING CONSCIOUS TRAVEL**  .................................... 6  
   Overview ............................................................... 6  
   Perspectives .......................................................... 7  
   Principles ............................................................. 7  
   Social Entrepreneurship – The Need and Opportunity ................... 8  

3. **CONSCIOUS TRAVEL – PERSPECTIVES**  ................................. 10  
   The end of Business as Usual ......................................... 10  
   Change our view of the world ....................................... 11  
   Learn how systems work .......................................... 13  
   Shift from an Extractive to Regenerative Economy ................. 19  
   Shift from Volume Growth to Flourishing ......................... 23  
   Empower Host communities to control their tourism destiny ....... 29  

4. **CONSCIOUS TRAVEL – PRINCIPLES**  .................................. 32  
   Introduction .......................................................... 32  
   Purpose ............................................................... 32  
   People ................................................................. 38  
   Place ................................................................. 45  
   Power ................................................................. 50  
   Protection ............................................................ 57  
   Proximity ............................................................ 61  

5. **NEXT STEPS**  .......................................................... 64  

Appendix: The Need for and Inevitability of Change ..................... 65  

References ................................................................. 74
CHAPTER 1
Introduction

The Tourism Innovation Partnership for Social Enterprise (TIPSE) connects three communities:

- The social enterprise community – existing social enterprises and the agencies established to provide them with financial, technical and professional support.

- The tourism and hospitality “industry” – private sector businesses, government departments, destination marketing organisations, NGOs and industry associations focused on supporting the visitor economy.

- Higher education agencies (universities and colleges) and related associations (TEFI) responsible for developing knowledge and providing education and training to the tourism and hospitality sector.

Its first project is to prepare a context document designed to:

- support tourism and hospitality educators in preparing their students for a rapidly changing workplace;

- support tourism and hospitality educators in actively promoting social enterprise within tourism and hospitality as a viable career alternative to enterprise employment;

- inform the social enterprise support community of the issues, dynamics and opportunities associated with the tourism and hospitality sector; and

- provide a robust conceptual framework for the on-going examination of social enterprise within a changing industry.

While funded by the United Kingdom Higher Education Funding Council and Unltd, the scope of the project is international and has involved the participation of three universities: Oxford Brookes, Guelph and Florida and a social enterprise, The Tourism Changemakers Forum.

The material is designed to satisfy the distinctly different but complimentary needs and perspectives of three overlapping communities with an interest and or stake in the development of healthy Social Enterprises operating within the economic domain of tourism and hospitality.

Each of these communities is experiencing its own internal flux that is also affecting its relationships with the others. While members of each will approach the topic with a different perspective and need, the unifying principle and focus is to equip tourism and hospitality students with the knowledge, confidence, insights and skills needed to navigate a course towards a very different and unpredictable future.

Social Enterprise is a relatively youthful phenomenon. The terms social entrepreneur and social entrepreneurship were first used in the literature on social change in the 1960s and 1970s but came into widespread use in the following two decades partly in response to increasing signs of social inequity. Key promoters from the outset include Bill Drayton, founder of Ashoka, business thought leaders such as Charles Leadbeater and successful entrepreneurs such as Jeff Skoll, who among others created the Skoll Foundation.

Social entrepreneurs are society’s change agents: creators of innovations that disrupt the status quo and transform our world for the better. They see a problem they want to solve and they go after it in a way that is potentially disruptive. It’s not just seeing a problem and addressing it...
intermittently and on a piecemeal basis. It’s saying “I’m going to crack open this system and solve it.”

With growing public and corporate awareness of such challenges as climate change, resource scarcity, wealth disparity, globalisation, austerity, and political instability, the role of business in general has begun to experience a critical and fundamental re-examination. The core belief associated with capitalism, that its exclusive focus and responsibility is the maximization of shareholder profit, is losing sway, and many conventional businesses are assuming greater responsibility for creating social good. To the extent that including a social agenda becomes more commonplace within the broader business community, the importance of “social entrepreneurship” per se will increase and evolve.

The tourism and hospitality industry is also experiencing major change and flux: the industrial model of production and consumption, borrowed from manufacturing after the last world war, was fueled by low energy costs, cheap credit and rising disposable incomes to grow internationally from a few million to nearly 1.2 billion trips in 2014. Over the next six years it is forecast to grow by another 50%.

The arrival of low cost airlines, Internet connectivity, comparison search engines and rising competition have worked in the customer’s favour – long-distance travel now costs significantly less in real terms today than fifty years ago. But concurrently with cheap travel being viewed as a right, the invisible “externalities” associated with congestion, low margins, resource use, seasonality, environmental degradation, low wages and poor working conditions have also become harder to ignore.

Due in part to its reliance on overseas investment and market expertise combined with a lengthy, complex value chain that connects visitor to hosts, mass tourism hasn’t always contributed as much to the welfare of host communities as it could if more locally owned and controlled models had been followed. Furthermore while promoted on the basis of its job creation potential, the industry unfortunately suffers from a very poor human resource relations record and, according to the ILO, is characterized by low wages, irregular hours, and poor working conditions.

The pressure on tourism companies to be more responsible – both environmentally and socially - is growing rapidly within the tourism and hospitality domain. Members of both the Boomer and Millennial generations – the two primary sources of consumer spending power – are increasingly aware of the impact of their travels on host populations. The number of individual enterprises successfully creating both social and environmental value while profitably attracting and catering to guests is increasing. They operate under a multiplicity of labels – eco, responsible, sustainable, geo, good, and fair tourism – but there is no unifying conceptual framework and approach that unifies and distinguishes them from traditional “industrial” practices. Conscious Travel constitutes an attempt to integrate those positive initiatives into a robust, but simple, model that acknowledges the highly interdependent dynamic and self-organizing nature of what is, in effect, a tourism system.

Finally, the third party – the higher education community – is experiencing an equally bumpy ride into its future. Austerity measures, taken in response to the financial collapse of 2007-8 and public sector indebtedness in many countries, have caused severe budget cuts and universities are being forced to adopt more commercial approaches and solicit direct support from industry. Mass education, which developed alongside mass tourism, industrial healthcare, agriculture and transportation etc., also modeled itself after the manufacturing sector that it was designed to serve. An industrialization process in higher education involving more standardization, specialization, centralized control and greater focus on specific vocational, employment-ready skills has accelerated and intensified over the past sixty years as governments needed to demonstrate that their voters’ children could find employment and business could have access to a pool of educated labour.

Technology is proving to be both a disruptive and enabling force. The combination of multimedia, social media and inexpensive bandwidth is creating opportunities to extend education to broader audiences while at the same time automating many functions associated with face to face interactions and small groups. Otto Scharmer, a senior lecturer at MIT who recently conducted a highly interactive online course involving over 25,000 participants argues that a true 21st century model of higher education is already emerging that’s potentially free; empowering (putting the learner into the driver’s seat of profound personal, professional and societal renewal), and transformative (providing new learning environments that activate the deepest human capacities to create – both individually and collectively).

None of these three parties – the social enterprise, tourism and hospitality, and higher education communities - operates in isolation but is embedded in a global set of inter-linked, interdependent societies and economies adapting to major challenges from four quarters: environmental, technological, social and economic.

To be effective, therefore, entrepreneurs – be they social or otherwise – must learn to operate in what has been described as a volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous world (a VUCA world) and make sense of the key change forces that will impact their best efforts. The skills and knowledge to cope with the complexities and pace of change are light years apart from those required by an industrial machine intent on resource extraction for the purpose of making and selling material goods. Yet the majority of our university courses, text books, organizational structures and beliefs underpinning most policy, business advice and consultancy still draw on principles and assumptions developed in a previous century.

The opening words of the Earth Charter, a document that grew out of the 1992 Rio Earth Summit, frames the work at hand:

“We stand at a critical moment in Earth’s history, a time when humanity must choose its future. As the world becomes increasingly interdependent and fragile, the future at once holds great peril and great promise. To move forward we must recognize that in the midst of a magnificent diversity of cultures and life forms we are one human family and one Earth community with a common destiny.”

The following situation assessment made by an indisputable member of the “establishment,” focuses on the institutional failures that need addressing.

The hierarchical, command-and-control institutions of the industrial age, that over the past four hundred years, have grown to dominate our commercial, political, and social lives are increasingly irrelevant in the face of exploding diversity and complexity of society worldwide.

They are failing, not only in the sense of collapse, but in the more common and pernicious form - organizations increasingly unable to achieve the purpose for which they were created, yet continuing to expand as they devour resources, decimate the earth, and demean humanity.

The very nature of these failures alienates and disheartens the people caught
up in them. Behind their endless promises of a peaceful, constructive societal order, which they never deliver, they are increasingly unable to manage their own affairs, while society, commerce, and the biosphere slide increasingly into disarray. We are experiencing a global epidemic of institutional failure that knows no bounds. We must seriously question the concepts underlying the structures of organization and whether they are suitable to the management of accelerating societal and environmental problems – and, even beyond that, we must seriously consider whether they are the primary cause of those problems. 7

These words were written in the 1990s by a manager within the Bank of America, a man who preferred to be a farmer but who saved his bank from collapse and chaos by stewarding it and other banks towards one of the most innovative and successful inter-company partnerships in that industry. The banker, Dee Hock, masterminded the creation of VISA, applying extraordinary insights gained from his observations of nature to help build a highly stable, global company now managing turnover in excess of $1.2 trillion per quarter.

Dee Hock’s words point to the root cause of the challenges identified by the Earth Charter’s authors.

Climate change, resource and water depletion, wealth disparity, casino financing, weakening democracies, and run-away-technology are not the causes of our very present challenges but symptoms of a much deeper malaise – a fundamentally false and obsolete way of seeing the world.

Unless humanity, social entrepreneurs, educators and tourism practitioners included, change the way we see ourselves and our relationship with our planetary home and each other no effort to address ‘the problem’ will succeed. It is failure to address root cause that is holding us back. Despite that, virtually all our primary institutions be they political, commercial, media, or educational inadvertently or intentionally do everything possible to distract us from that level of “re-framing.”

This challenge has been defined in a tighter, more rigorous language as an epistemological error. 6 In 1972, Gregory Bateson said that ‘we are governed by epistemologies that we know to be wrong’ writing at the same time: ‘the organism that destroys its environment destroys itself.’ All our major systems and institutions are based on a set of assumptions about how the world works that science has, over the time line of mass tourism, proved to be false. Unless our social entrepreneurs and change agents are made aware of that and find a better, clearer set of lenses with which to view and make sense of their world, we might as well be sending them out blind-folded and in chains. Fortunately, in virtually every sector of human endeavour, the scales are falling from the eyes of change agents and thought leaders and a new, more accurate, uplifting, workable way of seeing and being is being communicated in a contemporary language.

Conscious Travel provides another set of lenses with which to view the context and purpose of social enterprise as practiced in the tourism and hospitality sector.

SCOPE AND STRUCTURE

This document constitutes Part 1 of a two-part series and presents the conceptual, intellectual core of the TIPSE project based on the concepts of Conscious Travel – an emerging, alternative approach to mass industrial tourism designed to enable tourism to fit in a spatially constrained world.

Social Entrepreneurs will find themselves operating in an economy and culture transitioning between two very different paradigms – the currently dominant model (the Old Story) which is based on the importance of economic growth and money as the primary sign of success and an emerging model that defines success in richer, qualitative terms associated with development and well-being as experienced by individuals, enterprises, communities and the planet as a whole.

Tourism has already played a significant role in diffusing the Old Story – there is virtually no corner of the planet, regardless of how remote, that doesn’t see tourism as offering an economic opportunity for someone. But having been based on a production and consumption model whose use of resources (land, water, wildlife and cultures) and production of waste (landfill, sewage, greenhouse gases) is now outstripping the biosphere’s capacity to process and recycle safely, it’s time to re-think – how are we going to sustain visitor economies that benefit all stakeholders (not just a few shareholders) and cope with mammoth increases in human demand?

Part 1 introduces Conscious Travel as an emerging framework with which to consider ways in which the tourism and hospitality sector can transform itself by addressing the key challenges with “fresh eyes”. This section – an emerging work in progress - integrates much of the re-thinking taking place outside tourism that has also helped foster the growth of social entrepreneurship. It is designed to stimulate fresh thinking that will shape the curricula, support and marketing material that institutions of Higher Education use to promote social entrepreneurship as a career option and encourage more students to create social enterprises.

Following interactive discussion within the educational community of the issues and challenges outlined, Part 2 will address Opportunities for Social Enterprise in more depth by examining successful case studies. Several pioneering social enterprises will be described; gaps/ opportunities in the market will be highlighted, lessons learned and critical success factors evaluated.

Part 2 will also address the question What do Conscious Hosts Need to Learn? Ideal content for any programs designed to promote social entrepreneurship and support entrepreneurs committed to helping tourism make the transition from old to new will be suggested for further adaptation, development and use by educational faculty.
CHAPTER 2
Introducing Conscious Travel

OVERVIEW

Conscious Travel is based on the belief that, mass international tourism, based on an industrial operating model, is now falling far short of its promise and, as it continues to grow, is at risk of doing more harm than good.

While this model has been successful and has supported amazing growth, it is now producing diminishing returns for providers and host communities; placing excessive pressure on scarce resources of land, water and energy; failing to take sufficient responsibility for managing and minimizing its waste; or preserving the environmental and cultural resources on which it depends. Its application of industrial practices has commoditized unique places into similar products and viewed guests as targets to be exploited.

Because industrial tourism depends on price-led volume growth, it is on a collision course with the rising direct and indirect costs associated with carbon management, food, infrastructure and ecosystem services that will undermine its long-term viability. The concept of sustainability has achieved widespread recognition throughout the tourism community but has not managed to decouple resource use from consumption at a rate sufficient to offset volume growth.

The vast majority of tourism destinations are continuing to pursue strategies based on volume growth without paying similar attention to whether that growth is fairly benefitting all stakeholders affected by it i.e. residents, guests, partners in the supply chain, employees and investors. Rarely are the costs associated with tourism traffic adequately identified and measured.

What’s needed is a more positive, inspiring and compelling appeal to create a better, more stable, higher yielding, form of tourism that delivers tangible and equitable benefit to host communities and causes all stakeholders to flourish.

Change will not be lead by centralized agencies (political, social, media) for as long as they remain entranced by the old materialist growth model and are distanced from the unique people and places that extend hospitality. Change will most likely come from “the bottom up,” from, by definition, unique place-based communities where tourism hosts collaborate in ways suited to those places to develop a form of visitor economy works for all.

Real, pervasive change can only occur one community at a time when individual host providers wake up, to revere and protect the sacred qualities of the place they represent; grow up by taking responsibility for themselves and the whole; and step up and forward by becoming agents of change and regeneration.

The Conscious Travel concept has three elements: a new model or conceptual framework; a community-oriented action learning program that empowers would-be conscious hosts; and, over time, the emergence of a global network of communities that have applied the principles and practices of Conscious Travel to proactively shape the type of tourism they consider appropriate and desirable for their community.

The Conscious Travel Model offers:

A fresh Perspective on tourism’s role and mode of operation that’s suited to the current period of transition and transformation. This perspective is expressed as a set of six observations and assumptions (beliefs) that underpin all other elements. They set the context, rationale for and scope of change.

These observations, beliefs and assumptions help us make sense of our time in history, describe our relationship with each other and all life on Planet Earth; provide a deep sense of purpose to the work we do in the domain called travel, tourism & hospitality; and shape our roles and activities.

Components of the Conscious Travel Model
A set of six **Principles** emerge from the Conscious Travel perspective that destination communities can use as signposts or pointers to the types of behaviour that will deliver a better tourism. Four of these are identified as “top tier” and given most attention in this introduction: People, Purpose, Power and Place.

Recommendations as to **Practices and Pedagogy (Curriculum)** relevant to social entrepreneurs and conscious hosts will be drawn from these pointers in Part 2.

A new set of **Performance** measures consistent with a revitalised purpose namely to generate high net benefit to all stakeholders by operating in harmony with Nature’s laws. The end result will be a visitor economy that is “environmentally sustainable, socially just and spiritually fulfilling.”

**PERSPECTIVES**

The Conscious Travel model – like any model old or new – is based on a set of six observations, operating assumptions and beliefs that will shape the scope, form, structure and function of travel in a post carbon age:

1. “Business as Usual” is neither possible nor desirable and transformation is inevitable

2. Humanity must shift its focus from addressing symptoms to root cause

3. Tourism is not an industrial assembly line but a living, dynamic system and systems-thinking capacity will be essential

4. Tourism can shift from being part of an out-dated, unsustainable Extractive Economy to helping build a life affirming Regenerative Economy.

5. This shift will involve a redefinition of success from a focus on volume growth and profitability for a few to the FLOURISHING of all stakeholders.

6. The Regenerative Economy is “place-based” and will be built from the ground up – community by community.

**PRINCIPLES**

Six principles are proposed as signposts or pointers to the issues that need to be addressed if tourism and hospitality is to adjust to the changing times.

Consistent with the principle of community-self determination, these principles are not prescriptive. They are presented as six inter-related, inter-dependent compass points relevant to travel and hospitality as an aid for deeper reflection, inquiry and collaborative learning. They help hosts develop and retain a holistic perspective and provide information about recent advances in knowledge and thinking that might encourage novel practices to emerge that are right for each community.

A consistent theme highlighted by Conscious Travel is the need for a regenerative model that delivers greater tangible social and environmental value to host communities. The industry is currently dominated by privately-owned, profit maximising companies, 90% or more of which are small-medium sized operations and the balance are multi-national corporations operating mostly in the airline and hotel sector.

Bearing those assumptions in mind, let's look briefly at what each of the compass points to:

**Purpose** – Of the six key Principles and Practices in the Conscious Travel Compass, the Purpose Principle provides the primary point of orientation, pointing due north and pulling the other seven principles together into a coherent whole. Purpose is the glue that holds an organization or community together, the amniotic fluid that nourishes its life force; the juice that helps everyone flow and animates activity. Evidence is accumulating that companies committed to serving a higher purpose actually generate more profit than those who focus exclusively on maximizing profits to shareholders.

The purpose of a Conscious Travel enterprise and destination is to help all stakeholders flourish as individuals, businesses and communities and grow sustainable net positive benefits that enrich the host community and their guests.

**People** – tourism is essentially about human beings having an encounter with other human beings who live in other places. Despite the fact that tourism is really all about relationships and feelings, the industrial emphasis on product, productivity, price and turnover has, in many cases, automated, standardized and thereby de-humanized those encounters and, in many ways, devalued them too. Corporations spend millions measuring and trying to improve “engagement” – a sterile, mechanical word for passion and enthusiasm. Gallup tells us that only 13% of employees worldwide are engaged at work – does that mean then that we are being served by zombies most of the time? No wonder margins are thin and thinning but what amazing potential if even half of those 87% disengaged employees get “turned on”!

Take a moment to read this observation from Raj Sisodia and John Mackey, co-authors of *Conscious Capitalism* and observe the shift in your own energy as you read.
Imagine a business that is born out of a dream about how the world could be and should be. The founders are on fire to create something of relevance, resonance and permanence – a business that will far outlive them, that delivers real value of multiple kinds to everyone it touches. 7

The biggest challenge and opportunity for revitalizing tourism is to “breathe some life back in to it” i.e. “inspire” people starting with the human beings who serve and inspire their guests. But that will take more than words. We will have to create the conditions whereby employees feel valued, respected and cared for and have a deep sense of meaning and purpose. Hardly the track record that the International Labour (ILO) associates with tourism! Nor can the tourism industry ignore many of the fundamental human rights abuses, inequality and non-sustainable practices that exist within its realm. A more balanced story that acknowledges tourism as both a force for good and harm needs to be told if this sector is to enjoy more respect and trust from the rest of the economy.

Place – this is one of the key Ps in the whole Conscious Travel model. But so often the tourism industry treats places as just another product, a piece of background for the all-important transaction and the guest is simply a PAX (passenger) or ADR (average daily rate) on legs. A critically important part of the Conscious Travel model involves awakening hosts’ sensibilities to the uniqueness of the place they depend on, to fully experience wonder and awe and, in particular, to heal and enliven our connection with Nature. Unless hosts are still in love with the place they call home, on fire with genuine enthusiasm, how can they spark the imagination of their guests?

Power – to effect change, and to accelerate the shift to a better way of living on this planet requires agency – the ability to influence, inspire and engage others. In the Conscious Travel context, we’re not talking about power over or the power to exploit but power as in the energy, drive, and infectious enthusiasm that wells up when you know you are living on purpose; when you are serving something bigger than you; when you are in the flow.

Today, people can combine their power at a speed and scale unimaginable just a few years ago. Bottom-up movements and business models are giving agency to people and challenging existing institutions. 8

Another key objective of Conscious Travel is to attract, nurture and empower hosts to become community change agents who protect and regenerate culture and nature at home and inspire guests to do the same. In many cases that involves taking a stand on issues and attracting support. It also means tapping into the wealth of creativity and ingenuity that all communities possess but which they have traditionally been persuaded to devalue. The opening page of the B-team’s report The Future of Work 9 summarizes this call perfectly:

Create thriving communities
Listen to the needs of your employees
And create an environment
That helps them
Thrive

Protection – this Principle encompasses the activities necessary to protect and, where necessary heal and regenerate the nature and culture of a place and ensure that the operations of the business generate zero ground waste and carbon, and use earth’s resources sparingly. Many of the activities associated with this principle (energy, water and waste management) are described as sustainable activities and are left to specific departments and specialists. But now is the time to move way beyond compliance and obligation to a positive, joyful partnership with Nature.

The word “Sustainability” is deliberately used sparingly as a means of stressing that perception and attitude are as important as techniques. Protection is not a peripheral activity to be left to CSR departments but a core expression of business purpose. The model encourages host communities to frame the challenges in terms that are relevant to their situation and to trust in their ability as stewards to take guidance from Nature and tap into the ingenuity and resourcefulness of the community.

Proximity – this is a P word for Local. All travel is local (once the guest has arrived) and needs to benefit the local community in ways that the community wishes and needs. Sadly this is not the norm. Ideally, as many of the resources consumed by tourists should have been grown, harvested and or made in the locality or as close to the point of consumption as possible. Most of the exciting new developments expressive of the merging Regenerative Economy are emerging from community-based activities at the grassroots. Destinations will increasingly pay more attention to their residents’ needs to play and explore their own place and will place more emphasis on attracting people from surrounding regions in order to minimize the carbon footprint associated with long-haul travel.

SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP – NEED AND OPPORTUNITY

The need and opportunity for Social Entrepreneurship within the global tourism and hospitality sectors is systemic, strategic and tactical.

A major systemic challenge stems from its universal and virtually exclusive adoption of a profit maximizing industrial model of production and consumption that has created an economy based on the transport of over 1 billion international visitors and 6-8 billion domestic tourists using overnight accommodation. The sector accounts for 9% of global GDP, 1/11 jobs and 29% of services exports globally. Tourism has played a major role in globalisation, the creation of employment and opportunities to earn foreign exchange in developing countries. But like the capitalist system on which it is based and that has supported unprecedented levels of growth and global expansion, the sector is now revealing some significant flaws and market failures:

1. The net impact of tourism spending in the host communities is low and likely insufficient to cover all the costs associated with current levels of visitation. UNEP estimates that in “all inclusive” resorts, for example, only about 5 cents of every tourist dollar trickles into the local economy. This is largely because most development and capital investment has been made by enterprises located in the source markets. Widespread diffusion of niche tourism products (activities, experiences, locally owned accommodation, restaurants and transport providers) that are structured as either social enterprises or cooperatives could improve and increase the positive net impact of tourism to host communities.

2. The industry is highly labour intensive and supplies accessible jobs to people who might otherwise have difficulty finding employment but also suffers from a very poor human resource relations record due to the prevalence of low wages, irregular hours, seasonal operations and poor working conditions. Much of this traffic in labour is controlled by profit seeking agencies, operating as intermediaries, who have little interest in developing a positive HR image as they can benefit from the high rates of turnover, the mobility of the workforce, seasonality of employment and, in many cases, workers desperate to take work under any condition.
3. The travel and tourism sector, like many others, hasn’t always been required to pay for the externalities associated with its operations and this has lead to significant over use and pollution that can also create opportunities for a variety of social enterprises – waste food management, recycling operations, water cleaning and renewable energy projects are of significant potential.

4. The non-mass market of travellers wishing to enjoy authentic experiences, interact more closely with locals and make a positive contribution (via philanthropy, voluntertourism, micro-credit and crowd funding) is increasing and provides additional opportunities for social enterprise – local tours, artisan products, experiences etc.

5. In many destinations the resilience and future viability of tourism will actually depend on it developing social ownership structures that ensure local control and enhanced local benefits from the visitor economy. The sector is plagued with low margins and limited barriers to entry and the perishable nature of the product it sells combine to accentuate and accelerate the process of commodification. As input costs of food, water, energy are expected to climb social enterprises and cooperatives could provide resilient and viable ways of sustaining local economies.

Despite these trends, few if any destinations have applied a focused systematic approach to the use of social entrepreneurial structures, including both social enterprise and cooperatives and other community owned initiatives (land trusts, micro credit operations) as a means of improving the livelihoods of people in host communities.

To realise these opportunities, an ecosystem of support is needed that can and should be delivered via host communities. A combination of global vision realized through place-based tactical execution is required. Hence the Conscious Travel model which is designed to stimulate a fundamental re-think of the way tourism is conceived and delivered.

This document looks at the subject from an conceptual, systems perspective as a means of enabling patterns of opportunity to be identified and interest in the opportunity stimulated. By understanding the “big picture” dynamics and strategic change drivers, existing tourism practitioners and students of hospitality and tourism will be a stronger position to both identify and evaluate the social enterprise potential.

Bill Drayton, founder of Ashoka, is quoted as saying:

*Social Entrepreneurs are not content just to give a fish, or teach how to fish. They will not rest until they have revolutionised the fishing industry*.

Conscious Travel is not content just to help a few social enterprises come into existence but to inspire an entire generation to revolutionize the way travellers benefit the places they visit, transform the perceptions of their guests and contribute the building of a Regenerative Economy. But in keeping with our approach, that will require a change of perception and heart before a change of mind. Hence this conceptual-philosophical start.
CHAPTER 3

Conscious Travel Perspectives

Whether stated clearly or not, very operating model, organization and initiative is based on a set of assumptions and beliefs about how the world works, what values matter, what’s happening out there, what needs fixing and what might be done differently.

Since Conscious Travel has emerged as a concept out of a fundamental concern as to the future viability and utility of the industrial model, we consider it important to state with clarity the six key premises or perspectives that underpin our approach to creating a better tourism economy that works for all.

1. “Business as Usual” is neither possible nor desirable and transformation is inevitable

2. Humanity must shift its focus from addressing symptoms to root cause

3. Tourism is not an industrial assembly line but a living, dynamic system and eco-literacy essential

4. Tourism can shift from being part of an out-dated, unsustainable Extractive Economy to helping build a life affirming Regenerative Economy.

5. This shift will involve a redefinition of success from a focus on volume growth and profitability for a few to the FLOURISHING of all stakeholders.

6. The Regenerative Economy is “place-based” and will be built from the ground up – community by community.

1. The end of Business as Usual

The current industrial model of production and consumption is delivering diminishing returns such that more “business as usual” will result in growth that is uneconomic and unsustainable. This trend is inevitable (no living system avoids change) and is part of a larger evolutionary process as humanity adjusts to living in harmony with nature’s laws. In general terms:

➢ Unabated growth in the production and consumption of goods and services is now deemed unsustainable. 10

➢ Current levels of human economic activity are already exceeding safe planetary boundaries and ecological overshoot. 11 12

➢ Current measures of economic activity (GDP and GNP) do not adequately account for environmental and social costs such that much growth is now deemed uneconomic – potentially damaging and biophysically unsustainable. 13

➢ The sheer number and scope of change forces within the environmental, social, economic and geopolitical domains combined with their interdependence is creating a situation described as highly volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous – a “VUCA” world that necessitates unprecedented levels of agility, creativity adaptability and resilience that is calling forth new mindsets, models and ways of seeing and being. 14

➢ At the same time, contemporary education systems are under increasing pressure from business and industry to focus attention on knowledge and skills relevant to their current commercial requirements (still based on an industrial model increasingly seen as obsolete) at the expense of humanities and a general education that encourages critical thinking and creativity.

➢ A growing chorus of voices across society is recently suggesting that dealing with the issues in a piecemeal way, “tinkering at the edges” or simply choosing between the left- or right-oriented political systems is inadequate. The system itself needs changing and that requires a fundamentally different frame of mind.

The international tourism industry, which has traditionally benefitted materially from adopting the industrial production and consumption model, is beginning to experience the internal flaws of a system that is showing signs of decline. Specifically:

➢ Diminishing returns per transaction unit presently necessitate volume growth. Global average increases in trip volume are forecast at annual rates of 3-4% internationally. Despite various attempts at “sustainability” this rate of growth is not matched by a commensurate de-coupling of resource use and waste generation. Virtually every tourism destination continues to prepare strategies based on volume growth and the industry as a whole has done little to prepare a thorough assessment of costs associated with such growth such that the net impact of the economic activity is impossible to assess with accuracy.

➢ for as long as developing countries continue to “develop” and a middle class expands, tourism is assured of growing demand. 15
We are facing a Tourism Tsunami. At a 4% annualised compound growth rate, tourism volumes will double within seventeen years. But the availability of places that tourists deem as attractive is more or less fixed and subject to carrying capacity limits. Signs of tourism fatigue, congestion and degradation can be expected to increase. The fragmented nature of the industry has meant that the private sector has avoided internalising “external” costs but society at large may insist they be internalised as the negative effects of this avoidance become more apparent and expensive.

International tourism has relied heavily on a combination of foreign investment in facilities (notably hotels, resorts, major entertainment centres); use of intermediaries (wholesaler-retailers) based in source markets and public sector investment in infrastructure (transportation terminals, roads, ports and investment incentives). As a consequence, relatively limited portions of visitor spending stays in a destination. Sadly, data regarding the net benefit of various types of tourism is scarce, fragmented and not necessarily accurate. UNEP suggests that less than 20 cents of every dollar spent on all-inclusive package tours feeds directly into a local host economy and could be as low as 5 cents in some cases. 16

As a significant globalizing force, tourism has often disrespected local wishes, minimized negative impacts, ignored and disempowered local community decision-making. Despite, its “labour intensity” the sector has a very poor reputation for labour relations and provision of sustainable livelihoods but does generate many opportunities for unskilled and marginalised workers to obtain employment.

Discussion of triple and even quadruple “bottom lines” has increased over the past decade; the tourism industry has experienced countless green initiatives and produced multiple certification programs and awarded responsible tourism operators with various kinds of recognition. Various Corporate Social/Sustainability/Responsible programs are pitched on the basis of “cost savings” and or compliance and sustainability is approached as a “bolt on” designed to sustain or green the existing model. At the same time, educators complain that neither industry nor the student population approach sustainability with much positive enthusiasm.

Because there is insufficient hard evidence to show that projections of volume growth (ie trips and tourists) can be de-coupled from resource use and waste generation, our focus must shift to becoming better or improved in some way by, for example, delivering higher net positive impacts to host communities and engaging them more directly and intimately in determining the future of this sector. What tourism needs now is growth that is:

- **jobless growth**, where the economy grows but produces few jobs or ones that are poorly paid and erode the dignity and health of the worker;
- **ruthless growth**, where the proceeds only benefit speculators, and the rich or powerful;
- **voiceless growth**, where economic growth is not accompanied by extensions of democracy or empowerment and where residents are deprived as say in who and how many guests they welcome; and
- **futureless growth**, where the present generation squanders resources needed by future generations.

Once a systems view is applied to history, major shifts in both paradigms and economic models can be seen as inevitable. Life ubiquitously follows a continuous pattern of re-generation and adaptation. Life evolves. And that is what is happening now. We are living on a planet experiencing one of the biggest and fastest evolutionary shifts in human development in our brief history.

The industrial model that has underpinned tourism growth over the past one hundred years has generated some remarkable achievements which enable us to enter this evolutionary phase. Rather than start our thinking by focussing on the flaws of that model, attention is paid initially to sharing a vision of what might replace it. An article included in Appendix A provides an overview of the industrial model and the role we can all play in helping co-create a new and better one.

### 2. Changing Worldviews

As most introductory courses on Tourism and Hospitality cover the content material associated with key issues and change drivers (Environmental, Economic/Financial and Business-related; Societal-Geopolitical; Scientific and Technological), they will not be covered in depth in this document.

But it is important to identify the fact that, no matter how comprehensive the content available to describe these pressures, we’re in danger of two major errors in our approach to them:

i. **Our focus on symptom-like issues** (such as carbon reduction, fair trade, working conditions, gender equity, indigenous rights, wildlife protection etc.) has fragmented dissent with the status quo and drawn attention away from root causes and the systemic, existential nature of the challenge.

Even bigger issues such as climate change, resource scarcity, wealth disparity, geopolitical unrest, pollution are not causes but symptoms of a much deeper malaise that cannot be tackled until we have acknowledged that our way of seeing the world and framing the issues is fundamentally false and obsolete.

Ironically, social enterprise is seen and promoted as a way of solving a problem or “fixing” a market failure because, after 400 years of practice, we have become fixers by nature. Since Copernicus and Galileo, and with the encouragement of Bacon and Descartes, we’ve been reducing problems to bite-sized chunks that can be repaired or replaced based on our notion of life as working like a machine. Just listen to our language – we’ve made nature an “It,” a problem “out there” to be solved, a posture, by the way, considered nonsensical to indigenous people. 17

We respond in this way because we understand much more about
managing the outer world of things that we can observe, measure and analyse with our physical senses than an inner world of subjective perceptions and ideas. Not only that but, if we are lucky, we can identify a cause or entity to blame and attack as that solves our need to “do something” and, thereby, lessen our discomfort. We are rather like the wise fool Nasruddin in the Sufi tale.

A neighbour found Nasruddin on his knees in the street looking for something under the street lamp. “What have you lost he asked?” “My key,” said Nasruddin. The other man got down on his knees and started searching with him. After a few minutes, he asks, “Where did you drop them?” “In the house,” replied Nasruddin. “Then, for Heavens sake, why look here?” “Because there’s more light here,” replied Nasruddin.

The solution to most of our contemporary problems is within us “at home.” But rather than look inside the dim and uncharted territory within, we look for answers where there is more light in the more manageable world “out there”.

ii. Our unwillingness to change the way we make sense of our world and challenge the assumptions on which our systems and institutions are based is the true cause of our predicament.

We have ignored Einstein’s famous injunction “you cannot solve a problem with the same consciousness that created it” making it impossible to address the many converging crises and so called “wicked problems” identified by the World Economic Forum, major consultancies and many institutions and individuals. Attempts at fixing one set of problems tend to generate unforeseen consequences in unexpected places.

We have already made that mistake with the topic of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) that is closely linked to Social Enterprise. The majority of corporations treats CSR as a necessary “bolt on” to corporate policy and promotes it as a means to reduce costs, improve reputation or ensure legal compliance. Similarly, many university departments have “bolted on” specialist classes – often electives such as The Business Case for Sustainability, Carbon Reduction Practices, Certification Criteria and Eco-labeling, often failing to teach eco-literacy and systems thinking.

While these efforts are helpful and should not stop – they buy us time - it should also be recognized that they simply make an unsustainable position slightly less unsustainable and detract or delay from the essential re-thinking, re-designing task required.

It is vital that we get to root cause and approach these challenges in a manner that our own science shows us to be in greater harmony with the way the world really works.

“It’s all a question of story. We are in trouble just now because we are in-between stories. The Old Story - the account of how the world came to be and how we fit into it - sustained us for a long time. It shaped our emotional attitudes, provided us with life purpose, energized action, consecrated suffering, integrated knowledge, and guided education. We awoke in the morning and knew where we were. We could answer the questions of our children. But now it is no longer functioning properly, and we have not yet learned the New Story.” — Thomas Berry

In the western world, the “old story” that Thomas Berry refers to emerged during the Renaissance period in Europe, enabled the growth of science, the Industrial Revolution, post war globalisation and growth of unprecedented levels of production and consumption – in short, a globalized Extractive Economy. We will use the descriptor Modernist (Industrial) worldview as a useful descriptor.

From the beginning of the Industrial Age and for a period of over 400 years we have applied a machine metaphor to our understanding of how the universe works. We have been trained to think as machines think. We have been persuaded that the only way to understand reality is through reliance on our physical senses and mind-based powers of deductive reasoning. We have ignored and trivialised instinctual and inner, intuitive ways of knowing and acted in deference to the credentials of external authorities – experts, specialists, authority figures, and external standards.

Western culture generally lives in a conceptual world of either/or logic and simplistic cause and effect thinking. We isolate, bifurcate, and package complex issues – humans and nature, science and religion, things and spirit – into those that can be analyzed by reduction and others into categories not easily quantified or impossible to measure. We separate understanding into realms of mind and heart, realism and idealism, logic and intuition, quantity and quality.

We have succumbed to an illusion of separation and isolation from that which we observe – be it other life forms or matter and been encouraged to believe that, in addition to being separate, we are superior and have a right to exploit others to satisfy our own self interest.

“Your paradigm is so intrinsic to your mental process that you are hardly aware of its existence, until you try to communicate with someone with a different paradigm.”

Our sense of separation combined with a science that described the universe as having a tendency to run down (entropy) has fuelled a need to be in control and compete with each other for scarce resources, while focussing on ever more complex ways of achieving efficiencies. We assume nature is a resource to be used and that the whole must give way to the survival of the parts.

We have created a global extractive economy with an insatiable appetite for more that is working against not with nature’s built in tendency to self-organize, regenerate and evolve. Fortunately, more people are becoming aware of the shortcomings in our dominant worldview and are questioning the fundamental values, beliefs and assumptions underpinning the global economy.

Over the past sixty years, a Post-Modern (Ecological) worldview has emerged fuelled by revelations of modern science and recognition that many of the assumptions underpinning its predecessor simply don’t help us make sense of our world anymore. While the Ecological worldview has yet to penetrate the corridors of power (in politics and commerce) and the media they control, this is the mindset that is shaping thinking around a so-called Generative or Regenerative Economy discussed in more detail in Perspective #4. According to the Institute of Cultural Evolution between 20-30% of Americans operate from this paradigm compared to 50% who hold Modernist views. A survey undertaken first in the 1970s and updated in 2008 suggests that the “Cultural Creatives” – a demographic also holding many of the beliefs associated with Post Modernism has grown from 20% to 33% in recent years. This latter group are considered synonymous with those practicing Lifestyles of Health and Sustainability (LOHAS) and form the source market of more conscious, mindful travellers seeking experiences and preferring environmentally and socially responsible travel suppliers.

Insights from our studies of ecology, quantum physics, cosmology, cellular biology, neuroscience to name just a few disciplines have, since the turn of the Century, pulled the rug from under the floor of the Modernist paradigm. We do not live on top of a dead planet of inert matter but are an intrinsic part of a living system in a constant state of flux, adaptation and evolution.
Western science is very rapidly changing toward an understanding of nature as alive, self-organizing, intelligent, conscious or sentient and participatory at all levels. In this newer framework, biologic evolution is holistic, intelligent and purposeful. Elizabeth Sahtouris

The paradigm shift from a dead to a living universe transforms the human story. We move from a secular journey in a fragmented and lifeless cosmos without apparent meaning or purpose, and into a sacred journey through a unified and living universe whose purpose is to support the emergence of self-organizing beings and communities at every scale. Duane Elgin 1999

The emerging Post-Modern worldview recognizes that the Earth has 3.8 billion years’ experience operating a self-sustaining, regenerative system that has allowed for magnificent levels of qualitative growth and evolution and, if we, as animals, wish to thrive, we need to learn to think the way nature thinks. We need to enter a right relationship with nature of which we are a part and on which we depend for our existence.

Fortunately, this emerging paradigm co-exists with and is significantly influenced by a vitally important third paradigm that has outlived all others and, historically, has proven most endurable of all, and that is the Indigenous worldview. Some indigenous people speak of the “original instructions.” Chief Oren Lyons of the Onondaga Nation, summarizes its rules in Listening to Natural Law in the anthology Original Instructions.

“Our instructions, and I am talking about all human beings, are to get along … with nature’s laws, and support them and work with them. We were told that if you do that, life is endless. It just continues on in great cycles of regeneration… If you want to tinker with that regeneration, if you want to interrupt it, that’s your choice, but the results that come back can be very severe because the laws are absolute.”

The challenge describing the Post Modern (Ecological) worldview stems from its relative youth and immaturity – we are still very much in transition from one story to another and experimenting as we go along. As individuals, it is highly likely that we embrace values and ideas associated with more than one paradigm as we develop our own personal understanding. Despite these reservations, and at the risk of over simplification, summarizing the key characteristics of this emerging paradigm is necessary if we are to attempt to understand how society in general and tourism in particular might change as a result of wider adoption of a new perspective that includes the following beliefs and assumptions:

- As living beings, subject to the same organizing principles Nature has evolved for all life, humans are neither separate from nature nor superior.
- All life is intrinsically, inherently intelligent, connected, and interdependent
- All life has value in itself, independent of its usefulness to humans. All species have inherent, intrinsic value and have a purpose within the biosphere or they wouldn’t be here.
- We are not just “skin encapsulated egos” walking on the surface of the earth but an expression of it and dependent on the community of life, air, water and soil in every conceivable way.
- Our purpose is to support Life in its natural built-in process of qualitative growth, adaptation and evolution towards higher levels of order, complexity and beauty.

If life is a whole process of continuous evolution toward richer, more diverse, and mutually beneficial relationships, it seems logical that we should be working on sustainable design at that level.

- In the human, social realm, the Post Modern perspective, often also described as Pluralistic, insists all perspectives deserve equal respect and seeks fairness, equality, harmony, community and cooperation. Hence the focus on and achievement of a range of human rights – women’s liberation, end of slavery, gay rights, separation of church and state.
- Collaboration is preferred over competition. Command and control methods of management/leadership are replaced with servant leadership – leaders acknowledge they cannot control a system but can create the conditions for it to evolve in a certain direction.
- Growth is re-defined – not as quantitatively more but qualitatively better and as growth which enhances life – as generation and regeneration.
- Since nature’s favoured organizing principle involves radically decentralised, localised decision making and self organization, locally run, bottom up solutions, in which power is distributed and ownership shared more widely, will increase as the Post Modern worldview is more widely adopted. This trend will help preserve the unique character and diversity of places.

For a host of reasons, this emerging worldview is extremely threatening and challenging to those who might continue to prosper where the old story dominates. The change process will be slower than some might wish but change is inevitable forced by growing environmental dilemmas and pulled by a populace yearning for more quality, fairness, stability, meaning and purpose in their lives.

3. Learn how systems work

The great challenge of our time is to build and nurture sustainable communities – communities that are designed in such a way that their ways of life, businesses, economics, physical structures and technologies do not interfere with nature’s inherent ability to sustain life. The first step in this endeavour is to understand the principles of organization that ecosystems have developed to sustain the web of life. This understanding is what we call ecological literacy – Fritjof Capra

The fact that we see social and environmental decay as disconnected events or fail to see them at all is evidence of a considerable failure that we have yet to acknowledge as an educational failure. It is a failure to educate people to think broadly, to perceive systems and patterns, and to live as whole persons. David Orr, Earth in Mind 1995

Mass industrial tourism developed as a result of applying the Modernist worldview that saw the universe operating like a machine and the Earth as a vast lumberyard.

Members of the tourism “industry” have laboured long and hard for this industrial sector to be recognized as a key economic “engine” and have deployed mainstream management methods such as vertical integration, re-engineering, standardization and automation, to improve its own outputs, efficiencies, returns and impact.

On the supply side, elements of the tourist’s experience have been delivered by various tourism providers segregated into discrete sub sectors (transport, accommodation, entertainment etc.) that are linked
in highly complex but linear value chains. Organizationally, tourism is structured into hierarchies with both budgets and programs (incentives, subsidies, taxation, regulations and other policies) designed for power and control to be concentrated at national levels and cascade down to regional and community-based agencies and organization.

But as has been discussed in the previous two perspectives, continuing business as usual is recognized as being unsustainable at best and suicidal at worst. Not only have many called for a change of consciousness, but there are signs that such a change is already underway. As the Modernist paradigm is replaced by a more effective ecological perspective, participants in the tourism economy will be required to replace the metaphor of assembly lines with that of living ‘systems’ and become eco-literate.

As discussed in the previous perspective, during the last two decades of the 20th Century, huge strides have also been made in a number of disciplines; ecology, quantum physics, complexity science, quantum mechanics, and general systems theory that totally undermined the applicability of a machine metaphor to our understanding of life.

In an excellent and rare paper published in the Annals of Tourism Research in 2004, titled Reconceptualizing Tourism, authors Bryan Farrell and Louise Twinning Ward called then for the adoption of more holistic systems approach to the study of tourism.

Based on research findings in these fields it can now be said with a degree of confidence that all natural and social systems are interdependent, nonlinear, complex adaptive systems. They are complex because each has its own identity, emerging from the interactions of important connections, variables and processes. They are adaptive because they have the capacity to evolve, learn and work toward adjusting to their surroundings. 26

Farrell and Hall also anticipated resistance and suggested that the central impediment to applying a holistic, ecological perspective would be that:

Tourism researchers schooled in a tradition of linear, specialised, predictable, deterministic, cause-and-effect science are working in an area of study that is largely non-linear, integrative, generally unpredictable, qualitative, and characterized by causes giving rise to multiple outcomes, quite out of proportion to initial output. 29

Concurrently with the progress made in the earth sciences, computer science was developing its understanding of networks that showed remarkable overlaps with ecology, a fact that caught the attention of business. As far back as 1990, Michael Rothschild wrote in Bionomics, ‘The Inevitability of Capitalism’ 30

“A capitalist economy can best be comprehended as a living ecosystem. Key phenomena are also central to business life. Information is the essence of both systems. In the biologic environment, genetic information, recorded in the DNA molecule, is the basis of all life. In the economic environment, technological information, captured in books, blueprints, scientific journals, databases and the know-how of millions of individuals, is the ultimate source of all economic life.” 31

A few years later in a national bestseller titled The Death of Competition, a new term was unleashed – the “business ecosystem” by James Moore:

“The new paradigm requires thinking in terms of whole systems – that is, seeing your business as part of a wider ecosystem and environment. Our traditional notions of vertical and horizontal integration fail us in the new world of cooperating communities. In place of industry I suggest a more appropriate term: business ecosystem. The term circumscribes the microeconomics of intense coevolution coalescing around innovative ideas… The dominant new ecosystems will likely consist of networks of organizations stretching across different industries.” 32

Given that these words were written in 1995, a mere two years after the Internet had launched in the business community and long before Bill Gates acknowledged its commercial possibilities, Moore was remarkably prescient. Moore paved the way for another advocate of the ecosystem model. In 2000, Tapscott, Ticoll and Lowry introduced the term “Business web” that inspired the notion of a Digitally Enabled Tourism Ecosystem as discussed in the paper, Shifting Sands, The Tourism Ecosystem in Transformation (Pollock, 2002).

Despite the fact that thinking in terms of complex systems is at the forefront of science, it has taken over two decades for mainstream business leaders to acknowledge that a systems approach will be necessary to deal with the ‘messy’ and ‘wicked’ problems facing humanity. In 2011, the World Economic Forum (WEF), which in years previous listed global risks separately, wrote of systemic risk:

Systemic breakdowns are breakdowns that occur in an entire system, as opposed to breakdowns in individual parts and components. Systemic risks are characterised by:

• Modest tipping points combining indirectly to produce large failures
• Risk sharing or contagion, as one loss triggers the chain of others
• Hysteresis or systems being unable to recover after a shock. 33

Expect the Unexpected, published by KPMG in 2012 in preparation for the Rio + 20 talks provided a thorough examination of how the word had changed since 1992; identified ten megaforges affecting corporate and government institutions; and assessed the risk and opportunities associated with them. Their report began with a conventional listing of ten forces but also acknowledged the inadequacies of applying a reductionist, linear approach.

The world is too uncertain and too complex to rely on linear forecasting; therefore, business leaders and policy makers should prepare for the unexpected. This means learning to look at the world in a new way that takes account of globally interconnected megaforges, the causal relationships between megaforges, feedback loops, effective intervention points and complex scenarios. 34

Fritjof Capra, who has done more than most to explain systems thinking in a language accessible to the business community, concluded that the delay can be attributed to two main reasons – our addiction to linear thinking and our materialist culture.

In linear thinking, when something works more of the same will always be better. For instance a “healthy” economy will show strong, indefinite economic growth. But successful living systems are highly nonlinear. They don’t maximize their variables; they optimize them. When something is good, more of the same will not necessarily be better, because things go in cycles, not along straight lines. The point is not to be efficient, but to be sustainable. Quality, not quantity counts.

We also find systems thinking difficult because we live in a culture that is materialist in both its values and its fundamental worldview. Most biologists will tell you that the essence of life is in the macromolecules – the DNA, proteins, enzymes etc. Systems theory recognize that the essence of life does not lie there It lies in the patterns and processes through which those molecules interact. You can’t take a photograph of the web of life because it is nonmaterial – it is a network of relationships. 35

So tourism leaders may be excused for being slow to think this way give the complexity of the tourism subsystem - the sheer number of
its diverse parts and their interdependencies make applying a systems lens challenging and difficult. Institutions (especially academia) are not structured for the levels of interdisciplinarity necessary to think and work this way; industry has not been shown the necessity and benefits; and policy makers with budget have not yet allocated resources needed to develop systems thinking capacities. Furthermore, systems learning is best done collaboratively by doing (i.e., by experimentation in some cases) and neither collaboration or experimentation are yet that popular.

Resistance to change of this depth and magnitude is understandable – most tourism practitioners are busy enough trying to make ends meet financially to have time to think about their thinking. But change is no longer an option or a luxury. Unless we learn to think like nature thinks, unless we come to appreciate how Life works, humanity’s survival prospects are diminishing fast. To put it bluntly, our life as a species depends on our figuring out what life is and how it works!

Our best teacher is Nature herself. Getting out and spending time in the natural world, walking in a forest, planting a garden and growing some vegetable or flowers are perfectly good places to start and can complement the more demanding mental work associated with shifting ingrained habits of thought. Furthermore, a worldview shift cannot be undertaken in the head using rational thought alone. It involves engaging our senses, feelings, and intuition so takes time and engagement.

A core assumption of Conscious Travel is that tourism will flourish only to the extent that its human participants learn to live in harmony with the natural world. The good news is that nature is remarkably efficient preferring to replicate relatively simple rules at multiple levels and scales. The rules governing a simple cell apply to any form of human community – a school, a political party, a village, or tourism destination. All are living systems and exhibit common characteristics. Once you can explain what life is in plain language, you’ve grasped the essentials of systems thinking and can start to apply this knowledge to make your community flourish.

So we have to start with an elementary biology lesson and ask two fundamental questions: what is life? How can we apply what we know about how life works to ensure we as a species work too?

What is Life?

Look at the list of living things and non-living things in the following table.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>List of Living Things</th>
<th>List of Non-living Things</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>fly</td>
<td>radio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tree</td>
<td>automobile</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mule</td>
<td>robot</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>baby</td>
<td>crystal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mushroom</td>
<td>The moon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>amoeba</td>
<td>computer</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Now ask the question: what, beyond their biodiversity, is the common denominator in the list on the left column that is absent in any of the items in the non-living list to its right?

The answer is self-maintenance via a mechanism of self-regeneration from within. Life is a system that makes itself from within.

What is a Living System?

Living systems are all around us. Every living organism from the smallest bacterium to a vast Amazonian ecosystem is a system. The parts of living systems are themselves living systems. A leaf is a living system, a muscle is a living system, communities of organisms including ecosystems and social systems such as families, schools, businesses, nations are living systems.

Donella Meadows, a supreme master of systems thinking, defines a system as “a set of things – ecosystems, people, cells, molecules, ideas – interconnected in such a way that they produce their own pattern of behaviour.”

A system is a set - or pattern – of relationships and consists of three kinds of things:

- elements (things)
- interconnections (relationships, processes and the rules governing the processes)
- purpose (function)

As illustrated, a system also has a boundary and a context or larger environment in which it sits. In addition it has emergent properties – qualities that cannot be predicted by looking at the parts alone.

The elements are not always material (i.e. things understood through our physical senses) and can be ideas, concepts, and beliefs. As a consequence, we can have all kinds of systems – political, economic, technological, ecological, educational, biological, belief etc.

The most basic system and building block of life is a cell. It comprises:

- **Elements**: cytoplasm made up of proteins, nucleic acids, enzymes, mitochondria, DNA
- **Interconnections and flows**: energy, chemicals, H2O
- **Function/Purpose**: self-maintenance ie to be a cell
- **Boundary**: cell membrane
- **Emergent Property**: It’s alive!

A cell has the following characteristics that apply to life at all levels of complexity

1. **It maintains its own individuality**: a yeast cell remains a yeast cell; a liver cell remains a liver cell even though its elements and their relationships may change. Similarly, a body retains its individuality over time despite the facts that its component cells – of all types – are constantly reproducing, growing and dying.

2. **Life is not localised with any one element**: “life is a global property, arising from the collective interactions of the molecules in the cell.” Note this property is true of any life form. Where is the life of an elephant? The life is the organised interaction of its organs that work as a network.
3. Life then is **an emergent property** – not present in the parts and only originating when the parts come together to form a greater whole.

4. **The cell doesn't need any information from outside to be itself** – all information for a fly to be a fly is contained within the fly – but it is strictly dependent on outside materials (nutrients and energy) to survive.

5. **The cell membrane is permeable** to enable the cell to be in constant communication with the larger system of which it is part.

6. **It self-regulates** (a function called autopoiesis) – Various metabolic reactions within the body of the cell control the taking in of nutrients and energy and the elimination of waste as a means of ensuring its own individual vitality while contributing to that of the whole.

Take a moment to think about yourself and notice how you display the same characteristics as a humble cell. While the following brief but effective description barely scratches the surface as to the almost miraculous intricacies in the way the human body as a system operates, it clearly shows a pattern that repeats itself at multiple scales – from individual human (animal) to community, ecosystem, society.

The human body comprises tens of billions of human cells and ten times that number of non-human cells (microbes, bacteria, yeast cells), each a decision-making entity with the ability to manage and maintain its own health and integrity under changing and often stressful circumstances. At the same time each cell faithfully discharges its responsibility to serve the needs of the entire body on which its health and integrity depend.

Working together, these cells create and maintain a self-organizing human organism with the potential to achieve extraordinary feats of physical grace and intellectual acuity far beyond the capability of any individual cell on its own.

Each decision-making, resource-sharing cell is integral to a larger whole of which no part or system can exist on its own. Together, they create regulatory mechanisms internal to the whole that work to assure that no part asserts dominance over the others or monopolizes the body's stores of energy, nutrients, and water for its exclusive use. Resources are shared based on need.

All the while, the body's cells self-organize to fight off a vast array of viruses, cancer cells and harmful bacteria, adapt to changing temperatures, energy needs and variations in the body's food and water intake; heal damaged tissues, and collect and provide sensory data to our conscious mind essential to our conscious choice making.

What distinguishes the behaviour of a life form and an inanimate object?

The best way to understand how living things behave differently from inanimate objects is by way of an example - kick a stone and it will react according to a linear chain of cause and effect applying the laws of Newtonian physics. Kick a dog and it will respond according to its nature and non-linear patterns of organization. Its response is unpredictable because a machine or inanimate object can be controlled but a living system can only be disturbed.

In the case of the dog, the kick is a stimulus or disturbance and the dog chooses a response – it might howl, whine, whimper, growl, bite or ignore the stimulus completely etc. On this basis, the statement made by biologist Lynne Margulis “Life is matter that chooses” makes sense. In summary, these are the four defining characteristics of life:

- **Life is a system that regenerates itself from within**
- **Life is an emergent property**
- **Life is matter that chooses**
- **A living system can only be disturbed, never controlled**

Why on earth is this information relevant to tourism practitioners?

If you have understood what makes life life you have begun to understand how systems work. Once you start to understand systems you will see the world differently – you will think in terms of relationships, connectedness and context and you will have a tough time communicating with those who are stuck in the linear, cause and effect mode of thinking interested in defining and measuring separate things. Systemic thinking involves at least seven shifts in perception, essential to make sense of the world we currently occupy as shown in the table opposite.

Before we examine how to affect or change systems, we need to understand a few more systems basics.

**Networks and Interdependencies**

No part of a system exists or acts in isolation but is always in relationship to something else on which, in many cases, it depends. Species in any ecosystem are interdependent in a variety of ways: they may eat each other; use one another’s waste as food; provide shelter or housing for another; carry away waste; or store energy etc. All animal life forms, for example, are utterly dependent on the plant community for producing sufficient oxygen through photosynthesis. It is because of this myriad of relationships (internally between its sub-systems and externally between the system and its environment) that every system is unique.

Because members of a community derive their essential properties and their very existence from their relationships, sustainability is not an individual property but a property of an entire network.

The arrival of the Internet and its eventual adoption by virtually all enterprises – large and small – within the tourism economy provided ample proof that tourism is really a network – and potentially an intelligent one at that. The internet, subsequent breakthroughs in systems interoperability (the capacity of systems developed independently by different parties to talk, exchange information and support transactions) plus the emergence of Lego-like web services, now called apps, have allowed information and value to flow more freely between peers without a central intermediary and have changed roles and relationships significantly.

**Nested Systems**

Nature is made up of systems that are nested within systems. Each individual system is an integrated whole and, at the same time,
The human body has an ideal internal temperature of 39.3°C. Should the external temperature rise, the body will perspire as a means of cooling itself or shiver if the temperature falls significantly alerting the mind to take corrective action – put on more clothing or turn up the heating.

As a consequence, every living system can learn and adapt. In fact, the most basic definition of life itself is that which self organizes and self-regenerates.

Diversity, network relationships, feedback loops, cyclical flows all imply and support cooperation and partnership. In the twentieth century, ecologists have demonstrated that cooperation in Nature is a more important factor in self regulation than competition. We constantly observe partnerships, linkages, associations, species, living inside one another depending on one another for survival. Partnership is essential for life. Self- is a collective enterprise. Fritjof Capra.

Cycles and Flows

Members of an ecological community (i.e., a system) depend on the exchange of resources in continual cycles. Cycles within an ecosystem intersect with larger regional and global cycles such the hydrological cycle. Each organism needs a continual flow of energy and information to stay alive. The constant flow of energy from the sun to Earth sustains life. The flow of visitors and their spending sustain tourism systems. Plants convert the sun’s energy through photosynthesis and store it as vegetation which is eaten by animals that may or may not be eaten by others. Recycling is built in to nature’s processes – in fact, you can define an ecosystem as a community where there is no waste.

Self Organization – the power of feedback loops

The primary pattern of life is a network that’s non linear – in other words, relationships and connections go in every direction. Information, chemicals, and energy flow through the networks and, because their paths go in every direction and connect up, information can flow in a circular path and return to its origin. These information and influence cycles act as feedback loops that enable the system to regulate itself. A feedback is a loop where information is fed back into a system to direct its behaviour. Positive or reinforcing feedback loops amplify behaviour. Negative or stabilizing feedback loops moderate. For example, the human body has an ideal internal temperature of 39.3°C. Should the

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Shift</th>
<th>Implication</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>From parts to the whole</td>
<td>Living systems are integrated wholes whose properties cannot be reduced to their smaller parts. Their systemic properties emerge from the interaction of the parts in often unpredictable ways</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>From objects to relationships</td>
<td>We are a communion of subjects, not a collection of objects constantly in dialogue with one another and adjusting to each other</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>From objective knowledge to contextual knowledge</td>
<td>Nothing can be understood out of context</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>From quantity to quality</td>
<td>Traditionally we have focused our attention on what can be sense and measured. Intangibles have been assigned less importance. Yet now we understand that relationships – especially patterns that emerge from the interactions of elements -- often cannot be sensed at all let alone measured but we ignore them at our peril.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>From structure to process</td>
<td>Systems constantly fluctuate, develop and evolve but not in a linear, gradual fashion. Small changes can have big effects.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>From contents to patterns</td>
<td>When we draw maps of relationships we discover configurations that repeat and it is those patterns that help us understand how a system works.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A living system cannot be controlled only disturbed.</td>
<td>Changing system involves changing its purpose, structure and context.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

forms part of a larger system. Changes within a system can affect the sustainability of the systems that are nested within it as well as the larger system in which it exists. This fact is especially pertinent to a destination’s visitor economy because it is nested within multiple economic systems of the source countries from which visitors originate. Flows of visitors between an origin and destination are affected as much by the flows of currency (exchange rates) and relative vitality of the economies in each as by marketing campaigns. Disturbances to any element in a system can cascade throughout the entire system in unpredictable and disproportionate ways.

Flexibility and Balance

Systems are never static and are always in a state of communication with the system in which it is embedded or in response to inner changes. Its feedback loops, acting to amplify or a dampen a tendency, enable a system to make whatever adjustments are needed to come back into balance. Everything in an ecosystem fluctuates – population densities, supplies of nutrients, rainfall etc. -- and it is this adaptability that contributes to the resilience of a system.

Diversity

A diverse ecosystem will be more resilient to shocks from outside because it contains many species with overlapping functions that can partially replace one another. In human communities, ethnic and cultural diversity means that problems will be experienced and faced differently. In tourism, local solutions to generic problems are essential as conditions vary significantly from one place to another and what is acceptable to one group in one place may not work for another embedded in another culture and subject to different environmental factors.
Subjectivity and Systems

Particularly in the case of human systems, there is also an element of subjectivity when considering systems – essentially, systems exist in the eye of the beholder because it is the observer who decides what to include or not include in our definition of a system (i.e. we set its boundaries) when we look at one. Even more importantly what we think or decide is the purpose of the system affects what we look for, what we see and judge as functional or dysfunctional, working or not working.

For example,

- **What is the boundary of a business enterprise?** An airline might define its purpose as the safe transport of people and cargo between airports and not need to consider the impact of its passengers or cargo on the destination.

- **What is the purpose of business?** The traditional view has been to maximize the return to shareholders. By applying this understanding of purpose, CEOs have not been required to count the costs associated with using ecosystem services or causing congestion and harm to third parties (i.e., non-customers). The economic system did not include these as costs to the enterprise and labelled them “externalities.”

- **What is the purpose of an education system?** If the answer is to serve the economy, it will be structured and operate very differently than if its primary purpose is to enable individuals to flourish in a changing world.

A key outcome of adopting a systems view is that it becomes necessary to examine all your beliefs and assumptions about what you are investigating or that underpin any changes to a system you wish to introduce. Everything is related!

Peter Senge who has been a leader introducing systems thinking to the business environment draws our attention to three dimensions of this way of thinking:

- **Systems thinking is … a framework for seeing interrelationships rather than things, for seeing patterns of change rather than static “snapshots”. It is a set of *general principles* distilled all over the course of the twentieth century. It is also a set of **specific tools and techniques**… And systems thinking is a **sensibility** – for the subtle interconnectedness that gives living systems their unique character.**

How Do You Change a System?

When problems occur, our immediate reaction is to want to act to fix them. If the problem were an inanimate thing, we could take it apart, identify the malfunction, replace or repair a part and reassemble in working order. Sadly living systems don’t work that way. Dissect a living frog and it ceases to be a living frog.

Even though human systems, such as an economy can be dissected and disassembled conceptually/mentally, our lack of understanding of all the complex inter-relationships and dependencies can, despite the best of intentions produce undesirable and unanticipated outcomes. Nevertheless, we all hope we can identify leverage points to affect change even though in complex adaptive systems they are often counter intuitive.

In response to these challenges, Donella Meadows wrote a useful paper *Leverage Points: Places to Intervene in a System* (1997) that prioritizes interventions in reverse order of their effectiveness. The current tendency is to tinker at the edges – cut carbon emissions, discount prices, add taxes, impose regulations, add incentives etc. but, because we don’t fully understand the system and its relationship with other systems, such interventions rarely work even though they may help us feel more in control at the time we make them.

Fiddling with details is like arranging deck chairs on the Titanic. Probably ninety-five percent of our attention goes on the numbers, but there’s not a lot of power in them. Not that parameters aren’t important, they can be but they rarely change behaviour.

So how do you change a system as vast and complex as tourism? How do we best shift tourism from contributing to an extractive industry, driven by a thirst for growth yet also caught up in a system that produces diminishing returns to all stakeholders over time and fails to share wealth equitably? The steps Donella Meadows described in her paper have been simplified in the diagram below and placed in order of effectiveness.

We start by understanding the worldview or paradigm that has shaped the current purpose or function of the social-economic system that has spread throughout the globe over the past quarter century.

**HEIRARCHY OF SYSTEM LEVERS**

```
PARADIGM

PURPOSE, FUNCTION

STRUCTURE

RULES

RELATIONSHIPS

INSTITUTIONS

BEHAVIOUR
```

You could say paradigms are harder to change than anything about a system and therefore this item should be the lowest on the list not the highest. But there’s nothing physical or expensive or slow about paradigm change. In a single individual it can all happen in a millisecond. All it takes is a click in the mind, a new way of seeing. But of course, individuals and societies do resist challenges to their paradigm harder than they resist any other kind of change. (Meadows 1997)

As discussed in the previous section, the fundamental values and beliefs of the Modernist paradigm suggest that life is a struggle in which survival requires competition for scarce resources that can be used in ways to make and sell things others need for their survival. Success is
defined and measured in material, financial terms. The economy has transcended religion in the sense that creating wealth has become society’s dominant preoccupation – “It’s the Economy Stupid.” The current economic system depends on continual growth, as measured by GDP, and tourism is considered to be one of many economic engines that can contribute to that growth. As will be investigated in more detail in the next Perspective, there is growing realization that Capitalism – the dominant economic operating model - has several intrinsic flaws that must be addressed and tourism’s role and contribution will inevitably be included in that investigation.

After Paradigm, the Goal, Purpose or Function of a system is the most powerful lever – change a system’s purpose and all else will change: the elements (who can participate); the relationships between those elements; the rules governing how they are conducted (the flows of energy, materials and information connect them); and the institutions established to ensure those rules both are followed and work in support of the end-goal.

Conscious Travel’s Perspectives # 4 and # 5 relate to ways in which the Purpose of the broader economy and tourism both need to change and are likely to change over the next few decades as the flaws in the current situation become more apparent.

After Purpose, and only in that sequence of effectiveness, comes Structure – the “social architectures” that are the blueprints of human relations, how we organize ourselves to do things, who makes the economic decisions and how?

A system’s Structure – the rules of the game - determines how people operate. A commercial bank whose sole purpose is to make a return for its shareholders will act very differently than a community bank whose purpose is to support its members through good times and bad. A publicly owned multinational company that includes bottled water in a much larger line of food and beverage-related product will act very differently during a drought than a bottling plant located in the community and owned by its members.

In Perspective # 4, which follows, we examine the strategic implications of shifting an economic system from its current purpose of extracting and creating maximum financial wealth to affirming life and generating real “wellth” or well being for the many. In Perspective # 5, we suggest that the concept of “flourishing” based on new understanding from positive psychology and ecology combined can be applied as a more comprehensive indication of purpose and a more thorough and nuanced progress indicator. Perspective # 6 identifies the emerging structures and various forms of ownership emerging within the new economy more suited to supported generative activities and outcomes.

Our industrial-age civilization has been powered by twin processes of extraction: extracting fossil fuels from the earth and extracting financial wealth from the economy. But these two processes are not parallel, for finance is the master force. Biophysical damage may often be the effect of a system’s action, yet extracting financial wealth is the aim. 42

While the Modernist worldview, and the capitalist economic system it spawned, both underpinned and enabled a huge industrial production and consumption machine to create vast wealth, its decline is now both inevitable and desirable for four reasons:

• The conditions that ensured its past success are fast disappearing; 43
• The model contains within it certain characteristics and flaws that worsen with time (Kotler et alia); 44
• It is ultimately life denying since it doesn’t replenish the resources it extracts and fails to generate the conditions where all life can thrive;
• The larger economy, of which tourism is a subset and on which it depends, is having to change and will drag tourism along with it.

The current Extractive Economy is based on a number of beliefs and assumptions that form part of the Modernist Worldview as applied in a Capitalist financial/ economic system:

• Humans are superior to other life forms on the planet and have the right to use earth’s resources to create wealth.
• Business is the best organizational form for creating wealth
• Private ownership of resources is essential to the operation of a free market economy
• Companies have a fiduciary responsibility to maximize returns to their shareholders
• A free market best determines how capital and resources (input) are allocated to create wealth (from goods and services)
• Money is the sole measure of success that matters and is equivalent to wealth and power.
• The purpose of capital is to manufacture further financial wealth
• The combined results of business activity (transactions) in a community is best measured by the Gross Domestic Product (GDP)
• Increasing GDP is a sign of increased wealth, which due to a “trickle down effect” leads to higher living standards for all engaged in the economy
• The more the economy grows, the more all citizens benefit. Growth is therefore good and should be promoted and pursued forever

In a relatively empty world these assumptions worked relatively well. The economy literally had room to move. If problems (so called externalities) proved a problem or resources ran out, it was possible to move on and find another place to start again. But with 7.2 billion people on the planet and virtually every square mile having been “developed” in some way, that option is becoming very difficult to exercise. The consensus among disciplined thinkers is clear - “the dominant economic model is unsustainable.” 45

Nevertheless, few in the mainstream dare question the accepted paradigm, the story that money buys happiness, that optimizing shareholder value is ordained truth and is our fiduciary duty, that fair and transparent markets will magically guide our decisions to optimal outcomes, that there are limitless physical properties of growth, that there are unlimited possibilities for substitution of inputs through innovation, and that undifferentiated economic growth is the answer to our problems and the source of our prosperity.

The challenge is no longer to try to fix the problem by breaking it down into its parts and tackling each separately.

4. Shift from an Extractive to a Regenerative Economy

Without working from the Modernist worldview described in Perspective # 2, tourism could not have developed into the huge economic engine it is today with the potential to change the lives of billions for the better. That engine is best described as an Extractive Economy in that it was based on the extraction of resources (human labour and materials from the biosphere) combined with various forms of capital to make and sell goods and services.
The challenge now is to completely re-design the system — one that sustains life and enables Life to do what it was designed to do i.e., to flourish, develop and evolve.

You don’t start with the corporation and ask how to redesign it.

You start with life, with human life and the life of the planet and ask.

How do we generate the conditions for life’s flourishing?

And that whole system change is going to be very hard.

But what if we had a teacher with 3.8 billion years experience? Would that help? The answer is obviously yes. If humanity has gone astray, it is because we thought we were superior to other life forms and knew best. We’ve been trying to control, outsmart and modify nature for hundreds of years. Fortunately, Nature might be neglected or battered but she is still there and humans are now realizing how much we have to learn.

Regenerative Capitalism rests on this core vision:

From the Greek “ge,” generative uses the same root found in the term for Earth, Gaia, and in the words genesis and genetics. It connotes life. Generative means the carrying on of life and generative design is the institutional framework for doing so. The generative economy is one whose fundamental architecture tends to create beneficial rather than harmful outcomes. It’s a living economy that has a built-in tendency to be socially fair and ecologically sustainable. 47

David Korten, a highly productive, long serving champion of a new economy provides a good summary of its purpose that provides infinite possibilities for positive expression:

The only valid purpose of an economy is to serve life. To align the human economy with this purpose, we must learn to live as nature lives, organise as nature organizes, and learn as nature learns guided by a reality-based, life-centred, intellectually sound economics. 48

Marjorie Kelly, in Owning Our Future, Journeys to a Generative Economy defines a Generative Economy as having a Living Purpose — by creating the conditions that sustain life over the long term. Kelly develops this notion further by asking the question — what place (location or company) makes you want to visit and causes you to feel alive when you do? Kelly quotes the eminent architect, Christopher Alexander, who asked what made some buildings seem to be more alive than others:

There is a central quality that is the root criterion of life and spirit in a man, a town, a building or wilderness. This quality is objective and precise, but cannot be named. The search which we make for this quality, in our own lives, is the central search of any person, and the cruc of any individual person’s story. It is the search for those moments and situations when we are most alive. 49

This quality of aliveness has the capacity to attract and enrich those who come in contact with it whether it is associated with a person, company or place. While Alexander called it a “quality without a name,” his own reflections suggest a strong correlation with authenticity, integrity, genuineness.

A system has this quality when it is at one with itself; it lacks it when it is divided. It has it when it is true to its own inner forces; lacks it when it is untrue to its own inner forces. We know this quality when we encounter it in a person, for when a person is true to himself, you feel at once that he is “more real” than other people are. When our world has this quality, people can be alive and self-creating. When the world lacks this quality, he says, people, cannot be alive, but will be self destroying, and miserable. 50

The Emerging Regenerative Economy

While admittedly, it’s very early days, the signs of an emerging economy are definitely there for those with eyes to see and come in several forms:

• Open discourse on flaws within the current system. Now there have been plenty of individual criticisms of the system throughout its lifetime but establishment figures, who had much to lose, tended to keep their concerns close to their chest. Ten years ago, it would have been unthinkable for any of the big five consulting firms to state in high profile reports that the current system isn’t workable and needs a complete re-think. But they have:

This report shows the world on a development trajectory that is not sustainable. If we fail to alter our patterns of production and consumption, things will go badly wrong. KPMG 2012 51

The conclusion is obvious: we need a new paradigm underpinning new mindsets and tools to survive and thrive in the twenty-first century. We need to move from a fundamentally unsustainable path to a fundamentally more sustainable one. Towards Zero Impact Growth – strategies of leading companies in 10 industries, Deloitte, 2012 52

This is why prosperity in human societies can’t be properly understood by looking just at monetary measures, such as income or wealth. Prosperity in a society is the accumulation of solutions to human problems. MCKINSEY 53

• In April 2015, three major reports appeared within a week of one another. First, Philip Kotler, best known as the best seller marketer for business as usual, published Confronting Capitalism; Addressing Its 14 Flaws 54, then the Next System Project, backed by over 350 high profile businesses introduced their analysis indicating that the challenges facing the USA are systemic in New Political Possibilities for the 21st Century 55, and finally The Capital Institute also published their report Regenerative Capitalism- how universal principles and patterns will shape our new economy. 56

• An extraordinary amount of experimentation is happening in communities around the world involving thousands of new, local, community-based initiatives such as the Transition Towns movement, the Institute for Self Reliance, the Business Alliance for Local Living Economies (BALLE) as well as thousands of cooperatives, worker-owned companies, neighbourhood associations and corporations, social enterprises and not for profit businesses. The thinkers and the concepts behind this diverse flourishing of new ideas is well documented in the Next System project report.

• Emergence of new terms being used by alternative activist groups and constituencies shows that traditional dominant thinking is weakening e.g., the sharing economy, the restorative economy, Capitalism 3.0, the caring economy, Conscious Capitalism, the collaborative economy, the gift economy, the steady-state economy and, the best catch all of all – the New Economy.

John Fullerton, former investment banker and founder of the Capital Institute, which has just released its report: Regenerative Capitalism:
How Universal Principles and Patterns Will Shape Our New Economy, has suggested that while conventional economic thinking assumes economic vigour is a function of the rate of GDP growth, a Regenerative Economy assumes:

Economic vigour is a product of human and societal vitality, rooted in ecological health and the inclusive development of human capabilities and potential. ….

and leads to the following characteristics:

• Acts in ways that support the long-term health of the whole society;
• Sees economic and financial health as inseparable from human, societal and environmental health
• Values richness, diversity, integrity and fairness; seeks excellence through constructive competition
• Responds to the full gamut of human needs, continuously adapting to changing circumstances and evolving to higher and more effective levels of organization.

Regenerative economics lifts the debate way beyond that between neo-liberal economics preferred by conservatives on the political right and the Keynesian (or socialist) economics generally preferred by liberals on the left of the political spectrum. Fullerton agrees with Kelly and Korten in that the difference lies in purpose; the old economy is about economic growth; the emerging new economy is about ensuring the economy contributes to the health and vitality of life on earth.

Fullerton has set out eight key principles of regenerative vitality that are summarized below. 57 He notes that while each Principle is described separately they should always be considered together in their entirety, as the whole constitutes an overarching pattern.

Whether or not the new economy ends up being called Regenerative or assumes another name, it is highly likely to encompass some of the principles that Fullerton and colleagues have set forth as eight Principles. Since tourism is a highly derivative economy and sub set of the general economy, it will need to fit with the changing values, beliefs and assumptions of a new economy at some point. Conscious Travel is in part an attempt to anticipate the implications of being embedded in a very different economic system to the one that prevails today.

The Eight Principles of Regenerative Capitalism

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Principle</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In Right Relationship with Nature</td>
<td>The economy is embedded in and dependent on the biosphere and must obey nature's laws</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Views wealth holistically</td>
<td>Multiple kinds of capital must be taken into account (natural, social, intellectual in addition to financial) and real wealth prioritised over financial (phantom) wealth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Local&quot; Empowered Participation</td>
<td>Individual participants need to be empowered to negotiate for their own needs so that they can contribute to the whole</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robust circulatory flow</td>
<td>Money, information, resources, goods and services should flow freely within the economic system to optimise access to opportunities and support innovation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Honours Community and Place</td>
<td>The global economic system is strong overall only to the extent that the uniqueness of its parts are celebrated and strengthened</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edge Effect Abundance</td>
<td>Creativity and abundance flourish where different systems interface</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seeks Balance &amp; Evolution</td>
<td>Regenerative capitalism allows the system and the sub-systems nested within it to self-regulate – growth is redefined as development and maturation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Innovative, Adaptive, Responsive</td>
<td>If previous seven principles are adhered to, the system can adaptive to its environment and evolve to higher forms of order, beauty and complexity</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In Right Relationship

The first Principle refers to the fact that humanity is an integral part of the web of life (the biosphere) and has a responsibility to live according to its laws. Damage to any part of that web ripples back to harm every other part as well. With rights – e.g., the right to life – come responsibilities: to protect and affirm the lives of other people and species.

The goal of any system is to balance the self-assertive tendencies of the individual elements with integrating tendencies that enable the larger wholes of which they are a part to function. In nature, species and individuals earn a right to a share in the bounty of the whole as necessary to their sustenance through their contribution to the well-being of the whole. Over the long term, those that contribute prosper, and those that do not contribute expire. The interests of the whole are protected against rogue behaviour by natural limits on the ability of any individual or species to monopolize resources beyond its own need to the exclusion of the needs of others.

Aldo Leopold, naturalist and author the Sand County Almanac, summarized how to decide what fostered a right relationship with nature.

A thing is right when it tends to preserve the integrity, stability and beauty of the whole (biotic community, commonwealth of life) and it is wrong when it tends otherwise.

While the terms Regenerative Capitalism, Generative or Regenerative Economy are new to the mainstream business community and not yet mainstream, its principles are based on the assumptions identified with the Post Modern worldview described on page 13 and are held, to varying degrees, by those who classify as Cultural Creatives – potentially some 30% of the population in the western world.

Views Wealth Holistically

Fullerton observes: “True wealth is not merely money in the bank – multiple kinds of wealth or capital (social, cultural, living and experiential) must be taken into account.”

The relevance to tourism should be clear. Growing tourism for its own sake i.e. attracting more tourists, generating more investment, jobs and tax revenues is of no value unless it is contributing to the vitality and
health of the community in which it is embedded. The “trickle down” rationale has proven weak or non-existent when all social community costs are properly counted.

As the core purpose of conscious travel is to maximize the net-positive aspects of tourism to all stakeholders sometimes “more” might be appropriate if there is spare, underutilised bed capacity that is not operating effectively; in others, less volume might produce more benefit to more people, even if of an intangible kind.

Authors of Regenerative Capitalism do not “operationalize” how a holistic approach to wealth assessment can be obtained. Numerous attempts are being made around the world at developing progress indicators that could replace GDP and better track well-being and happiness. Conscious Travel agrees with the positive psychologists and some deep ecologists that the construct of “flourishing” could provide the ideal way of both viewing, evaluating and tracking “wealth” at an individual, enterprise and community level and as an alternative to purely economic indicators that maintain a utilitarian perspective to people and places. The need to replace volume growth with a more complex and nuanced measure as Flourishing is discussed in the Perspective # 5 next.

Empowered Participation
Fullerton defines “empowered participation” as suggesting that individual elements in a system need to be empowered to negotiate for their own needs while enabling them to contribute to the health of the whole. In short, everyone matters and the whole is only as strong as its weakest link.

The old economy favours the large and is upheld by governments that prefer hierarchies and are attracted to work with and for the strong. Consequently, in many cases, it has systematically disempowered individuals and reduced their agency by allocating funds to projects that require external experts and specialists who consult with local parties affected on a superficial level.

Investment in a regenerative economy will loosen its tie with property ownership and capital of all kinds (financial, social, cultural) will be created and shared by larger numbers – as discussed in Perspective # 6, destinations will actively encourage a diversity of business structures such as worker-directed enterprises, social enterprises, cooperatives and not-for-profits to provide the means whereby the financial benefits seep into the entire community more effectively.

Conscious Travel is based on a belief that all communities that welcome and host visitors have a right to determine the pace, scale and scope of tourism that works for them. Furthermore, with the right information and a modicum of advice and support, communities have the intelligence and social capital necessary to make such decisions. As the old economy measures success by return on investors’ financial investment and the growth in tax revenues that might ensue, the interests of a partial but not complete set of stakeholders are generally favoured. We believe that if destinations are serious about tourism generating higher net benefit, they will spend more developing the planning, marketing and development capacity of inhabitants and less on campaigns conceived, designed and executed by non-resident agencies.

Robust Circulatory Flow
Fullerton describes the seventh Principle: “As human health depends on the robust circulation of oxygen and nutrients so too does economic health depend on robust circulatory flows of money, information, resources, goods and services.” To this list we would add power and agency – the capacity to bring about change.

These flows, regardless of kind, act as important feedback loops that keep a system in balance.

Again, this is tourism’s primary role i.e., to connect and enable meaningful encounters (exchanges of information, experience, opinions, aspirations, money, and memories) between people.

Highly centralised, multi national enterprises may claim that they contribute to a circulatory flow between the haves and have not nations, north and south etc. but their very structure, forms of ownership and modes of operation restrict this contribution – materials are often sourced in bulk from outside a destination, workers imported because no business will bear the cost of training locals, and profits are returned to the source of the investment.

Regenerative economies actively support and promote forms of ownership (co-operatives, social enterprises, worker owned businesses and not-for-profits) designed to maximise the circulation of benefits back into the community: Many communities are also experimenting with alternative currencies, crowd-financing, innovative micro-credit schemes in order to increase the flow of financial capital (see discussion in Perspective # 6).

Honours Community and Place – Builds Community Wealth
The fifth principle of Regenerative Capitalism is also core to the Conscious Travel Perspective for reasons outlined in Perspective # 6 and discussed in detail in the chapter called PLACE. John Fullerton’s rationale applies one hundred percent to destination communities:

No two places or things in our world are ever exactly the same. This diversity creates the richness that is essential to system vitality. It fills niches, provides choices, adds opportunities, discovers new ways, and increases excellence through constructive competition. Furthermore, just as each ecosystem comes to embody unique adaptations to a particular place, so each community embodies a mosaic of traditions, beliefs and potentialities, each uniquely shaped by the long-term pressures of geography, history, culture, environment and changing human needs.

While authentic uniqueness of place is of huge value, it is also fragile. Population growth, rising affluence and globalisation are all forces that are undermining the unique “soul” or “sense of place” that makes a place special. Hence our call for Hosts to become more than residents – to become rooted inhabitants with a deep knowing of and appreciation for the nature and working of the elements that contribute to its uniqueness.

As important as the need to develop the distinctiveness of places is the need to localize production and consumption by building up “short chain” and “known chain” economic initiatives such as local food initiatives, farmers’ markets, local clean energy production and develop local cultural services and products.

Edge Effect Abundance
Ecologists have each determined that creativity and abundance flourish at the edge of systems where the bonds holding the dominant patterns in place are weakest, for example, on a shoreline where rivers meet the ocean. Cell biologists and geneticists recognize that the intelligence of a cell exists at its membrane where the cell converses with its environment and not in the nucleus in the cell’s centre.

In human terms, tourism literally “lives the edge”. We bring individuals to the edge of their comfort zones as we transport them away from the security of the familiar (home) to experience novelty and surprise of the unknown. Good tourism is transformative tourism when it helps a guest shift perspective and return home “with a fresh pair of eyes”
Seek Balance
A Regenerative Economy seeks to balance efficiency and resilience; collaboration and competition; diversity and alignment – small and big, local and outsider.

Innovative, Adaptive and Responsive
If the previous seven principles are pursued, an economy and its enterprises increase their capacity to innovate, adapt and respond to changing external conditions. What Darwin actually meant by “survival of the fittest” were those that best fit a new environment would be the survivors. Tourism will need to fit into a Regenerative Economy and that will mean living within its means and contributing to the whole.

Fullerton observes:

*Overly centralised State bureaucracies and over-sized corporate hierarchies – filled with narrowly prescribed specialists in an overly emphasized pursuit of efficiency and control that stymies individual creativity are inherently degenerative and should be replaced by more innovative, agile networks of interconnected business webs.*

In many respects, “a network of interconnected business webs” is a better term to describe most visitor economies than industry (see discussion in Perspective # 3 above). But often multi-national, national and state run bureaucracies that control policy, budgets, regulation and enforcement can impede effective adaptation through overly generic, inflexible, top down command and control methods.

5. Shift from Volume Growth to Flourishing

Tourism services are currently delivered by two very different types of businesses: medium to large-sized private and public corporations with the tendency or potential to operate from multiple locations within a country and across borders; and small, medium-sized businesses (SMEs) mostly privately owned, often run by families and cooperatives and rooted in a specific place.

The larger corporations – often required by national laws regarding the structure and obligations of corporations – operate according to the prevailing view of business purpose, namely to maximize profit to shareholders. The financial and economic models of production and consumption they apply necessitate volume growth via expansion (more outlets) or mergers and acquisitions. These organizations wield enormous political influence both nationally and internationally and their decision-makers rarely reside in the destinations in which they operate.

While both types operate within a dominant paradigm that “wealth is measured by money,” “wealth equates to power and influence,” and “more is better than less,” the capacity and desire to grow varies significantly between the two types of business.

The second group are small to micro, independently owned and “place-based” businesses rooted in a specific geographical location and most cannot move. They make up between 95%-99% of businesses in any given destination. The table below provides a simplified and generalised summary of the differences between these two fundamentally different business types within both tourism and the economy as a whole.

Unlike most publicly owned multi-national companies, small medium-sized independently owned enterprises are not under pressure from the market, the analyst and shareholder to produce reliable dividends and increasing share value every quarter, every year. Most are simply trying to make a decent living and built some equity for their retirement or to pass on to their children. All start-ups and the vast majority of social enterprises will fall into this category.

What matters most for small to medium-sized business is staying trim enough to be agile and robust enough to stay alive in lean times. While companies that are not publicly traded still focus on providing services in profitable ways, the local mum-and-pop restaurant isn’t trying to squeeze ever more tables into the room, ever more seats at every table or ever more meals into every day. They understand there are natural limits.

Despite the fact that the vast majority of enterprises in a destination fall into the SME category, the organizations that have assumed responsibility for tourism development (be they member-based Destination Marketing Organizations or government bodies) cater to the needs of the larger enterprises that wield the most power and influence. They are also and necessarily sensitive to the fact that, where public funds and politicians are concerned, generating results in the form of more jobs, income, investment and tax revenues is deemed essential for political success and longevity.

While there is evidence that some destinations are defining success less in terms of growth in visitor volume and more in visitor spending, the vast majority of destinations continue to pursue a growth strategy –

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristics of Publicly-owned Multinationals and Small Privately-Owned Enterprises</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Large Multi-National Companies</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dominant Driver</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Defining activity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Costs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ownership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial capital</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purpose of investment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Role of profit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government role</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trade</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political orientation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
projecting or aiming for average annual growth rates in visitor arrivals of generally no less than 3% per year (depending on economic conditions). This unwavering commitment to growth is evident in a statement from the head of the UNWTO in a recent interview:

"The core of our mandate as a UN-specialized agency is to promote sustainable tourism, but you can't promote sustainability if you don't promote tourism, so that's why we said competition and growth on one hand and sustainability on the other. We stand for a belief that the growth of this industry on one hand and the preservation, protection, responsibility and sustainability on the other hand are not a zero-sum game. We believe that we can continue to grow, we have to embrace growth and never be afraid of it. We have to equip our members, particularly governments and destinations, with whatever would enable them to grow in a healthy way but to do that in a sustainable way." 19

The same organization defines sustainable tourism as "Tourism that takes full account of its current and future economic, social and environmental impacts, addressing the needs of visitors, the industry, the environment and host communities." 20

Unfortunately, as there is no systematic, global effort to comprehensively list, name, let alone measure the economic, social and environmental costs associated with tourism; nor is there any evidence to show that overall tourism growth has yet been de-coupled from growth in pollution, congestion, emissions, wealth disparity, resource use and waste production, an agenda based exclusively on volume growth can never be described as sustainable.

A growth strategy might be responsible when applied to individual businesses (with the capital and mandate to expand) and where tourism is at an early stage of its development along a sigmoid curve (see Discussion on Butler's Tourism Area Life Cycle Model in the Appendix) provided that, in both cases, it is growth of a net positive impact (i.e., the costs have been fully mitigated). Otherwise on a finite planet, volume growth forever by an industry which uses and fails to replace scarce capital stock (land, water and atmosphere) to provide its inputs and absorb its waste outputs is as impossible a goal to reach as it is pure folly to attempt to do so.

The following quote by highly respected economist, Kenneth Boulding is rapidly being understood and embraced by many thought leaders across all sectors of the economy and some politicians. Unless our tourism leaders can re-think their position on this one, they will increasingly appear completely out of synch with their peers and unprepared to make the kinds of adjustments that will be asked of all of us.

"Anyone who believes that exponential growth can go on forever in a finite world is either a madman or an economist." Kenneth E. Boulding

Furthermore, in many cases when destination hosts pursue growth for its own sake – encouraged to expand in times of plenty but unable to shrink in times of down-turn - it is the existing and mostly small businesses in the destination that suffer. Growth – as in the expansion of facilities such as investments in accommodation, resorts and transportation infrastructure – immediately benefits the developers, generates short-term jobs for a construction sector and, provided that excessive subsidies have not been used by governments to attract investment, may produce some incremental tax revenues. But unless or until the growth projections are consistently realized and the costs associated with servicing the tourist traffic are fully paid for, the net results for existing local businesses is often more competition and reduced profitability.

A shift from quantity to quality doesn't mean a shrinking of the economy – on the contrary it can and should mean greater net benefit to all participants. The problem with our current system is that it only produces money and places no value on time spent simply enjoying life, relationships, community, resilience, beauty, joy, a healthy biosphere, vibrant expressions of unique culture.

The industrial model values and measures economic outputs in quantitative terms: numbers of jobs not quality of work; corporate profit but excludes many externalities; volumes of visitors but not their enjoyment; productivity (GDP per worker); profitability (average daily rate); and efficiency (occupancy) etc.

Tourism Needs a Goal That Transcends Growth and Greening

As indicated by the statement of UNWTO’s leader, there remains an assumption within tourism leadership that tourism can continue to grow in size and spending provided that it does so in a sustainable, presumably “green” way.

But despite all the monies spent on sustainability practices, the awards given to sustainable companies and initiatives, the certification criteria, codes and declarations, tourism’s growth – past, present and future – is outstripping nature’s capacity to cope with the waste it produces and resources it uses. What’s even more worrying is that a leading proponents of Responsible Tourism, Dr Harold Goodwin, has dismissed the possibility of humanity ever shifting off what he describes as its anthropocentric position such that the best thing we can do is make Business as Usual a little less “unsustainable” and little more responsible, somehow. 61

Nevertheless, sustainable practices are to be encouraged as they slow down our hurling towards the cliff’s edge and buy us time. But they are futile unless, at the same time, we’re aspiring and conspiring to turn our vehicle called tourism around and head to a brighter, better future. Conscious Travel is about mapping a route to a completely different destination and yanking the steering wheel called “progress” around to head in a more fulfilling direction.

To pragmatists, this may at first seem “pie in the sky” and foolhardy. But fortunately the number of leading thinkers outside tourism now recognizing the need to reimagine, redesign and regenerate a failing system is growing rapidly and gaining huge momentum.

The Conscious Travel Model faces the contentious issue of growth head on and argues that, despite all the growth pressures, we must somehow shift our focus from quantity to quality and our purpose from growing bigger to becoming better. Less may well mean much more in terms of enterprise viability, guest satisfaction, and community well being and welfare.

Major developments in two relatively new but very different yet complementary disciplines are pointing to the potential of FLOURISHING as a replacement for GROWTH and they are positive psychology, and ecology. By linking these two approaches, they enable us to apply flourishing to all levels: personal (and therefore to all stakeholders in an economy), enterprise, community, and ecosystems with their nested ecosystems.
Positive Psychology

Prior to the 1990s, virtually all the research into human states of being were focused either on pathology (mental illness) or behaviour and conditioning (the nurture versus nature debate). While there are now thousands of psychologists, executive coaches and ordinary men and women practicing various aspects of positive psychology, two of the key founders and catalysts in this movement are Dr Martin Seligman and Chris Peterson. 62

Seligman had initially made a comprehensive study of Happiness but decided that in and of itself it was not a reliable indicator as it reflected more of an emotional mood than state of being. He decided that the construct “flourishing” was more useful. As a construct, like “weather,” it has several elements that can be more tightly defined and measured but it also assumes a quality greater than its individual parts. Today’s weather, for example, reflects the combination of temperature, humidity, wind speed, sunshine and barometric pressure each of which can be measured and each of which change by themselves and in relation to one another.

The criteria used to identify an element of the construct “flourishing” are:

- It contributes to well-being
- Can be pursued for its own sake
- Can be defined and measured exclusively of other elements
- Can be measured by self report or objectively

In his latest book, Flourish 63, Seligman articulated an account of how he measures well-being, and titled this work, “Well-Being Theory”. He concludes that there are five elements to ‘well-being’, which fall under the mnemonic PERMA:

- **Positive emotion** — Can only be assessed subjectively as it describes positive feelings such as pleasure, joy, rapture, warmth, contentment, peace etc.

- **Engagement** — Like positive emotion, can only be measured through subjective means. It is presence of a “flow state” that occurs when we are utterly absorbed in an activity or thought; when time seems to stand still and we feel one with the activity or stimuli (music, scenery, painting etc.). This concept draws heavily on the work of Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi and doesn’t just happen. It occurs when an individual is deploying their highest strengths and talents to cope with highest challenges. It is also associated with passion and the joy that comes from doing what one loves most or best reflects our interests and passions.

- **Relationships** — The presence of friends, family, intimacy, or social connection and the capacity to love and be loved and making a contribution to community.

- **Meaning** — Belonging to and serving something bigger than one’s self

- **Achievement** — A sense of accomplishment that is pursued even when it brings no positive emotion, no meaning, and nothing in the way of positive relationships.

Three aspects of Flourishing from a positive psychology perspective are particularly worth noting:

1. As humans we can measure our capacity to flourish. One of the main by-products of positive psychology is a set of tests for evaluating how well an individual might be flourishing and exercise and practices that can be undertaken to develop it:

2. We can create the conditions within communities of all kinds (schools, work places, institutions, places etc.) that improve or impede that capacity to flourish.

3. While our individual character (inherited personality traits) may influence how well we flourish, we can learn to work with our character strengths to improve life satisfaction (positive emotions) engagement, relationships with others, sense of meaning and achievement.

Despite this discipline being less than 25 years old, a vast body of research has been undertaken into ways of increasing our capacity to flourish either personally or in various collective settings.

Of immediate practical relevance is the fact that we all tend to be more engaged and perform better when we are encouraged to use our natural strengths. Dr. Seligman and Peterson undertook research to identify the universal traits that are best about human beings. They combed through nearly 2,500 years of history to identify six core “virtues” found across religions, cultures, nations, and belief systems.

The six virtues that made the cut were wisdom, courage, humanity, justice, temperance, and transcendence. Each virtue contains three to five character strengths, with a total of 24 topping the list as listed below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Virtues</th>
<th>Strengths</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wisdom and knowledge</td>
<td>Creativity, curiosity, judgment, love of learning, perspective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Courage</td>
<td>Bravery, perseverance, honesty, zest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Humanity</td>
<td>Love, kindness, social intelligence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Justice</td>
<td>Teamwork, fairness, leadership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Temperance</td>
<td>Forgiveness, humility produce self-regulation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transcendence</td>
<td>Appreciation of beauty, excellence, gratitude hope, humor, spirituality</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Each person has five ‘signature’ strengths—like a unique strain of DNA—that make up the “real you.” Tiffany Shlain’s 8 minute film, The Science of Character provides the best introduction to the topic and you can take the free test that shows your personal strengths at: http://www.viacharacter.org

This work is of specific relevance to both social entrepreneurship and tourism hospitality for at least two strong reasons:

(a) the real opportunity to improve both yield and guest satisfaction rest with the consistent delivery of personalized customer service. An engaged employee can provide this. One who is disengaged cannot. There is overwhelming evidence that when employees can apply their strengths at work and are recognized for doing so, their engagement soars.

(b) The ideal company makes its best employees even better—and the least of them better than they ever thought they could be. Today’s employees (especially Millennials) are not just looking for the best places to work, they want to join the best places to grow (see more in the Principle – People)
Ecology and Systems Thinking

A key assumption underpinning Conscious Travel is that both the visitor economy and the larger economy in which it is embedded are inter-linked, nested systems of networks comprising, in the case of tourism, hosts, guests, investors, residents and suppliers to the host community. Ideally all participants benefit from and contribute to a flourishing system. The scientific literature identifies a number of features associated with ecosystem health in the natural environment that could be applied to the tourism ecosystem: vigor/vitality; diversity; balance; and resilience.

The table titled What Does it Mean to be a Flourishing Individual, Enterprise and Community Within Tourism? maps how 11 characteristics combined from ecology and positive psychology might be used to scope, measure and evaluate the flourishing at three scales: a thriving individual; a prosperous enterprise and flourishing community. Every one of these characteristics could be quantified in some way and on an overall index developed – with some time, money and research.

The good news is that, until such quanta exist, we can already sense whether an individual is thriving, an enterprise is prosperous and a community is flourishing. I would suggest – even though I do not yet know the mechanics of how – that all sentient beings are “hard wired” to sense and evaluate the health and aliveness of all life forms with which we come into immediate contact.

A gardener knows when their garden is flourishing – the individual plants are healthy, exhibiting vigour and vitality; they are resistant to pests and diseases; and resilient withstand the shocks of drought or unexpected storms. The garden comprises a diversity of plants that provide food and shelter for other life forms and adapts to the unique terrain and seasonal changes.

Similarly, a mother knows when their child, regardless of age, is flourishing. They don’t expect the same child simply to get bigger but to mature and become more capable and confident over time, better able to take responsibility for their choices and contribute to their family and community. If to flourish is something we wish for our gardens, our children and communities, then why not wish it for our visitor economy? Both gardens and children need someone to tend and nurture their development – so do visitors and host communities. That’s why Conscious Travel emphasizes the role of host as change agent who leads by serving, coaching and guiding.

Applying the Concept of Flourishing To Tourism

The eleven elements of the construct “Flourishing” can be applied to individuals (both hosts and guests), to the enterprise that connects them and the larger community of stakeholders also affected by and involved in that encounter.

Each element is described below on the understanding that considerable research is needed to “operationalize” and establish measurement, tracking regimes that can, in future, supplement visitor quantities, and dry economic measures:

1. **Vigor and Vitality:** A healthy ecosystem is said to have vigour – a word that describes strength, energy and enthusiasm; and vitality which implies aliveness, exuberance, renewal, and a capacity to generate value. Healthy open systems derive their energy from an external source and process or re-cycle waste within the system or between the system and a larger system in which it is embedded. The tourism system is embedded within both a biosphere (the physical environment), the bigger economy, and an “ethnosphere” – a term, equivalent to culture, that encompasses the sum total of the shared thoughts, values and beliefs, ideas and inspiration of the people who have been interacting together and with nature. Its primary source of energy is the visitor whose spending is metabolized by the various parts of the system (host providers, their suppliers and ancillary services) into food, fuel, energy for constituent parts of the system. The whole of any system has emergent properties, characteristics and a personality greater than the sum of the parts – in modern parlance we might refer to that as its brand.

Another aspect of vigor and vitality is agency or power – the capacity to act; to make conscious choices; and respond either to external stimuli or inner promptings. In light of the challenges faced by individuals, enterprises and communities as they move from one story to another, we are each being asked to participate actively in supporting that transition and become agents of change.

2. **Self awareness:** all systems from the simplest of bacterial cells to Planet Earth have boundaries – some form of membrane that make it possible to develop a sense of identity; and to define and be aware of self. According to the majority of biologists, all life is sentient (it can perceive, interact with its environment, learn, remember and make choices). As has been discussed in this chapter, a healthy individual is aware of their own nature and complexity – their dominant forms of intelligence; the sensitivity of their sensory capacities; their strengths, values, purpose, morals, beliefs and assumptions. Such self awareness can also be developed by a business enterprise and a community.

3. **Positive Emotions:** a flourishing individual generally displays and enjoys a range of positive emotions (not necessarily all the time) and knows what conditions he or she needs to create or attract to stimulate them. The same might be said of a company – the role of a leader is again to create the conditions in which its members feel good about being there (they feel valued, safe, appreciated, mentored etc) and the same characteristic can be achieved at the community level. Companies can aspire to be recognized as great places to work for and places can aspire to be recognized as great places to live, work and play.

4. **Engagement:** is almost synonymous with passion and when we are most engaged we are absorbed in an activity, experiencing peak performance and being in the flow. To resort to a mechanical metaphor – it’s as if we’re operating on all four cylinders! There’s a sense of energy, zest and enthusiasm that is attractive to others. Having a high rate of engagement is a critical determinant of a company’s productivity and profitability and an individual’s sense of fulfilment and well-being. The state of being in the flow involves a tension between what one can do and achieve and what one aspires to achieve – it accelerates learning, creating and adapting; all pre-requisites for an adaptable, resilient high performance entity.

5. **Relationships:** a flourishing individual can sustain a range of positive, productive relationships with a diverse range of people in a variety of circumstances and has developed strong EQ skills of empathy, active listening, generosity, capacity to mentor,
What does it mean to be a flourishing individual, enterprise and community within tourism?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHARACTERISTICS</th>
<th>THRIVING INDIVIDUAL</th>
<th>PROSPEROUS ENTERPRISE</th>
<th>FLOURISHING COMMUNITY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Vitality (healthy, robust) Power, agency</td>
<td>“Fully alive”, healthy, energetic, authentic, zest, enthusiasm, fashion, empathic, cooperative, supportive, confident, present</td>
<td>Healthy level of profitability; solid market prospects (pipeline, repeats, referrals); provides sustainable livelihoods to employees, delights customers; enjoys community support</td>
<td>Enjoys high net benefits from tourism (minimal costs); feels a sense of ownership and pride; able to expend genuine welcome to visitors; boom &amp; busts cycles minimised</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Self awareness – distinct identity (character, personality, identity, authenticity)</td>
<td>Good self knowledge: Emotions, strengths, values, beliefs, ethics, intelligence and aptitudes</td>
<td>Clarity about purpose and needs of all stakeholders; sense of how to differentiate (stand out); strengths; cultures (values and ethics) that are expressed by all members.</td>
<td>Clear sense of PLACE – what is unique and special</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Positive Emotions</td>
<td>Able to express a full spectrum of emotions High EQ</td>
<td>Pleasant, happy place to work; supportive, nourishing, stretching, compassionate, creative</td>
<td>Great place to live, work and play High levels of community well being Tourism benefits evident &amp; valued</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Engagement (passion, “in the flow”)</td>
<td>Capable of absorption in an activity, experience peak performance and joy in the task, passion, zest, High EQ, SQ</td>
<td>High positive energy; focus on delighting customer in creative ways, employees and customers feel heard and cared for</td>
<td>Community enthusiasm, lots of spontaneous community activity, and a strong sense of pride</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Relationships (interdependence, sense of inter-connectedness)</td>
<td>Can sustain a range of relationships with work colleagues, friends, family and enjoys a support network High EQ</td>
<td>Enjoys good relations with all stakeholders, especially community; willing to work collaboratively with other members of the destination community</td>
<td>Community members willing to work together, collaborate, co-create.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Meaning &amp; sense of purpose</td>
<td>Enjoys a strong sense of personal purpose and direction</td>
<td>Members of the enterprise share a common sense of purpose higher than simply making a profit that engages and motivates</td>
<td>The community knows why they are encouraging tourism and what they wish to achieve as a result of its success.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Achievement (Sense of mastery, autonomy &amp; contribution)</td>
<td>Has a range of interests, skills and enjoys a satisfying level of mastery; sense of autonomy (can direct events to serve self and others)</td>
<td>Leads trends rather than follows, clear sense of strategic direction &amp; priorities</td>
<td>High levels of performance on indicators determined by the community as important to them. High levels of volunteering and SE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 Diversity</td>
<td>Flexible, multi-skilled and capable of taking multiple perspectives</td>
<td>Diverse workforce (gender, ethnicity, age, intelligence, worldview) but aligned around a common purpose &amp; values</td>
<td>Diverse enterprises but aligned around a common purpose &amp; values and sense of place</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 Balance (within and between)</td>
<td>Balances various aspects of life (work-leisure); physical, mental, emotional and spiritual</td>
<td>Operates in harmony with natural environment – close to zero waste; minimum resource input; respects local culture, expresses place. Procures locally</td>
<td>Healthy environment Thriving culture Self sufficiency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 Resilience</td>
<td>Able to bounce back after major changes or shocks; learns from mistakes, adaptable</td>
<td>Plans and prepares for downturns, low seasons, contingency &amp; risk planning</td>
<td>Plans and prepares for downturns, low seasons, contingency &amp; risk planning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 Capacity to grow, develop, self-organize</td>
<td>Committed to lifelong learning, personal growth and development</td>
<td>High levels of innovation and creativity.</td>
<td>High levels of innovation and creativity.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table © Anna Pollock – not to be reproduced without permission. Shaded areas are based on Positive Psychology and Dr. Martin Seligman’s concepts of Flourishing.

and provide useful feedback etc. In the corporate world it is often said that "culture" (the amalgamations of beliefs, values, expectations) eats strategy for breakfast. A culture which enables a community to flourish is one in which there is a high degree of trust, transparency, authenticity and coherence around a shared purpose.

6. **Meaning and Purpose**: the research from psychology and sociology confirm that people are actually happiest when they have a sense of purpose; when they are deploying their own strengths and or are serving some “thing”, person, or cause perceived as greater than themselves. Companies that have a clear sense of purpose and commitment to making the world a better place in some way find it easier to attract, retain and motivate people to achieve higher levels of productivity and achievement. Those destinations that can show how the visitor economy will enable to community to achieve its goals also enjoy more local support and participation.

7. **Achievement**: Psychologist have shown that on an individual level having explicit goals in life, and making efforts to achieve them are important to well-being and happiness. Achievement helps to build self-esteem and provides a sense of accomplishment. It also strengthens self-belief. Achievement is clearly equally applicable to the enterprise and has traditionally been measured in terms of profit and the community where achievement in tourism is often
viewed as numbers of visitors. The flourishing model encourages us to develop a wider range of both quantitative and qualitative performance measure that not only keep a more accurate track on costs (direct and indirect) absorbed by a wider range of stakeholders but also to consider so called soft intangible benefits relate to the quality of life enjoyed by residents, the well being of their guests. Hosts tend to measure average revenue per unit of transaction but could also be focusing on what I have described elsewhere as the R3 factor – the extent that, as a result of their visit, guests tend to rave, refer and return. The Net Promoter Score, for example, is used extensively outside of tourism and in some companies. but quite rarely as a key performance indicator at the destination level.

8. **Diversity and Complexity** – diversity of species, conditions and stages of development is key to nature's success. In a forest for example, some parts of a forest are in a state of rapid growth or regrowth while other parts are maturing and others are aging. There is continual cycling through these stages, with disturbances (such as fire, flood or storm damage) driving release of resources, which in turn leads to re-organization and re-growth. One of the biggest shortcomings of industrialization and associated globalization is the way it has stripped away diversity encouraging monocultures in society (through standardization and conformity). Diversity unleashes creativity – mostly at the edges of s system where t “meets” another system. Tourism ecosystems obey similar laws – those that appeal to a diversity of markets; deploy a diversity of labour and entertain a diversity of perspectives are more adaptive and productive. They are better able to sense changes in their environment and respond appropriately.

9. **Balance**: ecosystems operate through exchange; through give and take – one organism's waste is the food for another. Reference to the triple bottom line and the need to balance economic, social and environmental considerations is a partial recognition of this ecological law. Natural ecosystems have in built checks and balances that prevent any one sub species growing beyond the capacity of other species to support it.

10. **Resilience**: If an ecosystem is healthy it is also recognised as being “resilient”. Resilience is not just about the ability of the system to absorb shocks and return to normal but the ability to self-organise, adapt, learn, transform and resist disorder. Thus, an enterprise can focus on being “sustainable” by enhancing its own resilience relative to the systems in which it operates.

   **Economic resilience** reflects the financial strength and stability of the enterprise, including the economic vitality and diversity of the communities in which it operates, the supply chain that it rests on, and the markets that it serves. An economically resilient destination, for example, does not depend on one major source of visitors or several tour operators or in-bound airlines; given a crisis, it can work collaboratively with speed to replace a market that may have disappeared overnight. A resilient destination does not over reach itself – developing too many producers when market conditions are positive that may well struggle when market conditions contract - a situation all too commonly experienced in tourism as the phenomenon of “boom and bust”.

   **Social resilience** reflects the “human capital” of the enterprise, including the capability, imagination, teamwork, and loyalty of its workforce, the strength of its relationships and alliances, and the political and cultural cohesion of its host societies. A socially resilient destination will enjoy high levels of resident and employee engagement in the act of inviting and taking care of guests in inspiring new ways; tourism will enjoy high levels of respect from the host community and command high yields, repeat visits and word of mouth referrals; tourism will have maximized the net benefits to the community as a whole. Similarly guests will show respect and responsibility by not placing excessive and unreasonable demands on a host population of violating their values.

   **Environmental resilience** reflects the operational efficiency and effectiveness of the enterprise in terms of resource utilization and waste minimization, as well as its ability to protect and nurture the natural ecosystems in which it operates. Tourism operators will minimize dependency on scarce and depleting resources, use non-renewable energy sources and generate as close to zero waste as possible.

11. **Capacity to Grow, Develop and Self-organize**: every Life form goes through a similar pattern – after birth rapid growth in size and complexity, followed by a period of learning and experiencing and contributing and then that development slows down physically but acquires other characteristics – the capacity for reflection and wisdom that benefit other members of its community prior to death. Complex adaptive systems comprise self-organizing individuals whose decision in sum shape the characteristics of the larger community of which they are a part. Resilient systems tend to have a greater capacity for learning and sharing knowledge obtained by individuals or groups within it. In summary, a flourishing tourism community would focus on improving system health – contributing to the growth in human welfare (the development of human, social, cultural and

Conscious Travel is about helping tourism enterprises thrive and flourish and that means generating sufficient vitality (net income, employee engagement, customer support, partner collaboration, and community support) to:

- offer employees decent, secure year-round livelihoods that enable families to stay together in and around the destination
- be able to maintain and enhance the facility and contribute to the conservation and in some cases rejuvenation of the local biosphere (environment) and ethnosphere – local cultures and traditions that express the uniqueness of the place.
- eliminate waste (food waste, water, carbon emissions, pesticides) from operations
- withstand shocks such as sudden drops in demand, increased competitive pressure, cost increases, necessity for increased taxation and or regulation; and
- enable the host (owner-manager) to play a leadership role in community building.

There is room for a variety of business structures in a tourism ecosystem in order to maximise community benefit – hence the suitability of tourism for social enterprises, cooperatives and the involvement of not-for-profit ventures. They each have their place and role.

Tourism enterprises are man-made and while a good location and attractive facilities do count, success is determined by the effective interactions and inter-relationships of the people who play various and sometimes multiple interchangeable roles: employee, guest, supplier-partner, investor, resident, regulator, planner etc.
Thus “success” is dependent on the extent to which all the stakeholders involved feel individually fulfilled; know their role, worth and value; have the knowledge and skills needed to play their role well; are motivated and engaged and can work together towards a common purpose.

To make life forms flourish – be they plants, animals, gardens, whole ecosystems, companies, nations, you simply have to care. Simple acts of recognition, generosity, appreciation, empathy, consideration and gratitude have the power to cause others to flourish – you don’t need to study for years to become competent in the act of caring for another to flourish. The capacity is hard wired in all of us. Its effectiveness and potency can increase – but only with practice.

We are human beings, as opposed to all other beings, because we care about the question of what it is to be human and because our existence rests on care for the world. Care is what it takes to live in the world and implies a particular kind of connection that sustains the system. When we lose the ethical responsibility that being connected implies, we leave the responsibility for maintaining the system up in the air, floating without an anchor. 64

Spanish philosopher Jose Ortega y Gas-set said:

Life is not the sum of what we have been, but what we yearn to be.

The French writer Antoine Sainte-Exupery also spoke about the need to tap into our deepest longings because that is when we are most human and most motivated:

If you want to build a ship, don't drum up people to collect wood and don't assign them tasks and work, but rather teach them to yearn for the endless immensity of the sea.

It will take a different kind of leadership to help individuals, companies and communities flourish. Leaders will need a wider sense of self and the capacity to:

• make sense of a VUCA word and empower others to do the same;
• develop high levels of self awareness and personal mastery;
• identify and live their values;
• form and sustain empowering relationships with all stakeholders;
• bring them into alignment around a shared vision; and
• inspire engagement, creativity, self direction, and passion.

6. Empower Host Communities to Control Their Tourism Destiny

The discussion on Systems – Perspective # 3 – highlighted key features of a system the fourth of which is its membrane or boundary. This applies to cells, bio-regions and the Earth itself. In human systems, the system’s boundary is set by the participants and forms an important aspect of the overall structure or “social architecture.” In the same way that purpose and values shape structure design and behaviour, the social architecture (institutions, and the rules governing membership, relationships, transactions, and procurement etc.) has an equally huge impact on the behaviour of the system and its members.

The past 20-30 years have witnessed the rise of large, multi-national corporations who have defined the boundary of their economic system as global. Their expansion has been driven by the goal of maximizing the return on their shareholder’s capital based on their capacity to exploit, purchase, own and dispense with a range of other forms of capital: land, natural resources, cultural assets, and labour regardless of their location etc. Many multi-national tourism-related companies form part of this community. Even if a destination comprises mostly locally-owned facilities, the very act of promoting itself as an attractive destination to in-bound, long-haul international visitors contributes to globalisation and renders the local visitor economy vulnerable to many of the costs associated with this phenomenon: economic destabilization, increased debt, growing wealth and income disparities, loss of food security, resource depletion, social conflict and environmental degradation.

Once tourism has been identified for a place as a “good thing,” all too often control over its future development shifts to decision-makers other than the residents who will be expected to serve and support the visitor. Costly facilities, amenities and infrastructure projects need to be constructed of a standard suitable to the incoming visitors requiring capital that, in many cases, is not available locally. Once foreign investors (public or private) become involved, then strategic plans and feasibility assessments are necessary and are generally funded, if not conducted, by investors or governments focussed on the core goal – to grow visitor volumes, spending, tax revenues and create jobs. In many cases, the beneficiaries of the development process (consultants, developers, investors) are not residents of the host community. The persons responsible for the planning, feasibility and branding studies are rarely residents of the places they are commissioned to work for but part of a relatively mobile, rootless community of experts.

The industrial model with its exclusive focus on profit maximisation, cost reduction, efficiency, scale and growth is indifferent to the unique and quirky characteristics of individual places. By contrast, the Regenerative Economy, by its very nature, can only take root and flourish in living communities as defined, experienced and loved by their inhabitants.

Just as each ecosystem comes to embody unique adaptations to a particular place, so each community embodies a mosaic of traditions, beliefs and potentialities, each uniquely shaped by the long-term pressures of geography, history, culture, environment and changing human needs. 65

Modern capitalism’s rush to a monoculture of big box chain stores (and chain hotels and restaurants) driven by efficient scalable business models has desecrated places in ways that have significant social consequences. 66 67 68 While we may discount these issues as the price for progress, it does not need to be this way – in fact, the tide is rapidly turning.

Paradoxically, despite the global economy and the attendant global culture, we as a nation – like many others – maintain a desire for the locally authentic. We crave a distinctiveness to our cities, towns and rural areas, hankering for making a “mark of place” within this globalised world. 69

Integration with Local Self-determination Initiatives

Conscious Travel is based on two premises that, if done right:

• tourism can be a regenerative force, helping each place to “come into its own” with its many unique facets recognised, experienced and celebrated by residents and visitors alike; so long as
• residents can and must be empowered to express that uniqueness in a way that respects local conditions and can also make informed choices about the type, scale and pace of tourism they wish to sustain.

Conscious Travel is conceived as an antidote to the tendency for
capitalism to centralise and disempower because, as stated by Professor Gary Hamel:

_Capitalism has become more and more centralised and as power becomes centralised, ordinary individuals feel as if they have less and less influence over critical decisions and that when decisions are made, they are not responsive to local situations and local needs._

Conscious Travel considers policies and actions which prevent local communities from determining the future scope, scale, type and pace of tourism development that works for them constitutes a form of _economic colonialism_ that, in turn, creates an economy that under performs at best or produces negative impacts at worse.

The solutions developed to address the most complex issues faced by communities tend to come from the communities themselves. They can't be dealt with in silos that centralised governments create.

The Conscious Travel approach is designed specifically to empower receiving communities to make informed decisions about their future through working together as collaborative action-learning communities. Community-wide consultation and participation is a core tenet. The geographical boundary of these communities will vary from one place to another – according to local geographical and cultural factors, and will be determined by the participants according to the pattern and strength of their connections and the natural and cultural characteristics of the place.

_All travel is local._ Despite the act of getting there, all travelers do eventually arrive at a locality and experience its uniqueness. And if all travel is local, then ideally all hosts should be indigenous in the deepest sense of the word.

The localist/self-reliance community, where it is active, can help members of the visitor economy identify and deploy suitable social architectures that, in combination, can ensure that the visitor economy generates real tangible benefits to all stakeholders. These architectures include, but are not necessarily limited to:

- Business structure and purpose
- Ownership structures
- Procurement practices and “Localist” initiatives

**Business Structure and Purpose**

In many countries (primarily the US) the legal framework of a limited liability company establishes the exclusive, fiduciary duty of directors to be the maximization of profits for shareholders. Such legal frameworks limit the capacity of directors to make decisions that might reduce those returns – even if for a social purpose (eg increasing minimum wage, offering additional worker benefits, volunteering to pay for waste disposal when not required by law etc.)

_Social Enterprises_ are profit-making enterprises that trade just like other businesses; but plough their profit back into activities that benefit people and planet. Depending on the jurisdiction in which they are registered, they can take various legal forms. Social Enterprises provide an excellent vehicle whereby a destination community can increase the net benefit from tourism to the local community. In the UK, Social Enterprises account for 5% of all registered businesses.

In the United States, B Lab is a non-profit that certifies businesses that meet rigorous standards of social and environmental performance, accountability and transparency. Over 1200 businesses, including Ben & Jerry’s, Etsy, Method, Patagonia, Plum Organics and Seventh Generation have been certified from more than 30 countries and 60 industries and enjoyed the following benefits: being better able to attract talent and engage employees, increase consumer trust, benchmark performance, protect the company's mission, and by building collective voice.

As a consequence of this leadership, laws have been passed in 26 states creating a new type of corporation – the Benefit Corporation – that gives its leaders protection to pursue a higher purpose than profit and offer the public grater transparency to protect from pretenders. Benefit Corporations are not legally required to apply for B-lab certification but are encouraged to do so.

**Ownership Structures**

The dominance of private ownership as a social structure within the Extractive Economy accounts for the behavior of the system and its members

Ownership is the gravitational field that holds our economy in its orbit, locking us all into behaviours that lead to financial excess and ecological overshoot.

As Thomas Piketty has also shown in _Capital in the Twenty-First Century_, it is the means whereby the rich will continue to get richer and left to its own devices the system will continue to increase the gap between the rich and poor.

Ownership is also the aspect of the current economic system that is experiencing the most experimentation – a natural form of spontaneous evolution that occurs when one system is giving way to another based on a different set of values and purpose. The emergence of new structures such Community Interest Companies (CIC) in the UK; low-profit, limited liability (L3C) and Benefit Corps in the US, combined with a rise in the number of state-owned banks like that pioneered in North Dakota all reflect a rising awareness that when ownership is shared, a more even pattern of income and wealth distribution follow.

So if the goal is to increase the amount of net benefit enjoyed by a community from tourism, it follows that the communities need to consider and actively encourage a wider range of ownership structures including cooperatives, employee-owned firms, community banks and government sponsored enterprises. In the conservation domain, there are numerous examples to confirm that community-ownership of shared resources generates wise stewardship. Namibia’s success with its conservancies and Mexico’s success with community forests come to mind.

One of the most under-recognized yet most effective structures for sharing risk and reward and driving business benefit into a community is the cooperative. These are businesses owned and run for the benefit of their members – employees, suppliers or local communities. Worldwide more than three billion people sustain their livelihoods through cooperatives. In the UK, they number over 6300 and generate an average of £37 billion; in the USA 30,000 cooperatives account for 1 million direct jobs and $652 billion in revenue and $3 trillion in assets. Among the 300 largest cooperative and mutually owned companies worldwide, revenues total $2 trillion, equivalent to the 9th largest national economy in the world.

Four types of cooperative are recognized. The percentages in brackets
apply to the US: Consumer cooperatives (92%); Producer Cooperatives (5%); Purchasing Cooperatives (2%); Worker Cooperatives (1%)

In Europe, the European confederation of cooperatives (CECOP) represents some 50,000 enterprises employing 1.3 million workers of which some 8000 enterprises are engaged in tourism. The largest cooperative in Europe and deemed the most successful and resilient is the Mondragon Group based in Basque Country Spain where employees exceed 100,000 in number.

Cooperatives and social enterprises provide the best structure whereby benefits from tourism can be directed most easily into the host community.

Procurement – Buying Local

The Extractive Economy (industrial model) was sustained and empowered by two factors during the course of its development: deregulation of the finance sector and globalisation. Tourism benefitted initially from the first as credit was readily available for expansion and fuelled consumer demand and tourism both benefitted and contributed to globalisation.

Elsewhere in this document, the assertion that “all tourism is local” has been made in that it uniquely brings the customer to the point of consumption. We have also highlighted the critical importance to tourism of (a.) delivering benefit to the host community and (b.) maintaining and developing the uniqueness of each place so as to attract visitation and enhance guests’ enjoyment.

In response to the loss of both jobs and autonomy associated with globalization, a “localist” movement has emerged from the grassroots that goes far deeper than mere trade protection.

Destinations based on conscious travel principles will seek to ensure as much of the visitor’s spending and activity delivers benefit to the host community and procurement of goods, services and labour locally is the best means of doing so. The emergence of the Sharing and Collaboration Economies and peer-to-peer trading has helped in this regard.

Because the localist movement is much stronger than community-based tourism, we recommend – for practical and strategic purposes – a very close alignment between conscious travel and the many effective agencies that are developing what are called “local living economies” defined by the New Economy Working Group as:

a planetary system of regionally self-reliant, energy-efficient, locally rooted living economies that function as balanced, innovative, and productive subsystems of their local and regional ecosystems, share information and technology, and trade their surplus with their neighbors for goods and services they cannot reasonably produce for themselves. 73

The connections and alignment are discussed in the chapter PROXIMITY.
INTRODUCTION

Six principles are proposed as signposts or pointers to the mix of activities that would be undertaken in a destination community aligned with the perspectives discussed previously.

For the purpose of this report, the following discussion observations are designed to stimulate discussion around the kind of pedagogic content appropriate for social entrepreneurs and would be change agents. There is no intent here to provide a list of actions or “how to” manual but to inform and encourage creative thinking. Ultimately, a learning program will be developed for conscious hosts to help them achieve this goal:

Co-creating, community-by-community, “an environmentally sustainable, socially just and spiritually fulfilling visitor economy” that enables all its stakeholders to thrive and flourish.

PURPOSE

Of the six key Principles and Practices in the Conscious Travel Compass, the Purpose Principle provides the primary point of orientation, pointing due north like the North Star and pulling the other seven principles pulled together into a coherent whole. A firm’s purpose is the glue that holds an organization or community together, the amniotic fluid that nourishes its life force; the juice that helps everyone flow and animates activity.

All companies have a purpose or mission. Many write it on their walls. But fewer companies have identified a purpose that taps into a higher, universal truth that has the capacity to inspire and uplift. Those that do, such as the Conscious Capitalists who will be described shortly, tend to attract and retain the right customers and talented, creative employees and outperform their peers in the same domain of business.

As change agents within their communities, Conscious Hosts will need to inspire and motivate others at multiple levels - within an enterprise, the community in which they operate and within a broader industry ecosystem. To be effective, hosts will need to win the trust of employees, peers, partners and customers. In today’s cynical world, trust doesn’t flow easily from followers to leaders and can never be guaranteed just because hosts have a business card that states a leadership position. Trust is earned by leaders who can articulate clearly and passionately what they care about, what they stand for, and where they are headed. Success involves following the ancient maxim associated with the Delphic Oracle in ancient Greece – Know Thy Self; following the advice of Polonius in Shakespeare’s Hamlet when he encouraged his master, “To thy own self be true” and learning from Simon Sinek who assembled evidence that “People don’t buy what you do but why you do it.”

The Changing Role and Purpose of Business

It’s only very recently that the questions “What’s the Purpose of Business?” or “What’s the economy for?” have been raised or publicly debated. The business community has reflected the dominant paradigm – especially as reinforced by neo-classical economists such as Milton Friedman. In a Times magazine article back in a 1970, Friedman argued that the sole purpose of a business is to generate profit for its shareholders. He spent the remainder of his life actively defending that position. Moreover, he maintained, companies that did adopt “responsible” attitudes would be faced with more binding constraints than companies that did not, rendering them less competitive. That belief has grown to such an extent that corporations now have become the major power brokers on the planet making a very small number of shareholders very wealthy and powerful indeed.
As awareness and concern for the negative impacts of human activity on the planet grew apace in the 1970s, so did support for the view that business must shoulder its share of the responsibility for addressing the problems and not leave all remedial and mitigation actions to the public sector.

As early as the 1970s, Willis Harman, founder of the World Business Academy argued:

“Business has become, in this last half century, the most powerful institution on the planet. The dominant institution in any society needs to take responsibility for the whole.”

In 1999, Paul Hawken authored Natural Capitalism, a manifesto for epochal change in the ways companies operate. It too called for companies to take a bigger role in making the world a better place by harnessing the talents within business to tackle key environmental and political problems. Ideas such as these sowed the seeds of the “Corporate Social Responsibility” movement that has now grown large enough to become an economic ecosystem of its own, gathering strength among consumers and producers alike while also evolving in form.

Professor Edward Freeman Professor of Business Administration at the University of Virginia persuasively argues that insistence on assuming the purpose of business is simply to make money is equivalent to saying

Social Responsibility” movement that has now grown large enough to harnessing the talents within business to tackle key environmental and problems and not leave all remedial and mitigation actions to the public sector. 

In 2007, a critically important book for the evolution of business purpose was published: Firms of Endearment: How World-Class Companies Profit from Passion and Purpose, authored by two academics, Raj Sisodia and Jag Seth and a business writer, David Wolfe. If Willis Harman had sowed the notional seeds of business assuming a purpose higher than profit, then the research and insights in Firms of Endearment cultivated their young shoots such that now a forest is in the making. These academics started out by identifying companies that enjoyed such high levels of brand loyalty that it could be said they were loved or endeared by their customers. The financial evidence proved that they also out-performed peers in their sectors by a significant ratio.

In their report 79, Edelman go on to suggest that brands can do well by doing good increased from a base of 57% in 2008 to 76% four years later.

The authors’ curiosity had been piqued by two previous publications: Love is the Killer App written by Yahoo’s Chief Solutions Officer, Tim Sanders and Lovemarks: The Future of Brands by Kevin Roberts then head of Saatchi and Saatchi.

The global financial collapse, which began in late 2007, then accelerated and expanded the scope and depth of thinking about responsibility and purpose among consumers, executives, investors and the general public. It was in that same year that the public relations firm, Edelman commenced its Good Purpose research program designed to monitor changing consumer attitudes to the role and performance of business. Edelman found that the proportion of respondents believing that brands can do well by doing good increased from a base of 57% in 2008 to 76% four years later.

In their Good Purpose 2012 report 77, Edelman go on to suggest that companies need to stretch beyond exercising a “licence to operate” by establishing a “licence to lead.” Furthermore, the authors suggest that such an expansive, ambitious goal will need to enlist the comprehensive capabilities and resources of an entire - from employees to supply chain, community, customers, R&D and product innovation, as well as external partners in order to bring new solutions to market and to impact societal issues. Earning – and maintaining – a license to lead is about championing things that matter. The majority of consumers around the world and, especially, in rapidly developing economies now look to business to assume greater responsibility for meeting “societal needs” i.e. attending to major social issues by “taking a stand on issues I care about”; “using its resources to drive change in the world,” and “inviting customers to get involved in creating products and services.” In short, it’s about “understanding the company role as a global citizen and using the organization’s values to ultimately be more human.”

By 2014, some analysts and authors suggested that the so-called Information Economy was actually morphing into the purpose-driven economy. Aaron Hurst, a globally recognized entrepreneur, founder of the Taproot Foundation and CEO of Imperative – two successful social enterprises – published his book: The Purpose Economy. 80 showing how desire for impact, personal growth, and community is changing the world.

The Purpose Economy is a quest by people for more purpose in their lives. It is an economy where value lies in establishing purpose for employees and customers – through serving needs greater than their own, enabling personal growth, and building community. 81

Prior to that publication another thought leader, Simon Sinek, had got people thinking about customer motivation and brand selection by stating that “people don’t buy what you do, they buy why you do it.” In his readable book Start With Why 82, Sinek attributed the success of the Wright Brothers, Steve Wozniak and Jobs at Apple, and Martin Luther King to their ability to inspire and motivate customers, employees and investors by answering the question WHY?

Conscious Travel takes the position that Purpose is a topic that needs to be examined at multiple levels: personal (i.e., by the Conscious
Host as an individual, corporate (the purpose of the enterprise), and sector (the role and purpose of tourism). Furthermore, Purpose, as illustrated below, is the aspect of our lives that has been most affected by the shift in worldviews discussed in Perspective # 2 earlier. As we learned in Perspective # 3, when the purpose of a system changes, so will everything else.

Change in Purpose from one Worldview to Another

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Worldview</th>
<th>Old Modernist</th>
<th>New Post-Modern</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Individual</td>
<td>Make money, accrue wealth</td>
<td>Develop personally, be part of something bigger than self</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enterprise</td>
<td>Maximise financial returns to shareholders</td>
<td>Make the world a better place</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community</td>
<td>Increase GDP; grow tourism arrivals</td>
<td>Ensure all stakeholders flourish and benefit from tourism</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Personal Purpose

Positive psychologists have identified having a sense of meaning and purpose in your life as a critical contributor to personal well-being (see next chapter on PEOPLE).

A Conscious Host is an individual who has developed an above average level of self-awareness. Even though self-awareness has received little attention in business literature until recently, a recent study unsurprisingly showed that a leader’s capacity to know him or her self was the strongest predictor of enterprise success. 

In an important article from McKinsey, Change Leader, Change Thyself, authors Nate Boaz and Erica Fox state "we've become convinced that organizational change is inseparable from individual change." They suggest that most people aren't aware that the choices they make are extensions of the reality in their hearts and minds and many can live their whole lives without understanding the inner dynamics that drive what they do and say.

If you don’t know who you are, how can you be true to yourself? How can you be authentic, real and genuine? You will lack integrity, unable to present the whole of you consistently, in talk as well as in deed. Without either authenticity or integrity, it is exceedingly difficult to earn trust from others and without trust, would be followers rarely follow – unless, of course, commanded, intimidated or brow beaten.

The process of discovering and owning your personal purpose will involve asking deep personal questions as a pre-cursor to being able to facilitate investigation of the same queries within your enterprise, community and sector. These questions are more easily posed than answered.

- Who am I?
- What am I here to do? How might I serve?
- What are my strengths and weaknesses?
- What do I stand for?
- What do my values, assumptions and beliefs look like?

The more time spent examining yourself and allowing your answers to emerge, the more confidence, authenticity and integrity you will convey to others and the more trust you will earn.

To add to the challenge, you cannot address these questions in isolation. In the same way that your cells form organs encased in a skin called your body: you are a leader within an enterprise that operates within a sector (tourism and hospitality); and within a bigger economy that’s embedded in another system – the living biosphere. The questions listed above can and should be asked at each of the four levels and, as there will be significant inter-relatedness, be prepared for some flux and need for re-evaluation as you move back and forth between them!

There are two schools of thought as to how you come to your purpose – by discovery, by creation or both. Aaron Hurst, author of The Purpose Economy argues that Purpose is neither a cause, nor a noun but a verb. Purpose is much about how we apply ourselves to our work so that we can experience purpose as part of a community, when we serve a larger community and push ourselves to grow.

He suggests we need to bust some myths commonly held about Purpose by understanding that Purpose is:

- Not a cause
- Not a luxury for the wealthy
- Not a destiny
- Not a revelation to be discovered in some Eureka moment; and
- Most certainly not easy – as you explore and commit to your purpose, you will most certainly be pushed beyond your comfort zone.

Tim Kelley on the other hand, as the author of True Purpose, 12 Strategies for Discovering the Purpose You Are Meant to Make takes a contrary view – that each of us come into the world with a unique essence and set of gifts that will shape our purpose. It’s what our soul intends for us to fulfill. When we are in alignment with that essence we will feel most fully fulfilled and be in a position to grow and develop.

Both authors and the countless others who have published thoughts on the topic seem to agree on one thing however – that Purpose is tightly connected to our values, passions and beliefs and that all three are influenced by the prevailing culture of the society we grew up in, the values espoused by parents and other close family members who raised us, and our life experiences.

Hurst, has recently created Imperative, a US-based B-Corp whose purpose is to transform work by empowering everyone to work with purpose. Imperative is leading the way in bringing the science of
purpose to life in workplaces and online. The company has combined academic research with career coaching expertise to build an online purpose assessment tool that maps the three core drivers affecting the way we find and express purpose at work: whom we serve; how we serve them and why - our moral view of the world.

**Enterprise Purpose**

Peter Drucker writes in *The Practice of Management*:

*If we want to know what a business is, we have to start with its purpose. And the purpose must lie outside the business itself. In fact, it must lie in society, since a business enterprise is an organ of society. There is only one valid definition of business purpose: to create a customer. The customer is a foundation of a business and keeps it in existence. The customer alone gives employment. And it is to supply the customer that society entrusts wealth-producing resources to the business enterprise.*

While this definition has a nobler ring than profit maximization it doesn't go far enough today. The world is replete with evidence that creating and satisfying customer needs and wants has created part of the problems associated with over-the-top consumerism. As discussed in the PEOPLE section, Maslow identified that people's needs change as they mature. Business has spent the past half-century catering to and emphasizing the need to meet what Maslow called our “deficiency needs” for security, love and belonging and self-worth-esteem. They became a bottomless pit as we discovered that personal fulfillment could never be achieved via the acquisition of more stuff after a certain level of consumption and income had been reached. Smart companies are recognizing that customers are seeking meaning and purpose through richer experiences, through service, and through giving something back to a cause greater than our own self-interest - hence the rapid growth in “experiential travel” and voluntourism in our sector.

A shared purpose aligns and coheres all stakeholders and generates both focus and efficiency - individuals are less likely to focus on their own self-interest and, instead, look to see how they can serve the whole. A clear statement of purpose and especially one that appeals to the values and concerns of its stakeholders energizes, stimulates creativity and inspires – it literally breathes life into a company and gives it vitality and zest. Employees are more willing to bring their whole selves to work and engagement increases.

The clear and authentic expression of a higher purpose that is lived by company members acts as a magnet attracting the right people into its orbit. It’s a great substitute for a lifeless brand that has been created by an agency several steps removed from the company. As discussed in the chapter PEOPLE, having a clear and noble sense of purpose – being able to indicate how your corporate efforts will improve and regenerate the world, is essential if you wish to attract talent from the Millennial and subsequent generations.

Roy Spence and Haley Rushing, co-founders of The Purpose Institute and authors of *It's Not What You Sell, It's What You Stand For*, define purpose as a statement that articulates the difference you are trying to make and the core values that you will apply to achieving that difference. Here are four examples:

**Southwest Airlines:** to give people the freedom to fly

**REI:** to reconnect people with nature

**Whole Foods:** to help people eat well and live longer

**Unilever:** improve more lives, in more parts of the world, more completely.

Note: Purpose, Mission, Vision are often used interchangeably even though they are different. Purpose refers to the difference you are trying to make; mission is the core strategy you have chosen act out your purpose and vision is a vivid conception of how your world will look when your purpose has been realized.

Authors of the book *Conscious Capitalism*, Raj Sisodia and John Mackey have identified four categories of great purposes:

**The Good** – Service to others: improving health, education, communication, and quality of life

**The True** – Discovery and furthering human knowledge

**The Beautiful** – Excellent and the creation of beauty

**The Heroic** – Courage to do what is right to change and improve the world

The worst thing that tourism companies can do is jump on the purpose bandwagon and craft some purpose sentiments without doing the hard work of self examination and understanding the consequences of a purpose statement. To stimulate thinking, however, it might pay first to focus attention on the sector purpose.

**The Purpose of Tourism**

Despite the evidence correlating purpose with profits, were you to ask a tourism provider (hotelier, transport provider, attractions operator) what’s your purpose, they would most likely respond – “to make money of course” or, possibly to “give people a place to stay” “to entertain,” or “have a fantastic dining experience” etc. Similarly, if you were to ask the staff of a Destination Marketing Organization, what’s your purpose – they would most likely answer “to grow tourism” or “to attract more visitors to my destination.”

These are all acceptable answers – at one level. They describe what an enterprise does and how it measures success. For the majority of hosts and destinations, business is, as Milton Friedman insisted, about transactions, profit for shareholders and the more of both is always deemed better regardless of the social cost.

For the individual business, success is measured in profit. For the destination marketer, answerable to either an industry board, a politician or both, success is most often measured as in growth of:

- the volume of trips,
- the number of tourists;
- spending by tourists;
- investment attracted into the tourism sector
- tax revenues derived from the tourism sector
- contribution to Gross Domestic Product (GDP)

Implicit in the justification for more volume is the assumption that more tourism will generate more jobs, more tax revenues, improve local amenities and, for the world as a whole, reduce the gap between the “have” countries that are the source of visitors with “have less” countries that receive them. The problem lies in the word “implicit” – these benefits are usually referred to in vague ways as promises to sugar coat a development proposition and are rarely quantified or tracked before or after a development.

The Conscious Travel model does not question the fact that tourism is primarily a commercial activity with the potential to generate sustainable benefits to the host community, many of which will be
material and financial in nature. What is questioned, however, is the failure to fully take into account all the costs and risks and to define success so narrowly. The gross impact is measured first and, in some cases, exclusively. Attention is less often on measuring the costs (financial, social and environmental). So unless there is a net benefit to all stakeholders, and unless the risks associated with further expansion are both identified, assessed and mitigated all or in part, such growth can be simply uneconomic, potentially damaging and biophysically unsustainable.

But Conscious Travel does invite destination marketers and enterprises to probe a little deeper and tap a range of potentially more inspiring reasons for existence that might have greater power to attract, motivate and satisfy a wider range of stakeholders. We genuinely believe that there is a strong commercial financial reason for sincerely identifying and aligning behind a higher purpose and focus that delivers some form of greater social good. Our approach is based on the assumption that by focusing on the delivery of a wider range of outcomes (often subjective and involving emotional, even spiritual responses from the people involved, regardless of their role), profits will follow, increase and stabilize.

We stated in Principle #5, that it was time for tourism as a whole to shift from its pursuit of more (more visitors and more spending) to better. The concept of flourishing was introduced as a more attractive and positive purpose statement. We genuinely believe that there is a strong commercial financial reason for sincerely identifying and aligning behind a higher purpose and focus that delivers some form of greater social good. Our approach is based on the assumption that by focusing on the delivery of a wider range of outcomes (often subjective and involving emotional, even spiritual responses from the people involved, regardless of their role), profits will follow, increase and stabilize.

The purpose of real live connections and the joy of “breaking bread” with another (sharing a meal; visiting a home; participating in an activity) with someone from a completely different culture is that it reminds us that our perspective/paradigm/mindset is just one of many. AirBnB – a highly commercial enterprise – has tapped into this human need very effectively by enabling individuals to earn extra income from their homes and sharing some hospitality and extending a highly personal welcome.

Here are some thoughts regarding the Purpose of Tourism expressed by Jessica Lee a Tour Guide in the Middle East and shared on the Conscious Travel blog.

As those involved at the top of the tourism tree become more and more focused on pricing and marketing it’s now more important than ever for those down at the roots of the industry to realise the role we can each play in promoting a different ideal; an approach that, for me, is the true purpose of tourism. Seeking connections between people, places and cultures so that the tourist is no longer just a spectator peeping through the window into an exotic ‘other’ land but part of that world, if only for a minute, themselves.

A good guide or leader can make all the difference in helping to lift the lid off a place and allow tourists to travel not just further but We need to foster a sense of inclusion where it’s not ‘us’ against ‘them’. I’ve lost count of the times I’ve overheard guides tell their clients to not talk to anyone in markets and at sights and on the street. If you dive into the market and are comfortable chatting to the vendors, your clients will feel that they can do this too. If you just walk through simply giving a spiel on the history along the way and ignoring everyone, that’s the way your passengers will act as well. For our groups we are the benchmark for how to behave and by using this responsibility wisely we can inspire our clients to go out and make local connections themselves.

3. Tourism as an Agent of Regeneration and Revitalisation. Tourism could (and often does) become an agent for change in a community stimulating and encouraging the renewal and revitalisation of its landscapes, infrastructure, amenities, culture and environment. There are, of course, countless tales of places being transformed by the vision and efforts of one or two individuals. The European EDEN project (European Destinations of Excellence) is an excellent project replete with case studies of regeneration. In the chapter on Perspective #6, the role that tourism can play supporting the growing revitalisation of places and various local living economies initiatives was highlighted.

If the purpose and goal of tourism in a community is to enrich the lives of its inhabitants hosts, as opposed to simply increase returns to shareholders controlling valuable property assets, then we can expect to see more social enterprises and cooperatives.

4. Tourism and Hospitality as a Source of Positive Social Impact. Tourism and hospitality are two sectors in which social enterprise and cooperatives can make a positive social impact by hiring socially disenfranchised people to acquire a new skill as tour guide.
or chef; by raising funds for local social projects; eliminating food waste; or matching volunteers and impact investors with worthwhile projects in the destinations they have visited on vacation.

5. Tourism as an Agent of Inspiration – instilling wonder and awe.

I have left what I think is the real, most ennobling, most important, most inspiring purpose of travel to the last and that is to re-kindle a sense of wonder and awe at the mystery of the universe and the miracle of evolution.

The biggest tragedy associated with the application of an industrial model and mindset to tourism has been the objectification of guests who have become wallets; of unique places that have become points on a checklist that need to be “done” and of residents who become objects of curiosity to be captured on film or digital memory card. Thanks to customers’ belief that they have a right to cheap travel and suppliers’ tendency to drop prices when demand ebbs, the tourist economy is on a “race to the bottom.” Standardisation and automation have led to a “sea of sameness” and the sheer congestion and toil associated from getting from one place to another cause numbness to replace wonder.

It has taken 13.7 billion years to evolve the magic and mystery that exist in each destination and that are often missed as we rush to fill a room, cater to an impatient diner, or meet a departure schedule. Most tourists are so numbed out by the very act of getting there, that it can take days before they slow down enough to really appreciate the wonder that’s all about them.

As discussed at greater length in the section PROTECTION, A critical first step towards dealing with the challenges facing humanity is learning how to care and to live in harmonious relationship with the Nature of which we are a part. That comes when we realise that we are all one family travelling on what Buckminster Fuller called “spaceship earth.” It happens when we realise that we are not helpless specks in an unfeeling universe but central characters in an evolving drama. It happens when we look at the miraculous results of 13.7 billion years of evolution and stop dismissing it as “nothing but.”

It happens when we slow down enough to experience:

the awe of being a part of a creation that is good when we find ourselves in a harmonious relationship with it. It will not be through raw power or synthetic activism that will cause us to care. It is the simple beginning of the romantic awe one has in cultivating a garden. The miracle of germination, sprout, growth, fruition and harvest that centers us back to the earth. It is mindfully feeling our steps on the grass and appreciating weeds that help us understand our place. There is something praiseworthy in the symphonic chorus of pre-dawn birds, the melody of barking dogs and the final notes of dusk’s insects. Until we remember that the dirt we plow is where we originate and where we will finally rest it will remain a meaningless obstruction to progress. 17

For humanity to be able to stop the growth Titanic steaming headlong into an iceberg, we must cease viewing Nature as something out there, a meaningless obstruction to progress. We need to put down our books about nature and actually get into a rainstorm, be startled by the deer we startle, climb a tree like a chameleon. It’s good for the soul to go where humans do not have great say about what happens. Between these trips to the “great outside” we need only open our hearts at the smaller encounters; the smell of old sunlight on a leaf pile, the chrysalis of a butterfly inside our mailbox, the glimpse of an earthworm that helps us grow our tomatoes. This literal immersion in nature helps prepare us for a figurative immersion. This is where we take our reasoned minds and stuff them back into our bodies, realising that there is no membrane separating us from the natural world.

When you step back at look at the five deeper expressions of Purpose as a whole, you can see that they all revolve around the idea of “becoming fully alive” or realizing what it means to be fully human, awake, aware and alert, to expressing oneself to the fullest extent possible, to being all that one can be. There is one verb that encapsulates all those aspirations and that is “to flourish.”

So as you reflect on ways in which the travel and visitor economy might help all its stakeholders flourish, consider these questions:

- What would happen if the community envisioned tourism not just as a generator of cash, income, and taxes but as a creative force for community rejuvenation; celebration and expression?

- What would happen if the community said let’s draw everyone together to explore ways of ensuring our visitors leave - not satisfied but ecstatic - full to overflowing with emotionally charged memories of unique, meaningful experiences and encounters and discoveries?

- What will it take to ensure that those encounters touch their hosts in equally positive delightful and positive ways?

- What will it take for the natural outcome to be for those relationships to be sustained digitally after the trip such that many of your guests continue to rave and refer and plan a return trip?

- What will it take for the visitor economy to become one in which all residents in your community want to participate in? What will it take for residents and guests to account for 80% of your marketing effort?

- What will it take for your visitor economy to thrive; for the benefits to flow into all corners of the community; and for the benefits to stay in the community and not be leaked out or siphoned off?

"DON’T ASK WHAT THE WORLD NEEDS. ASK WHAT MAKES YOU COME ALIVE. BECAUSE WHAT THE WORLD NEEDS IS PEOPLE WHO HAVE COME ALIVE."
PEOPLE

As travel and hospitality are all about people meeting, serving, taking care of and entertaining other people this sector has traditionally been highly labour intensive.

Despite the increase in automation, every aspect of travel involves human beings both encountering and relying directly on other human beings while moving from home to another place to have an experience. Leisure travellers in particular have placed a high value on the inter-personal service in tourism facilities and the chance to meet both local hosts and fellow guests. Business travellers appear to trade off personal contact for efficiency. Research into the so called “Connected Traveller” points to their willingness to accept higher levels of machine automation in return for convenience and speed.

The act of extending hospitality to strangers is one of the oldest expressions of humanity and core to the business of tourism, hospitality and gastronomy. No matter how fine the facilities are; no matter how delicious the food, its value to both the host and guest is dependent on the humans who serve the customer. The primary unit of activity is a relationship not a transaction and it is the nature and quality of the relationship that determines value. Seventy years of applying an industrial model of production and consumption to what is in effect a highly personal relationship (albeit temporary in many cases) between a guest and host, has encouraged a fixation on the financial transaction instead.

The industrial model views people as resources (units of production) and the goal is to maximize profits by increasing productivity and efficiency through whatever means necessary (including automation and outsourcing). As a result, the positive net impact on local labour sources i.e., human lives and livelihoods in the destination rarely lives up to industry promises.

Dr. Danah Zohar in her prescient book published back in 2004 summatizes a prevailing approach to people associated with conventional business:

> At the heart of capitalism and business-as-usual lies a very narrow definition of what it means to be human and to be engaged in human enterprise. Human beings are currently measured by their thirst for profit and their ability to consume. Employees are measured by their capacity to produce what others can consume. Viewed merely as consumers, customers and employees are not seen as people who value certain things, who harbour loyalties and passions, who strive and dream, who seek a particular quality of life. Big consumers (the wealthy) have more value than small consumers (the poor). Capitalism’s assumption that we will always act so as to pursue our own self-interest caries the underlying assumption that human beings are essentially selfish, and that we will always act to promote "number one." 18

Even earlier in 2000, Dr. Lynda Gratton, concluded as a result of a longitudinal study of six years in duration that people management practic-es had changed little over the period of her research. In her subsequent book, Living Strategy: Putting People at the Heart she calls for a new way of thinking and doing based on four propositions:

1. there are fundamental differences between people as an asset and traditional assets of finance and technology;

2. an understanding of those differences creates a whole new way of thinking and working that requires a complete shift in mind set;

3. business strategies can only be realized through people; and

4. creating a strategic approach to people necessitates a strong dialogue across the organisation.

The topics (questions) explored below are needed to adequately prepare both Social Entrepreneurs and Conscious Hosts for their role as Change Agents - these three terms will be used interchangeably throughout this document.

• How has the industrialization process affected the way tourism affects people in their different roles (employee, guest, partner-supplier, investor/owner, resident)?

• How is the work place changing?

• What are the implications of these change forces?

How has the industrialization process affected people in their different roles?

The art and practice of hospitality is as old as human history itself and universally practiced by all cultures to varying degrees of generosity. The original art of hospitality was both a practical, adaptive response to circumstances and an expression of our fundamental interdependence as human beings. If a person left the safety of their kinship group through injury or disorientation, or out of a need to travel away from home, survival depended on finding strangers willing to provide shelter from the elements and restock supplies. Pre-modern, industrial man simply didn’t make a big distinction between friend and stranger- all are kin, sharing common needs to be loved, accepted, fed, warm, and safe. Indigenous, pre-industrial cultures recognized and expressed an interdependent and cooperative relationship that much of modern society has since lost. Most importantly, indigenous hospitality formed part of the “Gift “ culture and was offered freely based on fundamental principles of mutualism and reciprocity.

The very nature of the industrial operating system necessitated a de-humanizing process as it automated, standardized, outsourced, re-engineered and streamlined the production processes along its value chain in order squeeze higher profits out of every transaction. Industry talk shifted from people and places to products and market segments and the offer of free hospitality became confined largely to visiting friends and relatives. Mass transportation diluted the ratio of host to guest and vastly increased the number of strangers on the move. Adoption of the industrial model shifted focus from guest to product.

By adopting an operating model suited to the manufacture of “things,” tourism became dragged down by the twin forces of increasing competition and commodification that could only be contained through cost cutting, automation, job losses and price discounting. The sector now has a reputation for poor wages - the International Labour Organization (ILO) actually applies the adjective outrageous – long, unsocial working hours, unattractive working conditions, high levels of labour turnover, use of part-time, casual, seasonal labour (zero-hour contracts) and difficulties associated with recruitment and retention.

A “product centric” view dominated mass tourism for well over six decades. The Internet appeared initially not to have changed that. By the mid 1990s early adopters of Internet technologies such as Expedia and Travelocity, become powerful online travel agents. Despite using revolutionary technology, they continued to market their products the old way – broadcasting a monologue via a growing number of channels
to an invisible and, to all intents and purposes, anonymous set of customers whom they called “eyeballs.”

It only took five more years, however, for the more discerning to recognize the Internet's true impact would not be to make robots of us all, but could actually liberate the humanness in humanity. As we entered the new Millennium “product centricity” peaked and a major shift in power from company to customer began. The Internet enabled buyers to talk back to sellers and soon they insisted on having a proper two-way conversation and later helping design the product or service. That power shift has fundamentally changed marketing.

Now we’re seeing another power shift that has the power to make or break tourism and hospitality enterprises – an equally big shift in power from companies to employees. That power shift is turning “HR” on its head. It is also creating a huge opportunity for conscious hosts, social enterprises and their destination communities to increase the net benefits from a flourishing visitor economy.

How is the work place changing outside of tourism?

The most active front-line of change in current society is the work place. Even that term is becoming meaningless as our mobile devices enable us to stay connected to our jobs twenty-four hours a day from anywhere in the world with a WiFi or 3G connection. For many, work is no longer tied to a place – the factory, office cubicle or hotel lobby. So a more accurate question would be to ask “How is the world of work changing?”

The four main change drivers turning the workplace upside down are: Technology, Science, a Shortage of Talent, Shifting Values, and Workplace Diversity. They are summarized below and discussed in various levels of detail in three reports: Future Work Skills by the Institute of the Future (2011); the Future of Work report (2015); and The Future of Work: Jobs and Skills in 2030 published by the UK Commission for Jobs and Skills, and two recent books - Jacob Morgan’s The Future of Work: How to Attract New Talent, Build Better Leaders, and Create Competitive Organizations and Lynda Gratton’s Shift: The Future of Work is Already Here.

Technology, in the form of global connectivity, increasing power in smaller, mobile even wearable, implanted devices, artificial intelligence, software as a service, cloud computing, the Internet of Things and Big Data is also changing where and how we work and who does it. Traditional organizational boundaries are dissolving and small, agile, teams of diverse skills and disciplines, amplified by a new level of collective intelligence can now achieve the kind of scale and reach previously attainable only by very large enterprises.

Science: An explosion of knowledge and understanding in the fields of neuroscience, positive psychology, behavioural psychology, epigenetics, systems thinking, complexity, psychometric testing, and queries into the nature of consciousness itself are all being deployed in the business world to great effect by increasing both performance and well being. We are gaining in our understanding of and appreciation for the power, plasticity and diversity of human intelligence and our inherent adaptability that has fuelled a deeper appreciation of the true value of the people working in our companies.

Shortage of Talent - The theme of IBM’s CEO Survey in 2012 was Leading through Connections by “empowering employees through values”, “engaging customers through relationships” and “amplifying innovation via partnerships.” The survey showed how far the pendulum has swung from treating human resources as a cost and even a possible liability on a corporate balance sheet. Human capital, customer relationships, innovative products and services are now perceived as the primary source of sustained value. But what constitutes “talent” in a knowledge/information economy is very different from that considered important in an industrial economy. Traditional education has been slow to adapt to the changes in the workplace and, as a consequence is also going through a re-think but not as fast as the workplace needs. The outfall of this response lag is not so much a shortage of labour (especially in light of the mobility of today’s workforce) but a shortage of appropriately skilled personnel ready to work in corporations whose structures, cultures and purpose are evolving rapidly.

A shared study by Accenture, Brookings Institution and The Global Business Coalition for Education, Investment in Global Education; A Strategic Imperative for Business, states that we are facing a global talent time bomb — we simply do not have enough people with the right kinds of skills for 21st century jobs. Manpower’s 2014 Talent Shortage Survey indicates that 36% of companies are reporting talent shortages. And Oxford Economics data suggests that by 2021, 25 countries will have serious shortages of college-educated talent, including USA, UK, Canada, Japan, France and Germany. Finally, the situation is no better, and probably worse in the Travel and Tourism sector. The WTTTC has conducted its own survey of member companies and report that:

Over half the travel and tourism companies described their experience hiring staff as difficult, with the challenge greatest for higher skilled and more professional roles. Alongside engineers, chefs and other technical roles, other jobs that are particularly difficult to recruit for include accountants and food and beverage managers. Nearly two-thirds of the companies also reported that recruiting staff has become more difficult in the past two years.

The main effects of talent shortages have been to increase the workload on existing staff which engenders lower morale and less creativity and creates difficulties meeting service standards. 91

In western, aging economies, the labour/talent pool is actually destined to shrink rather than expand. It comprises three sources - those already holding onto a job but interested in a change of employer; those who, by choice or necessity, broke free or were pushed into becoming self-employed, free lancers, sole traders and volunteers or who joined or started social enterprises, collectives, NGOs, not-for-profits and worker-directed companies; and the unemployed.

The past ten years have seen a huge rise in the number of self-employed “freelancers” and some 30% of university undergraduates would prefer to start a business that seek a fulltime job. The Internet has been awash with sites encouraging and showing people how to “follow their bliss,” “make a difference”, find “meaning and purpose” and “financial freedom” by running their own business. It’s also become clear that anyone with a smartphone can potentially execute a bright idea by pulling together creative, talented but virtual teams, deploying software rented from the cloud and crowd fund it from micro investors.

In short, attracting, retaining and motivating quality employees is fast becoming the biggest headache for anyone in business and will necessitate some courageous and imaginative action. Successful enterprises are those that assume greater responsibility for attracting “raw talent” and then educating and shaping that talent to support the needs of the enterprise and its community.
Workplace Diversity: Entrepreneurs and managers are now leading teams of people whose composition in terms of age, gender, ethnicity, nationality, competency and values is more diverse than at any period in history. Multinational companies have teams located in literally hundreds of countries such that their employees have vastly different backgrounds now work with each other on common projects. While diversity is undoubtedly an asset, coping and harnessing it takes a variety of skills which are more likely to come from life than any school text. Nevertheless, tomorrow's entrepreneurs need to be prepared.

The furniture manufacturer Herman Miller has invested considerably in understanding the needs of the people who will occupy their cubicles, use their desks and sit on their office chairs. Their report Generations at Work is a must read.

The 21st century has ushered in a new, generation-bending era in the U.S. workplace. Fifty-five-year-old Baby Boomers are on project teams with 22-year-old Millennials and reporting to 45-year-old GenXers while Vets, though fewer in numbers, retain positions of power and influence.

There are two, over-sized “bookend” generations who have the greatest impact on consumer behavior over the past decade: Baby Boomers (aged 52 plus) and Gen Ys also known as Millennials (aged 20-34) whose numbers in the US alone total 78 and 77 million respectively. The same trend repeats throughout much of the western world especially in the developing world, where the Gen Y generation is rapidly moving into positions of influence due to their number, purchasing power, and ease of working and living in a digitally connected, globalized economy.

In many respects, Millennials and Boomers share more in common than people realize. According to an article in Harvard Business Review:

Boomers and Millennials do not want static jobs or careers that follow a pre-determined pattern. Instead, they yearn for a lifelong odyssey, a fluid journey in search of meaning, stretched by challenges and stimulated by constant learning.

Half of all boomers and a third of Gen Ys regularly volunteer - and give substantial amounts of time (on average 10 hours a week). More than 80 per cent of both boomers and Ys want employers to get involved and are looking for opportunities to give back through work.

The bookend generations opt out of the old ways of work, they are redefining success - and are willing to accept a radically “remixed” set of rewards. Both generations rate five other forms of compensation - a range of new experiences, a great team, flexible work arrangements, recognition for a job well done and the ability to give back to society through work - as at least as important as money.

Women are playing a major role in this shift up Maslow's heirarchy since the mid 1970s when many started to work outside the home in huge numbers and began juggling the demands of functioning effectively in the workplace while still maintaining primary responsibilities for child rearing. But this characterization does not apply to all women. A study in Understanding the needs of the people who will occupy their cubicles, use their desks and sit on their office chairs, use their desks and sit on their office chairs and are valued in the workplace while still maintaining primary responsibilities for child rearing. Women want recognition”. While women of all ages are likely to play a major role in a shift in values, it is the men and women in the Millennials generation who have been identified as the key drivers of change.

Millennials and Boomers do not want static jobs or careers that follow a pre-determined pattern. Instead, they yearn for a lifelong odyssey, a fluid journey in search of meaning, stretched by challenges and stimulated by constant learning.

Half of all boomers and a third of Gen Ys regularly volunteer - and give substantial amounts of time (on average 10 hours a week). More than 80 per cent of both boomers and Ys want employers to get involved and are looking for opportunities to give back through work.

The bookend generations opt out of the old ways of work, they are redefining success - and are willing to accept a radically “remixed” set of rewards. Both generations rate five other forms of compensation - a range of new experiences, a great team, flexible work arrangements, recognition for a job well done and the ability to give back to society through work - as at least as important as money.

Women are playing a major role in this shift up Maslow’s heirarchy since the mid 1970s when many started to work outside the home in huge numbers and began juggling the demands of functioning effectively in the workplace while still maintaining primary responsibilities for child rearing. But this characterization does not apply to all women. A study of working women in the 35-50 age group on the US, UK and Germany found that an average of 40% are “unencumbered” in terms of child rearing and across geographies seek and value similar things.97

1. Women flourish and flower when they feel they have agency and impact and have the ability and opportunity to self-actualise. Flourishing is grounded in health and well-being as well as in freedom and autonomy.

2. They want “intellectual challenge in order to grow their mastery and ace a domain of knowledge or an expertise. But since an approving audience is what inspires mastery and the pursuit of excellence, women want recognition”.

3. Women find work meaningful when it allows them to model success and exceed expectations and advances causes of meaning and relevance to them.

While women of all ages are likely to play a major role in a shift in values, it is the men and women in the Millennials generation who have been identified as the key drivers of change.

The Deloitte Millennial Survey and the EIU Societal Purpose Survey revealed “a resounding message that the success of business should not be measured on profit alone”. In fact, profit as a sole measure of success, was rejected by 92 percent of Millennials and 71 percent of business leaders. In its Meaningful Brands study, Havas Media also found that people would not care if over 70% of brands disappeared. Meaningful Brands i.e., those brands perceived as improving the well-being of people’s lives in a tangible, significant and fulfilling way, have enjoyed better financial returns than even top hedge funds.

The latest edition of the Edelman 8095 Exchange study 94, which surveys 4,000 Millennials in 11 countries, also found that roughly 80 percent of Millennials want to have a job with a purpose that matches their personal passions. In other words, young professionals worldwide are looking at a company's shared value.

A 2012 study Talent Impact: What Workers Want by Net Impact 95 showed 67 percent of employees in the U.S. want to work for an organization that shares their values; this number jumps to 74 percent for current students. Furthermore, many of the students the students Net Impact study interviewed said they would be willing to take a pay cut to work for the right company.

Shift in Values: as will be discussed though out this document, we are witnessing one of the biggest and fastest shifts in personal values recorded in human history. When values shift to such an extent, everything else changes.96

Values are a shorthand method of describing what is important to us individually or collectively and shape our behaviour. Values are concepts that transcend contexts. Researchers, working in over 80 countries, have found 60 human values that seem to recur across cultures with pretty much everyone holding everyone of these values but to varying degrees. People are not as rational as we think – emotions and values are critical in determining how we process information i.e., how we perceive our world and how we behave.

Two value-types are particularly important:

i) Intrinsic values; which are inherently rewarding to pursue such as caring, loyalty, integrity, affiliation with nature; and

ii) Extrinsic values, which are centred on external approval or rewards such as wealth, image, status etc.

The diagram opposite, published in Common Cause 97, maps a range of values according to their type:

The psychologist Abraham Maslow is well known for identifying how needs and associated values affect the way human beings behave. As illustrated below, a human’s most basic need and urge is to survive – to secure the sufficient food, water and then safety to be able to sustain and reproduce life. Next is a need to belong and to be loved by others and to
feel part of a group. Once that has been achieved, the individual is able to develop his own identity and sense of self worth and is better able to control his life and chart his or her own course. These three needs, core to all members of humanity, Maslow described as “deficiency needs”. He went on to identify a higher order of needs called “growth needs” that enable a human to develop greater capacity for acquiring wisdom, insight, meaning, and purpose and that motivate them to greater levels of service.

Another more recent pioneer in the examination of what a “values-based” enterprise might mean is Richard Barrett, founder of the Values Centre who has mapped Maslow’s needs to stages in the development of consciousness as expressed by a person, an enterprise or even a country.

Both Barrett and Maslow suggest that the individuals and the collections of individuals we call society journey up the various stages of this ladder with varying degrees of success towards a state of self-actualization – when our full potential as human beings is expressed.

Barrett suggests that some form of transformative shift occurs (see stage four in diagram) when an individual moves from focussing on meeting their “deficiency needs” to their “growth needs” largely because, while satisfying the deficiency needs may lead to temporary improvements in comfort, their satisfaction never delivers on-going peace and contentment. These needs act like a bottomless pit requiring more and more goods or experiences to satisfy.

Barrett and many others observe that since a growing proportion of the world’s population now have their deficiency needs met, huge segments of a global society are concurrently passing through the fourth transformation stage in Maslow’s hierarchy. They are reflecting on their own purpose and values and moving from an obsession with “I” to “we,” from a narrow sense of self to an ever widening sense of self that starts by taking other members of the human community into consideration and then widening that to encompass all life forms. In so doing, they...
are re-defining what it means to be human. It is the movement that Otto Sharmer describes as a shift from ‘Ego’ Consciousness to ‘Eco’ Consciousness 100. The impact of such a movement on virtually every aspect of human activity cannot be under-estimated and is a persistent theme in our Conscious Travel story.

While I have not come across a comparison of these two interpretations (i.e., that put forward by the Values Centre 101 and that expressed in Common Cause ), there does seem to be some significant overlap suggesting that as people have the deficiency needs met and develop their consciousness (i.e., move through stage four in Barrett’s diagram), their values shift from being extrinsically oriented to more intrinsic in nature.

Understanding both the variation and potential shift in values provides a very effective way of understanding why individuals, communities and behaviors behave the way they do; why some seem to be acting in unison (singing from the same hymn sheet) and others seem "all over the place." It also explains why some messages and modes of communication work with some people and not with others. Someone oriented towards extrinsic values will not respond to more emotive messaging appealing to values like unity with nature or social justice.

Understanding values provides a further key to understanding how organizations change. In Perspective # 2 we learned to change a system, you need to change its purpose. In human systems such as companies and societies, the purpose is a reflection of shared values also known as culture.

Richard Barrett and colleagues The Values Centre have developed a set of tools that enable individual values and shared values (i.e., culture) to be mapped. Where the personal values and aspirations of employees differ from those experienced in the company, as expressed implicitly or explicitly by its leadership, then dysfunction occurs. There is no alignment or coherence.

When the values expressed and lived by the members of a company match those it might wish to attract or influence e.g., as employees, customers or investors, the task will proceed smoothly. Companies consistently voted as a Top Place to Work attract a much larger pool of recruits and those selected are more likely to fit with the culture and both stay and recommend to peers – reducing costs associated with turnover and ongoing recruitment.

What Are the Implications of these Change Forces for the future of Tourism and Hospitality?

Labour relations constitute the “Achilles Heal” of mass industrial tourism and an opportunity for those businesses and destinations determined to break out of what is a negative cycle.

The mass tourism market suffers from low barriers to entry, fierce global competition, product perishability, seasonal flows in demand, vulnerability due to unpredictable exogenous factors - economic conditions, changes in consumer demand, fluctuating exchange rates, and events that disrupt visitation flows (weather, natural hazards, political instability, disease, conflicts, terrorism). (see Appendix)

Profit margins are notoriously thin and price discounting is the most commonly used tactic for maintaining market share and sustaining cash flow.

According to the Deloitte Hospitality Report, the average hotelier in the US spends 33% on labour costs and turnover is 31% - in the UK the same statistic is 34%. Since the onset of the recession in 2007-8, high unemployment rates combined recently with high rates of labour mobility (immigration and displacement) have led to labour practices less favourable to employees in terms of take home pay, hours worked, benefits, and training. In the UK hotel sector, only 41% of companies offered training. In competitive urban markets such as London, reports of intimidation, illegal piece rates, and payment less than minimum wage have increased. Similar patterns are presented by the global cruise industry. 102

In short, labour in mainstream mass tourism has become a cheap commodity – a substitutable resource to be consumed and then discarded and because the global economy is generating so many hungry, desperate, cash needy, low skilled workers, there’s little incentive or opportunity for tourism and hospitality employers (especially in multinational companies with global franchises) to change. Politicians enjoy the fact that tourism and opportunity provide a relatively easy entry into the job market – in times of austerity and public sector cut backs, tourism and hospitality has punched above its weight in terms of job creation but the quality of employment and its long-term sustainability is highly suspect.

The $64,000 question is does it have to be this way? How can the negative spiral of cheap travel that leads to cheap jobs, poor service, low spending, a need for more growth, and less customer satisfaction that, in turn, generates more discounting and more cheap but deteriorating product be reversed?

The encouraging news is that there are exceptions to this trend - There are several outstanding roles models who have set the standard for levels of customer service and employee engagement that refute any claim or suggestion that poor labour practices are inevitably par for the course in tourism and hospitality.

Chip Conley grew his business from one motel in northern California to a brand comprising 29 properties before merging with another company, he went on to become a sought after speaker having written two best selling books on human motivation; runs a consulting training company and is also Vice-President Strategy for Airbnb. 103

Ritz Carlton founded by Caesar Ritz has been internationally
recognized as setting the Gold Standard for customer service by putting their employees first.

Dannie Mayer, one of New York’s most successful restaurateurs, built his multi-million-dollar hospitality business by focusing on serving and aligning the needs of all his stakeholders, starting again with his employees. He too now runs a successful consultancy, the H quotient.

Herb Kelleher, founder of Southwest Airlines, America’s most profitable low cost airline consistently delivered high returns to investors while achieving international recognition for employee relations and customer service. Both Chip Conley and Herb Kelleher were early members of the group known as Conscious Capitalists.

These leaders all started out as entrepreneurs – not individuals trained in the sector by working their way up the ranks and absorbing outmoded practices left over from an industrial era. What unites them is a fundamental belief in the positive side to our “human nature” and a commitment to helping all their stakeholders flourish. In most cases, they listened to their hearts as well as their heads; and they intuited that it takes people to make profits; by putting people at the heart of their enterprise they reaped a financial dividend and created role models for others to follow.

There are also a number of other dynamics that can be harnessed by destination communities wishing to break the “cheap travel” cycle.

1. As stated earlier, power has not just shifted from companies to consumers, it is also shifting in favour of employees. The Millenial Generation, along with their younger successors, is particularly adept at deploying “New Power” afforded by social media to make change and push for social justice, a living wage, human rights etc. Note: the compulsory introduction of a minimum living wage in the UK could increase labour costs by 50%.

2. Many of those consumers that have disposable income to spend are becoming more mindful, conscious consumers reading labels and preferring to support responsible businesses – see section on PULL. The challenge, however, is that middle class incomes have flat-lined for over twenty years and post recession austerity measures combined with the growth in short-sighted labour practices within the labour intensive service sector means that most employees cannot afford to purchase the goods and services they work so hard to make available. The minimum wage is no longer enough to support consumption. Yet the tourism and hospitality industry has consistently resisted attempts to introduce minimum or living wages where they have been proposed.

3. A focus on increasing engagement – in short, creating passion, energy, power and zest within your enterprise could pay dividends.

Engagement in the workplace is a dry term to describe the extent to which employees are fully present, bring all their faculties to work and demonstrate some passion, aliveness and interest in their tasks. If ever there was a single indicator that tracks the health of a company then “engagement” is probably it. That being the case, surely it is appalling that, according to Gallup’s new 142-country study on the State of the Global Workplace, only 13% of the global workplace is considered engaged at work. The majority of employees would appear to resemble zombies rather than alive human beings with any traces of passion and enthusiasm. The bulk of employees worldwide – 63% – are “not engaged,” meaning they lack motivation and are less likely to invest discretionary effort in organizational goals or outcomes; and 24% are “actively disengaged,” indicating they are unhappy and unproductive at work and liable to spread negativity to coworkers.

Poor pay and working conditions combined with poor management create unhappy employees and guests become collateral damage. No one is going to be engaged and capable of exemplary service if they are tired, hungry and afraid of being evicted!

4. Demonstrate genuine commitment to employees’ wellbeing – i.e. meet the need for balance and decent working conditions. Respect the diversity of talents, capacities and intelligence within the existing work force, matching jobs to the individual’s strengths and demonstrating ways in which the employee can realise their own dreams and aspirations i.e. move up Maslow’s hierarchy in their own lives. The role models cited above have deployed this strategy – why is it significantly the exception not the rule?

5. Enable employees to bring their whole selves to work

Authors such as Jacob Morgan, The Future of Work, published last year and Lynda Gratton The Shift: The Future of Work Is Already Here, have both done a very thorough job of mapping the changing workplace landscape. They emphasize the flattening organizational structures and employees’ needs for recognition, growth, empowerment, meaning and purpose but don’t really get to the root causes of success or failure. Nor do they touch upon the way in which the basic assumptions about human nature on which commerce is based are currently dissolving in front of our eyes.

This deeper analysis is left to more courageous writers such as Richard Barrett in Liberating the Corporate Soul 104, Raj Sisodia, David Wolfe and Jag Sheth in their book Firms of Endearment 105, and positive psychologist Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi in Good Business 106 who together pull the rug from under the utilitarian economists. In an in-depth analysis of brands that are loved, Fears of Endearment, Raj Sisodia et al describes a humanistic company as:

One run in such a way that all its stakeholder develop an emotional connection with it, an affectionate regard not unlike the way many people feel about their favourite athletic teams. Humanistic companies – or firms of endearment – seek to maximize their value to society as a whole. They are the ultimate value creators creating emotional spiritual, social, cultural, intellectual, ecological and, of course financial value. … These companies are imbued with the joy of service… recognize the inherent need people have to serve others… they are thriving despite onerous regulations and unscrupulous competitors by holding onto their humanity.

They even go as far as to suggest that if firms of endearment can be described by any one characteristic it is that they possess a humanistic soul.

Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi, who brought the concept of flow and peak performance to national attention, also identifies the source of meaning, purpose and vision as soul.

A paycheck is a sufficient impetus to motivate some employees to do the minimum amount to get by, and for others, the challenge of getting ahead in the provides a satisfactory focus for a while. But
The point I am making here is that topics that were once taboo in business circles are now being openly discussed. After three hundred years of splitting matter from spirit, we are recognizing—or perhaps simply remembering—that humans are more than rational personalities encased in a body suit but possess an ephemeral, invisible quality—sometimes called Soul, other times called Higher Self—that provides meaning and purpose to our lives.

Employees increasingly want and expect to bring their whole selves to work and those selves are highly complex. They also house considerable untapped talent. Traditional business has been tapping into a small proportion of that “resource” focusing mostly on the linguistic, communicative and numerate literacy associated with a small part of the brain.

A mere twenty years have passed since Daniel Goleman popularized the concept of Emotional Intelligence (EQ) and introduced ways of evaluating how successful we are at understanding and regulating our emotions, expressing empathy, reading body language and relating to others. EQ was found to be a better predictor of success in business than traditional IQ.

Despite the critical importance of “social capital” and its associated intelligence (EQ), there still proved to be something missing. A person could demonstrate high EQ but still be disengaged, feeling unsafe, and unable to bring his whole, true self to work. Engagement—better described as passion—at work has continued to fall and the missing ingredient has something to do with Soul. A decade after Goleman published Emotional Intelligence: Why It Can Matter More Than IQ, Dr. Danah Zohar, author of Spiritual Capital—Wealth we can live by introduced SQ to the lexicon:

SQ, or Spiritual intelligence is the intelligence with which we access our deepest meanings, values, purposes and highest motivations. It addresses what it means to be human and the ultimate meaning and purpose of life.

Not long after, Dr. Cindy Wrigglesworth, added SQ21—The Twenty-One Skills of Spiritual Intelligence to the discussion of human psyche and what it means to be human and Luthens introduced the concept of Positive Psychological Capital.

The concepts and practices associated with Conscious Travel are based on this more complete understanding of what it means to be a healthy human in the 21st century. By nurturing all four aspects of our humanity—body, mind, heart and soul—with our need to be physically healthy, mentally alert, emotionally in balance and spiritually fulfilled, we can truly care for all involved in the visitor economy.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types of Human Intelligence and Associated Personal Capital</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Capital</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Body – physiology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brain function – thoughts, plans,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>intellectual acuity, creativity, rationality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotions, feelings, relationships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Values, purpose, meaning</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6. Replace command and control styles of management and associated rigid processes and protocols, functional siloes and hierarchical managerial layers with more fluid, dynamic self-organizing relationships of accountability and purpose. In short distribute leadership responsibility more widely within the organization. 110

As Dan Pink describes effectively in his book on motivation called Drive, today’s employees people seek Autonomy—the freedom to direct themselves and ideally co-design the work itself; are happiest when developing a sense of Mastery and control over their lives and work and when they have identified a Purpose—either a personal sense of direction, a collective one, or, ideally both. This is at odds with the old industrial approach to control that resulted in scripted responses that employees had to mouth, while following rigid protocols, procedures and job descriptions that undermined spontaneity and acts of genuine caring and imaginative problem solving.

As companies flatten and switch from being hierarchies to wirearchies, the concept of managers as gatekeepers who act as intermediaries between commanding executives and controlled frontline staff is rapidly, and thankfully, weakening. The old worn distinction between leaders who have the vision and strategy and managers who execute and enforce is utterly unsuited to today’s circumstances.

Manager-leaders’ role is to serve and support the employee and not the other way around. Managers exist not to police and control employees but to inspire, engage, challenge, coach and enable them so that employees can grow into leaders themselves. Plan B

Change is possible but, as should by now be apparent, it is systemic change that is needed and there are no silver bullets. But when viewed from a systems lens, it’s clear—there’s no such thing as “cheap travel”—some one or some part of the system is paying a high price. In tourism, we see that price being paid at food banks, rising incidence of depression, exhaustion and fear.

The Regenerative Economy—based on affirming life and allowing for life to regenerate—has to start with respecting all human beings and enabling people to become all they can be. Those individuals within tourism and hospitality who have upheld these beliefs and principles have proven a positive stance towards people pays.
Over the past 1-15 years, products became destinations and destination capital (talent) as well as traditional investment and financial capital. whose personnel demanded far more than just a roof over their heads. but investors and diverse forms of creative, service and knowledge businesses communicate a kind of authenticity. The prize wasn’t only leisure visitors, more important for unique places to differentiate themselves and and...Again paradoxically, it was globalization – based on the hunger for novelty, the industrial system of production and consumption, that has made travel accessible for so many, both needs and is designed to standardize and homogenize. The commodification process starts the moment that hosts see and talk about places (accommodation, restaurants, attractions and places) as products and with a mindset that just standardize and homogenize. The commodification process starts the moment that hosts see and talk about places (accommodation, restaurants, attractions and places) as products and with a mindset that for people who have grown up with the condition passed within a day or two when my innate curiosity overcame anxiety and symptoms of what I now recognize as grief passed.

Maria Montessori understood that for people who had grown up with their hands in the soil and their bodies exposed to the elements for homesickness could ultimately debilitate. Her general practice in urban Naples was full of migrants complaining of various malaises for which there appeared to be no known physiological explanation. She intuited an effective cure – to encourage the patient to put up with the inconveniences of modern travel and travel half way around the world to simply sip another Frappacino in Starbucks in Ubud, Bali or gulp down another MacDonald’s hamburger in Pago Pago on an island in the middle of the Pacific? Commodified is as big a threat to the future of tourism as is congestion.

Again paradoxically, it was globalization – based on the hunger for expansion needed by multinational corporations – that made it ever more important for unique places to differentiate themselves and communicate a kind of authenticity. The prize wasn’t only leisure visitors, but investors and diverse forms of creative, service and knowledge business whose personnel demanded far more than just a roof over their heads.

In what is often called a Creative Economy the battle now is for human capital (talent) as well as traditional investment and financial capital. Over the past 1-15 years, products became destinations and destination leaders (national and municipal governments, economic development departments and tourism marketing agencies) have invested vast sums in branding consultants – experts in resource mapping, stakeholder engagement, creative story building, reputation development, image design, public relations and campaign development. City leaders also spent heavily on a small number of airport design and engineering firms to ensure they had the most impressive gateways. In both cases, since their designs were based on the shared approaches, assumptions, criteria and priorities of the old, extractive economy, somehow there is a weary sameness, sterility and artificiality to them.

While any attempt to counteract the current trend towards sameness that globalization seems to bring in its wake is to be applauded, the results will likely be superficial and temporary unless we frame our questions differently and are prepared to dig deeper. When it comes to places, the question should not be “how do we make ourselves different and stand out” but what does this place tell us about who we are? The first question suggests we can, of our own independent volition, craft an image, a brand or message that suits both us and our target audience and stamp it on our communications. The second implies a recognition that our identity has an emergent property that reveals itself naturally as we as hosts, inhabitants, residents and guests interact with the places we inhabit.

As the acclaimed American writer, Wendell Berry, observed, “We cannot know who we are until we know where we are.” That knowing requires so very much more than a set of geographical coordinates now instantly obtained on our phones by simply typing in a postal code.

And we certainly can’t outsource the discovery of our identity, for that is our life’s purpose.

To put Wendell Berry’s insight into a tourism context, I would add – “We cannot travel well unless we miss home, and we are unlikely to miss home unless we have experienced a deep knowing of it”. This is where Arne Naess’s “deep knowing” comes into play and why “places” will play such a critically important role in the Regenerative Economy of the future.

A sign of our times is that “homesickness” is no longer recognized as a medical condition. I suffered it once and intensely at the age of 14 having travelled for a similar number of hours by train and ferry from Victoria Station in London to Stuttgart in south Germany in order to learn the language with a family neither I nor my parents had ever met. The family couldn’t have been more kind and welcoming. Fortunately the condition passed within a day or two when my innate curiosity overcame anxiety and symptoms of what I now recognize as grief passed.

Personal mobility, both upward in an economic sense and geographically, in terms of the places we have visited, is both a hallmark and pre-requisite of success in our current, extractive economy. Starting in the 1850’s, human beings broke a pattern of inhabitation that had lasted...
several thousands of years. We became nomads again travelling from here to there on a daily basis for the purpose of making a living. Unlike our hunter gatherer ancestors who had an intimate knowledge of the land over which they traversed and the stars in the heavens that guided their routes, we are hermetically sealed in cars, trains, buses and planes - our passage determined by timetables, deals, seasons passes, prices and congestion. Unlike our farming ancestors whose movements were constrained by the need to tend animals and plants according to the land over which they traversed and the stars in the heavens that guided our hunter gatherer ancestors who had an intimate knowledge of the natural resources, containers of human capital, and sinks for financial energy going somewhere else spending countless hours in airports or on highways and in hotel rooms that look remarkably like those just left behind. The constant pressure to be and to do combined with the often unpleasant stimuli associated with economy travel or the daily commute require and cause numbness as a form of self protection. We retreat from life behind headphones and the screens of our tablets and kindles soothed and distracted by the incessant stream of digital bits that have the same effect as George Orwell’s soma. We immunize ourselves from the power and promise that places can offer and then wonder why fatigue is a daily companion.

Most of those responsible for any level of global or national decision making are rootless biosphere people who consume a great deal of time and energy going somewhere else spending hours less in airports or on highways and in hotel rooms that look remarkably like those just left behind. The constant pressure to be and to do combined with the often unpleasant stimuli associated with economy travel or the daily commute require and cause numbness as a form of self protection. We retreat from life behind headphones and the screens of our tablets and kindles soothed and distracted by the incessant stream of digital bits that have the same effect as George Orwell’s soma. We immunize ourselves from the power and promise that places can offer and then wonder why fatigue is a daily companion.

David Orr makes a similar but complementary distinction between residency and inhabitation.

A resident is a temporary occupant, putting down few roots and investing little, knowing little, and perhaps caring little for the immediate locale beyond its ability to gratify. As both a cause and effect of displacement, the resident lives in an indoor world of office building, shopping mall, automobile, apartment, and suburban house, and watches TV an average of four hours a day. (May I add Residents are increasingly knowing their world through electronic screens)

The inhabitant, in contrast, dwells in an intimate, organic, and mutually nourishing relationship with a place. Good inhabitation is an art requiring detailed knowledge of a place, the capacity for observation, and a sense of care and rootedness.

Residence requires cash and a map (or perhaps just a smart phone and wifi connection). A resident can reside anywhere that provides and income.

Inhabitants bear the marks of their places, whether rural or urban, in patterns of speech, through dress and behaviour. Up rooted, they get homesick. 112

I began my life as an inhabitant – for 12 years as a child, I had the opportunity to “soak up a place.” I was free to roam the chalk downs, lush green meadows and ancient woods around my house and school in Sussex, England and wander daily through streets of a small but ancient town that echoed of Druidic spells, Roman footsteps, Norman knights, Papist rebellion, Tudor gentility and cruelty, Georgian coffee houses, Victorian industry and post war suburban expansion.

That diversity excited my curiosity to see what lay around the next corner and I relished the mobility that rising income made possible.

But that mobility also converted me into a resident of over 16 “homes” in two countries interrupted with two extensive periods of being itinerant (living from a suitcase) that lasted twenty-four months in total during which I circumnavigated the world three times. My sense of identity and self, my sense of home that a stable yet free childhood growing up in a small town helped shape, is responsible for any sense of sanity I might currently have held onto since. Yet I often find these sentiments of Wordsworth ringing through my ears:

"The world is too much with us; late and soon, Getting and spending, we lay waste our powers: Little we see in Nature that is ours; We have given our hearts away, a sodden boon! The Sea that bares her bosom to the moon; The winds that will be howling at all hours, And are up-gathered now like sleeping flowers; For this, for everything, we are out of tune.

The Role of Place in Creating a Regenerative Economy

The most fundamental premise underpinning all efforts towards a Regenerative Economy is that it is time for us, as prodigal children, to return home to a right and mutually nourishing relationship with Nature. This relationship may be conceived as a universal ideal but can only be realized as an experience in and of a place.

Home has a number of meanings including a dwelling where we take up residence but home also means our place of origin and a place where something or someone flourishes. The question most frequently asked travellers, of course, is “where do you come from?” or “where is home?”

As David Orr has suggested our status as resident or inhabitant relates to our sense of feeling rooted in a shared sense of place. Knowing where we come from and where we belong helps us feel more grounded and secure. Pico Iyer suggests at the end of an excellent talk on movement and homecoming 113 that “Home is not just a place where you sleep but where you stand” - a definition that also alludes to a rootedness our mobile economy does so much to undermine. Pico’s choice of words echoes the poet Rumi’s advice:

Wherever you stand, be the soul of that place Your bright gaze will kindle this old shadow world to Blaze up once again with the fire of faith

In the encounter between a guest and a host it is the host who is rooted at home. It is the host who can reflect the soul of the place, reveal its promise, enchant and delight his guest. By so doing, the host can model a way of deep place knowing within the guest that might cause a fire to “blaze up once again” and evoke a yearning to know her own home more deeply. Guests return not only having seen another world but, to quote Proust, having developed a capacity to see the familiar with fresh eyes; If enough of us wake with fresh eyes, our survival as a species might be assured.

A community of hosts who share a passionate sense of place offer their guests a unifying story that weaves together their relationship with nature, art and community and subtly can inspire them to re-
Before we examine how hosts can help influence the way our guests see better care of it. For hosts to fulfil this role, however, they will need to imagine not only how to live well but better understand the nature of sustainability, holism and flourishing.

And the world cannot be discovered by a journey of miles, no matter how long, but only by a spiritual journey, a journey of one inch, very arduous and humbling and joyful, by which we arrive at the ground at our own feet, and learn to be at home. Wendell Berry

Before we examine how hosts can help influence the way our guests see their world, we need to examine the concept of Place more closely

**What Is Place?**

As is so often the case, the word place in the English language conveys multiple meanings. In the tourism context, of course, it refers to a geographical location we live in or have visited. But we also use the word to speak of a state of order or disorder with such phrases as “putting things in place” or “being out of place” or even being “all over the place.”

Place can also refer to status - “I have found my place in the world” or “she should know her place”. Places are often associated with a distinctive quality or experience ("there's something about this place which makes me feel..."), and tourism has grown fastest to places considered to have a distinct, often sacred spirit and magnetic power - what the ancient Greeks referred to as "genus loci."

The etymology of the word is interesting – particularly in light of Pico Iyer’s statement quoted earlier. Place stems from the Latin words placea (meaning a specific or localized spot); platea (the root of plaza or courtyard) and, and planta (the sole of the foot). In each case, place refers to a particular space in which one is situated, in which one plants one’s feet and stands and from which one obtains any sense of orientation on the surface of a sphere hurtling through space.

When a systems lens is applied, place seems to have more attributes than synonyms. Places occur at all levels of existence from the microscopic to the cosmic with each place referring to a distinct, unique spatial location, defined in relationship to other places in which they are nested or adjacent. My cells live within my body that lives in a home in a neighbourhood, within a town, nation, bioregion, country, planet, galaxy etc.

While places are interconnected, they are also bordered and distinct either by material/physical markers e.g., when town becomes country and by the definitions and meanings we give them. Boundaries also help to define a place’s identity – what it is and what it is not. According to geographer Edward Relph:

*The essence of a place lies in the experience of an “inside” that is distinct from an “outside”... To be inside a place is to belong to it and to identify with it, and the more profoundly inside you are, the stronger is this identity with place.*

In the same way that species each have a role or niche within their ecosystem, place provides us with a niche within a community – hence the term finding or knowing one’s place.

Places also provide the means, the containers within which we can experience the abstract. As places are specific, localized, and not generalized, they enable us to “make real” or “realize” concepts such as sustainability, holism and flourishing. “Through place it is possible to understand the embodied effects of the global at the local level”

Place is more than geography. It is a cerebral and emotional blend of associations, and awareness that is part physical, part science, and part history, culture and social memory. Place is subjective and very personal.

Place is powerful because it reveals, not only outer shapes, but inner values and identity. While sustainability is an abstract construct, places are intimate, real and personal, filled with meaning and potential. Space is transformed into place as it acquires definition and meaning. According to Tuan, “What begins as undifferentiated space becomes place as we get to know it better and imbue it with value.” In that sense we are all artists of place and placemakers. Places arise from the rich connections among the earth, local nature and spirit. Places act as a compass, touchstone, and organizing principle.

Our perception and appreciation of place depends very much on our worldview. The old story, the dominant paradigm that underpins our extractive economy, has viewed places in terms of the separate objects (resources) that could be exploited and represented by lines and markings on a map. The emerging new story that underpins a Regenerative Economy sees places as alive and having lives, pulsing with beliefs, thoughts and actions that shape who we are as people. Most importantly it’s a two-way conversation – we shape places and they shape us.

In other words, places cannot be defined rationally – they can only be sensed and felt. Coming to grips with why and how one place differs from another – for all are unique – requires the capacity to think as scientists in systems terms and express as artists. Data points, graphs, charts and statistics fail to convey “who a place is” and how to be a part of it. We must bring all of ourselves and intelligences to the task of comprehending a place and give ourselves permission to explore multiple ways of knowing, experiencing, intuiting, feeling and sensing before expressing and sharing our discoveries with a much richer, highly personalized creative palette – creative writing, dance, sculpture, image making, music, food, poetry, colour, texture, sound, smell.

It is not surprising that we search for metaphors - the word “tapestry” comes to mind. Places produce and reinforce particular ways of thinking about being in the world. Consequently selfhood (social and cultural identity) and placehood (social landscapes) are completely intertwined.

It is through our connections with and attachments to a place, we grow our caring. By slowing down and connecting more deeply to the locality of one’s here and now an affective emotional relationship develops between person and place. By slowing and pausing we are able to feel its rhythms.

A healing process requires continual, thoughtful and caring engagement. We can best engage in healing in the places we inhabit. Our communities and land are where we can learn about what makes life possible on a continuing basis. Regeneration of the health of humans and local earth systems is a two-way street – each supports the other in a mutually beneficial way. This awareness is the beginning of a whole system healing process.

Why is Place Becoming So Important and “Place Making” on the rise?

While the simple answer to this question would be to point to the need for an antidote to the sameness wrought by globalization, the truth is deeper and more complex than that.

Place is becoming more important because we are aware – both consciously and subconsciously – that we are running out of space and nature. We are losing access to the wild places that remind us of our true nature as animals. Our industrial mindset has gone about as far as is safe
in distancing our minds from our bodies and narrowing our sense of self to that of a “skin encapsulated ego on legs.”

In order to breakthrough rather than breakdown in response to the huge challenges facing humanity, we are required to do far more than bolt on some sustainable practices to business as usual. Realizing our potential capacity to flourish and sustain life requires a fundamental change of heart, or as the Greeks called it, a Meta-Ato that will never be enabled by observation, analysis, reason, or data analysis but through a range of sensual, emotional and spiritual experiences that empower us to affirm Life and cease destroying it.

It is fair to say, however, that if the so called “extractive economy” has relied heavily on globalization as the means to increase production and improve corporate efficiencies and profitability, the “regenerative economy” encourages and supports its opposite “localization.”

**Localization is the process of economic decentralization that enables communities, regions and nations to take more control over their own affairs. It does not mean encouraging every community to be entirely self-reliant; it simply means shortening the distance between producers and consumers wherever possible and striking a healthier balance between local markets and a monopoly dominated global market.**

The process of Localization which is occurring throughout the world requires both “top down” policy shifts and “bottom up,” grassroots initiatives that are by definition “place-based” and oriented to local conditions. As is discussed in the chapter PROXIMITY, the relatively recent but rapid rise of local finance (community banks, micro finance and local currencies), investing, food, energy, media, manufacturing, education, healthcare, and even tourism is staggering.

More recently, the term “place-based” has crept into the lexicon in addition to “local”. The term and concept originated in the 1960s, when writers like Jane Jacobs and William H Whyte who offered ground breaking ideas about designing cities that catered to people, not just to cars and shopping centres. Their work focused on the importance of lively neighborhoods and inviting public spaces. Until recently, the term was used mostly by landscape architects, urban planners and architects to describe the process of creating squares, plazas, parks, streets and waterfronts that will attract people because they are pleasurable or interesting.

The term “place-based” is now being used in a wider variety of sectors:

- **Economic development** where the development of jobs and enterprise are linked to a place, cannot be outsourced and serve local and regional markets;
- **Education** where curricula and methodologies, mostly from elementary to high school level are developed that immerses students in local heritage, culture, ecology, landscapes, opportunities, and experiences as a foundation for the study of language arts, mathematics, social studies, science, and other subjects
- **Social Enterprise** - a focus on funding and encouraging social enterprises to be proposed and supported by communities to meet specific local needs
- **Conservation** – that incorporates, place-specific meanings, local knowledge, and social-ecological dynamics.
- **Cultural Tourism** – an integrated approach to developing tourism based on experiencing all facets of a local culture

In the case of tourism, the term could be considered redundant in light of the fact that, by definition, all travel involves movement from one place to another. The pre-fix “place-based” has been applied to distinguish approaches and developments that grow out of a specific place (i.e., are locally conceived and operated) compared to the many developments conceived by multi-national enterprises and dropped into or onto a variety of locations.

Such initiatives are to be applauded with the following caveats:

- Many rely on developed methodologies and professional input (consulting studies, design agencies etc.) associated with a specific discipline. Local inhabitants will be consulted but the process is usually initiated by some form of central agency in a “top down” process that suggests a solution being laid upon versus emerging from a process of community-based, participatory envisioning and acting.
- The methodologies applied tend to be based on knowledge obtained by observation, data collection and analysis – often undertaken by professionals - that make full use of the left hemisphere of our brains but overlook the ways of deep knowing enabled by attention to all our senses, our heart's intelligence, our gut instinct. They may fail to tap into the other ways of knowing that a community has as derived from the senses, intuition, memory, and tradition and organize their investigations according to traditional disciplines.
- They are generally partial in scope and focus on a subset of factors according to the discipline of those who initiated the undertaking. Place-based economic development may, for example, include food, agriculture, tourism and culture but fail to dig deeply into the earth sciences – the forces that shaped the land over time. Place-based education in schools is often geared towards increasing an understanding of nature but doesn't integrate with social, cultural and economic issues.

**The Role of Hosts in Conscious Place Making**

The industrial model of production and consumption describes hosts as providers or operators and their guests as consumers. The Conscious Travel model uses the term host liberally to cover any person who, by being a rooted inhabitant in a place called home can extends hospitality directly and indirectly to a guest who has travelled from somewhere else.

The industrial model tends to confine the activities of a “tourism operator” to the tasks associated with operating a business or enterprise. A vast array of job descriptions associated with specific competencies, standards and performance criteria now proliferate. By contrast, the Conscious Travel model asks so much more of a host because so much more is needed. Hosts will inevitably act at one time or another as educators, entertainers, match makers, connectors, stewards, custodians, enquirers, story tellers, healers, guides, counsellors, coaches, interpreters and much more. Virtually any and every inhabitant of a place can be engaged in the act and art of hosting to the extent they wish.

Host has become a complex Art and Science that needs to be practiced so that it takes on a distinct personality of the practitioner. Hosts can't just accommodate, feed, transport or amuse their guests (with a floor show or ticket to a game etc.) but must stage manage a diverse set of information and sensory rich experiences that involve higher levels of guest participation and engagement than ever dreamed possible even twenty years ago. By way of an example, when incomes had risen sufficiently for the general public to be able to afford wine with the occasional meal, vineyards were able to supplement their income with wine tastings and a retail outlet. Now most offer niche culinary schools affording the opportunity not just to learn how to prepare and enjoy a meal using in-season vegetables and fruit from the kitchen garden or local artisan farmers but learn from a celebratory chef and discuss horticulture with local growers.
It may have taken twenty-five years for the majority of the tourism industry to have embraced the importance of The Experience Economy, but there is no doubt that in an age of "stuffocation" 118 for as long as our basic needs are met, there's no going back. 119

The role of host is morphing into stage manager, story teller and orchestral conductor with the guest experience taking the form of a complex symphony of experience. As a result, really successful hosts – like a successful conductor – must have an infectious passion for and deep understanding of the music, the role of each instrument and the strengths and weaknesses of each musician and create the conditions in which they play together well, in harmony and in time. Dan Pink in his book A Whole New Mind describes this aptitude as "the ability to put together pieces. It is the capacity to synthesize rather than analyse; to see relationships between seemingly unrelated fields; to detect broad patterns rather than deliver specific answers; and to invest something new by combining elements nobody else thought to pair."

This emerging role of Host has at least four requirements. A Conscious Hosts, be he or she a taxi driver, head waiter, hotel manager, chef, front desk clerk, tour guide or bus driver needs:

• An empathic capacity – so that through enjoyable and subtle conversations they can sense what might best delight their guest
• A deep knowledge and appreciation of their home destination based on first hand experience of its multiple aspects;
• Trusting, respected and respectful relations with their fellow inhabitants that they can draw upon the capacity of their community to provide authentic and deep hospitality.
• Courage and competence to step forward and lead by serving a self-organizing group of fellow hosts committed to creating a better tourism

In network terms, the host becomes a vital hub in a network; the keystones species in an ecosystem. In other words a very important person and not just an invisible service provider hidden away in a backroom pouring over occupancy and ADR data summoned out to the front desk only when needed to adjudicate a disputed bill.

Responsible Tourism is defined as tourism that “makes better places for people to live in and better places to visit” and Conscious Travel fully supports this aspiration. But instead of focusing on the activities that individual hosts can undertake within their enterprise to do less harm, Conscious Travel widens the scope to include active, intense and highly collaborative community building that integrates tourism into a matrix of place-based, local enterprises of all kinds (for profit, not-for-profit, social, cooperative, NGO and government) committed to flourishing.

The Journey Home – seeing Place with fresh eyes
A core perspective of Conscious Travel (Perspective # 6) is that communities of hosts will be empowered to make conscious choices about the type, scale and pace of tourism development in their community. Conscious Hosts will act as change agents co-leading this process.

But well before they can jump into the task of identifying what they want and don’t want, of identifying strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats etc. they need to become rooted dwellers of the land and develop fresh eyes of their own. They need to see their home through the eyes of children and loosen up their creative, emotional, spiritual capacities for expression.

The crucial and perhaps only and all encompassing task is to understand the place, the immediate specific place where we live. We must somehow live to it as close as possible, be in touch with its particular soils, its waters, its winds. We must learn its ways, its capacities, its limits. We must make its rhythms our patterns, its laws our guide, its fruits our bounty”120

There are no detailed road maps or lists of “10 Must See and Do” for this kind of journey. Each community will make their own path. But we do suggest this Journey of Discovery engage the children in the community. If the goal is to really get to know home, who better to both help and benefit than the youth for whom everything is a fresh discovery.

“To keep alive his inborn sense of wonder, a child needs the companionship of at least one adult who can share it, rediscovering with him the joy, excitement and mystery of the world we live in. Rachel Carson

Identify practical projects that children can enjoy – developing wildlife and kitchen gardens on land owned by members of the tourism community; adopting a school and helping children better understand where their food comes from, how to grow their own; organize walks involving locals knowledgeable in both cultural and natural history; using local examples identify and map the various cycles and relationships that connect the community and link with other places.

As importantly, break out from the silo’d thinking associated with traditional subject-oriented education – this journey doesn’t require you come home with facts and figures but awakened feelings, curiosity heightened, frequent soundings of “I had no idea” and encourage as great a variety of modes of creative expression as members of the group can muster.

• Find local writers, poets or write and create. Share poetry and writing that evokes a sense and love of your place. Find old words that are falling out of use but which earlier inhabitants used to describe their world.
• Find local artists, potters or paint, draw, create
• Engage the elders and have them share stories with the young
• Prepare food and dance and sing together
• Identify experiences that could be developed to encourage visitors to explore more deeply and stay longer
• Allow community and a shared sense of place and commitment to its flourishing to emerge.

This may sound “soft” and “touchy feely” and it’s meant to. Is the alternative – write a brief and hire a bunch of branding consultants to come and tell you who you are – likely to work better?

Conscious Hosts who are rooted in community will recognize that the children and their parents are their potential customers, today and well into the future; their marketing partners; and major allies. Instead of dreaming up campaigns to sell the importance of tourism to a community, this approach would demonstrate a commitment by persons engaged in the visitor economy to make a tangible commitment to improving livelihood in a place.

Falling in Love With Mother Earth.
Jacques Cousteau, the famous oceanographer, often said “we care for that which we love” and Zen Thich Nhat Hanh also says change will only happen at a fundamental level when we fall back in love with the planet.
When we recognise the virtues, the talent, the beauty of Mother Earth, something is born in us, some kind of connection, love is born. We want to be connected. When you love someone you want to say I need you, I take refuge in you. I will do anything to secure your well-being.

If these are sentiments you associate exclusively with philosophers, poets and mystics, think again. This is a grassroots initiative in Australia.

POWER

You never change things by fighting the existing reality. To change something, build a new model that makes an existing model obsolete.

Buckminster Fuller

At its core, Conscious Travel is a call for change – a call to create a better tourism that works for all. Achieving such a transition will involve active “change agents” who, following the advice of Buckminster Fuller, can envision and build a better model and render the old obsolete.

Power, defined in its literal sense as “to be able” is, therefore, an essential top-tier principle associated with Conscious Travel. Conscious Hosts will need to learn where and how to find the energy and capacity to act – to make informed and conscious decisions about the type and pace of tourism they wish to attract and support in their communities.

Traditionally, and in both the developed and developing world, tourism has been developed as an economic sector and its marketing assigned to professionals with marketing credentials. Where planning and development do occur, these tasks are assigned to planning officials in economic development departments who may or may not outsource community consultation and planning studies to independent consultants. The most engaged body overseeing tourism development is the visitor bureau, visitors’ centre) and its primary function is marketing and promotion.

Why Understand Power?

If Conscious Travel is to develop into an alternative model to mass industrial tourism in which development initiatives currently deliver most benefit to developers and speculators with financial capital, it must enable and empower community residents to play a much greater part in the planning and management of the visitor economy that affects them.

Playing that role requires hosts to become active change agents in their communities – working collaboratively with others – to bring about systemic change and ensure their activities generate more good than harm.

Understanding why and how to empower and be empowered is therefore crucially relevant.

For many, power is both a challenging and delicate subject – the exercise of political and corporate power is so frequently associated with misuse, exploitation and corruption that many want nothing to do with it. The majority of people who are experiencing a diminishing sense of control over their lives and their spending power are increasingly feeling powerless personally, economically and politically. While awareness of the huge challenges facing humanity is rising, there are few signs that “the powers that be” know how to cope even if we could be assured that our leaders care enough to try.

Paradoxically, at the same time, there is also evidence to suggest that we’re living through a period of huge “power shifts” that are occurring between companies and customers, companies and employees, politicians and citizens. Theoretically, we can vote with our wallets, withhold “our engagement” at work, and turf out politicians with a tick on a ballot paper but it doesn’t seem to make much difference. Unethical companies still make good profits; companies fire whistle blowers, and politicians continue to peddle influence once in power.

The topic of power is especially relevant to tourism because the visitor economy is, by definition, a people and community business – it affects everybody directly or indirectly in a community whether they travel or not themselves. As the planet fills up with people and those people aspire to travel, the pressure on places will also increase. UNWTO forecasts a 50% increase in the number of international tourists within a mere eight years – that’s 750 million more border crossings than today and potentially 6-8 times more domestic movements involving an overnight stay occurring each year. This phenomenon has the potential force of an economic and social tsunami – right now most of us are simply admiring the colour of the ocean water off in the distance!

It will take preparation and power to cope with the energy of that volume growth effectively. Responsibility will inevitably fall to those affected by the incoming force. Conscious Travel is about preparing and empowering host communities to cope intelligently and creatively by making informed, conscious choices that work for all. Entrepreneurs and change agents will need to know how to support communities harness collective power.

Achievement of any of the Conscious Travel Principles can only take place in community by hosts learning to work together and dissolving, where appropriate, resistance, and misunderstanding. That’s a political activity and will involve the exercise of a new kind of power and a new approach. Democracy is a learned art not a rigid structure but a dynamic evolving process that can be expressed differently according to local cultures and traditions. Effective, respectful change making requires skills that can be developed. You have to start by understanding the notion of power - how power has worked in the past and how it might work in the future.
Old Power versus New Power

The co-founder of GetUp and Avaaz, Jeremy Heimans and co-author Henry Timms open an excellent article Understanding New Power, published in Harvard Business Review, thus:

We all sense that power is shifting in the world. We see increasing political protest, a crisis in representation and governance, and upstarts businesses upending traditional industries. But the nature of this shift tends to be either wildly romanticized or dangerously underestimated.

There are those who cherish giddy versions of a new techno-utopia in which increased connectivity yields instant democratization and prosperity. The corporate and bureaucratic giants will be felled and the crowds coronated, each of us wearing our 3D-printed crown. There are also those who have seen all this before. Things aren’t really changing that much, they say. Twitter supposedly toppled a dictator in Egypt, but another simply popped up in his place. We gush over the latest sharing economy start-up, but the most popular companies and people seem to get more powerful.

Both views are wrong. They confine us to a narrow debate about technology in which everything is either changing or nothing is. In reality, a much more interesting and complex transformation is just beginning, one driven by a growing tension between two distinct forces: old power and new power. 121

Old power is primarily “power over” and is based on a position of dominance or advantage over others. It’s about getting your way and having others do what you want. It’s understood as a noun – something you either have or you don’t have whether that is weapons, knowledge, money, status, celebrity, influence or contacts. Exercising old power involves using those attributes to control, command, coerce. In older times, political power was associated with a blood-line and inherited. Now it is viewed as a commodity that can be bought and sold.

Worse of all, such old power creates conflict because gaining it involves taking it from another. It is perceived as a finite and scarce resource. Acquiring old power involves participation in a win-lose game in which there can only be winners and losers. It feeds off a belief in scarcity and lack and fear. Even those who have power spend much of their time and money defending it and holding onto power because power defines who they are. This win-lose dynamic produces feelings of superiority and entitlement among those who have it and a sense of powerlessness among those who don’t. The end result is social tension that only increases as the “haves” increase their power and the “have nots” grow in number.

Because of this fear of loss, old power causes huge rigidity – changing one’s mind is viewed as “giving in” as a sign of weakness, a standpoint that blocks openness to new information and stifles the flexibility to deal with changing circumstances. Power not only corrupts but fear of its loss can distort the capacity to perceive and evaluate reality accurately.

Dominance gives privileged access to resources much of which are then spent on defending and maintaining that dominance. In previous eras the wealthy and powerful could use brute force to get their way. In our highly inter-connected, infinitely more open and transparent societies, power elites have discovered that controlling information, media and politicians is proving a far more effective way of maintaining their status quo.

This understanding of and approach to power has enormous implications for the way communities of any kind are organized. The “power over” form (a dominator model) is associated with organizational hierarchies as those considered to have the greatest power can use it to choose to whom they delegate portions.

Because dominator power has prevailed through most known cultures throughout most known history (i.e. the period of written history dating back to 3200 BC), there’s a tendency to assume it reflects human nature and describes the only way that humans have interacted with each other. Our ancestors (homo sapiens) appeared at least 1.8 million years ago and survived for 95% of that time through hunting and foraging. There is no archeological evidence to support or refute a consistently warlike, highly competitive nature. Anthropological and zoological research has shown the extent to which highly cooperative societies emerged in response to the need to care and nurture offspring. One of the features that distinguish humans from primates is our capacity to cooperate as a group; to empathize, to imagine what others are thinking and to share parental responsibilities.

A transition towards more sedentary lifestyles and emergence of farming occurred at the end of the Holocene, after the last ice age 10,000-11,000 years ago and we now have evidence of villages and cities appearing some 5000 years later in which people lived relatively peacefully applying more of a partnership model. Another big shift occurred around 4500 BC with the southward movement of nomadic tribes, showing signs of a more warlike dominator model, which moved from the barren steppes of Central Europe into what was known as the Fertile Crescent.

This is no place for a detailed discussion of early human history – the key point I wish to make here is that the old power (dominator) model which we’ve become so used to, is NOT the only model that has sustained humanity in the past. It is clear that the dominator model successfully shaped human organization for as long as power could be acquired as a thing through force or by using accumulated wealth. As armies and weapons became more expensive, power shifted from monarchies and dynasties to those with wealth – first the merchants then those with financial capital. After a long period of colonial exploitation and two world wars, democracy appeared in the ascendant but there are many signs that even democracy couldn’t keep pace with capitalism.

According to the Economist, in a special edition, What’s Wrong with Democracy? democratic forms of government peaked around the year 2000 but its progress has stalled since:

Democracy is going through a difficult time. Where autocrats have been driven out of office, their opponents have mostly failed to create viable democratic regimes. Even in established democracies, flaws in the system have become worryingly visible and disillusion with politics is rife. 122

The world’s bastion and global cheerleader for democracy is the United States where the basic tenets of democracy no longer seem to apply. In a major analysis of government decision-making, Professors Gilens and Benjamin conclude:

In the United States, our findings indicate, the majority does not rule—at least not in the causal sense of actually determining policy outcomes.

When a majority of citizens disagrees with economic elites or with organized interests, they generally lose. Moreover, because of the strong status quo bias built into the U.S. political system, even when fairly large majorities of Americans favour policy change, they generally do not get it. 123

Again, this is neither the time nor the place for an in-depth discussion of the politics associated with democracy’s demise – its health varies enormously from one country to another - but would-be change agents
do need to understand how to combat popular disillusion and revitalise individual and community participation in decision-making.

The diffusion of interactive, connecting technologies that enable the instant sharing of knowledge between people is undisputedly the key force enabling a new and more accessible form of power to emerge. Authors of the HBR paper Understanding New Power, quoted at the outset of this chapter, provide a useful comparison.

Old power works like a currency. It is held by few. Once gained, it is jealously guarded, and the powerful have a substantial store of it to spend. It is closed, inaccessible, and leader-driven. It downloads, and it captures.

New power operates differently, like a current. It is made by many. It is open, participatory, and peer-driven. It uploads, and it distributes. Like water or electricity, it’s most forceful when it surges. The goal with new power is not to hoard it but to channel it. 114

Umair Haque the provocative, often inspiring your professor and contributor the Harvard Business Blog has also observed a shift in the nature of power needed:

“...maybe strength in the 21st century isn’t about dominance...it’s about the capacity to evoke...the ability to spark the enduring bonds of shared values, intrinsic motivation, and mutually committed perseverance. It is, in short, not the power merely to command, subordinate, demean, insult — and then caw about it with impunity. It’s the power to inspire, animate, infuse, spark, evoke — and then connect, link, and collaborate, to be a force multiplier……I’d say that in the 21st century, strength is the power to evoke, and it consists of four other E’s: the power to engage, ennoble, elevate, and enlighten.”

It’s time to remember power as a verb not a noun — a state of being not a thing that can be possessed by some not others and that’s abundant – we all have it because it comes from within and not without.

Most importantly power is relational – it’s created by working together, sharing and empowering others. Relational power is highly contagious. The growth in one person’s power enhances others.

This is “power with” instead of “power over” and is, by nature, infinitely more powerful and effective because relational power opens up possibilities that emerge from synergy. Instead of $1 + 1 = 2$; the interaction can result in something greater than the sum of the two parts – that’s emergence. Authors of Active Hope, Joanna Macy and Chris Johnstone observe:

Emergence and synergy lie right at the heart of “power with.” They generate new possibilities and capacities, adding a mystery element that means we can never be certain how a situation will go just from looking at the elements within it. We can know the strength of copper and tin yet still be surprised by how much stronger bronze is, which comes from mixing the two together. The British poet, D.H.Lawrence, wrote:

Water is H2O
Hydrogen two parts
Oxygen one
But there is a third thing that makes it water
And nobody knows what that is. 125

Emergence and synergy are probably the two most creative forces at work in the universe operating from the most micro to macro levels of the universe often with mysterious effects. Under the right conditions, water can “shape shift” or morph into ice which has completely different properties to liquid or evaporate into vapour – a process which we observe every day but are still unable to totally explain.

The simple act of good conversation can bring forth huge synergistic outcomes, opening up a creative space from which possibilities emerge, when both sides have the courage and willingness to explore new ground, listen actively and share reflective responses. In their inspiring and instructive book, Active Hope, Macy and Johnstone cite Mandela’s courageous step in opening up true win-win negotiations with F.W. de Klerk, the South African president as an example of the power of simply opening up a conversation. 126

The following table summarizes the major differences between the two types of power and is an adaptation from a similar table developed by France Moore Lappe in Get a Grip. 127

Summary: Old and New Power Compared

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OLD</th>
<th>NEW</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Power over – dominating; top down governance</td>
<td>Power with- relational; self-organizing, networked governance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zero-sum. It strengthens some at the expense of others. It divides what already exists</td>
<td>Mutually expanding and synergistic. It builds the capacities of all involved. It is creative, generating new strengths and new possibilities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exclusive and excluding</td>
<td>Inclusive, open source, crowd wisdom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A one-way force, either you have it or you don't; life boils down to the powerful versus the powerless</td>
<td>A give and take, two-way relationship. No one is ever completely powerless because each person’s actions affect others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limiting, intimidating, scary based on fear, distrust and scarcity</td>
<td>Liberating, freeing, growth-enhancing based on love and respect and a sense of abundance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Currency</td>
<td>Current</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Closed, secretive, leader driven</td>
<td>Open, transparent peer driven</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Controlling</td>
<td>Collaborating</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Held tightly , Grows by hoarding</td>
<td>Grows by sharing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rigid, static</td>
<td>Dynamic, always changing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Derived from laws, statues, force, wealth</td>
<td>Derived from relationships, knowledge, experience, numbers, creativity, trust, perseverance, humour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shorter-term – what can I get/ keep now</td>
<td>Longer-term – mindful of creating relational power over time</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Old Power and the Industrial Tourism Model

One of the reasons the industrial model is in decline is that its hierarchical structure prevents the free flow of money, information, ideas and, by default, power from flowing through and nourishing “the system.” Capital is accumulated and the rich get richer but, in so doing, deprive the system of those purchases that could be made by the many
I fully recognise that there are likely hundreds of instances where tourism has been introduced in a manner that is fully respectful of local residents' wishes and has had a positive net impact on the lives and livelihoods of all stakeholders in a community. Whether this is the norm rather than the exception is impossible to tell – as to my knowledge, no multi-national, international agency has invested in developing a standardized methodology or data collection project to find out what is normal or the exception to the caricature presented above.

There is growing anecdotal and some empirical evidence that the number of destinations where, either the volume or type of inbound tourism is irritating local communities, is growing (see Ian Hickman's *The Final Call,* 127 Elizabeth Becket's *Overbooked,* 128 and recent documentary *Gringo Trails* by Peggy Vail 131). World Heritage Sites are particularly vulnerable to over-crowding 132 133 and given a 50% increase in total numbers travelling over the next eight years we can anticipate the relationship between many host communities and their visitors might well deteriorate unless pro-active steps are taken to manage the impact of such volume growth and ensure tourism visibly generates more good than harm.

Reversing the cycle of powerlessness

Conscious Travel is put forward as an approach to community-driven visitor management but it depends on active participation by the resident community. Such participation cannot take place in an environment/ atmosphere of social apathy, a sense of powerlessness, or indifference. If Conscious Hosts are to be effective in achieving the goal of a visitor

---

**THE TOURISM SPIRAL OF DISEMPOWERMENT**

1. A destination with rich culture and high scenic values, and or pristine environment is “discovered” and recognized by outsiders as “ripe for development.”

2. Development requires investment – often the destination has a very limited cash economy and lacks sufficient financial capital so external investors are allowed in or invited in and start building hotels and dining facilities. Many (but not all) assume limited responsibility for infrastructure – impacts on nature and culture are “externalities.” Local residents are rarely consulted as they are considered to lack sufficient knowledge of tourism to make informed choices.

3. Local residents may (or may not) be displaced with or without compensation by the local governments/ruling classes especially if the latter have been persuaded of the benefits of economic development.

4. Tourism grows but as there has been inadequate investment in education and training, personnel are imported to ensure high hospitality standards are met and tourist-friendly languages (generally English) are spoken. Other items also need to be imported to support needs of guests – oil, housing materials and furnishings, food items, souvenirs etc. As a result of both importation and foreign ownership, the amount of income from tourism that seeps into the local economy is limited. (UNEP suggests that as little as 5cents for every dollar spent in an all inclusive resort actually stays in the host destination)

5. With success – as in steadily growing numbers of visitors, expansion is deemed viable and funds become necessary to finance the infrastructure (roads, airports, waste management etc.) projects now needed to support arrivals. International funding agencies get involved and they insist on feasibility studies and in-depth planning that can only be undertaken by overseas "experts."

6. Tourism continues to expand; young locals are educated in western ways and seek employment in the tourism and hospitality industry often leaving their villages for a more exciting life in the development centres and so-called tourism “hot spots”. Jobs are poorly paid and seasonal. They do not earn enough money to move into self-employment and remit sufficient funds to family villages to hire replacement labour so the agricultural labour issue remains unsolved. In some cases, tourism is so successful that visitors decide they should buy property and rent it out. Land prices escalate way ahead of farm incomes and land use changes occur.

7. Local governments are under enormous pressures to raise funds for infrastructure and social services – local residents watch their culture unravel and natural environment deteriorate. They feel powerless but can do very little to resist as they are now dependent on making money

8. Over time, the destination finds that its original culture is of interest to a more discriminating market of experiential travellers who want to live like locals and experience the unique culture but there are few dwellings remaining in the vernacular architecture and they no longer meet the extensive sustainability criteria required for the national tourist office to sustain its accreditation by a well meaning international certification authority.
economy that works for all, they must take the following steps:

- Wake up and stop waiting to be rescued
- Find kindred spirits, Step Up and serve
- Develop the conditions that encourage community-based empowerment
- Master the Tools for Effective Collaboration
- Develop the conscious leadership skills appropriate for our time

Wake Up and stop waiting to be rescued
We are robbed of our power when we associate responding with blaming or when we believe someone will come to fix our problem. A consistent theme within Conscious Travel is that our challenges are, indeed, systemic. We may just have to start from scratch and re-think, re-imagine, and re-design for ourselves. The poem Allegiances by William Stafford speaks to our time – There are no lands out there to be discovered and plundered; there is no “away” in which we can dump our unwanted stuff; and there are no no hero experts familiar with unchartered territory to guide us. It’s up to us.

Grow Up and acknowledge our responsibility as individuals
In his best selling book Drive, Daniel Pink identifies three primary human motivators: autonomy, mastery and purpose. All relate to a deep and abiding need for agency – the sense that we can affect change and make choices. The social philosopher and psychologist Erich Fromm in The Heart of Man also pointed to this hunger for agency:

“Man cannot tolerate absolute passivity. He is driven to make his imprint on the world, to transform and to change, and not only to be transformed and changed. This human need is expressed in early cave drawings, in all the arts, in work, and in sexuality. All these activities are the result of man’s capacity to direct his will toward a goal and sustain his effort until his goal is reached.

Individuals can and do make a difference. Psychologist Carl Jung highlights the fact that collective change is the outcome of individual change.

In the last analysis the essential thing is the life of the individual. This alone makes history, here alone do the great transformations just take place, and the whole future, the whole history of the world, ultimately spring as a giant summation from these hidden sources in individuals. In our most private and most subjective lives, we are not only passive witnesses of our age, its sufferers, but also its makers. We make our own epoch.

But today many ordinary people have negative or ambivalent feelings towards power associating it with old power patterns of coercion, force, elitism, domination and that causes many to refrain from stepping forward. The word activist has negative connotations and in many countries activists are often stereotyped as troublesome, eccentric, militant, even unhygienic! Large sections of the public agree with activists’ messages, but are put off by not wanting to affiliate themselves with the kind of person they think makes an activist. The internet is replete with evidence that whistle blowers – no matter how seemingly just their actions – experience excessive abuse including from the people their actions were intended to defend.

Given that power is simply the capacity to act and produce intended affects, such negative attitudes induce passivity – a response that may not serve us well in times of danger and, therefore, is as potentially harmful as well as incorrect. Whether our choices and actions are made consciously or not, every one of them affects the world we all occupy and shapes the circumstances of our lives.

Tom Atlee calls this “intrinsic participation”:

“Between stimulus and response, there is a space. In that space is our power to choose our response. In our response lies our growth and our freedom.”

In addition to the power to choose our response, we have the power to create our future. After realising we must make an individual decision to step up, we will have greatest and most lasting success by collaborating with others.

Find kindred spirits, Step Up and serve
As we come to understand that new power is “power with” and relationships are more important than things, we won’t even think of trying to be a lone ranger style of hero. We’ll know in our bones that we will flourish by serving the whole and resonating with its intentions. Conscious leaders are servant leaders who know how to create the conditions whereby a community of free but interdependent self-organizing agents can flourish together. One metaphor that illustrates how a destination community will function is that of a jazz group improvising.

Something very interesting occurs when a group of jazz musicians improve together. A number of separate individuals, all making their own decisions, act together as a whole. As the music flows, any of the musicians can take the solo spot, that leading role gliding seamlessly between the players. Who decides when the piano or trumpet player should come forward. It isn’t just the person playing that instrument for the others have already stepped back just a little to create an opening. There are two levels of thinking happening at the same time: choices are made from moment to moment both by the group as a whole and by the individuals within it.

This is called “distributed intelligence” in action.

One might argue, paraphrasing William Gibson, that intelligent tourism exists, it’s just not evenly distributed yet. And to mix our metaphors, that’s why global tourism is making such a cacophony of sound that isn’t yet music.

Margaret Wheatley summarises the power and importance of community this way.

“The essential truth I’m discovering right now is that when we are together, more becomes possible. When we are together, joy is available. In the midst of a world that is insane, and that will continue to surprise us with
new outrage... in the midst of that future, the gift is each other. We have lived with a belief system that has not told us that. We have lived with a belief that has said, “We’re in it for ourselves. It’s a dog-eat-dog world out there. Only the strong survive and you can’t trust anybody.” That’s the belief that’s operating in most organizations if you scratch the surface.

In an inspiring book titled *Walk Out Walk On* [139], Margaret Wheatley and Deborah Frieze describe seven very different communities of people who chose to walk out from a world of problems and walk on into a new world of possibility. Their learning experiences have been a huge source of inspiration for Conscious Travel and you’ll see why on reading their description of this walking out and on process:

When people and communities walk out, they discover they’re more gifted and wiser than they believed or had been told, that working together – even in the harshest circumstances can be joyful, that they can invent solutions to problems that others have declared unsolvable. The communities are creating meaningful change in some of the most difficult political, social and economic circumstances. They may have little money, few trustworthy formal teachers, and minimal material resources. They have been told they are “backward” or don’t possess the requisite expertise to solve their own problems. Had they accepted current thinking, they would have sat back and waited passively for help to come from the outside – from experts, foreign aid, and heroic leaders.

But instead, they walked out. They had the good sense not to buy into these paralyzing beliefs about themselves and how change happens. They walked on to discover that the wisdom and wealth they need resides in themselves – in everyday people, their cultural traditions and their environment. They’ve used this wisdom and wealth to conduct bold experiments in how to create healthy and resilient communities where all people matter and all people can contribute. Their creativity and hard work make it easier for us to see that a different world is possible.

**Developing the conditions that encourage community empowerment**

Empowered beings are rich in social capital (EQ); psychological capital (confidence, hope, optimism and resilience) and spiritual capital (SQ) which gives them a strong sense of personal identity, aliveness, meaning, purpose and connectedness.

Empowered persons are powered from the inside by a current of power that can be shared between and with others without diluting its strength. While this kind of power can neither be granted nor taken away, individuals can still bestow or grant institutional/organizational authority to others.

An empowered community comprises empowered individuals aligned around a common purpose whose collaboration is based on a trust that emerges from an experience of mutual respect and reciprocity.

Trust is today’s version of Adam Smith’s “invisible hand” It can’t be bought. It can only be earned and is the foundation of any successful relationship whether that be with guests, employees, partners, or fellow hosts and residents in a community. Unfortunately, in today’s political and commercial world, trust is in short and generally diminishing supply. Its lack has the same negative impact on the economic engine as a steady oil leak.

There are at least six conditions or attributes that, depending on how expressed, can build or kill trust and encourage people to express their empowered, engaged selves:

- Empathy and Compassion
- Fairness
- Transparency and Accountability
- Meaning, Purpose and Efficacy
- Recognition and a sense of significance
- Growth opportunities

1. **Empathy and Compassion**

Compassion and empathy are often used interchangeably but there are subtle differences. Empathy is our ability to imagine ourselves walking in someone else’s shoes; to see the world through the eyes of those who are different to us. Derived from the Greek word meaning “in feeling” or “feeling into” it requires an openness to receiving and holding the other’s experience without reservation or judgment. Empathy is passive but absolutely attentive.

Compassion encompasses empathy. The word compassion is derived from the Latin and means “to bear with” or “to suffer with.” Empathy is that aspect of compassion that opens one to a deep understanding on the other’s suffering. Compassion also involves an active concern for and effort to alleviate that suffering. Compassionate action is a willingness to go beyond self-interest and give of oneself for the good of another and is therefore altruistic in nature.

Both empathy and compassion enable individuals to enter into and maintain relationships of caring.

The capacity to express empathy in a highly connected society that encompasses a vast diversity of perspectives is a critical pre-requisite to exercising “new power”. Much of humanity living in the wealthy countries that pioneered the industrial revolution has grown up absorbing the primacy of the individual and self-interest. As a consequence, many psychologists and sociologists suggest that narcissism is on the rise. Narcissists are known for their inflated sense of self-importance, their need for attention and lack of consideration for others. This trend combined with a financial system that consistently rewards those with money over those who only have labour to offer has contributed to the designation Age of Entitlement to the times we live in.

Practicing empathy is a vital skill for any would-be-leader – whether they are entrepreneurs of any kind, corporate executives, family members, teachers etc. to learn how to create the conditions for its expansion.

Empathy delivers results in politics, business, and relationships. It’s becoming ever more critical in politics and the practice of any form of democracy and collective decision-making. We live at a time when so many different worldviews operate side by side and severely hinder understanding and communication. It’s more than intellectual and moral laziness to put people into boxes called “isms” and “ists” e.g., jihadist, environmentalists, immigrants, CEOs of multinational public companies, bankers etc. The following stages can ultimately be catastrophic – the act of categorizing and labeling so easily leads to stereotyping, blaming and demonizing. Developing empathy is the first step to appreciating intellectually and emotionally the human commonalities, inter-connectedness and inter-dependence that make “new power” – the capacity to act collectively for the common good – possible.

The business community is slowly waking to the value of empathy and need for compassionate management. Dan Pink, masterful reader of emerging zeitgeist, identified empathy as a critical faculty in *A Whole New Mind* in 2005 and Dev Patnaik dedicated a whole book to the subject in *Wired to Care* four years later.

Two other British sources on this subject are: Belinda Parmer who has published both a book, *The Empathy Era* and Roman Krznaric whose
article, book, *Empathy A Handbook for a Revolution* 139 and RSA Talk provide in-depth suggestions as to how to cultivate our own empathic potential.

Conscious Hosts have both a huge need and opportunity to master empathy as a skill — their employees, business partners and guests will present a huge range of views, assumptions and beliefs. Each encounter provides an opportunity to see the world from their eyes and also model behavior that cause their employees and guests to see the world from a fresh perspective. Since empathy can be applied to significantly improve employee engagement, customer delight, community support, it should become an obsession within our sector sooner rather than later.

2. Fairness
The second pillar underpinning human morality is Fairness and our capacity to sense whether fairness is present in an interaction is also shared with some primates. 140 Modern brain scanning technology provides further evidence that fairness is hardwired — a human brain's reward centres respond more strongly to situations in which people are treated equally as opposed to unfairly, even when fairness comes at a personal cost.

It is our in-built sense of fairness that causes many people to become social entrepreneurs when they are moved to address a glaring inequity such as homelessness, food waste and poverty etc.

Cooperation can only be maintained to the extent that individuals are fair with each other. All of us hold the understanding, deep within us, that we’re best off in very way by taking a larger and more embracing view of what constitutes self-interest.

Epidemiologists such as Wilkinson and Pickett 141 and economists such as those within The New Economic Foundation 142 give multiple reasons why inequality is both unfair and corrosive. Countries with giant income disparity between the very rich and very poor, both the affluent and the poorest suffer from high rates of ill health, crime, mental illness, environmental problems and violence.

The biggest challenge tourism faces is that as an industrial sector it is rife with unfairness practices that erode both trust and hope. Many tourism and hospitality businesses, driven by the nature of the industrial model to focus on cost cutting and price competition, have also taken advantage of the desperation of people displaced and disenfranchised by economics and politics (recession, austerity and conflict), to keep wages to the minimum. Tourism and hospitality does not have a monopoly on this kind of practice — product retailers can move jobs offshore to save money and use third party agencies to distance themselves from the lives and circumstances of people who make their products.

3. Meaning, Purpose and Efficacy
The critical importance of experiencing a sense of meaning and purpose for maintaining an individual’s stock of “psychological capital” i.e. capacity for confidence, optimism, hope, and resilience has been discussed in the PEOPLE and PURPOSE chapter.

Individuals not only need to know that their efforts are contributing to a whole that has meaning for them and the of which they are a part but that they have the competence and conditions to be effective. Furthermore, those individuals whose tasks are aligned with the individual's known strengths tend to outperform because they are able to do what they love in service of the bigger goal.

4. Honesty, Transparency and Accountability
Trust and empowerment also flourish in an environment where transparency, openness and clarity are prized.

Four key strategies for building transparency in the workplace include:

- Sharing corporate vision and values with as much interaction and co-creation as possible so that the individual can feel their efforts are contributing to an effort greater than themselves
- Being clear about goals, targets, and performance measures and, again, involving team members in setting them
- Providing constructive feedback
- Ensuring team members have the information and tools to make decisions.

5. Recognition, gratitude and a sense of significance
Providing genuine, frequent recognition of a person’s effort has been shown to be the primary influencer on engagement at work.

6. Providing Personal growth opportunities
In more stable times, companies used to offer job security in exchange for loyalty. Today, most people expect to change jobs frequently but also expect to use their time with an employer to develop their skills and knowledge.

Mastering Tools for Effective Collaboration
Collaboration is key to building resilient communities, but working together as a group can be challenging. The localist movement has developed a wide range of tools that introduce facilitation techniques. Conscious Hosts will become skilled practitioners of a facilitation methods that works best for them.

- **Art of Hosting** Trainings teaches a combination of powerful conversational processes that harness the collective wisdom and self-organizing capacity of groups of any size to take charge of the challenges facing them.
- **Asset Mapping Toolkit** from the Asset-Based Community Development Institute at Northwestern University provides a framework for identifying community assets as an alternative to needs-based community mapping.
- **Community At Work** offers consulting and training on participatory-based group facilitation, strategic planning, team development, and more.
- **Designing a Resilient Community** from the Center for Ecoliteracy is an interactive curriculum for high school students, introducing them to innovative strategies for redesigning communities to increase their resilience.
- **Community Strategic Visioning Workshops** by Future Search are three-day task-focused planning meetings which bring people together to tell stories about their past, present and desired future, discover common ground; and make action plans.
- **Effective Groups** is a curriculum developed by Transition Network trainer Nick Osborne to equip social change projects with tools to navigate group dynamics, improve communication, facilitation, and conflict resolution so people work together effectively.
- **Open Space** is a self-organizing facilitation methodology in which participants create and manage their own agenda of parallel working sessions around a key theme.
- **World Cafe** is a facilitation methodology for hosting large group dialogue around a specific question or theme, based on a set of integrated design principles.
Conscious Leadership

Conscious Hosts who wish to take a leadership position in their communities will need a different set of skills than those associated with the Command and Control styles associated with the industrial model.

First of all, they will be serving a group of hosts who have come together to develop, execute and monitor a plan that ensures their community and its members enjoy the full benefits from a flourishing visitor economy.

In these circumstances, traditional leadership elements are in reverse order with Being and Seeing preceding Doing. The leaders role is to make sense of the world, communicate and share a vision, help reach agreement on priorities, identify and utilise the strengths of team members, coach, guide and support.

PROTECTION

It goes without saying that tourism depends on both natural, healthy biodiversity and cultural diversity. If all places were the same, there would be little incentive to travel. Similarly, unless life in general and humanity in all its cultural forms can be protected from degeneration, no form of economic activity has any future at all.

Core to Conscious Travel therefore is the notion of “protection” – it behoves conscious hosts and communities to become of aware of the forces that undermine the viability of biospheric and cultural health and take active, mindful steps towards affirming and sustaining life. We live in the Anthropocene – a geological era in which our decisions as humans determine how life evolves. The existential crisis of our age is too big and too scary to waste with hesitant, short-term, selfish thinking.

For that reason, all so-called “sustainable,” “responsible,” and “green” practices (often lumped together under the heading Corporate Social Responsibility) are fully supported. They are essential steps along a path to ensuring the future health of a visitor economy. But, in our view, they are nowhere near enough and may be lulling us into a false sense of security.

Since the word “sustainable” first was introduced into the business lexicon in the 1980s, a vast amount of work has been focused on defining the term conceptually and operationally; translating a noble lexicon in the 1980s, a vast amount of work has been focused on developing, execute and monitor a plan that ensures their community and its members enjoy the full benefits from a flourishing visitor economy.

Evidence that the top echelons of leadership in tourism have bought into this view can be seen in the following comments made by the Secretary-General of the UNWTO

The core of our mandate as a UN-specialized agency is to promote sustainable tourism, but you can’t promote sustainability if you don’t promote tourism, so that’s why we said competition and growth on one hand and sustainability on the other.

The reluctance to let go of a comforting notion that you can have your cake and eat it too makes good sense from within the linear-thinking, Modernist worldview that equates more of some “thing” as generally better and is encouraged to focus exclusively on the profitability of an enterprise and growth of an economy.

But this view makes no sense at all once you see all life as one interconnected whole dependent on a biologically constrained life support system that is becoming increasingly compromised.

The UNWTO view might be workable if it were clearly understood that growth referred to positive net impact – to flourishing – but since it really means growth in arrivals and departures, it wont.

They say that paradigm shifts can occur within a twinkling of an eye and “once you see it, you can’t unsee it.” While it may have taken half a century for concern regarding environmental realities to have accumulated to the levels we acknowledge today, big business is now waking up fast and for a fundamentally good and basic reason, as stated by the CEO of the World Sustainable Business Council (WBCSD), Peter Bakker:

CSR is dead – it’s over! Leading companies are integrating sustainability into everything they do for the simple reason that business cannot succeed in a society that fails and our society is about to fail.

A major re-think of business has started and those companies that lead the charge will be in the best position to thrive if that prospect of failure is eliminated. Many companies, often labelled Sustainable Brands, are committed to transformative change – seeing huge opportunities too in aligning their purpose with the needs of humanity as a whole. IKEA’s Head of Sustainability states:

It comes down to setting agenda for transformational change in the business and then really driving that change through innovation because incrementalist doesn’t light people up. It is radical change that excites people.
The WBCSD report *Changing Pace* 16 shows just how seriously their 200 members are taking the challenge of reforming the fundamentals of capitalism to ensure it works for future generations. Contrary to public perception, this group of businesses, who control $7 trillion in turnover are not at all averse to the pricing of externalities such as carbon; tolerating more regulation and certification; shifting energy subsidies to renewables; more spatial planning; tighter building codes; pollution fees and even some more tax – if the right investments are made. Their justification is simple – business cannot operate in an environment of chronic risk and uncertainty and there are opportunities for real value to be created (tangible wealth and intangible wellbeing) provided the right decisions are taken and the right investments are made now. What businesses need more than anything to adjust is clarity and commitment and a “level playing field.” Organisations like WBCSD and members of such networks as Sustainable Brands do not conceive of the future as necessarily gloomy but as replete with opportunities to create a better life for more.

The challenge for tourism lies in the speed with which the shift from an older paradigm, underpinning an Extraction Economy, is taking place to one that focuses on Regeneration. That transition is changing the broader social context from which tourism gains its social licence to operate and also is altering the economic and fiscal rules of the game. The WBCSD is pushing for a carbon tax realistically priced at $100 per tonne! The costs of moving tourists will escalate whether we mitigate the effects of our waste and consumption or not – climate variability and extreme events, rising sea levels, traffic interruptions due to political instability or disease, inadequate food production, rising commodity prices due to scarcities, lack of water will all affect the demand for tourism directly and our ability to operate indirectly. The current model applied by mass industrial tourism will not survive in its current form.

Failure to move with the emerging transformational paradigm – one that both Weaver 17 and Goodwin 18 think has little traction and is unlikely to become widely influential - just may cause tourism to be viewed less enthusiastically in the future. The University of Cambridge Institute for Sustainability Leadership (ISL) report, *Climate Change Implications for Tourism*, 19 synthesizes the most pertinent findings of the Fifth Assessment Report from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change and is the most succinct, to-the-point summary of the subject available today. On page 14, the Cambridge authors make an observation that directly contradicts and undermines Weaver’s optimism:

No country has yet developed a low-carbon tourism strategy, leaving the sector to find its own way to address climate change in the face of considerable uncertainties” and “The transition to low-carbon strategies by tourism will need to be initiated by the sector itself.”

Authors of the same study make the following observations about the tourism and hospitality sector:

• Calculations of the contribution of tourism to global carbon dioxide (CO2) emissions range from 3.9% to 6% of human emissions with 4.9% the best estimate. As the world becomes more affluent, the sector is expected to grow by an average of 4% annually and reach 10% of global GDP within 10 years. The sector’s emissions are on a course to grow 130% between 2005 and 2035.

• Tourism will be affected by policy changes and efforts to reduce GHG emissions causing global warming, especially in the context of the steep growth in its emissions. Emission from transport and the built environment account for 95% of tourism’s emissions, meaning that reductions from those two sectors will dictate much of its mitigation potential.

• Coastal tourism is the largest component of the tourism industry with more than 60% of Europeans opting for beach holidays, and the segment accounting for more than 80% of US tourism revenues. Rising sea levels will have a profound and multiple impacts on coast tourism. For example, nearly a third of Caribbean resorts are less than 1 meter above the high water mark. Sea level rise of 1 meter would damage 49-60% of the region’s resort properties, lead to the loss or damage of 21 airports and inundate land around 35 ports. The cost of rebuilding tourist resorts in the region by 2050 is estimated at between US$10-23.3 billion. Beach erosion could reduce prices that operators can charge for accommodation.

• Given the significance of its climate impact, tourism will come under significant pressure to reduce GHG emissions if governments enact policies to curb climate change in line with its target of keeping the rise in global average temperatures below a 2 degree increase over pre-industrial levels. These pressure will become all the more acute given the sector’s projected growth.

• Under a business-as-usual scenario, the sector’s emissions are forecast to grow by 130% between 2005 and 2035; and emissions from air travel and accommodation are expected to triple. Studies show that for some countries, such as the UK, unrestricted growth of tourism would, by 2050, see the sector consuming the entire carbon budget available under a 20C scenario.

• Emissions reductions from improvements to fuel efficiency and technological fixes are expected to be offset by growth in tourism. Strong policy measures are likely to be necessary, especially to change passenger transport behavior, where “a large price signal” is needed.

• Changes in lifestyle are therefore likely to be an important component of any effort to drive emissions reductions from tourism. Such changes might include, for example, a reduction in the demand for long-haul tourism in favour of holidaying more locally.

• The tourism sector’s emissions are somewhat concentrated: for example air transport accounted for 43% of the sector’s emissions but only 17% of trips taken. Cruises tend also to have high associated emissions. This means that reducing demand in a few small subsectors of tourism could have a significant affect on emissions.

• No country has yet developed a low-carbon tourism strategy, leaving the sector to find its own way to address climate change in the face of considerable uncertainties.

• The sector will not be uniformly affected. Urban tourism will be less vulnerable than coastal tourism. Pilgrimage, family visits or gambling will be less affected than beach tourism, angling or nature watching. The relative attraction of destinations to tourists will change as temperatures rise, while climate change is already encouraging “last chance” tourism to threatened environments.

• The sector will face significant climate impacts and is likely to be required to make a significant contribution to measures addressing global GHG emissions.

“fits” naturally with much of the thinking associated with new, living, local economies described in the section PROXIMITY; the Conscious Capitalism, Regenerative Capitalism and New Economy thinking as well as much of ecological economics and social reform.

So we’re not interested in judging or chastising those who hold onto what we consider to be obsolete beliefs but are keen to work with those interested in developing a model that will be a better fit for a worldview on the rise.

In this context however, our first task and contribution has to be to admit our own error of perception! When creating the compass of alliterative “Ps,” we applied the word PROTECTION to the vast topic of sustainability, and only later recognized the lasting power of an old paradigm. Does Nature really need protection from us – a powerful species, agreed, but still very dependent on seemingly inferior species like microbes, bacteria, yeast etc. to survive? Is “the environment” really another thing or problem, that needs to be fixed with human ingenuity or do we need to step back, away even, and let nature restore balance? What is our role as a species – are we co-creators, really? If so, God forbid that we should act like the Sorcerer’s Apprentice, so proud we learned how to cast a spell but so stupid not to have learned how to stop it.

Perhaps the P should be changed to PLANET to point to our embeddedness in nature? But is such a pointer needed when the planet is really our only home, our mother, our entire source and reason for existence? And perhaps planet Earth, Gaia, Pachamama doesn’t give a toss as to where we place Her on some entirely subjective conceptual diagram but only cares that we recognizes that without HER we are nothing, yes no thing. We simply cease to be.

And since we’re referring to the principles as pointers and signposts, I can’t help but think of us as the modern equivalent of the Prodigal son staggering home, broke and slightly hung over from too much indulgence. The signpost should read “Welcome Prodigal – home this way” and, to prepare us for the joyful homecoming we’ve been promised, perhaps we will also be given some home truths to help our reintegration into the family and acceptance of our responsibilities as adults.

- **Time is running out for humanity to learn how to do the above but, should it do so, the quality of our lives could improve enormously;**
- **Tourism success is currently measured in terms of volume growth (increasing the number of tourist trips) and, due to increases in human population and affluence, is forecast to grow at a global annual average of 4% in perpetuity. (Note no one has yet forecast when that growth rate will stagnate or decline)**
- **The 4% annualised volume growth trajectory is unsustainable so an alternative approach needs to be developed that involves:**
  - significantly reducing resource use – especially non-renewable energy, land and water and the habitats of other life forms and, ideally, achieving zero-waste from the ground-based parts of tourism;
  - making better, more efficient use of existing investments (hotel rooms, entertainment facilities) and transport infrastructure;
  - internalizing externalities that will inevitably make “cheap travel” less available;
  - generating much higher rates of return (more yield) and more positive social impact per unit of consumption/production;
  - reducing leakage and increasing multiplier effects;
  - significantly improving the diffusion and impact of tangible benefits to all stakeholders affected by tourism especially host communities;
  - reducing costs associated with marketing and operations through more repeat visitation, referrals and positive reviews;
  - better more effective integration of tourism with the development of local living economies;
  - increasing employee engagement and improving customer satisfaction;
  - increasing cross selling and upselling;

- **The other unfortunate truth is that most host communities are flying blind. Both industry and governments have done a good job of extolling the benefits of tourism but a very poor job of either identifying or counting all the costs. We have elaborate and complex Satellite Accounts that feed a number into a measure (GDP) that we know to be useless at assessing net welfare to a community of human beings. What we need more than anything is:**
  - A comprehensive list of costs associated with the attraction and support of an influx of on-resident visitors into a community;
  - Maps of where their spending is likely to go and under what conditions;
  - An accurate picture of who really benefits and, again, under what conditions; and
  - What are the most effective ways of ensuring the income benefits the host community.

We take as given that, all other factors being equal, tourism demand will rise. The UNWTO forecasts for growth overall are likely to be under-estimates given population growth, the rise of the middle class in South America, Africa and Asia, and the fact that international and domestic travel is now as essential to economic activity as credit and electricity. But air travel, which accounts for 17% of trips yet 43% of emissions associated with the tourism sector, has limited options for reducing its generation of CO2 and other greenhouse gases. In that daunting context, the ground-based tourism industry (ground transportation, buildings and food and activity provision) has nothing short of a moral imperative to:

  a. minimize and, where possible, eliminate CO2 emissions by switching to renewable energy sources, reducing energy demand;
through improved efficiencies and, if relevant, disinvesting in fossil fuels;

b. maximize the use of existing tourism plant by ensuring they get year-round use – even if that means different uses at certain times of the year;

c. increase the positive net benefit to hosts communities in the form of better jobs – sustainable livelihoods; local procurement that sustains locally owned social enterprises –and cooperatives that enhancing social impact;

d. focus attention on being more creative in the way they design guest experiences that encourage longer stays and more spending on goods and services delivered from the locality;

e. take more direct responsibility for protecting and enhancing both the local physical environment and culture (see the principle of PLACE);

f. take a more active role in educating guests as to ways in which they can minimize the impact of their travel behaviour while deriving much higher levels of enjoyment.

With no disrespect to the many committed sustainability experts, leaders and professionals, we are not convinced that the current emphasis on the mechanics and economics associated with sustainability is working as fast or as a deeply as is needed to mitigate the growing risks associated with “Business as Usual”. We suggest there are a number of reasons for this situation that have to be addressed “head on”

a. tourism has become a political and economic means to the end of economic growth as measured in contribution to GDP and visitor arrivals. As a consequence two conflicting messages are communicated simultaneously: grow the industry (increase the number of beds, restaurant covers, activities and arrivals) but be sustainable! Within the tourism industry there is virtually no open discussion of this internal contradiction nor clarity as to who, in a given situation, are the beneficiaries of such expansion.

The cognitive dissonance experienced by a simultaneous appeal to both extrinsic and intrinsic values has caused hesitation at best and paralysis or willful blindness at worst.

b. Tourism like mainstream business measures success by returns delivered on financial capital and has not been asked to measure returns on natural or social capital.

c. Tourism businesses tend to get pitched as individual enterprises with, as stated above, the appeal being made strictly to the owner-manager's business sense. Opportunities for collaboration, cooperation, cost savings and knowledge sharing can, therefore, often be missed. Hierarchical structures with top down, centralised command and control decision-making that worked for assembly lines are still being deployed throughout the entire industry in both public and private sectors despite major shifts in human values and expectations as discussed in the PEOPLE chapter.

d. Sustainable tourism practices are isolated in a package called Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and treated as a necessary “bolt on” to corporate policy - promoted as a means to reduce costs, improve reputation or ensure legal compliance. They are handled separately from people-related issues. The current approach to curricula development in many universities and colleges teaching tourism and hospitality management affirms the “bolt on” approach with specialist classes – often electives – offered in such courses as The Business Case for Sustainability, Carbon Reduction, Certification Criteria, and Eco-labelling that are suited to a rational, linear form of thinking and being. Few address the systemic root causes and very few teach eco-literacy and systems thinking as applied to tourism. Opportunities for engaging the senses and emotions to stimulate motivation are often neglected. The organizational structure of most teaching institutions reflects a worldview steeped in hierarchy, specialisation, and competitiveness, and the research and pedagogic paradigm is still based on an epistemology based on material reductionism, and the primacy of empirical observation back by quantitative analysis and evaluation.

c. In order to encourage behaviour change, we have focused on and seemingly affirmed the very values that have got us into difficulty. Recent psychological research distinguishes between extrinsic values that are centred on external approval or rewards (such as financial success, fame, status) and intrinsic values that are considered inherently important in their own right (friendship, generosity, acceptance, loyalty, honesty) 151. By focusing on extrinsic values – promoting cost savings, business efficiencies, improved reputation, competitive advantage, being seen as smart – we’ve indirectly reinforced the belief that humans are inherently selfish, competitive and only interested in personal gain and that acquisition of money, stuff and power remain and will always be our primary motivators. The message has confirmed the notion of Homo as “Economicus.” By appealing to Homo Economicus and focusing on generic action steps (practices) and rationalisations that draw on our IQ – the intelligence associated with our left brains that govern our rational thoughts - we fail to make the connection to our social and spiritual selves and the deeper sources of caring, creativity and identity that can power and sustain a genuine caring for nature. We reinforce a perception that Nature exists “out there” and is a problem to be solved or fixed.

The Conscious Travel Approach

Based on the perspectives and principles discussed already, Conscious Travel approaches the issue of “sustainability” differently – namely, from the inside out.

As discussed at the beginning of this paper in Perspective # 2, the first step is to acknowledge the truth of our situation – as stated clearly in the “home truths above” and secondly to adjust the lens through which we see the world. If we only focus on the mechanics and cost savings of sustainability (heating systems, water management, fuel consumption etc.) and ignore or fragment our experience of the natural world which we are a part, it will be hard to motivate ourselves and our teams. Enterprises, and especially owner-managers, need to develop a sense of passion and purpose and a sense of stewardship for the ecosystem in which their operation is located. We have to capture hearts as well as minds. And it’s more than OK to have fun and celebrate the beautiful planet that sustains us – it’s vital to our health and happiness!

Once we humans come to understand and experience that we are part of nature and not sitting on or outside of it; that we can learn and benefit from Nature’s own experience gained over 3.8 billion years of evolution; and that our role is to become all we can be as humans while contributing to the health of the whole system, then sustainability is literally a "no brainer!"

*He who is in harmony with Nature hits the mark without effort and apprehends the truth without thinking.* Confucius

The question of the day, therefore, is how to we stimulate and hasten that shift in perception within the tourism community at all levels – from the frontline of every hotel to the boardrooms of the top international agencies and national tourism boards – and how do we then “infect” our guests with the same enthusiasm, passion and caring?
But such a shift in perception towards the natural world will have no meaning unless our attitude to the people who make this sector work also changes. If the industry continues to see the “labour force” as a costly commodity, a human resource instead of their biggest asset, and the source of all creativity, intelligence and passion, then deep change in its relationship with the rest of the natural world is impossible.

That shift in perception can occur as a result of study or an experience – generally in and of Nature. We feel our connection and enjoy a sense of profound wonder and awe, a deep sense of oneness or a magical sense of aliveness that widens and deepens our sense of who we are and why we are here.

As discussed in the sections PEOPLE and PURPOSE, when we identify with something larger than ourselves, we experience a sense of meaning and purpose and that enlarges and becomes part of who we are. Joanna Macy points out in Active Hope, that we move between many different expressions of identity in a day inhabiting a family self at home, a team self at work or at a football game, and an ecological self when enjoying the sense of connectedness described earlier.

When the definition of self changes, the meaning of self-interest and self-serving motivations changes accordingly. 152

So as discussed in the PURPOSE section, Tourism has a critical role to play in introducing its guests to different cultural and geographical worlds in ways that enable them to feel and experience that sense of oneness or kinship with other life forms – be they people, other animals, trees, whole ecosystems, or even the galaxy. That’s why our deep purpose as Conscious Hosts is to help our guests fall in love with life itself for the sake of fostering a sense of connectedness described earlier.

But hosts cannot play this role, unless they enjoy a sense of affectionate connectedness with the place they call “home” because developing a sense of kinship, rootedness and belonging also sustains a caring commitment to a place and provides the inspiration and energy to share that affection and commitment with guests. It is that capacity to infect others with a love for life, that is the essence of Conscious Hosting. As was discussed in the chapter on Place, it should also be cultivated in community with other hosts, fellow inhabitants and guests whose diverse personal experiences and perspectives can enrich the unique sense of a place.

Recognizing ourselves as part of the living body of Earth opens us up to a great source of strength. The expression “act your age” takes on a different meaning when we see ourselves as part of an amazing flow of life that started on this planet some 3.8 billion years ago. We come through an unbroken lineage that has survived five mass extinctions. Life has a powerful creative energy and manifests a powerful desire to continue. When we align ourselves with the well-being of our world, we allow that desire and creative energy to act through us.

Working together as a collaborative learning community, Conscious Hosts will identify the actions necessary to “live lightly on the earth” and minimize the footprint associated with their economic activity.

PROXIMITY

All travel is local. Despite the act of getting there, all travelers do eventually arrive at a locality and experience its uniqueness. And if all travel is local, then ideally all hosts should be indigenous in the deepest sense of the word. …

So local travel is not a peripheral aspect of travel; a nice “add on” but central – the core of travel. Local travel isn’t just about meeting the locals – people who live in the locality – or even about buying handmade things from local people but about arousing the senses and sensibilities of guests so that they know they have arrived are somewhere different, unique, and, as a result, sacred.

Indigenous people know how to do this naturally – they don’t need a course in hospitality. It’s in their DNA, regardless of which tribe they associate with. They have been doing it for tens of thousands of years. They don’t need to be brought into the mainstream. We must sit at their feet by the campfires that have been burning for millennia and learn from the shadows on the cave wall or the stars that rise and fall on the velvety purple sky outside.

The only way we’ll rescue the future of tourism from the insanity and tyranny of its current model is to become indigenous in mind, heart and soul, given that indigenous means to “originate or occur naturally in a particular place.” 153

As expressed in more detail on the chapter that focuses on the core principle of PLACE, Conscious Travel echoes the work of Bill Reed, and the Regenesis Group of planner-developers whose work acknowledges and harnesses the vital co-creative relationship between humans and the places they inhabit – a power that has been diminished but never totally erased. Reed and colleagues see their work as: “healing places to heal a planet” in recognition that, in many cases, past human damage has to be undone and natural systems encouraged to regenerate. They ask:

How do we create the kind of spirit around our work that taps into a powerful enough source of caring that we can continue it and continuously regenerate it? How do we tap into the wisdom that local cultures embody to work more effectively?

Place is intimate, personal, filled with meaning and potential. It grows out of the rich interrelationships of earth energies, biotic energies, and human cultural energies to create a living whole with its own distinctive nature and spirit. When we experience where we live and work as such a place, it becomes a powerful source for the continuing caring required to sustain sustainability. 154

A healthy visitor economy depends on the active support of the local resident community to provide a “social licence” to operate. Consequently, despite being dependent on bringing visitors to a place from far away, Conscious Travel is essentially localist in attitude.

But the next step is not creating a new local tourism initiative – such as “meet and eat with the locals”, or attracting more locals to sign up to Airbnb to make their homes available – but instead to integrate with any separate activities or purpose i.e., tourism from all other aspects of the community.

The tourism community is a relatively late arrival to the localist and self-reliance movement within the emerging new economy. It is growing rapidly in response to the failure of mainstream economics or centralists policies to help communities where the majority of enterprises are micro in scale with modest capital requirements. A huge amount of work has been undertaken in many countries by organizations like the Institute for Self-Reliance in the USA 155, the Centre for Local Economic Strategies (UK) 156. Locality 157 (UK), the community economic development movement (CED) in Canada that now includes 350 separate communities 158 and the international cooperative movement
- all of which have developed practical tools, strategies and information that have direct relevance to the small and micro businesses engaged in tourism.

There is no need for tourism to reinvent the wheel. In a highly informative paper titled Ultra Micro-Economics published by Cooperatives UK, its author, David Boyle states:

The ultra-micro approach to economics is simple. It is a local and a neighbourhood approach that makes economics work for people rather than against them. It is based on increasing the local retention of money, or perhaps the velocity of local money, on import replacement not comparative advantage, on greater levels of cooperation, allowing them to compete on more equal terms with the big behemoths, and using a much more personal or empathic approach to enterprise. 161

This ultra-micro approach is based on the following principles, that even in the most distressed and remote areas:

• There is money around, but not nearly enough institutions to invest locally and those which do exist are often too risk averse for growing local markets

• There are assets in communities – knowledge, skills resources, land and buildings, than can be harnessed to support local economic development.

• There is money flowing through all local economies but, when there are few local enterprises and supply chains, it tends to flow straight out again.

• There is a sense of place, where all economic levers belong, the economic glue which links those taking part in local sharing and trading

• There is something about the ultra-local approach that re-doubles benefits in other policy areas: it can produce jobs but also address environmental and social issues both locally and beyond. 163

Localise West Midlands summarizes the benefits of an ultra-micro approach 162:

• Creates a virtuous circle – as illustrated below - between stronger local decision-making and stronger local business

• Is a good way to build a more successful and inclusive local economy with more jobs and better civic welfare

• Supports the development of local power to make key decisions about investment and innovations

• Enables and powers people to be economically active and included with high levels of trust, cooperation and social capital and has short feedback loops

• Creates an economy based on local vision, needs and resources

• Builds trust and sharing of ideas and best practice necessary for community-based innovation. 162

A key study published in 2011 analysed 3000 counties in the USA and concluded that “those with a larger density of small, locally-owned businesses experienced greater per capita income growth between 2000 and 2007. 163

Two organisations located on either side of the Atlantic stand out for their commitment to helping communities become more resilient and self-reliant. In the US, The Business Alliance for Local Living Economies (BALLE) provides a national forum for visionary local economy leaders and funders to connect, build their capacity, and innovate. Over 30,000 individual members, have access to a rich library of resources and three transformative communities of practice: a Local Economy Investment Circle, the Community Foundation Circle, and the nation’s only Fellowship program dedicated to cultivating the emergence of a new economy. The BALLE website is replete with articles, case studies, videos etc. and experience/knowledge sharing is a clear priority. Their solutions are organized into eight key areas of activity:

1. Local First – promote a culture of local, cooperative and community-owned businesses and organizations

2. Shared Ownership - cultivate democratic models: worker ownership, land trusts, protection of public assets and the commons

3. Opportunity for all: determinedly invest in communities that have historically been deprived and oppressed.

4. Innovation for Good – build entrepreneurial capacity to meet local needs and innovate for the greater good

5. Soil and Nature: invest in soil and nature-based industries, energy and infrastructure; divest from fossil fuels

6. Community Capital: divest from Wall Street and invest in community.

7. Localist Policies: advocate for localist policies that level the playing field for local businesses, people and nature

8. Magic & Soul: use both to convene entrepreneurs and to catalyse the courage of their hearts.

Also in the US, the Thriving Resilient Communities Collaboratory (TRCC) 164 has created a set of guides for individuals and communities wishing to work together to make their communities better able to cope with the anticipated changes of the near future. They include such topics as:

• Guide # 1 Getting Started 165

An introduction to the converging economic and ecological challenges we face as responsible people sharing this planet, along with exciting stories and useful tools to help us find our way

• Guide # 2: Taking Steps Towards Resilience: Lifestyle Changes

A brief list of simple steps individuals and households can make to use less energy, become more mindful and resilient, with links to additional information and resources for DIY projects
• **Guide # 3: Taking Steps Towards Resilience: Practical Changes**
  Ideas, guides, and best practices for projects to mobilize your community - from relocalizing your food, energy, and economic systems to creating a culture of compassion and service

• **Guide # 4: Building a Movement**
  Tools to help you learn how to work effectively as a team, identify community resources and needs, and design an environment from which creativity and collective genius can emerge

• **Guide # 5: Shifting the System**
  Legal information, organizing strategies, and models to shift current policies, systems, and infrastructure to support and foster community resilience

In the United Kingdom, a similar initiative, which has now spread internationally, is the **Transition Town Network** 166 a UK-based charitable organisation whose role is to inspire, encourage, connect, support and train communities to rebuild resilience and reduce CO2 emissions. Several hundred Transition Towns have now been created worldwide sharing the common purpose of "to support community-led responses to peak oil and climate change, building resilience and happiness" based on seven principles that are consistent with the Conscious Travel perspectives and principles:

1. Visioning
2. Help people access good information and trust them to make good decisions
3. Inclusion and openness
4. Enable sharing and networking
5. Build resilience
6. Inner and outer transition
7. Self organization and decision-making at the appropriate level

Going forward the boundaries that have traditionally separated tourism from local economic and social development need to be blurred and the three functions integrated. The capacity of a community to provide an authentically warm welcome to visitors and offer a rich array of experiences that bring positive benefits to all stakeholders will depend on:

• there being a strong sense of community in the destination
• shared clarity about the type, scope and pace of tourism development the community believe its can support
• a unique sense of place conveyed by a diversity of place-based businesses
• a sense of aliveness that emanates from the passion, pride and commitment of locals
• strong relationships that support the flow of energy, income, enthusiasm and goodwill within the community.
• diversity of ownership structures that help maximize the flow of benefits into the community; and
• access to local sources of capital and other forms of business support
CHAPTER 5
The Next Steps

This edition of this document will initially be distributed to key participants in the TIPSE project and interested members of the Tourism Education Futures Initiative (TEFI) for review and feedback in order to:

a. identify issues and concepts that need further clarification,
b. identify and address any major gaps in content,
c. obtain feedback on “Implications for Action” for each chapter so that a section of the same name can be included in the next edition,
d. prepare some case studies of existing social enterprise, and
e. prepare a comprehensive list of Resources available to Faculty to pursue their own development.

Educational Need and Opportunity

The concepts associated with Conscious Travel provide a framework for thinking about an emerging visitor economy whose overarching purpose and structure will be to deliver positive social, environmental and economic impact to its stakeholders.

Currently tourism as a global industry relies heavily on traditional profit maximising corporate structures – the privately owned corporation dominates in terms of business structure but a much smaller number of national and multi-national, mostly publicly-owned corporations control or influence much of the capital invested, profits generated and customers served. Institutions of Higher Education, which have programs geared towards preparing students for careers in tourism and hospitality currently focus on the industrial, profit maximizing model. The majority of students seek employment within the larger companies, government agencies, NGOs and Destination Marketing Organisations (DMOs).

The real opportunity for alternative “social structures” such as Social Enterprise, Benefit Corporations, Worker-owned cooperatives, worker-directed companies, not-for-profit enterprises lies in supporting and enabling an alternative operating model based on maximizing social good for all stakeholders.

In order to encourage and support students considering a future in Social Enterprise, within Tourism and Hospitality, they will need

1. A rationale and context for the Social Entrepreneurship option
2. The capacity to critically observe models at work in their community and determine where the key change levers can have most effect
3. Understand how to develop and meet new success goals and embed CSR within their enterprise – such as flourishing
4. Have developed personal self awareness and self management/mastery skills
5. Have the tools to develop a deep appreciation of place and harness the skills of the community in which the enterprise is located
6. Knowledge and tools to design and develop rich experiences
7. Skills and knowledge to attract the right customer
8. Leadership skills appropriate to collective, community-based and enterprise decision-making.

Arne Naess, the deep ecologist suggested that wisdom derives from deep questioning, deep experience and deep commitment. On this basis, eight curriculum building blocks are suggested as starters for discussion.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Curriculum Building Blocks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>DEEP QUESTIONING</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Changing the model – opportunities for social enterprise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Root Cause – applying systems thinking to social change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flourishing in a Regenerative Economy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Living Lightly on the Land Zero Impact, Regeneration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Designing Experiences that Transform</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX

The Need for and Inevitability of Change

Introduction

Conscious Travel is based on a belief that the decline of the industrial model, on which most of tourism’s recent success has been based, is both inevitable and desirable.

Tourism’s industrial model of production and consumption flourished when energy was cheaply available from abundant, accessible sources of fossil fuel; when there were literally hundreds of new, virtually empty and exotic places to explore and cultures to get to know; when there were vast quantities of resources, capital and “know how” to deploy with limited debt to be paid; and when huge numbers of people were determined to put two decades of war behind them and improve their material well-being.

The decline is inevitable because the model emerged to serve a different world. The conditions that ensured its success are fast disappearing. Mervyn King, the former Governor of the Bank of England described the decade commencing in the mid 1990s as “N.I.C.E.” as it constituted a period of Non-Inflationary Consistent Expansion and went on to declare its demise in 2008.

The decline is desirable because the model contains within it certain characteristics and flaws that worsen with time. The industrial model of production and consumption generates wastes and uses resources that can be accommodated in its early stage of development but not sustained after it has reached a certain scale and pace of growth. Furthermore, built within its operating system are features that undermine its capacity for sustained success. The model ceases to generate net benefits for a majority – be they guests, host businesses or host communities. Costs outweigh incomes and the system becomes increasingly vulnerable to external shocks.

Sixty Years of Steady Tourism Growth

By any conventional measure, the growth of international and domestic tourism since the end of the last world war in 1945 has been spectacular. Sixty-five years ago, in 1950, international tourist arrivals totalled 25 million and receipts were $2.1 billion. By 2013, the number of arrivals had grown 43 times to 1.0867 billion and their domestic counterparts numbered between 5 and 6 billion. Total international receipts reached $1.159 trillion – suggesting an approximate global average spend of just over $1000 per person per trip.

The UNWTO forecasts that by 2030 – a mere 15 years away from now – as many as 1.8 billion international tourists could be crossing international borders. It’s not surprising that virtually every country and region in the world is now actively courting tourists as a source of foreign exchange and investment. What’s not so clear is how we are going to handle their waste (emissions, sewage and garbage), find enough clean water, inexpensive land for hotels and transport, protect endangered keystone species – either in captivity or the wild - and raise enough capital for services that rely on the public purse.
Provided that global forecasts for economic growth are met, demand for international travel shows no signs of slowing overall although traditional origin markets and destinations in Europe and North America are giving way to Asian, Latin American and Eastern European, Russian sources. China has risen to become the number one source of international tourists in less than a decade and demand growth for the Asia-Pacific region at 5-6% per annum significantly exceeds the 3.3% per annum growth rate for the world as a whole. Both the UN World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) and the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC) publish detailed annual accounts of tourism activity.

Despite the current absolute size of the industry, demand figures remain relatively low, when expressed as a percentage of the global population, suggesting there is still a huge pent up, latent demand. For example, relatively low, when expressed as a percentage of the global population, demand figures remain per annum growth rate for the world as a whole. Both the UN World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) and the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC) publish detailed annual accounts of tourism activity.

What Is the NET Impact of Tourism?

No one can or should dispute the positive effects of an economic phenomenon which has grown to contribute 10% of GDP and keep over 250 million people in a job. Since World War 2, tourism has brought benefits to virtually every country; lifted people out of poverty through accessible employment; created an untold number of entrepreneurial opportunities; enabled millions to enjoy face-to-face encounters with people of very different cultures; help fill public treasuries with useful tax dollars that were applied to education, health care and other social services; supported the development of important infrastructure and provided billions of dollars in foreign exchange and investment capital.

The Tourism Malaise

In the early days of its post war development, when nations contemplated building wealth from services as opposed to manufacturing, tourism was promoted as a squeaky clean alternative to manufacturing. That was understandable at a time when airports were quiet calm places with long intervals between take offs and landings; when freeway capacity vastly exceeded car use; trains moved freight; there were huge spaces between cities; the population was one third its current size; international travel was considered an aspirational novelty by a privileged few; and there was no need for segregated business lounges for a frequent travelling elite. Ignorance was bliss. As travellers, we couldn't see or smell CO2 so didn't know enough to pay attention let alone measure its concentration. Furthermore, when we left our rubbish behind it seemed to disappear from view, hidden in that place we called “away.”

The tourism sector has been slow to admit that, like every other sector, it needs to think about how it is going to remake itself in a resource-constrained world. There are five reasons this is the case:

1. The time-stamped, perishability of what is described as “the product,” necessitates a form of myopia and an obsession with the immediate that precludes long-term, thinking.
2. We tend to think not in wholes but in pieces. The last word that an hotelier, CEO of an airline, or owner of a high-end event production company will give when asked, “What business are you in? is tourism. They are likely to answer hospitality, aviation and business travel respectively.
3. We don't acknowledge our interdependence and responsibility for the whole. The hotel owner does not count the emissions generated by guests and most source countries don't either. For example, the carbon associated with international trips made by Britons when travelling overseas does not form part of the UK's carbon budget. When boring into an underground aquifer to access fresh water, does the owner of the theme park check that the farmer miles up the road still has sufficient pressure to irrigate the lettuce being delivered to hotels each morning? Perhaps we ensure that the trash is sorted into bins and removed by the council but have we seen the local landfill site and how well it is managed and staffed and whether toxins are leaching into the ground water?

As a consequence, the vast majority of hard working people labouring away in tourism are oblivious to the scope and nature of its “dark side.” Since most of us wouldn't know what to do about it if we did, why ask? Better to focus on aspects where we feel we can be effective like ensuring that towels are laundered less frequently, fuel-saving winglets are attached to our jet aircraft and re-cycle bins are installed at the exit doors of convention halls so all the “give aways” that delegates don't wish to carry home can be re-cycled and carry on.

4. A key role of all hosts is to accentuate the positive, keep calm and carry on. Entertainers at heart, we believe the show must go on and its actors must remain positive at all times. Destination choice is utterly influenced by perception – as guests cannot examine or trial their purchase their decision is fraught with risk and hesitancy. Tourism product cannot be warehoused and examine or trial their purchase their decision is fraught with risk and hesitancy. Where does the destination fear that an hotelier, CEO of an airline, or owner of a high-end event product cannot be warehoused and exam

Unfortunately, no systematic and standardised method for identifying let alone measuring these impacts currently exists in one place. Until we have scoped and evaluated all the costs as well as the benefits, we cannot assume or proclaim there to be a positive net impact or benefit from tourism overall.

Each and all of these issues warrant attention. The intensity and scope of their impact varies enormously from one destination to another. The most important issues to grapple with are:
The key participants in the industrial model of tourism are:

- **Roles**
  - Assumptions that were applied to enable transactions to occur; and for sustained success. To do that, we need to understand first how the industrial model works and see how its innate processes and operating assumptions underpinning the industrial model.
  - If the objective is to build a better model, then it is important to understand how the industrial model works and see how its innate characteristics have turned into flaws that undermine its capacity for sustained success. To do that, we need to understand first the roles played by the participants; second, the processes and operating assumptions that were applied to enable transactions to occur; and third, their impact on all participants.

- **Producers** who, in tourism come in different guises. The host or owner-manager of a tourism service creates a “product” – access to services and facilities that are packaged (manufactured/assembled) from sub-products (beds, or seats in plane or train, activities, and services) that, in turn, are created from raw materials that can be mined, farmed or manufactured. In some cases these hosts might use the services of developers and speculators who have the capital to acquire some tourism resources (land, access) by purchase or appropriation for the purpose of speculative development. They may have no intention of operating a tourism business but fund and build the hotels, roads airports and other infrastructure that enable a fledgling visitor economy to expand and mature. Hosts either sell their products direct to a potential guest or distribute them via a plethora of distribution channels involving multiple intermediaries.

- **Consumers** are tourists, guests or customers who take trips; have experiences; and buy specific products or packages directly from the host supplier or from intermediaries such as retail agents, wholesalers, inbound operators or, more recently, online travel agents. Note: the host cannot deliver a product to a customer. They are dependent on the customer travelling to the point of consumption. This represents huge risk to the consumer and risk and vulnerability to the producer. Since the product is, in reality, an experience consumed at a unique point in time and space, it cannot be warehoused or resold. Since hosts experience and perceive the customer as scarce, they must focus their efforts on promotion and persuasion and warding off competition from suppliers of similar products. As guests cannot pre-test or exchange a time-based experience, it represents a high-risk purchase that has an affect on their sense of value and expectations.

- **Host Communities** comprise residents of the place which the tourist visits and they experience direct or indirect benefits and costs associated with the extension of hospitality to incoming visitors. Benefits might include improved infrastructure such as roads, airports, a wider selection of restaurants, entertainment and sporting facilities. Costs could include higher food and housing prices, higher taxes to cover the need for more policing, fire and sanitation services etc. Also included in this category are the agencies (public and private) responsible for marketing the place and managing the facilities and services offered by hosts.

### Processes and Operating Assumptions Underpinning the Industrial Model

What follows is not an in-depth economic analysis but a set of observations regarding the interaction of various elements of the model. Italics are used to highlight certain features of the model at work.

- The industrial model is best described as a “make and sell” wealth creating activity comprising a very complex value chain linking a plethora of discrete parts as illustrated below. (Note: this comprehensive illustration should be viewed in its original form in the UNWTO report obtained here: http://www.unwto.org/ebook/sustainable-tourism-for-development/)

- All participants (producers and consumers) are considered to be separate from one another and focused on maximising their own self-interest.

- The producer’s objective is more or less exclusively to maximise profits and remit a positive return to the shareholders who invested financial capital in the business. In other words, the outcome (Profit) is synonymous with purpose (business exist exclusively to make money) and the primary unit of activity is the transaction.

- Value is created by the producer and realised through the sale of products made available for discrete periods of time e.g., room nights, seats on a mode of transportation within a specific time period and between an origin and destination; or as access to an activity. Profits occur when the product is sold for more than the cost of its creation and delivery.

- These products are assembled by a series of producers – called tourism operators who act independently of one another. Guests, known as consumers, passengers, delegates, or audiences, however, have a complete trip experience made up of several products supplied by multiple, un-related producers. Consumers are often grouped together into market segments based on behaviour, demographics or preferences so that producers can target a campaign at them which persuades a potential customer to commit to a purchase.
The sale-purchase process in tourism differs from most other sectors because the product cannot be delivered to the customer. Tourists have to be persuaded to commit to a purchase without the opportunity to trial or pre-test. Since it is time-specific experience, there is no opportunity for exchange and limited opportunity for refunds. The process is therefore perceived as highly risky for the consumer as they are not only committing limited amounts of disposable income but also time.

The process is also highly risky for the producer as it takes considerable resource to industrial model is highly competitive. Since the supply of raw materials and customers is finite hence the need to compete with all other participants for market share.

Industrial management is about rigorous cost control through application of practices developed in manufacturing such as standardization, homogenization, specialization, achieving economies of scale and more recently automation and outsourcing. Smart marketing practices that enable the seller to command a higher price or generate more volume (longer stays, returns and referrals) can also be applied.

Both the management and marketing practices are designed to increase efficiency (to achieve more output with less input) and productivity (higher returns per unit of capital and labour invested).

In the industrial model, both parties to the transaction (guest and host) endeavour to win at the cost of the other – in other words the relationship is an adversarial one. Guests now have access to instant and ubiquitous information and tools for comparison in their search for “the best deal.” Hosts have sophisticated revenue and yield management tools but are vulnerable to sudden and unexpected drops in market demand caused by factors out of their control such as currency fluctuations, natural hazards, terrorism, epidemics and an influx of new competitors etc.

Tourism relies on consumers having disposable income and applying that to purchase a trip. Thus tourism is a derivative economy dependent on the robustness of the economy in the source country. Traffic flows between an origin and a destination are also determined by factors outside the control of most producers such as currency exchange rates, unpredictable events that might prevent travel – acts of terrorism, epidemics, weather, natural hazards, fashion, acts of competitor destinations etc. Demand also ebbs and flows by season and average growth forecasts very rarely account for the huge volatility in demand experienced by individual hosts.

In such situations of demand volatility the most commonly used tactic that hosts deploy to maintain share and cash flow is price discounting accompanied by rigorous cost cutting. The latter takes the form of
more automation, personnel layoffs (doing more with less), harsher labour contracts, cessation of maintenance, standardisation, and, where possible, application of innovative promotional concepts. The end result of which is a drop in service quality, increased customer dissatisfaction expressed as a resistance to pay more and commitment to paying less i.e. getting a cheap deal and a consequence diminishing returns.

In short, in an industrial model, where neither guest or host views the other as an equal partner but as an object to be manipulated or an adversary to be beaten, the effect is the same over time – the downward pressure on price, yield and satisfaction. After 60 years of steady growth, travel is no longer considered a privilege but a right and “cheap travel” is an expectation.

The only other way a producer can maintain income levels when net unit revenues keep falling is to increase gross sales volumes – either by handling more visitors (growing in size to gain economies of scale), or through expansion or mergers and acquisitions. This encourages the concentration of productive capacity in the hands of fewer producers (market consolidation) but without the potential for increased unit revenues. The end result for a destination is then a growth in visitor volumes that generates higher costs in terms of the infrastructure and services needed to support the transportation and housing of non-residents. The result: a diminishing rate of return and, potentially, if all costs were properly accounted for, a negative rate of return. Furthermore, higher volumes of traffic often mean more congestion such that service quality deteriorates further and a destination can stagnate and appear as unattractive to the consumer.

Thus it can be seen that over time the Industrial model applied to tourism results in diminishing net returns for hosts and the host destination and less satisfaction and real choice for the guest. In addition, the necessary focus on volume and scale leads to consolidation and integration i.e., wealth is concentrated in fewer hands. The big get bigger but, unlike banks, they have little chance of becoming “too big to fail” and even huge firms like Thomas Cook are can be vulnerable. (Thomas Cook – the oldest tour operator on the planet – was recently taken over by TUI)

Impact of the Industrial Model on People and Place – the Tourism Area Life Cycle

The industrial model assumes that, left to its own devices, a market comprising rational agents acting in their own self interest will produce the best result for all concerned. Unfortunately, given the composite nature of the guest experience, this assumption is particularly misplaced in tourism and neither producer nor customer can be guaranteed an optimum result.

Individual producers have limited influence over the quality of the products delivered by many others in the value chain or the quality of shared resources such as landscape, aesthetics, sense of welcome, ease of access that factor into a guest’s satisfaction. Both host and guest are excessively dependent on the information available about each other prior to the trip when the transaction price is agreed on, if not yet paid. Guests cannot exchange or return a time dependent experience.

Furthermore, because tourism is often the only game in town, there’s a tendency to assume more is better. If you are a developer-speculator with capital and access to an unspoiled beach or park, then more capacity is better in the short term. If you are a politician and your prospects of being voted back into power depend on your ability to attract investment and show growth in visitation, then more might also seem desirable. But if demand doesn’t grow to match the increased capacity or if the destination is already having difficulty taking care of existing guests and maintaining cultural integrity and environmental quality, growth might not be the best option for anybody. Despite this dynamic, virtually every destination strategy is based on achieving growth in numbers of visitor and receipts.

The final sting in the tail is known as the “Tragedy of the Commons.” For an individual host to be successful, he or she depends on their enterprise having access to an active market; drawing upon a number of intangible “attractors” such as beautiful landscapes, architectures, pristine beaches, healthy ecosystems, a colourful, cohesive and distinct culture, heritage, and diversity of experiences that compliment and support what the host provides. Yet the economic system does not adequately reflect this interdependence between hosts or their use of shared resources (clean beaches, attractive viewscape; healthy ecosystems or cultures) and responsibility for maintaining the quality of those commons are all too often overlooked, ignored or under funded.

One of the most successful models taught in tourism and hospitality courses around the world is Dr. Butler’s “Tourism Area Life Cycle.” The model, published in 1980, was designed to describe a recurring pattern in tourism development. Since then the TALC model has sustained a huge body of empirical research. Dr. Butler cites over 250 separate papers on the subject in his own reflective analysis. TALC been applied to small resorts, through to larger destinations comprising multiple resorts or resort clusters and encompassing a huge diversity of experience offerings: beach, spas, wineries, casinos, indigenous offerings, surfing sites, conference tourism and wildlife tourism.

Even though the model constitutes a beginner’s level of understanding, it is worth summarizing its five stages briefly here:

1. **Discovery** – a destination or a resort is explored or discovered by a few pioneers or is made accessible due to political changes, improved access etc. Visitors tell others about their experience and enjoy a certain amount of status in being one of the early visitors to experience the place as unspoiled. At this stage residents may be unaware of the appeal their home could have to others from far away and, with no prior experience of tourism, are often ill equipped to protect themselves from exploitation.

2. **Growth and development** – as word spreads, demand builds and the potential for investment is seized. More visitors require more amenities. New hotels, restaurants, shops and services are built to cater for the influx of people- with some investments made by local residents, and most by external developer-speculators better positioned to recognize and exploit market potential. The scale of development is considered manageable at this point and the growing tourism economy delivers immediate and tangible benefits to both host and host community in the form of foreign exchange, improved amenities and infrastructure.

3. **Success** – at this stage the facilities are fully utilised. Demand growth is steady and the resort or destination attracts further investment to satisfy an ever expanding influx of tourists. Once the volume of visitors exceeds a certain point, increases in inbound access justify involvement of large wholesalers and mass...
tourism gets a foothold. In many cases, the destination is slow to react or to anticipate the long-term implications of the rapid and sustained expansion. Governments enjoy the tax revenues and for as long as demand equals or outstrips supply, hosts benefit and, until residents are inconvenienced or operating margins are compromised by over supply, tourism is perceived as a major boon for the area.

4. **Problem/Stagnation** is the next phase and can be caused by one or several factors. Success causes congestion and a deteriorating experience that leads to negative publicity. Congestion is aggravated if the destination suffers from demand peaks and troughs (seasonality) – it’s impossible to increase capacity during peak months and often hard to fill in the low season. Residents may experience negative consequences of success and not be as welcoming. During troughs in demand, hosts deploy discounting practices to fill rooms, beds, seats. Thinning margins result in low wages, deferred maintenance. Unhappy guests take their complaints home with them and the destination loses popularity. Note: at some point between stages 2 and 5, a disturbance or crisis can occur that temporarily disrupts demand and income plummets. Post crisis many hosts deploy a price discounting strategy to attract back business.

5. **Decline or Rejuvenation** – either the hosts businesses work collaboratively with government to develop and execute a “re-branding exercise” and or “rejuvenation plan” to attract more or a different kind of visitor or the resort sinks further into decline and is passed over.

As models go, it’s the biggest success story in tourism! Yet the following comment made by the author, indicates his surprise at its longevity.

*It is now three decades since the original Tourism Area Life Cycle (TALC) article first appeared (Butler, 1980), and rather surprisingly the model proposed in that article is still being cited and used in tourism research. That fact alone makes the TALC somewhat extraordinary, as most models have a short life span, before they are relegated at best to a passing reference in current textbooks or articles. The reason for the longevity of the TALC is not entirely clear.*

The key to understanding the author’s incredulity perhaps lies in the title given to the model. The term “Life Cycle,” is a term borrowed from automobile production observing product, namely to have a “life cycle” of acceptance and rejection as the market first desired the product and then eventually found it outmoded and unattractive.

The implication being that resorts fall in and out of fashion like clothes or cars and the challenge therefore is primarily a marketing one solved by repositioning, rebranding and re-investment. In most cases, models experience incremental change in the form of performance improvements, structural and design change and the addition of new features all aimed at maintaining an existing market or capturing an additional market. Tourist resorts are little different, except for one fundamental element, that of control. Most commercial products are manufactured by one company which has control over product design, production and marketing, whereas most tourism resorts are rarely under a single controlling force and their component parts often display a remarkable lack of ability to coordinate either product offering or marketing.

It is also interesting to note that while that first paper in 1980 has since spawned hundreds of other articles, theses and corporate discussion papers, memos and strategies, the focus remains a local one applied to a specific resort or place. Furthermore, they share the assumption stated by Dr. Butler when he states that these resorts are “not living entities although they are dynamic.”

**Introducing the Sigmoid Curve and Curvilinear Logic**

I am confident that, once we apply a systems lens to tourism, Dr. Butler’s model, which he suggests or fears might also be in decline, will experience an exciting rejuvenation in attention! My confidence stems from the fact that TALC is in fact the Sigmoid or S-curve in action and the Sigmoid curve – even though it sounds very grandiose - is simply a fundamental pattern underpinning all life itself. The word Sigmoid is Greek for the letter S and simply describes a line with two connected curves – much like an “S” on its side.

The Sigmoid curve is a graphic way of expressing what we all experience in life – the law of diminishing returns – often experienced somewhat painfully by a human tendency to do more of what worked in the past to achieve the same result in the present. As the returns decline, we redouble our efforts, confident that what worked in the past will once again be successful if only we invest more labor, energy, and capital.

It works as a model or pattern descriptor of the rise, growth and decline of so many phenomena because all products are the by-product of human beings and their economies which are living systems. While TALC was originally applied to specific resorts of various sizes and types, I believe the sigmoid curve applies to the industrial model of tourism as a whole.

Ecologists define sigmoid growth curves as pattern of growth in which, in a new environment, the population density of an organism increases slowly at first in a positive acceleration phase; then increases rapidly approaching an exponential growth rate as in the form of a J or hockey stick-shaped curve; but then declines in a negative acceleration phase until at zero growth rate the population stabilizes. The critical factor determining the point at which the curve flattens and turns downward is nearly always available energy (food or fuel).

The wise and eminently practical management guru, Charles Handy, applied the Sigmoid Curve to business drawing upon what Ernst Schumacher had earlier described as curvilinear logic, i.e. the conviction that everything has its ups and then its downs, and that nothing lasts for ever or was there for ever.

In his book *The Age of Paradox*, Charles Handy discusses the S-shaped curve:

*The Sigmoid curve sums up the story of life itself. We start slowly, experimentally and falteringly, we wax and then we wane. It is the story of the British Empire – and of the Russian Empire and of all empires always. It is the story of a product's life cycle and of many a corporation's rise and fall. It even describes the course of love and relationships.*
Luckily there is life beyond the curve. The secret of constant growth is to start a new Sigmoid Curve before the first one peters out. The right place to start that second curve is at point A, where there is the time, as well as the resources and the energy, to get the new curve through its initial explorations and floundering before the first curve begins to dip downwards.

That would seem obvious; were it not for the fact that at point A all the messages coming through to the individual or the institution are that everything is going fine, that it would be folly to change when the current recipes are working so well. All that we know of change, be it personal change or change in organisations, tells us that the real energy for change only comes when you are looking disaster in the face, at point B on the first curve.

At this point, however, it is going to require a mighty effort to drag oneself up to where, by now, one should be on the second curve (B). To make it worse, the current leaders are now discredited because they are seen to have led the organisation down the hill, resources are depleted and energies are low. For an individual, an event like redundancy typically takes place at point B. It is hard, at that point, to mobilise the resources or to restore the credibility which one had at the peak. We should not be surprised, therefore, that people get depressed at this point or that institutions invariably start the change process, if they leave it until point B, by bringing in new people at the top, because only people who are new to the situation will have the credibility and the different vision to lift the place back on to the second curve.

Wise are they who start the second curve at point A, because that is the Pathway through Paradox, the way to build a new future while maintaining the present. Even then, however, the problems do not end. The second curve, be it a new product, a new way of operating, a new strategy or a new culture, is going to be noticeably different from the old. It has to be. The people also have to be different. Those who lead the second curve are not going to be the people who led the first curve. For one thing, the continuing responsibility of those original leaders is to keep that first curve going long enough to support the early stages of the second curve. For another, they will find it temperamentally difficult to abandon their first curve while it is doing so well, even if they recognise, intellectually, that a new curve is needed. For a time, therefore, new ideas and new people have to coexist with the old until the second curve is established and the first begins to wane.

The hatched area beneath the peak is, therefore, a time of great confusion. Two groups of people, or more, and two sets of ideas are competing for the future. No matter how wise and benevolent they be, the leaders of the first curve must worry about their own futures when their curve begins to die. It requires great foreight, and even greater magnanimity, to foster others and plan one’s own departure or demise. Those who can do it, however, will ensure the renewal and the continued growth of their organization.

Since Charles Handy wrote those words in 1994, awareness of the pervasive recurrence of some form of “adaptive cycle” in any living system has become widespread. Thanks largely to the rise in ecological understanding, combined with our connectivity and appreciation of the way in which networks operate, we are now much more comfortable re-framing our notion of sectors and seeing them as inter-connected ecosystems combining social and biophysical elements.

Lance Gunderson and C. S. Holling, in their book Panarchy: Understanding Transformations in Systems of Humans and Nature (2002) coined the term, Panarchy to combine the structure and processes whereby natural and human systems are interlinked in continual adaptive cycles of growth/exploitation, accumulation/conservation, restructuring/release, and renewal/reorganisation. All ecosystems from the cellular to the global level are said to go through these four stages of a dynamic adaptive cycle.

All ecosystems from the cellular to the global level are said to go through these four stages of a dynamic adaptive cycle.

- The exploitation stage is one of rapid expansion, as when a population finds a fertile niche in which to grow.
- The conservation stage is one in which slow accumulation and storage of energy and material is emphasized as when a population reaches carrying capacity and stabilizes for a time.
- Then release occurs rapidly, as when a population declines due to a competitor, or changed conditions.
- Reorganization can also occur rapidly, as when certain members of the population are selected for their ability to survive despite the competitor or changed conditions that triggered the release.

Panarchy places great emphasis on the interconnectedness of levels, between the smallest and the largest, and the fastest and slowest. The large, slow cycles set the conditions for the smaller, faster cycles to operate. But the small, fast cycles can also have an impact on the larger, slower cycles. The fast levels invent, experiment and test; the slower levels stabilize and conserve accumulated memory of past, successful experiments.

Butler’s TALC model describes far more than the life cycle of an artificial product subject to the whims of fashion and involves far more complexity than is explained by product development and marketing alone.

The adaptive life cycle (Nature’s Timeless Principle) applies throughout the universe and applies equally to the life of stars and galaxies as cells and microbes. Every living thing has a natural life span. So do products, projects, organisations, teams, operating models and paradigms. Life
cycles are everywhere. In a day, it is waking, preparing, activity and sleep. In a life, it is birth, growing up, maturity and death. In evolution it is ape man, pre-historic man, modern man who also evolves through stages (hunter gatherer, farmer, artisan-merchant, industrialist etc.)

The sigmoid curve/lifecycle/panarchy model applies to ideas just as much as ecosystems or species. Whereas living systems are limited by energy availability; ideas are fuelled by support, acceptance and confidence. The industrial model of production and consumption based on a set of assumptions called “capitalism” is simply an idea and conforms to the same cycle. It’s a recent idea occupying barely a millisecond blip in geological time. It’s an idea we humans created so we can change it now that we recognize the characteristics embedded within it that do not respect natural systems and human’s innate desire to grow and develop. We simply have to withdraw energy in the form of our support for it and focus a building something better.

When looking at the future of mass industrial tourism, we might also remember that there are no straight lines in nature.

What looks like a straight line on a graph is merely a seemingly straight section within a curve.

An exponential growth curve that we have become so familiar with – the so-called hockey stick graph, only tells part of the picture. In 2005, as part of a major study of Earth Systems, William Steepe produced a series of graphs illustrating the scope of growth across numerous human activities between 1950 and 2000 that he presented as The Great Acceleration. In virtually every case, the growth continues relentlessly upward as if there was no stopping it. Fast forward an unknown number of years and the shape of many of these graphs will likely shift from a J to an S pattern. The question is not if but when.

Nature teaches us the change rarely happens smoothly and incrementally. One S curve does not seamlessly flow into another. While one system is going into decline, another is forming. So following Charles Handy’s advice, the key questions to ask when looking at any of the graphs under the heading The Great Acceleration, including the one described as international tourism, are:

- Where on each of these graphs might Point A (the inflection point) be located?
- When should we make the leap knowing that it is folly to leap to soon or too late?
- Who should take the leap and be the creators of the new?
- Who will be the bridge builders for the transition from one curve to another?
- Who will be the stabilisers of the old system?

The need to acknowledge that we can each play one or more of these roles at various times is very helpful. It prevents an antagonistic, them versus us approach which can accentuate the sense of separation between proponents of old and new and impede dialogue, experimentation and agility at the very time when diversity and open-mindedness are essential.
The Berkana Institute developed the following diagram and concept of bridge building across paradigms.

During this momentous and fragile time of transition from an old to new model for how we live on earth, we need Stabilisers – people and institutions who keep the lights on, ensure there is energy, order, peace and capital sufficient to maintain a safe operating system for new approaches to be tried and tested. But that will also require a slowing down and definitely not an acceleration of the status quo. As all the evidence is pointing to the fact that business as usual is taking us to the edge of a cliff, why hurry? Recessions and even economic depressions might prove to be our greatest allies at times like these if we use the slowing wisely. They point to internal weaknesses or issues in the same way that a new, unusual pain or early symptoms of a fever suggest we visit a doctor.

We need visionaries who can imagine and articulate a better model that inspires others to stretch and think creatively. We will need disruptive Innovators – creators of new systems - who will design hybrid organisational forms that combine the economic strengths of for profit companies with social values; who will decentralise energy use and help us kick our dependency on fossil fuels; who will create institutional cultures – be they in the public or private sector – that encourage engagement by all stakeholders and foster diverse perspectives; and who will insure that the host community determines how much tourism can be handled without harm to the residents.

We also need Bridge Builders for transition – people and places for the creator-innovators to hang their hat, feel safe, able to take huge risks or as one writer said: “be those who can translate the new paradigm into the operational settings of legacy organisations and create new jobs and output that enablers stabilisers to keep paying their mortgages and put their kids through college while adjusting as best they can to a new economy and paradigm”.

Conclusion

This section was designed to show that the decline of the industrial model, on which most of tourism's past success was based, is inevitable, natural and desirable. The degree to which people suffer through that decline, however, depends in large part on the level of resistance put up by those most invested in it or who have been unable to make sense of it.

More importantly, the emerging new is dependent on the declining old in the same way that teenagers may need to borrow their parents’ car or rely on parents to subsidize their college fees while exploring and developing their fledgling independence. It is true that various aspects of the industrial model have created many of the challenges we now face but is also true that without the advances in technology, science, knowledge and wealth associated with that period in our history, we would not have the foundation on which to leap forward. This is also why it makes so much sense to focus envisioning and building a better new than attacking the old.
References

1. https://skollworldforum.org/about/what-is-social-entrepreneurship/
4. http://www.earthchartarinaction.org/content/page/Read-the-Charter.html
5. Born of the Chaotic Age, Dee Hock, Barrett Koehler, 1999
8. Aaron Hurst
14. Farrell B, Twining-Ward L, R., ibid
17. Robin Wall Kummerer, Nature Needs a New Pronoun: To Stop the Age of Extinction, Let’s Start by Ditching “It”
18. Thomas Berry, “The New Story” (pamphlet), 1978
20. The Illusion of Separation Giles Hutchins
29. Sahnounez, E (199) Living Systems in Evolution
30. Duane Elgin 1999 and beyond
31. http://www.earthchartarinaction.org/content/page/Read-the-Charter.html
32. James Moore,
33. Michael L. Rothschild,
34. KPMG 2012
37. http://skollworldforum.org/about/what-is-social-entrepreneurship/
38. https://skollworldforum.org/about/what-is-social-entrepreneurship/
40. ibid
42. http://www.earthcharterinaction.org/content/pages/Read-the-Charter.html
43. http://www.earthcharterinaction.org/content/page/Read-the-Charter.html
44. ibid
45. http://www.earthcharterinaction.org/content/page/Read-the-Charter.html
46. ibid
47. http://www.earthcharterinaction.org/content/page/Read-the-Charter.html
48. http://www.earthcharterinaction.org/content/page/Read-the-Charter.html
49. http://www.earthcharterinaction.org/content/page/Read-the-Charter.html
50. http://www.earthcharterinaction.org/content/page/Read-the-Charter.html
51. http://www.earthcharterinaction.org/content/page/Read-the-Charter.html
52. http://www.earthcharterinaction.org/content/page/Read-the-Charter.html
53. http://www.earthcharterinaction.org/content/page/Read-the-Charter.html
54. http://www.earthcharterinaction.org/content/page/Read-the-Charter.html
55. http://www.earthcharterinaction.org/content/page/Read-the-Charter.html
56. http://www.earthcharterinaction.org/content/page/Read-the-Charter.html
57. http://www.earthcharterinaction.org/content/page/Read-the-Charter.html
58. http://www.earthcharterinaction.org/content/page/Read-the-Charter.html
59. http://www.earthcharterinaction.org/content/page/Read-the-Charter.html
60. http://www.earthcharterinaction.org/content/page/Read-the-Charter.html
61. http://www.earthcharterinaction.org/content/page/Read-the-Charter.html
64. http://www.earthcharterinaction.org/content/page/Read-the-Charter.html
65. http://www.earthcharterinaction.org/content/page/Read-the-Charter.html
66. http://www.earthcharterinaction.org/content/page/Read-the-Charter.html
67. http://www.earthcharterinaction.org/content/page/Read-the-Charter.html
68. http://www.earthcharterinaction.org/content/page/Read-the-Charter.html
69. http://www.earthcharterinaction.org/content/page/Read-the-Charter.html
70. http://www.earthcharterinaction.org/content/page/Read-the-Charter.html
71. http://www.earthcharterinaction.org/content/page/Read-the-Charter.html
72. http://www.earthcharterinaction.org/content/page/Read-the-Charter.html
73. http://www.earthcharterinaction.org/content/page/Read-the-Charter.html
74. http://www.earthcharterinaction.org/content/page/Read-the-Charter.html
75. http://www.earthcharterinaction.org/content/page/Read-the-Charter.html
76. http://www.earthcharterinaction.org/content/page/Read-the-Charter.html
77. http://www.earthcharterinaction.org/content/page/Read-the-Charter.html
78. http://www.earthcharterinaction.org/content/page/Read-the-Charter.html
79. http://www.earthcharterinaction.org/content/page/Read-the-Charter.html
80. http://www.earthcharterinaction.org/content/page/Read-the-Charter.html
81. http://www.earthcharterinaction.org/content/page/Read-the-Charter.html
82. http://www.earthcharterinaction.org/content/page/Read-the-Charter.html
83. http://www.earthcharterinaction.org/content/page/Read-the-Charter.html
84. http://www.earthcharterinaction.org/content/page/Read-the-Charter.html
85. http://www.earthcharterinaction.org/content/page/Read-the-Charter.html
86. http://www.earthcharterinaction.org/content/page/Read-the-Charter.html

ibid

http://localsewestmidlands.org.uk


http://www.resilience.org/communities-guide

ibid

www.transitionnetwork.org


http://www.newstories.org/worldview/current-models/two-loops/