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Abbreviations

CS	Civil Society
CSD	Commission for Sustainable Development, UN department of Economic and Social Affairs
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
FAR	Forum Anders Reisen (Sustainable tourism network)
FLO	Fairtrade Labelling Organisations International
FU	Fair Unterwegs (Tourism network)
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GRI	Global Reporting Initiative
GTZ	German Technical Cooperation
IFC	International Finance Corporation (World Bank Group)
IFI	International Financial Institutions
ILO	International Labor Organisation
IMF	International Monetary Fond
IPE	International Political Economy
IUCN	International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (World Conservation Union)
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
MoTC	Ministry of Tourism Cambodia
MPDF	Mekong Private Sector Development Facility
NGO	Non-governmental Organisation
OED	Oxford English Dictionary
SADC	Stay Another Day Cambodia
SADI	Stay Another Day Initiative
SEA	Southeast Asia
STI	Sustainable Travel International
STEP	Sustainable Tourism – Eliminating Poverty (UNWTO Initiative)
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organisation
UNWTO	United Nations World Tourism Organisation
UXO	Unexploded Ordnance
WB	World Bank
WCED	World Commission on Environment and Development
WTTC	World Travel and Tourism Council

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Abstract

This paper is discussing the general applicability and usability of new forms of tourism as an option for development and poverty reduction. Five common new forms of tourism are critically analysed: *Ecotourism*, *Community based tourism*, *Fair trade and ethical tourism*, *Pro-poor tourism*, and *Sustainable tourism*.

In order to reflect on the complexity of the chosen subject, this paper distinguishes relevant approaches to development, sustainability and tourism by identifying seven principles of sustainability in tourism. While it is a challenge in itself to measure and analyse these, this paper attempts to clarify to which extent the new forms of tourism live up to sustainability standards in the *Stay another day* initiative in Cambodia. 58 projects have been evaluated that define themselves all in combination of development and sustainability standards.

The analysis revealed that not only *Sustainable tourism*, but also *Community-based tourism*, both lost their original meaning due to an inflationary usage of the concepts. Moreover, sustainability principles in tourism are applied according to the tourism actors' suitability, and can not live up to the holistic demand of the sustainable development approach. As the main focus of the initiative is on the travellers' experience, a relevant debate on authenticity enriches the discussion. Furthermore, this paper reveals that alternative forms of tourism need a certain amount of cooperation or partnership to be successful. Hence, when tourism is used as a means of supporting the locals in development processes and poverty reduction, it is in need of the cooperation of its actors. Thus, the tourism industry, governments, Civil Society, as well as travellers themselves are asked to work together in order to minimize the negative impacts of tourism on the host destination.

1 Introduction

"The world is a book, and those who do not travel read only one page."

Aurelius Augustinus (354-430), Roman philosopher

1.1 Introduction

In the 1970's, tourism was imagined as the most elegant form of development aid (FU 2008a). Nowadays, tourism is considered an important contribution in the fight against global poverty (UNWTO). Thirty years of criticism, profound analysis, and questioning of the development potential have stipulated that the tourism industry and authorities generate new forms of tourism that provide environmental protection as well as local participation in the destinations.

Tourism is a massive industry often dominated by Western interests in regard to the point of origin of most travellers and where the consolidated tourism companies are registered. The industry's constant high growth rate allows international tourism actors to accentuate its potential for development. Hence, destinations all over the globe are hoping to participate and gain access to new income, foreign exchange, capital transfer and employment.

1.2 Problem formulation

According to the leading international organisation in the field of tourism, the World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO)¹, international tourist arrivals reached 898 million in 2007 (UNWTO 2008a). This impressive number is supposed to double by 2020 (reaching 1.6 billion) and reflects the continuing growth of the global tourism industry (FU 2008b) with an average growth rate of 6.5% between 1950 and 2007 (UNWTO 2008a). Despite the threat of terror acts, civil wars and high oil prices, further interest and investment into the tourism sector are expected to exceed the international tourism receipts that amounted to \$733 billion in 2006 (Tourism concern 2008a), a number that equals \$2 billion a day. Tourism already employs 8 % of the global workforce with little consideration for the countless side-effects as warned by the Tourism Concern, a British organisation that campaigns on exploitation of the global tourism industry (Ibid). The risk of displacement, environmental damage and exploitation of resources (human as well as natural) and other negative impacts of tourism questions its efficiency as strategic development option

¹ The UNWTO is a specialized agency of the United Nations that is committed to tourism, travel and the Millennium Development Goals (MDG).

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that relies on the advantage of using one of the most important global industries that provides work for more than 230 billion people.² For developing countries in particular, tourism brings potential benefits, as currently the industry represents around “35% of the worlds exports of services, and over 70% in least developed countries“(UNWTO 2008a). While Francesco Frangialli, UNWTO General Secretary, connects this to the growing interests of travellers from economically strong countries and the newly upcoming markets (Ibid: 2008b) he fails to identify peace as a basic precondition for international tourism arrivals, a component that should not be underestimated, especially in regard to developing countries in South East Asia (SEA).³

The potential of new forms of tourism to play a significant role in the alleviation of poverty, which is an essential precondition for peace, environmental conservation and sustainable development, is increasingly recognised by governments and tourism actors alike (Ibid: 2008d). One example is the initiative Sustainable Tourism - Eliminating Poverty (STEP) (Ibid: 2008c). Sustainable Tourism is promoted as an option for development that delivers practical benefits to the poor to “effectively channel visitor spending and associated investment into improved income and quality of life for people in poverty, so as to ensure that all possibilities are considered and used effectively” (Ibid: 2008e). This can be realised by seven mechanisms through which the poor can benefit directly or indirectly from tourism. These are

- employment of the poor in tourism enterprises
- supply of goods and services to the tourism enterprises by the poor or by enterprises employing the poor
- direct sales of goods and services to visitors by the poor (informal economy)
- establishment and running of tourism enterprises by the poor, e.g. micro, small, medium-sized enterprises or community based enterprises (formal economy)
- tax or levy on tourism income or profits with proceeds benefiting the poor
- voluntary giving/support by tourism enterprises and tourists
- investment in infrastructure stimulated by tourism also benefiting the poor in the locality, directly or through support of other sectors

² The World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC) expects revenues from international travels to rise more significantly and reach 10% of the global share (WTTC 2008a).

³ For example, Cambodia was not open to tourists during the Civil War in 1975-1979 (and later on). Also Vietnam was difficult to travel during the American Vietnam War. Today, Burma (Myanmar) is not easy to access due to the Military Regime in power.

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The geographical expansion and labour intensive nature of tourism can carry employment possibilities especially for the poor remote and rural areas.⁴ Furthermore, tourism is considered to be one of the major export sectors of developing countries due to its outstanding foreign exchange earnings (Ibid: 2008d).⁵ Hence, actors in the development sector are aware of possible opportunities in the tourism industry and implement sustainable development policies. Strategies focussing on the different aspects of sustainable development, that is economic, environment and social sustainability, are fostered by donor agencies, NGOs and governments alike, as these combine complex approaches and often attempt to reach the poor. Local participation has come to be seen as a guarantor for revenue production, but sustainability in tourism entails much more. While tourism indeed creates new sources of income and opens up new perspectives for the locals, most of the time revenues are left to very few actors only, often foreign themselves. The local population at the new tourism destination is left marginalised while facing the risk of diminishing resources, commercialisation of their culture, disregard of their rights, human rights violations and exploitation. Thus, tourism can also create poverty instead of alleviating it.

Hence, where there is a lot of light, also a lot of shadow is involved. The two sides of the coin are symbolised by tourism developments' ambiguity. Thus, the challenge is how to effectively combine all sustainable development aspects (economic, environmental and social) not only in theory but also in practice while linking them to the tourism industries' consumer oriented framework that takes into account changing consumption patterns.

The ongoing high growth rates in the tourism industry together with an increased awareness of irreversible consequences of global tourism have brought about distinctive consumers. Depending on the underlying motives and available capital, the difference between tourist and traveller mirrors a social exclusiveness that has created new forms of tourism, with destinations often to be found in development countries (Mowforth & Munt 2003). Among these, new forms of tourism as an option for sustainable development have a promising potential despite its inherent complexity that aims to combine economic growth with environmentally sound and social responsible aspects. While the essential role of tourism development is "its contribution to

⁴ In 2005, international tourism receipts for developing countries (low income, lower and upper middle income countries) amounted to US\$ 203 billion (UNWTO 2008d).

⁵ For 46 out of 49 least developed countries it was the primary source for foreign exchange earnings in 2005 (UNWTO 2008d).

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wider economic and social development within the destination” (Sharpley & Telfer 2008: 42) difficulties in realisation may be linked to specific local circumstances and power structures. Thus, when talking about sustainable development it is important to analyse how sustainability in tourism is understood and what it ideally contains in regard to economic development, environmental development and social development. Unfortunately, the vagueness of the concept of sustainability in tourism can easily be misused as solely for promotional value. For example, ecotourism was identified by Cohen as applied to any outside activity in the widest sense which in relation to the sustainability debate means that “any tourist enterprise penetrating a new area can be called ‘sustainable’ as a promotional gimmick” (2002: 268).

This brief discussion shows that the topic is not only very complex but also combines contradictory demands. It is possible to tackle each of the concepts separately (Sustainability, Development, Tourism) but the main aim of the thesis is to analyse under which circumstances tourism contributes to sustainable development in particular in Cambodia, one of the poorest countries in the world that has high expectations for generating tourism revenues due to its cultural heritage. Furthermore, the general applicability of sustainability in tourism as a development tool is discussed critically in regard to whether and how the cooperation between the tourism industry, governments and Civil Society (CS) minimize negative impacts of tourism. The attempt is framed by the problem formulation that aims to clarify which principles of sustainability are realised in the new forms of tourism in Cambodia and if there is a prioritisation visible. Thus, this paper attempts to assess

How sustainable is tourism as an option for development in Cambodia?

The following sub question will tackle the complex phenomena from different interdisciplinary angles and focus on the *Stay another day Cambodia initiatives*.

To what extent do the new forms of tourism, implemented by the Stay another day Cambodia initiative, live up to sustainability principles?

2 Methodology

“*Good* and *bad* are relative terms, as is sustainability.” (Mowforth & Munt 2003: 105)

2.1 Study objective and research design

Tourism in regard to development is a multi-disciplinary subject that usually focuses on the environmental, economic and socio-cultural impacts of development. The “absence of an adequate theoretical critique for understanding the dynamics of tourism and the social activities it involves” (Mowforth & Munt 2003: 2) has led to a certain theoretical divide in research. Either the literature lists the outputs and consequences of tourism in peculiar, regionally limited case studies, or the forces that impact on tourism actors are analysed.⁶

However, conceptual clarity in this field is missing, and the inflationary usage of the term sustainable tourism has brought about confusion in regards to what this concept actually entails, in theory as well as in practice. The idea to introduce sustainable development to the tourism sector is a valid approach in regard to poverty reduction. To what extent this idealistic concept is actually convertible in the tourism sector in Cambodia is the focus of this paper. Furthermore, it attempts to clarify the role authenticity plays in tourism, and to what extent this reflects a global trend of changing consumption patterns.

Mikkelsen (2005: 126) differentiates four common types of development studies. These are descriptive studies, explanatory studies, interpretative studies and action-oriented studies. This paper is an interpretative study of new forms of tourism as an option for development. The dominant perspective of the analysis is to clarify what sustainability in tourism development entails for its actors and how this is realised in Cambodia. The typical single country design is a case study in which the form of rationality is hermeneutic and communicative (Ibid: 127). Thus, the criteria of data quality are considered as guiding towards validity and conceptual reinterpretation of knowledge production. The application of results is conceptual and detached from the internal methods. Hence, the study objective is empirical. It asks for the present stage while relating this in a normative manner to expected future developments. Whether sustainability in tourism is only a ‘promotional gimmick’ (Cohen 2002: 268) will be discussed in

⁶ According to Mowforth & Munt, the political economy of new tourism forms revolve around the power play between ideology, discourse and hegemony (2003: 45).

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the analysis in order to reveal how sustainable the new forms of tourism in Cambodia actually are.

Sustainability in the context of development presumes that its theoretical components (economical sustainability, environmental sustainability, social sustainability) are implemented effectively and with the same priority. However, in reality different actors prioritise different components. This observation is even truer in regard to the tourism sector that, like any other industry, focuses on growth and expansion. Thus, to combine sustainable development with tourism has become a challenging task for its promoters and generated so-called new forms of tourism. New forms of tourism define themselves in combination of development principles and sustainability principles, and thus they attempt to live up to the holistic demand of sustainable development of tourism. These are Ecotourism, Sustainable Tourism, Community-based tourism, Fair Trade & Ethical Tourism, and Pro-poor tourism. From these forms that emphasise different aspects in regard to development, seven sustainability principles can be identified. These are ecological sustainability, social sustainability, cultural sustainability, economic sustainability, local participation, the educational element, and the conservation element (Mowforth & Munt 2003). Enriched by specific subcategories, thirteen indicators for sustainability in tourism help to analyse if there is a prioritisation between them. This in turn also forms the basis for assessing the overall potential of new forms of tourism to live up to sustainable development.

Tourism theory can be fragmented and weak when researchers, trained in different but distinct fields, cannot let go of their own trained approach⁷ and therefore miss the chance to live up to the complex and interdisciplinary nature of tourism phenomena (Echtner & Jamal 1997: 878). Tourism research encompasses economics, sociology, psychology, geography, anthropology, business studies, marketing, and psychology (Ibid: 869). The main dividing line is “whether tourism should be studied as a distinct discipline or as an area of specialisation within existing disciplines” (Ibid: 869). The fragmentation of tourism theory and research approaches can not be discussed here due to space limits, but it becomes clear that sustainable tourism, as a combination of tourism and development, enforces the already existing disciplinary dilemma of tourism studies.

⁷ ‘Academic imperialism’, along the two camps of impacts-externalities and business-development, is complicating a holistic approach toward the subject.

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Thus, one of the major challenges of this thesis is how to operate within this pick-and-choose supermarket of theories, approaches, concepts and methods. In order to get a hold of different linkages, the problem formulation helps to classify the main point of interest and examination. Hence, this paper investigates the new forms of tourism that relate to development theories and analyses what sustainability in tourism entails. It takes the approach that “the interdisciplinary nature of tourism should not be viewed as a burden or barrier, but as an opportunity to use debate, dialogue, and interpretation to reach a deeper understanding of this human phenomenon” (Echtner & Jamal 1997: 878).

In order to explain how this paper plans to answer the problem question it is essential to understand the main idea of the general applicability and usability of sustainability in tourism as a development tool that presumes the cooperation of the tourism industry, governments and Civil Society (CS) alike. Thus, the case study of *Stay another day Cambodia* (SADC), a proto-typical initiative that claims to promote sustainable tourism in Southeast Asia, will serve as the focus of analysis. The main focus is on the different means that address how to minimize negative impacts of tourism and how to support the locals in order to reduce poverty. Defining the basic concepts of development, sustainability and tourism will enable the reader to understand interlinkages, trade-offs and dilemmas which are necessary for understanding the critical analysis and discussion.

Sustainability in tourism and development are connected to global developments due to the origin of their conceptualisation. Hence, they entail a certain degree of international setting, in particular in regard to the global tourism industry that is facing the above mentioned high growth rates. When working with International Relations and Development, this complexity needs to be taken into account to grasp the phenomena. Or as Schmidt states,

“we must situate and contextualize, whatever topic or research theme we want to investigate – whether it is the relationship between the private sector and the state, environmental disasters, gender problems, conflict and instability etc. in the local setting always in an international political economy perspective – because there are almost no examples left on the planet of independent types of development – structurally or actor-based – it means that as long as the neo-liberal type of globalization prevails we cannot understand any development oriented research divorced from the international setting” (2006:4).

As different actors participate in the tourism sector (tourism business and operators, governments, various organisations on different levels, local communities, consumers of tourism products, etc) also different motives for driving new forms of tourism are expected which may challenge sustainability in tourism development in Cambodia. Thus, the analysis also tries to

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reveal to what extent sustainable development in new forms of tourism may reflect a global trend. Factors are presented that link the creation of development paradigms to international political economy debates that address issues of global (economic) concern and changing consumption patterns.

2.3 Data collection

This paper investigates what is understood by the new forms of tourism in Cambodia. This is done by analysing a sustainable tourism initiative called *Stay another day Cambodia* (SADC) that promotes several new forms of tourism under the heading of sustainable tourism. Hence, literature derived indicators for sustainability are discussed in the broader context of sustainable development. Thus, academic considerations are contrasted with the understanding of international organisations as well as governments and other actors in tourism.

Due to financial and social capital constraints, it was not possible to obtain data in form of expert interviews in the field (in Cambodia). Thus, the paper has to rely primarily on literature review and primary sources such as booklets and websites information. Secondary sources from books, journals, newspaper articles and websites enriched the information gathered on the case study Cambodia that is part of the former French colony Indochina, and thus the use of different languages in the data collection process was an asset.

The case study *Stay another day Cambodia* seemed especially relevant for two reasons. Cambodia as a location is still an insider tip in Southeast Asia though its tourism arrivals increase rapidly. Located in Southeast Asia, the former French colony Indochina, this region still has an exotic feel. Being discovered by international tourists only in the 1990s, Cambodia's' turbulent history that is connected to the American Vietnam War has left the country for a long time rather isolated. Thus, the country remained relatively untouched by tourism development and unintentionally created space for alternative models. In 2007, the SADC started to promote 41 initiatives (SADC 2007). Within one year, thirteen more projects were listed and one was dropped, making a total of 58 initiatives promoting sustainable tourism in Cambodia in 2008 (SADI 2008c).⁸ The increase of 41,5 % may show growing potential and a possible trend of new forms of tourism initiatives that reflect changing consumption patterns. From the 58 mentioned

⁸ To place this in the regional context, in Laos 57 projects are realised. Vietnam is still in the planning process and has implemented so far only 5 projects.

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projects, the sample was reduced to 53 because projects with the same name that exist in several cities were, for simplification reasons, seen as one.⁹

2.3 Coding as a method for analysis

This paper aims to combine different methods to understand the data as “methods are simply tools that belong to everyone” (Ryan & Bernard 2000: 792). It takes a qualitative approach to analyse empirical data based on content analysis. Classic content analysis “assumes that the codes of interest have already been discovered and described” (Ibid: 785). This is important for the analysis in regard to the discussion of sustainability principles in tourism projects in Cambodia. Five common new forms of tourism that adhere to sustainable development principles provide the background, that is Ecotourism, Community-based tourism, Fair-trade & Ethical Tourism, Pro-poor tourism, and Sustainable Tourism.

Qualitative data such as text (human thought) and narrative (human behaviour) can be analysed according to the linguistic tradition or the sociological tradition. The latter provides a “window into human experience” (Ibid: 769) while the former is treating text as an object of analysis itself. Two kinds of written text are distinguishable in the sociological tradition: words generated by techniques for systematic elicitation (in which words or phrases are collected and analysed to identify list of items and assess their relationship) and free flowing texts. Just as nothing does it all, usually a combination of different methods for collecting and analysing empirical materials is used. “Investigators apply interpretative and numerical analysis, using text analysis for exploratory and confirmatory purposes. They identify schemes, describe them, and compare them across cases and groups until they combine themes into conceptual models and theories to explain and predict social phenomena” (Ibid: 789).

Content analysis as a methodology is used to "facilitate the critical examination and comparison of the published content" (Krippendorff 2004: 22). The reader interprets the text for meanings. In content analysis, the analyst must define the terms and theories, set the framework for research, and have an identifiable research question. The identification of central issues and their interpretation is a way of discovering "how certain values, prejudices, cultural distinctions, and reality constructions are distributed in society" (Ibid).

⁹ These were Cambodia Trust (Phnom Penh, Kampong Cham, Sihanoukville); Sahmakun Teang Tnaut (Phnom Penh, Kampt); NYEMO (Phnom Penh, Siem Reap); Handicap International – Belgium (Siem Reap, Takeo Province).

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The coding of indicators and their subcategories identifies relevant terms or themes derived from the free flowing text in the SADC projects. The text revealed that it is useful to analyse the weight of the principles of sustainability as they are not equally strong present in the various projects.

This classification is used for the analysis in order to identify subcategories, terms and indicators of sustainability in tourism in the *Stay another day Cambodia* (SADC) initiative. What results is a picture of which kinds of new tourism are fostered by the SADC and to what extent they adhere to sustainability principles that are connected to poverty reduction through sustainable development. In order to do this, the principles of sustainability are further discussed and selectively analysed for SADC. While in theory sustainable development assumes to foster each component (economic, environmental, social) equally, sustainability principles in tourism seem to be prioritised by definition according to selective indicators. To what extent they do this in reality is under critical observation.

Sustainability in tourism development is a construct that is all-encompassing and difficult to implement. When looking at the data, it is apparent that each initiative focuses on specific principles, but none had been identified as truly sustainable in all categories. Hence, further clarification is needed in regard to which, if any, of the new form of tourism is fostering which areas. Key word identification through coding is the method used when analysing each sustainability principle. Though highly interpretative, the identification of key words helps to sort the data according to which aspects are most relevantly addressed (and to which tourism forms they claim to belong).

By using the seven principles of sustainability in tourism, the SADC project descriptions are analysed in order to generate a different and independent classification scheme. The question is whether there is a prioritisation of several components over others. This is done by using the seven principles of sustainability in tourism: carrying capacity, the ability to absorb inputs, minimisation of social division, enhancement of distinct cultural features, power & control, tourist education, locals training, biodiversity, culture preservation, host communities, and revenues. While going through the data, several inconsistencies appeared that demanded further investigation. Among them, two distinct categories reappeared, that are authenticity and partnership.

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Coding uses text for analysing specific chunks of information; thus, “coding is analysis.” (Ryan & Bernard 2000: 781). This method requires the researcher to make judgements by selection. Further diversifications bring about meaning. Major coding traditions used in this paper include content analysis, but also selected parts of Grounded Theory.¹⁰

Theoretical coding as a method of text analysis, originally in Grounded Theory, was developed in 1967 by Strauss and Glaser. It is a comprehensive conception of social science research processes in which data collection, analysis and theory formulation are closely intertwined (Strauss 1998). Hence, the term is used for both the method as well as the research result (Böhm 2000: 475). This approach is relevant for the paper in regard to the creation of development paradigms and to what extent they may adhere to global debates of consumption patterns.

According to Grounded Theory, controversial data improves the validity of categories. Contradictions and similarities help to generate the content issues. Thus, coding is interpretative and entails the naming of concepts or categories of data, their explanation and discussion (Böhm 2000: 476). Three types of coding are distinguishable: open coding, axial coding, and selective coding. Selective coding is relevant for this paper as it helps to identify authenticity and cooperation as two other main categories of sustainability in tourism. These elements appeared in the data collection process and closed theoretical gaps (Böhm 2000: 483). This has proved a valid method for the analysis, as new indicators are generated during the process.

Summing up, indicators for sustainability principles are identified in two steps. Literature and theory derived categorisations were further enriched by SADC own indicators (according to the proclaimed categories: Adventure Experiences, Community, Cultural activities, Culture, Eating & Drinking, Environment, Information Centre, Shopping, Spa & Massages, Sports, Stopover, Volunteering, Wildlife). Thus, in regard to the consumption oriented framework in Cambodia, it has been appropriate to enrich the former principles by authenticity (experience) and partnerships (cooperation).

2.4 Limitations

Coding as a method for analysis is a highly interpretative method, and thus error-prone. To avoid a biased researcher would mean to work in a interdisciplinary team, and even then due to

¹⁰ Others are schema analysis, content dictionaries, analytic induction, and ethnographic decision trees (Ibid.).

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subjective points of view, relevant indicators may be overlooked. However, one means to minimize mistakes is the constant reflection and critical observation of the work, in which external feedback is absolutely essential. In regard to sustainability in tourism this means taking the situation of Cambodia as a developing country into account. Since Cambodia is a developing country, it may have limited capabilities to implement all of the theoretically necessary components of sustainable development. Reality is a factor that needs to be taken into account, no matter how important an idealistic approach towards social changes may be.

With globalisation, uneven and unequal development has become severe and at least more remarkable between countries in the north, so-called developed countries, and countries in the south, or so-called developing countries (for further distinction and debate compare Mikkelsen 2005: 48). The problematic connotations of each terminology are found within, but for simplification in an already complex (and often emotional) debate it is difficult to avoid the western derived development terminology and refer to countries as from North and South (a geographically challenging approach). Likewise the tricky terminology that explains underlying assumptions and hidden paradigms, this paper attempts to tackle relationships of power in regard to who possesses the power to define. This is the starting point for understanding development processes. Borrowing the words from Mowforth & Munt, this paper tries not to “see tourism as a discrete field of study. Rather, it is an activity which helps us to understand the world” (2003: 3). This is even more important in regard to the international setting that the tourism industry is operating in. The diverse interests from participating actors, may they be travellers or service providers, governments or tourism organisations have all their approach on how to foster sustainability in tourism. Understanding their motives is a necessary task when debating its implementation.

Essential to International Political Economy (IPE) are complex power relationships between different actors connected to society, state and market that characterise the multi-layered interactions in the area of globalisation (Martinussen 1999). The extent to which these are influencing sustainability principles in tourism practice are important to analyse in regard to equity of access, international tourism characteristics and Southeast Asia as the former French colony Indochina. These are all factors relevant for discussing to what extent they may reflect an ongoing hegemony after the end of the Cold War and colonisation. However, this paper

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attempts to clarify what sustainable development in the tourism sector entails. Local participation in revenues and stakeholdership as well as other areas of power and control connected to tourism and development concepts (may it be on local, national, international or global level) are all valid and crucial issues to consider. An appropriate analysis of their interrelation though would go far beyond the space limits of this paper and had to be neglected.

3 Theory

“Tourism is a service commitment that involves personal contact.” (KATE et al. 2008a:5)

3.1 Tourism theories

On the broadest level, tourism theories can be classified into the liberal market-based approaches, the conservative approach such as mixed approaches (where the state has some control over the market) and radical approaches. Radical approaches provide an in-depth understanding of processes may they be global, national, or local that accompany tourism while identifying the unequal power relationships between tourism active actors.

The theoretical diversity of tourism theory, with a multitude of theoretical developments from various contributing disciplines, can be best understood by the classification from Jafari that recognizes four tourism research platforms (Jafari 1990 in Echtner & Jamal 1997: 878) or approaches to tourism development (Jafari 1989 in Telfer & Sharpley 2008: 27): namely Advocacy, Cautionary, Adaptancy and Knowledge-based platforms. Like in development theories, only lately have socio-environmental impacts and processes been included.

While Advocacy and Cautionary focus on tourism impacts, forms of development are the subject for Adaptancy. Knowledge-based platforms consider tourism studies as a whole with the goal to gather a scientific body of knowledge. Advocacy relates to modernisation theory in which tourism is seen as an effective developmental growth pole. Cautionary admits the negative consequences of tourism. The aim is to initiate a change towards considering impacts of tourism on environments and societies, with particular focus on centre-periphery dependency models. With Adaptancy alternative though idealistic approaches to tourism emerge which are closely aligned with ecotourism concepts:

“Variously referred to as ‘green’, ‘appropriate’, ‘responsible’, ‘soft’ or ‘alternative’ tourism, these approaches attempt to transpose the principles of alternative development on to tourism, proposing appropriately scaled, locally owned and controlled development, with the community as the primary instigators and beneficiaries of tourism”(Ibid).

Finally, the Knowledge based platform tries to relate to the broader and more applicable approach of SD that overtook alternative tourism concepts which were dismissed for idealism.

“Thus tourism, as a specific developmental vehicle, has aligned itself with the contemporary development paradigm although sustainable tourism development has proved to be problematic both in its practical

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implementation and in its acceptance by the many developing countries which view the concept as evidence of continuing western imperialism" (Ibid).

Summing up, a combination of the knowledge based approach and advocacy will be used in this paper. While Advocacy is fostered in the examined projects from *Stay another day Cambodia* (SADC), the paper will attempt to critically discuss the global context of changing consumption patterns and trends.

3.1.1 Conventional mass tourism and alternative tourism

The theoretical distinction of conventional mass tourism versus alternative tourism is a good starting point for understanding the tourism sector in which sustainability components have been implemented lately.

An extensive analysis on the identification of typical and antipodal characteristics of conventional mass tourism versus alternative forms of tourism was done by Lane (1990) and Buttler (1990) in Telfer & Sharpley (2008: 39). The general features of mass tourism are rapid development with the goal of maximization, and only little consideration for social and environmental issues. It is considered as uncontrolled, short term, sectoral and done by remote control. By contrast, alternative forms of tourism have a so-called flow development with the goal of optimization that considers the social and environmental components. Furthermore, alternative forms are controlled, long term, holistic, and incorporating local control. Hence, development strategies for mass tourism include development without planning but with project-led schemes. Conventional tourism development consequently is found everywhere, with concentration on 'honeypots' that often entail new building. In addition, the foreign (or outside/external) influence is characteristic, as development is initiated and realised by outsiders that import employees and urban architecture. Unlike mass tourism, the alternative forms plan first and then develop in suitable places. They have concept-led schemes, in which pressures and benefits are diffused. The local infrastructure and sources are developed by locals, such as through re-use of existing buildings, utilization of local employment and vernacular architecture.

Also the tourist behaviour varies accordingly to the chosen travel form. Understandably, mass tourism is associated with usually large groups, fixed programmes, little time, 'sights' as destination highlights. Of major importance are imported components that implicate a special (often luxurious) lifestyle and could be characterised as comfortable as well as passive. Shopping activities are involved and tourist groups are often perceived as loud. The alternative tourists are

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distinct in different ways, but ideally are identified as singles, families, or friends with spontaneous decision-making and much time. The most important feature is to 'experience' local lifestyle, hence, they are more demanding and active, hopefully quiet, and tend to bring presents instead of shopping themselves.

3.1.2 New forms of tourism

What is of special interest to this paper are new forms of tourism and to what extent they reflect changing consumers preferences. In tourism, like in any other industry, the market is driven by consumer demand. At least in western societies, the responsible tourist is willing to spend more money on different holiday experiences, so-called new tourism forms. What these forms contain exactly varies¹¹. Different niches or subforms however contrast any resemblances to mass or package tourism that is criticized and even rejected vigorously for its unsustainability. Thus, also from a consumer's point of view, the typical dividing line in different forms of tourism is most generally between traditional tourism in form of mass tourism, and new forms of tourism such as individual tourism. Due to a highly diversified range of tourism products, the demander can identify him/herself with either being a tourist or a traveller. In order to minimize negative impacts of tourism and allow 'travelling with a good conscience', tourism providers created new forms of tourism to cater the 'travellers'.

In the endless list of new forms of tourism that "is still in its infancy", there remains little agreement on the "definitions and conceptual and practical boundaries" (Mowforth & Munt 2003: 94). Nevertheless, Mowforth & Munt recognize five specific forms that define themselves as a combination of development and sustainability principles. They are connected to the needs and benefits of changing consumption patterns by people that want to travel with a good conscience or at least minimize their negative impacts.

¹¹ New forms of tourism can also relate to controversial issues which touch historical, ethical or social boundaries. The first relates to so-called dark tourism with further diversification into darker, and darkest (even virtual and cyber) tourism. Battlefield tourism such as Vietnam War sites belongs to this group. Also reconciliation tourism fits into this category which can be found e.g. in Poland, Auschwitz but also in Australia with the Aborigines and in Cambodia at the Killing fields. Medical tourism as a very new form has become especially severe in regard to ethical and human rights abuses, e.g. India where transplantations foster the exploitation of the poor by the upper classes. Also slum tourism (such as in Brasil) is highly controversial. Sex tourism as in Thailand is the classic example for another new form that reflects severe unequal power relationships. Thus, the diversified consumption and demand in the tourism industry has created its own problems which are most generally the risk of exploitation, environmental degradation, and displacement

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Ecotourism focuses on the environment and benefits for the local community. Ecotourism is understood “by Third World protagonists as an elite form of western defined pleasure and by First World proponents as means of protecting ecologically valuable Third World destination habits”(Ibid).

Community-based tourism asks for local involvement and stakeholder participation in the destination while control and initiatives come from within the community. It can often be found in the other forms.

Fair trade and ethical tourism respond to the changing consumption patterns of the First World. Policies seek to “create social, cultural and economic benefits for the local” (Ibid), and minimize leakages. These involve adherence to national laws, establishment of strong consultation structures between the First/Third World, transparency, open trading operations (such as social accounting), ecological sustainability, and respect for human rights.

Pro-poor tourism aims to generate net benefits for the poor and is rooted in the development consensus of poverty reduction. It is criticized for being “packed with most up-to-date technical development speak”(Ibid) as the poor are at the focal point of this form of tourism. Conditions of poverty in southern destinations are in particular relevant in this new form.

Sustainable tourism

“concentrates on environmental issues – relabelled from ecotourism. Although pro-poor tourism advocates would agree with much that sustainable tourism stands for, the overall objective of sustainable tourism is not to reduce poverty, though this may happen as a result of sustainable tourism's development.”(Ibid)

By contrast, Weaver defines sustainable tourism by applying the sustainable development idea to the tourism sector namely “tourism development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs [...and as] tourism that wisely uses and conserves resources in order to maintain their long-term viability” (Weaver 2006:10). Hence, sustainable tourism is characterised by minimization of negative impacts and the maximization of positive impacts. While sustainable tourism is a form of sustainable development (development as process) as well as a form of achieving sustainable development (development as goal) there is no direct relationship as the Brundtland report does not mention it explicitly. Only in 1992 in the Agenda 21 strategies was it referred to. The term started to be used

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in civil society, tourism academic and organisations.¹² The concept of sustainability in tourism was widely notable and recognised by tourism practitioners and research in 1993, when the Journal of Sustainable Tourism appeared. Proponents of sustainability in tourism aimed at helping to “conserve the environment and culture of the destination and provide the tourist industry with a more secure future” (Cohen 2002: 267).

This distinction is closely related to globalisation processes that aim to homogenise the world and paradoxically bring about different niche products and changing consumption patterns. Global awareness has created a need for diversification and a growing ethical awareness about larger impacts in consumption. The best example is the rise of fair trade debates and the creation of new markets. These have also spread to the tourism industry that responds and, at least partially, enhances sustainability and welfare (Hall and Brown 2006: 158). Investments into sustainable forms of tourism have become a bestseller and improve the consumers feeling about his actions as well as looking for a fair pricing of the product. However, it is necessary to identify what sustainability in tourism actually means.

3.2 Sustainability in tourism

The concept of sustainability is inflationary used in tourism. Hence it is important to understand what it originally entails and to which historical developments it is connected to.

First of all, sustainability is explained by using a definition borrowed from the Oxford English Dictionary (OED). Furthermore, a look at its history and arising political implications relate the main critiques with ongoing challenges.

To begin with, the term sustainable can be understood as either an adjective or an action attribute. The former considers the possibility to be “able to be sustained”, while the latter is challenging the industry, development, or agriculture for “avoiding depletion of natural resources” (OED 2008b).

Sustainability in tourism is a vague concept with varying interpretations (Sharpley 2000:1) but at the same time not neutral (Cohen 2002: 268). It is born in a special socio-political

¹² It has to be added though that already Murphy in 1985 and Krippendorf in 1987 meant by community-based tourism and soft tourism similar principles that were also referred to by the WTO and UNEP that time (Weaver 2006:10).

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context which it needs for efficient usage. The complex relationship between authenticity, equity, and sustainability in tourism is hence connected to the socio-political context of sustainable tourism, the relationship between discourse of authenticity and sustainability in tourism, and the problem of prioritising environmental regards over social equity, a common practice in less developed areas in the third world (Ibid: 268).

Unfortunately, the vagueness of the concept of sustainability in tourism can easily be misused as solely for promotional value. For example, ecotourism was identified by Cohen as applied to any outside activity in the widest sense which in relation to the sustainability debate means that “any tourist enterprise penetrating a new area can be called ‘sustainable’ as a promotional gimmick” (Ibid). In order to live up to the holistic approach there is a need to identify sustainability indicators in tourism to help classify the new forms tourism.

3.2.1 Sustainable development

Development is a normative field, in which different theories contribute to a deeper understanding of possible development processes, be they economic, political, social, cultural or of any other kind. Possible hidden assumptions and underlying concepts in this controversial debate help to understand the creation process of development paradigms.

Similar to tourism, Baylis & Smith (2006: 771-772) differentiate basically between orthodox and alternative approaches to development. Each has differing core ideas and purposes.¹³ The orthodox approaches focus on unlimited economic growth in a free-market system (as formulated in the Truman Doctrine in 1947). Once economies “take-off”, the inevitable process of growing prosperity would automatically trickle down to the bottom benefiting all. While creating a certain (often post-colonial) dependency between countries, neoliberal development policies have been implemented until today despite criteria that are difficult to realise for developing countries, containing long-lasting (and often unforeseen negative) consequences. The alternative approaches criticized the unequal power relationships, especially in the Bretton Woods institutions and North/South government action. Hence, the alternative approaches concentrated on marginalised groups, especially by empowering the poor, and helped Civil Society (CS) to gain importance. Concepts related to local control and participation were introduced to the debate and placed on the international agenda. Additionally,

¹³ Additionally, it is important to keep in mind that the actual implementation process of development through policy action is distinguishable from resulting challenges of these, such as impacts of development

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in order to avoid further exploitation of natural resources, the call for community-controlled commons symbolised growing interest in self-reliance and independence from others. Concepts rely on sufficiency's, the inherent value of nature, cultural diversity and participation of the different marginalised groups have come to be seen as the 'good way' to development (Ibid), receiving much theoretical attention and policy implementation. Among them sustainable development approaches and human rights considerations have gained attention. The trend to involve all actors (the state, the market and society) has resulted in global action programs such as poverty reduction through the achievement of the MDGs.

Hence, the purpose of development, like tourism, is connected to the underlying methodological assumptions of the different views. The orthodox view contains the problematic implication of transforming traditional 'backward' economies into industrial, commodified and modern economies with production surplus, and growing individualism (and consumption). Here, a strong connotation to the colonialism and civilisation debate is visible. In order to overcome this imperfect (and unequal) state of relationship between different parts of the world, alternative approaches place the creation of human well-being through sustainable societies at their forefront, trying to include the social, cultural, political, environmental and economical issues as well.¹⁴ Western (external) expert knowledge foster the demand for large capital investments, advanced technology and expansion of the private sphere. By contrast, the bottom-up alternative approaches see development as a participatory approach, in which local knowledge and technology are main assets that are useful and necessary to include. Instead of large projects, investment in small-scale projects and the protection of the commons are at the core of the development process (Ibid: 772).

One of the alternative approaches in development theory, that fosters a holistic understanding of development, is sustainable development. It is characterised by three recognised components, namely the economic element, the environmental element and the social-cultural element. These separately simple principles become a complicated task when combined and implemented or applied. First of all, an economically sustainable system means the ability to produce goods and services continuously, maintain a manageable level of government and external debt, and reduce the damages of the agricultural sector or the industrial production

¹⁴ Adequate measurement of development is equally problematic as its linked to the specific purposes. Economic growth, such as the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per capita that takes into account industrialisation and agriculture still applies as the first step of classification. With the alternative approaches other dimensions demand different investigation and concepts (Baylis & Smith 2006: 771).

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(Harris 2000: 5). Secondly, the environmental sustainable system relies on a stable resource base. The main idea is to avoid resource over-exploitation, which could only be justified through investment with adequate substitutes that maintain biodiversity, atmospheric stability, and other ecosystems (Harris 2000: 6). Thirdly, the social (or socio-cultural) sustainable system aims to achieve distributional equity, accessible health service and education, gender equity, political accountability and the possibility for adequate participation (Harris 2000: 6). Hence, sustainable development is, like any other development, a process and a goal at the same time.

Historically, sustainable development can be traced back to its formation in 1987 when the concept was made public and global. In 1987, the so-called Brundtland Report 'Our common future' was published by the World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED). In order to productively address the growing conflict between economic and environmental concerns in development, the following definition provided the background for later debates and policy recommendations: "Sustainable development is development which meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own need" (WCED 1987).

However, the formulations caused heated debates because of the two inherent far-reaching implications from the report itself. The equity debate acts on two different levels. On the one hand, intragenerational as well as intergenerational issues clash with the unequal global reality in regard to wealth distribution. On the other hand, there is the attempt to combine economic growth with environmental sound principle. This western derived nature of the concept caused a deepening of already existing North/South differences in regard to global power access and wealth distribution.

Consequently, further reports calling for global as well as local action became a matter of attention as well as protest. Among them were the 'Caring for Earth' Report in 1991 by IUCN and the legendary Rio Summit in 1992 where more than 170 countries agreed to the Rio Declaration and Global action program called Agenda 21, whose main contribution was the focus on the national responsibility to foster sustainable development strategies. Furthermore, the Commission for Sustainable Development (CSD) was founded in 1993. Finally, in 2002 the summit in Johannesburg marked another milestone in fostering sustainability through the formulation of Millennium Development Goals (MDG) which were taken over by the STEP initiative.

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The ongoing debate still concentrates on equity of different kinds, such as who has to promote sustainability (developing as well as developed countries) and how much emphasis the three elements should each deserve. This demonstrates the dilemma of sustainable development in practice. A certain ranking classifies one over the other, which contributes to the blurring of the original concept as “the strongly normative nature of the sustainable development concept makes it difficult to pin it down analytically” (Harris 2000: 6). What is important to note however, is that the concept of sustainable development preferably involves the following components: a equitable weight of each component that ideally results from maximizing positive impacts and by reducing the negative impacts of development.

3.2.2 Paradigms in development

A discussion on what constitutes a development paradigm provides helpful insight into this theoretical construct.

According to the Oxford English Dictionary (OED) the word paradigm has its origins in the Greek *paradeigma*, which is *paradeiknunai* and means ‘show side by side’, while describing a typical example, pattern, or model of something. Furthermore, it stands for a “conceptual model underlying the theories and practice of a scientific subject” (OED 2008a). The latter will be used for further considerations.

Kuhn (1962) argues that paradigms tend to be static. When a concept turns into a paradigm “a scientific theory is declared invalid [but] only if an alternate candidate is available to take its place” (Kuhn 1962: 1). Former paradigms are not completely rejected though, but they loose meaning and disappear in the historical context. Kuhn understands the scientific paradigm as a construct that

„satisfy more or less the criteria that it dictates for itself and (...) since no paradigm ever solves all the problems it defines and since no two paradigms leave all the same problems unsolved, paradigm debates always involve the question: Which problems is it more significant to have solved?”(Kuhn 1962:14)¹⁵

Weaver defines paradigm as “a collective world view more or less accepted as normative within a particular culture.” (2006: 67) A paradigm shift happens when the currently dominant paradigm looses its ability to explain, or internalizes contradictions until it involves too many contradictory

¹⁵ It has to be kept in mind here that Kuhn addressed the natural sciences within his text. Yet it may be possible to grasp an understanding of a paradigms power to define. Certain tools are available on how to proceed, in particular for competing development policies chosen for action (and money flow).

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aspects. Competing paradigms evolve that attempt to explain these contradictions and finally one becomes dominant (Kuhn 1970 in Weaver 2006:76).¹⁶ These are long-term transitions in which the new paradigm usually involves the non-contradictory aspects of the old paradigm.

Martinussen in contrast states that development research is “not characterised by a few explicitly and well-defined paradigms” (1999:13). According to his understanding, there exist only research programs and profiles which

“to a certain extent only, resemble paradigms in that they contain certain characteristic constellations of value premises, preconceived opinions and assumptions that, together with a set of propositions and methods, form the intellectual framework for empirical studies of development processes and issues” (Ibid).

For this paper, the classification of Sharpley is especially relevant as it differentiates the following four main schools of development or paradigms: modernisation (50s/60s), dependency (50/60s), the neo-classical counter revolution that is economic neoliberalism (mid 70s-80s) and alternative development theories (70s/early 80s) (Sharpley 2000: 4). As described before, only alternative development theories break with the tradition of the economic-oriented approach based on a country’s economic growth performance. People instead of goods are becoming the focus of attention with varying degrees on how much policy action is needed to include them in the development process. Through approaches such as empowerment (local community involvement through participation, gender) or sustainability, the framework for political action within development was expanded to include not only economic but also socio-cultural and environmental aspects (Sharpley 2000: 6). This is becoming clear when looking at the policy strategies incorporating poverty reduction such as the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) that are fostered by developing agencies and states alike. With the Millennium Summit in 2000, the United Nations identified poverty as one of the biggest global challenges and set forth to eradicate extreme poverty by 2015 (UNWTO 2008d). The World Tourism Organization has responded by launching the ST-EP initiative, which was announced at the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg in 2002. The initiative focuses on encouraging sustainable tourism¹⁷ – social, economic and ecological – with activities that specifically alleviate poverty, delivering development and jobs to people living on less than a dollar a day.

¹⁶ One example of a societal paradigm shift is the superseding of the theological paradigm by the scientific paradigm in the 16th/17th century (Ibid).

¹⁷ Activities concentrated on fundraising and awareness raising (capacity building seminars, research publication) with donors and development organisations that support STEP (such as South Korea, Italy, Macao S.A.R. China, SNV), with the Step foundation based in Seoul. Italy and SNV started pilot projects for assessing interventions to be made in tourism for achieving intangible impacts (UNWTO 2008d).

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Thus, paradigms in development are important to consider as they connect to changing trends in global consumption patterns which in turn related to the consumers quest for authenticity.

3.2.3 The dilemma of tourism and development

The tourism industry, as one actor in the game, is usually blamed for fostering unsustainability due to its economic growth orientation. Looking at the 8 'fundamental truths about tourism' summarized from McKercher's (1993) in Hall & Brown (2006: 15), the debate becomes more comprehensible.

The first statement claims that tourism, as an industrial activity, consumes resources, creates waste and has specific infrastructure needs. The second states that as a consumer of resources, it has the ability to over-consume resources. Third, tourism, as a resource-dependent industry, must compete for scarce resources to ensure its survival. Fourth, tourism is a private-sector-dominated industry, with investment decisions being based predominantly on profit maximization. Fifth, tourism is a multifaceted industry, and as such, it is almost impossible to control. Sixth, tourists are consumers not anthropologists. Seventh, tourism is entertainment. And finally, unlike other industrial activities, tourism generates income by importing clients rather than exporting its product.

The inherent dilemmas of sustainable development can be differentiated according to five principles as defined by Hall & Brown (2006). They identify five key principles of sustainability in the Brundtland report. These are holistic planning and strategy-making, the preservation of essential ecological processes, the protection of both human heritage and biodiversity, development embracing productivity that can be sustained over the long term for future generations, and the achievement of a better balance of fairness and opportunity between nations (2006: 17).

Thus, criticism is based on the intragenerational equity aspect (future oriented sustainability) that contrasts the actual demands for economic, environmental and socio-cultural sustainability. Also the interpretation of sustainability, being a task invented and defined by the developed countries, is criticised harshly by less wealthy countries. The equity debate continues in other areas, especially in regard to how locals are looked upon.

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The combination of sustainable development and tourism is challenging in two ways. On the one hand, tourism per se is due to its inherent growth oriented characteristics unsustainable. On the other hand, the equity aspect (inter- and intragenerational) is of particular relevance and widely discussed.

For sustainable development in tourism related processes this debate has several implications. Cohen (2002) identifies different aspects of Equity in the conceptualisations of sustainability in tourism that characterise a twofold consideration in which ways local population or resources can be used: locals as partners in the development of tourism/enterprises, and locals as users. The latter involves equity of access to tourist sites (Cohen 2002: 273). This involves the dilemma that one component of sustainability would be ranked higher than another one and equity is not guaranteed anymore. Environmental sustainability e.g. is easily achieved by restricting numbers to those who can afford it. But price discrimination does infringe tourist equity. Domestic potential tourists in particular are excluded. Also two tier pricing (meaning nationals pay less than foreigners) is not considered a good option for heritage related sites as this form would also infringe upon the sustainability of these sites (e.g. no environmental sustainability guaranteed). "Tourism to such exceptionally rare and valuable sites is thus kept sustainable for the benefit of a tiny minority of elite tourists at the cost of the exclusion of all others, even the nationals of the very country in which they are located."(Cohen 2002: 274).

Basically, this differentiation reflects the dilemma of tourism and development as one of the main ideas of sustainable tourism is to enhance the involvement of locals as equal participants in tourism revenue as well as tourism consumption. Only when the concept is realised in a way that encompasses all areas will it be more than a niche product that adopted fashionable terms, and make poverty reduction through tourism possible. Sustainable tourism as a development option however remains contradictory and seems to foster one component over the other, a dilemma to be found in any sustainable development practice. Furthermore, the ethical dilemma of sustainable tourism that derives from tourism itself is identified as "trade-offs, inequalities and imperfections that characterise tourism processes" (Hall & Brown 2006: 24). In order to overcome these, ethical principles for the decision makers have been formulated so that stakeholders prove their moral imperative to be responsible actors.

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In order to overcome this imperfect state, different approaches have been tried. While economic sustainability is stressed by the tourism industry, others focus on the environmental component while the local component of sustainability is neglected. Community response to tourism, or the communities' involvement and power in tourism related processes, may embrace different forms and is usually linked to at least one component of the sustainability concept (Telfer & Sharpley 2008: 115-145). Among them are Community-based tourism, Participation (as of different levels of local participation in planning and implementation process and as development tool), Empowerment¹⁸ (of the communities that change power structures), resistance, and the involvement of other actors such as NGOs role in tourism that have initiated fair trade in tourism, pro-poor tourism, volunteer tourism (also gender-related possible).

However, the temptation of constructing local identities is ruining the authenticity of the tourist experience and the locals alike and thus any activity that claims to own authentic local traditions¹⁹ has to be carefully evaluated.

3.3 New forms of tourism as an option for sustainable development

3.3.1 Sustainable tourism development and sustainable development of tourism

The new forms of tourism that are considered here, are defining themselves by the combination of sustainability and development. In order to reduce the negative aspects of conventional mass tourism, new forms of tourism have emerged.

“Forms of tourism with prefixes such as ‘alternative’, ‘appropriate’, ‘responsible’, ‘acceptable’ and of course ‘sustainable’ attempt to challenge the notion that all forms of tourism necessarily draw the Third World into a highly unequal relationship with the First World. Indeed, it was argued that the political economy of Third World tourism implies that such forms of tourism can overcome this unequal relationship.” (Mowforth & Munt 2003: 78)

Despite claiming to be alternative, different or sustainable the new forms of tourism suffer from similar problems. However, this paper takes the approach that these reasons are to be found in other areas such as global inequality and power relationships that go beyond the scope of this paper. What is of interest here is the discussion on what characterises new forms of tourism in order to analyse how they adhere to sustainability principles, that are the main components of poverty reduction through sustainable development.

¹⁸ Compare Sofield, T.H.B. (2003): Empowerment for sustainable tourism development.

¹⁹ One example of local identity construction can be found in Northern Vietnam, where the Sapa tribes have been criticized for being sold out by the government.

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Widely discussed in Sofield (2003), the debate needs to clarify the differing motives in relation to how sustainable tourism development is understood. One approach is linked to Empowerment of the locals for participating in development this is called *sustainable tourism development*. By contrast, the *sustainable development of tourism* is about how to make tourism more sustainable which is achieved by implementing the sustainability aspects into the tourism product or activity. However, in this paper “sustainable tourism development should be seen simply as a means of achieving sustainable development through tourism” (Sharpley & Telfer 2008: 42).

Summing up, sustainable tourism development is a complex and ambiguous term that contains both a process through which society moves from one condition to another, but also the goal of this process (Sharpley 2000: 3). Therefore, unspecific changes as well as concrete events are included within. Different actors may prioritise one component of sustainability over the other, and various interlinkages are unavoidable.

3.3.2 Principles of sustainability in tourism

Mowforth & Munt (2003: 97-106) argue that sustainability is “not definable except in terms of the context, control and position of those who are defining it” (Ibid: 98). Without being considered exclusive, seven principles are considered as the main drivers of sustainability in tourism development.²⁰

Ecological sustainability (Ibid: 98) is the most known component associated with alternative tourism. The so-called carrying capacity (number of people participating in tourism activity) provides a general means of identifying and minimising the environmental impacts of tourism activities. Hence, this measure is criticised for serving the communicators interest (low carrying capacity from operator, imaginary carrying capacity by conservation organisations).²¹

Social sustainability is defined as

²⁰ For other indicators, compare also Forum anders reisen (FAR 2008), a network on sustainable tourism and provider of travels, that developed a criteria catalogue. This tourism network claims to have the most sound and all encompassing framework for sustainable tourism with a pragmatic approach towards ecological, economic, social and qualitative standards. Fair trade tourism indicators are realised in-depth in projects from Fair Trade in Tourism South Africa 2008, at <http://www.fairtourismsa.org.za/aboutus/index.html> (last retrieved on 27.06.2008).

²¹ Furthermore, arbitrary chosen calculations in regard to group numbers and ideal management capacity risk to dismiss other relevant criteria such as availability of guides, maps, rest spots, etc.

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“the ability of a community, whether local or national, to absorb inputs, such as extra people, for short or long periods of time, and to continue functioning either without the creation of social disharmony as a result of these inputs or by adapting these functions and relationships so that the disharmony created can be alleviated or mitigated” (Ibid: 99).

Tourism may enhance or create social divisions by the separation of tourist and local areas (resorts, enclaves). Calculating social carrying capacity is one means to minimise these divisions.

Cultural sustainability is important in regard to the impacts of changes from outside and inside. It means the “ability of people to retain or adapt elements of their culture which distinguish them from other people.”(Ibid) Cultural influences from tourists are inevitable and a great concern is that cultural adaptation happens in favour of the dominant outside culture (see for example Tourism Concern for cultural subversion of indigenous groups).

Economic sustainability is equally as important as the other principles and stands for the

“level of economic gain from the activity sufficient either to cover the cost of any special measures taken to cater for the tourist and to mitigate the effects of the tourists presence or to offer an income appropriate to the inconvenience caused by the local community visited – without violating any of the other conditions – or both” (Ibid: 103).

Hence, the peril of buying off the other aspects of sustainability is acceptable as long as the economic profitability outweighs enough to “cover over the damage, ease the discontent or suppress the protest” (Ibid). Economic sustainability is equally important though it may be singularly fostered by the industry. It has to be kept in mind though, that economic sustainability involves the contextual issue of power as to who gains and losses financially from tourism activity. Consequently, power and control issues are the more immediate focus than other sustainability conditions and are deeply connected to stakeholder²².

The *educational element* is a highly controversial issue, but especially relevant in the new forms of tourism who explicitly provide an educational input. The idea and goal of the tourism activity is to foster broader understanding of how the “natural and human environment works”(Ibid). However, these genuine motives are easily achieved (already pamphlets are education) so that

²² Stakeholders are seen as “any individual or group influencing or affected by collective objectives“ (Hall & Brown 2006: 14ff). Thus, the moral obligation to act responsibly and according to ethical principles such as meaningful participation in decision-making processes becomes comprehensible. However, the crucial objective of stakeholding is besides financial reasons the power and control aspect. Therefore, motives and interests of involved parties, no matter to which degree, are necessary to consider.

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qualitative evidence is rare and difficult to classify. Also here the motives have to be taken into account as they reflect power and control interests. Mowforth and Munt identified two debates on what education means. In this context one is “the enlightenment of the new tourist in the cultural ways and norms of those they are visiting – an education for its own sake; and second, the training of the ‘hosts’ so that they are better able to cater for the wishes of the new middle classes who visit them”(2003:103). Interestingly, only little acknowledgement for the education of local population on the tourists is mentioned.²³ In addition, providing technical expertise on how to conduct tourism the right way reflects a paternalistic attitude (Ibid: 104) that resemble hegemonic biases.

Local participation is a broadly analysed concept. The debate focuses less on the need of inclusion of the local population, than on the degree of control by the destination communities. This reflects the general dividing line of whether to see host communities as objects or as controllers of tourism.²⁴ Whether mass tourism or the new forms of tourism have greater influence depends mainly on the provider who benefits from the revenues, the form of tourism is of lesser concern in practice.

The *conservation element*, which aims to connect tourism with the preservation of biodiversity or culture in a given area, is often understood in combination with ecotourism. But two distinct and opposing camps are identifiable in this debate. While there are adherents to the argument that ecotourism cannot survive without conservation, another argument criticises the focus on species preservation while neglecting the local people. “This view sees ecotourism as a new form of ecological imperialism in which western cultural values override local cultural values and thereby oppose the principles of sustainability which ecotourism claims to support”(Ibid). This statement links to Cohens critique on the Equity aspect in regard to whether consider locals only as users or as partners in tourism (2002: 273).

²³ For further reading check out Krippendorf (1987): *The Holidaymakers: Understanding the impact of leisure and travel*, London: Heinemann, who encourages the dissemination of information about the tourists.

²⁴ For an in-depth classification see Pretty and Hine (1999 in Mowforth & Munt 2003: 215) who distinguish six types of participation ranging from passive participation, to participation by consultation, bought participation, functional participation, interactive participation to self-mobilisation and connectedness.

4 Mapping Cambodia

“Smallness per se can be bad for growth, while the opposite is true when smallness is combined with tourism specialisation” (Brau & al. 2005: 23).

The Mekong region is a region in Southeast Asia that in the strict sense consists only of the former colony French Indochina, that is Cambodia, Lao and Vietnam. The actual reference as of Mekong region has become a popular means to overcome colonial indifferences. A wealth of attractions await the traveller, among them are historic temples, rich cultures, stunning landscapes, colourful local markets, and fantastic food to suit any budget. This is even more so true for the little kingdom of Cambodia. Theravada Buddhism is the main religion²⁵ and renders the country a safe place to travel. It is well known for the ancient temple complex Angkor Wat, the symbol and heart of the Cambodian nation. However, only few tourists venture beyond and take the chance to discover the diversity of this captivating country that is rich in culture, nature, history and tradition²⁶.

Cambodia is a fascinating country that after decades of turmoil and international isolation is going through major transition processes within a short period of time: from armed conflict to peace, from political authoritarianism to liberal democracy, and from a socialist economic system to one based on market-driven capitalist growth.

According to the annual report from the Ministry of Tourism Cambodia (MoTC 2008), since the UNTAC mission in 1992-1993, international arrivals increased dramatically by 18,5 %, reaching a number of 2,015,128 visitors in 2007 (MoTC 2008: 2). An increasing number of visitors is coming in particular from other Asian countries such as South Korea (16, 37 %), Japan (8,04 %), Vietnam (6,23 %), China (5,88 %), Taiwan (5,84 %) and Thailand (5,04 %). However, the kingdom holds an ongoing popularity for Americans (6, 83 %), French (4,47 %), British (4,17 %) and Australians (3,55 %). Hence, most visitors are coming from Asia, as well as Western Europe and the USA. This seems especially relevant for Cambodia's dark side of tourism. Despite awareness raising campaigns by the government and NGOs alike, severe difficulties remain with the countries' sad popularity for easy access to child sex tourism.

²⁵ 97 % of the population that counts about 14 million people adhere to Theravada Buddhism (MoTC 2008: ii).

²⁶ The average length of stay is only 6.5 days and does usually concentrate in the visit of Siem Reap (Angkor Wat) and Phnom Penh (MoTC 2008: vi).

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But also other tourism related issues remain challenging for the future. Although tourism receipts amount up to \$ 1,400 million, the unequal wealth distribution leaves most of Cambodia in poverty (Ibid). Severe negative environmental, social, and cultural consequences of tourism typically impact the poorest of people, from whom forty per cent are expected to live below the poverty line (SADC 2007). Thus, Cambodia's natural environment continues to be extremely endangered. Due to war and intense poverty the exploitation of forests and rivers for livelihoods continues and leaves the natural environment in a fragile state. Furthermore, landmines or Unexploded Ordnance (UXO) are expected to be a problem for many years to come, still killing or maiming more than 900 Cambodians per year (SADC 2007).

All the above mentioned factors are relevant when assessing tourism in Cambodia as most of the initiatives from *Stay another day Cambodia* are addressing these issues.

5 Analysis

5.1 Sustainability and tourism in Cambodia

“Stay a bit longer and experience more...” (SADI 2008a)

5.1.1 Stay another day initiative (SADI)

Financed by the multi-donor Mekong Private Sector Development Facility (MPDF), the *Stay another day* initiative (SADI) aims at poverty reduction through sustainable private sector development in Vietnam, Cambodia, and Lao (SADI 2008a). Initiatives included “are community projects, NGOs or businesses with a strong social conscience that support poor communities, conserve traditional heritage or cultural assets, or preserve the natural environment for the future” (Ibid). The distribution of booklets is the main promotional activity throughout the former Indochina region, and was set up by the International Finance Corporation (IFC)²⁷ to promote sustainable tourism projects so that travellers

“get to know the countries you are visiting in more depth. Our goal is to promote ‘destination friendly’ tourism, by connecting travellers with organisations that are in some way helping to conserve local culture and heritage, support community projects benefiting local people or initiatives to lessen negative environmental impacts of tourism. Currently covering the Mekong region of Cambodia, Lao PDR and soon Vietnam, we bring together interesting things to do, see or buy, by highlighting organisations that not only offer noteworthy experiences and souvenirs but are also giving back to the local communities.” (SADI 2008a)

SADI is less interested in diminishing the negative impacts of tourism in form of minimizing the number of tourists, but in attracting more tourists (or travellers). Thus, the motives are strongly associated with a consumer orientation that is mainly socio-economic sustainability, and less ecological sustainability. SADI claims to provide the best of what tourism has to offer by highlighting organisations that are giving something back to the local communities (SADI 2008b). With reference to the in-depth experience the new tourism forms are promoted to the responsible and conscious traveller who seeks this close connection to the locals. SADI’s main objective is to contribute to improving the welfare of the people by stressing the point of giving tourism revenues back to local communities, and the focus on the traveller’s consumption habits at the promoted projects is one means how to achieve this.

²⁷ The booklet (SADC 2007) for Cambodia was additionally published with support from German Technical Corporation (GTZ) Private Sector Promotion Program.

5.1.2 The sustainability of *Stay another day Cambodia* (SADC)

By using the eleven subcategories of the seven principles of sustainability in tourism, the SADC project descriptions are analysed in order to generate a different and independent classification scheme. This paper attempts to see if there is a prioritisation of several components over others. These components are carrying capacity, the ability to absorb inputs, minimisation of social division, enhancement of distinct cultural features, power & control, tourist education, locals training, biodiversity, culture preservation, host communities, revenues. While going through the data, several inconsistencies appeared. Thus, two more subcategories have been developed, authenticity and cooperation.

The coding of these subcategories identifies relevant terms or themes derived from the free flowing text in the SADC projects. The text revealed that it is useful to analyse the weight of the principles of sustainability as they are not equally strong represented in the various projects.

Ecological sustainability in form of *carrying capacities* or any kind of number restrictions on tourists appears not to be of primary concern for SADC. While coding, it became clear that already ecological sustainability was not explicitly referred to. This may result from the fact that all the small-scale initiatives listed in SADC aim at income generation and thus attempt to attract more visitors, not reducing their number. However, neglecting this component of sustainability reflects a counter productivity towards poverty reduction that relies on income generation. Furthermore, during the analysis the overall impression that this principle of sustainability is indirectly covered in other principles proved to be right (see discussion on the conservational element).

Social sustainability and its two subcategories, the ability to absorb inputs and minimisation of social division, were found to be especially relevant. The *ability to absorb inputs* was identified along context related topics and areas such as rehabilitation, reintegration, local development inputs and resistance to change. A good example is Krousar Thmey, a foundation that assists deprived children in Siem Reap and developed a Khmer version of Braille as well as Khmer Sign language. Overall, 16 out of the 53 projects were identified as fostering the ability of the host community to absorb inputs. The other aspect of social sustainability, the *minimisation of social division*, is realised twice as much in 36 projects. It contains terms such as marginalised people, disadvantaged, landmine victims, disabled, poor, woman, and street children. A classic example

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here is Cambodian Trust, a rehabilitation and education centre for disabled people that also produces prosthetics and aims at “working for equal rights for disabled people in an inclusive barrier free society”.

Cultural sustainability in form of *enhancement of distinct cultural features* is listed in 26 projects by context sensitive codes such as local handicraft, local ingredients, Khmer performances (including relating terms such as weaving, silk production, etc). The data allows further specification of traditional (ancient) and modern forms of cultural features. The traditional form is best described with the name of one project called National Center for Khmer Ceramics Revival (NCKCR). By contrast, Smateria, a commercial enterprise, aims to provide space for new ideas with the motto “bring common materials to a new life”. Overall, only 4 out of 26 are considered as referring to a distinctively modern context though the borderlines are blurry.

Another principle of sustainability, economic sustainability, is to be excluded from the sample. Economic sustainability tends to buy off all the other principles of sustainability as it is part of the development through tourism debate which puts poverty reduction at the forefront. The SADC initiative in particular seems to promote and select particular projects with a long-term income generation goal. As tourism is about consumption of tourism related products, these projects specialised in selling (locally produced) products, tours, and other services. However, also donations are directly addressed in the text. In regard to the host destination Cambodia, the visitors are taught to be aware of sharing their welfare. Thus, the originally defined subcategories *power and control* are far-reaching and would deserve its own paper. Information from the initiative on these was highly selective and difficult to compare. What is striking though is the amount of foreign involvement on the SADC listed projects. For example, languages in the names of projects used are Khmer (M’Lop Tapang), English (Handicap International Belgium), French (Pour un Sourire d’Enfant) or mixtures (Sangkheum Centre for Children). To what extent this may be connected to power and control issues in tourism in general will be theoretically discussed later in the following section and in combination with impacts of new forms of tourism while looking at *cooperation* and *partnerships*.

In particular, the educational element provided very fruitful results. As such, learning was especially relevant and one of the most used terms in the description of the various projects. The

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distinction of subcategories proves necessary and reasonable in regard to who is addressed. One level is the *tourist education* described context-sensitive by verbs such as learn, find out, experience, volunteer, visit and support. While these appeared in 30 projects, the issues addressing *local peoples' training* were found in 37 initiatives and thus mark the peak of all categories. The category includes education, training, workshops, teach, and learn as the most important key terms. This result is remarkable in regard to how tourism is used to tackle poverty reduction. Obviously via the educational component the speculatively long term and thus sustainable solution to self-help has found wide resonance in Cambodia. Criticism on what is taught to the locals, often trainings for the hospitality sector, confirms a certain paternalistic approach to fostering development.

The conservational element, often especially referred to as prototypical for Ecotourism, is identified by the subcategories biodiversity and culture preservation. To preserve *Biodiversity* (nature or environment conservation) is an explicitly stated aim for 11 projects, by terms such as heritage conservation, preservation, alternative, local, and environment. Although the last term would be expected to refer to ecological sustainability, the context proved the main point of reference is in regard to conservation; it is reclassified according to its usage in SADC. Culture preservation in turn is part of 19 projects. This outnumbers the subcategory *ability to absorb inputs* (16). Hence, culture preservation is ranked more important than one aspect of social sustainability. Overall, the conservational element outnumbers the social. Both categories used key similar key terms, except environment was interchangeable with society and *authenticity*. Thus, when promoting Ecotourism, both are distinct features to be equally concentrated on.

The local participation in the SADC in form of the subcategories *revenues* and *host communities* is inconclusive due to missing information. Only in few cases was it possible to identify explicit reference to where and how revenues are generated and re-distributed. Connected to the economical sustainability, host communities have been involved to different degrees in the tourism sector, which opens up a new debate how the host destination is treated. Whether they are objects or controllers of tourism is debatable. In the broader context of development and poverty reduction, Cohen also differentiates locals as users and partners (2002: 273). In the SADC initiatives, both forms are apparent (Buong Centre; general terminology of the initiatives partners). Hence, it would be interesting to relate these considerations and place the overall

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picture of how the locals, or host community is looked upon by the economically dominant outsiders. The many partnerships in the new forms of tourism encourage a destination friendly image that reduces negative impacts of tourism.

Summing up, what is analysed in this paper are the *Social sustainability* understood as change resistance (ability of local culture to absorb inputs: 16) and the attempt of minimising social divisions (involvement of marginalised people: 32). Another classification looked at is *Cultural sustainability* in regard to enhancement of distinct features (with a separation of traditional: 26 and modern culture: 4). The *Educational element* in form of learning is twofold and contains on the one hand the tourist's education (e.g. in form of information, or personal contact with locals: 30) relating to the authenticity experience and on the other hand locals' education (in form of trainings: 37). Finally, the *Conservation element* is also separated; one concentrates on the biodiversity (nature: 11) while the other is on local culture preservation (people: 19). This results in 7 variables which have been analysed in the written text by interpretative coding by identifying key words and variables from the booklet and website, that grasp the classifications above while providing a scientific attempt of classification.

Little data reliability and validity minimised results for *Local participation* as one of the most important categories of sustainability that differentiates the locals according to being objects or controllers, users or partners of tourism. Not enough relevant and valid data was collectable from the project self-descriptions. Also *Ecological Sustainability* in form of carrying capacities of visitors was excluded as they are less relevant for most of the projects that try to attract visitors. In regard to *Economical Sustainability*, the SADC as well as this paper takes the approach that all projects aim at long term revenues from tourism related business and projects. Consequently, the discussion whether or not economic sustainability buys off all the other principles as in the poverty reduction discourse remains relevant. Interestingly enough, most of the projects, namely 30 out of the total 53, have some kind of partnerships, or memberships, financed and/or created by foreigners or foreign organisations, or networking in any other possible way (local NGOs, networks). Thus, the many kinds of local participation (see also Mikkelsen 2005: 59)²⁸ are beyond the scope of this paper as this analysis would need extensive and in depth data from the field that is not (or only randomly) provided in the published content.

²⁸ The typology of people's participation in development identifies ten different forms (passive participation, participation in information giving, participation by consultation, participation for material incentives, functional participation, interactive participation, self-mobilisation, catalysing change, optimum participation, manipulation).

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This intensive discussion leads to further questions such as which principles of sustainability in tourism are prioritised in the SADC initiative and to which new forms of tourism do they actually belong. The following chapter attempts to portray an overall picture of these issues²⁹.

5.1.3 New forms of tourism in *Stay another day Cambodia* (SADC)

The enriched categories within SADC show a growing consumer orientation, which marginalises the sustainability components. Further examination is needed to understand this context, as it is remarkable that SADC's own classification grew within one year from 3 to 13 categories including Adventure Experience (AE), Community (CY), Cultural Activities (CA), Culture (C), Eating & Drinking (EA), Environment (E), Information Centre (IC), Shopping (S), Spa & Massages (SM), Sports (SP – no project in Cambodia listed), Stopover (SO), Volunteering (V), Wildlife (W – no project listed). According to the classification from SADC, the former labelling categories *Environment*, *Community* and *Culture* have been enriched by further visitors orientation in form of advanced consumption possibilities such as the categories *Shopping*, *Eating & Drinking*, *Spa & Massages*. Moreover, the tourist experience is addressed by providing search categories as *Adventure Experience*, *Information Centre* and *Cultural Activity*. The last two together with *Volunteering* deal with the conscience of tourists, especially in regard to personal involvement and getting to know a culture (compare also the “traveller”) or learning about the visited place or ‘giving something back’.

In regard to the prioritisation of new forms of tourism, in 2007 each project³⁰ was labelled as promoting community based-tourism. This is connected to the fact that the organisation that published the booklet, German Technical Cooperation, fosters all *Community*-based tourism projects for their own development approach and thus selected these in particular. However, when going through the data, this classification seemed arbitrary.

While only four projects were considered as positively impacting the *Environment*, nearly half of the sample, sixteen, was identified as fostering *Culture*. Thus, a clear ranking indicates that despite other expectations, environmental sustainability was less fostered than culture.

²⁹ Concerning the location of the projects, in 2007 a strong representation was in the tourist centres of Siem Reap (17), Phnom Penh (9), and Battambang (4). Sihanoukville, Kratie, and Kampot each had two projects, and other remote areas only one (Preah Vihear, Kampong Cham, Kompong Speu, Kompong Thom, Stung Treng).

³⁰ Out of the total number of projects in 2007, six projects were not classified by SADC. After excluding these irrelevant cases, 35 projects remained for investigation of SADC labelling and prioritisation.

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For 2008, the overall sample changed. *Community* impacting tourism was identified in forty projects. Thus, five formerly identified projects from 2007 missed that classification in 2008 while nine of them were new projects, and one had to be excluded because it only existed in 2007. Initiatives relating to *Environment* are realised in eleven projects and thus increased rapidly. The *Culture* component also increased by eight projects, and amounted from sixteen to an overall number of twenty-four. Thus, the ranking of *Community* over *Culture* and last *Environment* has been kept in the SADC's own classification.

Furthermore, the enriched categories provide a deeper understanding of what is considered important to the traveller and his consumption patterns. In regard to the categories *Shopping* ten possibilities have been categorised. *Eating & Drinking* is possible in ten projects. And *Spa & Massages* are found in three initiatives. Thus, a strong reference to the hospitality sector is provided. *Adventure Experience* is provided by two projects, *Cultural Activities* in ten though it remains unclear what the categorisation of these contained. *Volunteering* possibilities are provided in three initiatives and thus refer to a growing market segment within the independent traveller that wants to 'give something back'. According to the SADC website classification, *Sports* and *Wildlife* were not identified for Cambodia, despite the usage of the latter word in some project names (SADC 2008a). Finally, the convenient aspect of *Stopover*, which takes into account the short period of days that visitors spend in Cambodia, was classified in three projects.

Summing up, SADC focuses on the consumer as the centre of attention as they are expected to be willing to act responsible and thus voluntarily. However, also other actors in the tourism sector are important, which will be briefly discussed in the following section.

5.2 Challenges for sustainability in tourism

“In its widest sense, tourism is a form of trade, not of goods perhaps, although the commodification of tourist destinations and talk of the 'tourist product' is now firmly established and accepted.” (Mowforth & Munt 2003: 105)

5.2.1 Methodological considerations

Weaver (2006: 21-24) identifies five components that convey the complexity of tourism systems holistically acting on the knowledge based platform. They are relevant for this paper because information on the SADC was difficult to obtain from other sources than their own website and booklets. Hence, the reliability and validity of these needs careful evaluation.

First, the fuzzy boundaries in tourism sector make it difficult to gather reliable data on what was consumed (shopping, food, but also transportation) by tourists and by locals. This is relevant in regard to evaluation of the shopping category in SADC.

Second, indirect and induced impacts of tourism on other sectors and environments have to be taken into account. This refers to impacts that would not have appeared in and outside the destination if tourism was not fostered (e.g. construction, increased food production and fertilizer use). It is important to realise here is that while the global tourism industry quantifies the direct impacts, the global tourism economy takes into account indirect and induced impacts and thus becomes three times larger than the former (Ibid: 22). An assessment is further complicated by the fact that any interaction brings about change to a culture, making it difficult to identify the main reasons for that (such as media versus tourist interaction). Hence, the tourist impact on the SADC projects is difficult to measure, though often explicitly addressed as welcomed enrichment in the hospitality training.

Third, the influence of external sectors and systems on tourism is another component that challenges simplicity. The existence of natural or human made disasters (such as Tsunami, suicide bombings, or wars disrupting nature) has to be taken into account for effective tourism usage. In Cambodia, the unexploded ordnances (UXO) remain a danger which is visible in the streets by victims as well as when travelling through the country side and seeing warning posters.

Fourth, unpredictable non-linear cause and effect relationships in tourism make it difficult to estimate all consequences that arise from tourism or destination activities and bring about counter agitation (compare the avalanche effect that function as a catalyser, just like a retro trend).

Finally, the confined, other than the holistic sustainable approach, considers only destination or business itself and the direct impacts of the tourism sector with either environmental or sociocultural impacts, but not the macro and intersectoral assumptions.

Hence, the following sections aim at discussing the neglected factors in a broader framework.

5.2.2 The responsibilities of tourism actors

The realisation of sustainability principles in tourism, as shown in the previous discussion, is deeply connected to the actors' awareness and willingness to implement these guidelines. While the governments are asked to implement a functioning legal framework³¹, the industry can take action by voluntary certification through accreditation schemes³². Finally, the tourists themselves as consumers can be reached by information campaigns such as codes of conduct which appeal to tourist ethics and moral behaviour.

Influential tourism actors can be very broadly classified as international organisations, intergovernmental bodies, public authorities and agencies, nongovernmental and non-profit organisations, foundations and development agencies, industry associations and initiatives. Thus, "although 'responsible tourism' has become a marketing cliché, the location of responsibility and accountability is critical in assisting the emergence of a more ethically based tourism that can take a more holistic view of the welfare implications of its development processes." (Hall & Brown 2006:24)

However, the Rio Summit in Brazil in 1992 clarified who should take action in regard to sustainable development as defined in the Agenda 21. This is equally transferable and relevant for tourism development that claims to be sustainable. Within this global action plan two main themes are relevant for the tourism industry (Starcliffe 1995 in Mowforth & Munt 2003:105f). On the one hand, tourism is explicitly addressed as "offering sustainable development potential to certain communities, particularly in fragile environments" (Ibid). On the other hand, the Agenda 21's programme of action affects not only the legal framework but also the policies and management practices under which tourism operates. Thus, in particular governments need to

- improve and reorientate pricing and subsidy policies in issues related to tourism,
- diversify mountain economies by creating and strengthening tourism,
- provide mechanisms to preserve threatened areas that could protect wildlife, conserve biological diversity or serve as national parks, and
- promote environmentally sound leisure and tourism activities.

³¹ Despite attempts to make sex tourism and child abuse through awareness promotion illegal, Cambodia remains to be a country attractive for child molesters. High levels of corruption within the government and other authorities do not ease this situation.

³² It has to be stressed here that CSR is not a substitution for missing legal framework. The state and governments are in duty to secure workers rights (ILO) and human rights according to international standards alike.

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Furthermore, the industry, involved businesses and transnational corporations, are requested to

- adopt codes of conduct promoting the best environmental practice,
- ensure responsible and ethical management of products and processes, and
- increase self-regulation.

Two particular features here are the GATT rules which encourage externalisation of costs and the idea that only trade liberalisation brings about sustainable development (Arden-Clarke 1992 in Mowforth & Munt 2003: 106). The trust in trickle-down effects to solve the environmental problems created by economic growth has been disappointing though, as no automatic mechanism exists that would ensure reinvestment. Furthermore, often irreversible environmental damages have resulted. Hence, the critique of the Agenda 21 is rooted in the priorities and ideological values that reinforce the arguments about the importance of relationships of power. Consequently, “principles of sustainability are not absolute and immutable. In any tourism analysis there is a need to examine the questions of who is stating the principles, priorities and policies, who will benefit from related action and who will loose” (Mowforth & Munt 2003: 106).

The terminological challenge within the approaches of sustainable development and their realisation in the tourism industry remains. Actors in tourism focus on different aspects of sustainability, and the term Sustainable Tourism, as defined in the theory, cannot be expected to be an all encompassing framework anymore as it has become an empty term due to inflationary usage.

However, an interesting concept on what Sustainable Tourism could entail is formulated in the Agenda for Sustainable Tourism (UNEP) which provides indicators for what sustainability in tourism means. Though the terminology refers foremost to sustainable tourism, this provides an overview of which issues are addressed in regard to poverty reduction. While it goes far beyond the paper to analyse all the guidelines published on sustainable tourism in practice - they vary in regard to the different levels of tourism system (international, national, local), the sectors (private, public, voluntary), and cases – some broad themes are distinguishable. Sharpley & Telfer (adapting UNEP/UNWTO 2005 in 2008: 51) identify twelve aims which can be called an agenda for sustainable tourism. These are economic viability, local prosperity, employment

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quality, social equity, visitor fulfilment, local control, community well-being, cultural richness, physical integrity, biological diversity, resource efficiency, and environmental purity.³³ They all adhere to different parts of sustainability, but prioritise none of them. By contrast, the new forms of tourism do have certain prioritisation as discussed before. That means that different actors choose different suitable parts, and the holistic implementation seems not realisable.

For example the World Bank started in 2005 to include sustainable tourism development as an objective. It is not prioritised but found often in other projects, and in some Country Assistance Strategies and Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (Markandya et al. 2005:225).

Also the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC), consisting of top managers from the tourism industry, is promoting sustainability. They focus on mass tourism, a challenge in itself which is a necessary step when considering the high numbers of Asian tourists in Cambodia. In 1994, it initiated the Green Globe Program that is a Benchmarking, Certification and Performance Improvement programme based on the Agenda 21 principles for sustainable development.³⁴ It furthermore presents the Tourism for Tomorrow Award in 2008 with the categories destination award, conservation award, investor in people award, and global tourism award. WTTC claims to promote best practices in sustainable tourism development all over the world by acknowledging its importance in regard to climate changes, economic development, cultural understanding and peace among nations (WTTC 2008b). Addressing this challenge by developing products and services that aim to mitigate the impacts is seen as a demonstrated commitment for preserving the planet as well as for facilitating mass travel globally."(Ibid) Thus, mass tourism with its massive income possibilities aims to include sustainability, while the motives to do so remain questionable and risk of becoming a promotional gimmick.

"Twenty years ago sustainable tourism was just an idea, now it is entering the Travel & Tourism mainstream as more companies embrace new innovations demonstrating environmentally-friendly operations, a commitment to safeguarding the cultural and natural heritage of our planet, and addressing poverty alleviation through enlightened business practices." (WTTC 2008c)

Still, it remains important to foster sustainability in mass tourism, as Cambodia in particular relies on Asian tourists³⁵ that choose this form of travel due to little vacation times.

³³ For example, Forum anders reisen, a network on sustainable tourism and provider of travels, developed a criteria catalogue who claims to have the most sound and all encompassing framework for sustainable tourism with a pragmatic approach towards ecological, economic, social and qualitative standards. Furthermore, fair trade tourism indicators were developed in 2003 in South Africa by FTTSA <http://www.fairtourismsa.org.za/aboutus/index.html> (last retrieved on 27.06.2008).

³⁴ The Sustainable Tourism CRC (STCRC) is supporting Green Globe with sustainability research.

³⁵ As stated before, tourists originating from ASEAN countries, Asia and the Pacific have a total share of nearly 63 per cent in regard to arrivals in 2007 (MoTC 2008: 2).

5.2.3 The sustainable development paradigm

The uneven and unequal nature of development reflects the relationship between actors, power and control issues in tourism.³⁶ Furthermore, influential actors' power to define the terms and conditions under which sustainability in tourism is to be implemented reflects the creation of development paradigm. For example, Mc Michael observed already in 1996 that

“paradigmatic shift resonates globally. It registers in the demise of welfarist regimes in the First World, of socialist regimes of central planning in the Second World, and of the Third World as a political collectivity of post-colonial states. All are subsumed within the big tent of globalism, which displaces simultaneously their institutional and ideological legacies. In a general reversal of thinking, the present is no longer the logical development of the past; rather it is increasingly the hostage of the future: a future defined by globalists as one of inexorable efficiency” (1996 in 2007: 217)

In mass tourism, Weaver identifies the green paradigm which is part of the overall dominant western environmental paradigm (Weaver 2006: 67-68). These considerations are relevant in regard to the formation of development paradigms in general.

Telfer & Sharpleys newest publication (2008) on development and tourism provides an overview of the evolution of these development theories³⁷. The next development paradigm that follows sustainable development remains unclear and, borrowing Schuurman's title (1996), is attributed as *Beyond the impasse: the search for a new paradigm?* (Telfer & Sharpley 2008: 12). Future will tell, whether sustainable tourism has the potential to fill this gap.

However, what connects these approaches is that they all refer to a certain hegemonic idea of development. For example, the paradigm of sustainable development is broadly discussed in Sachs' book on 'Planet Dialectics' (1999). Sachs identifies several patterns for development paradigms that arose out of former concepts. Development concepts evolved over time and can be classified along certain (chronologically ordered) lines. Starting in 1949 with US president Harry Truman's speech, the category of underdevelopment was introduced (Sachs 1999: 3). With

³⁶ To what extent they reflect an ongoing hegemony (after the end of the Cold War and colonisation) in Cambodia cannot be answered here. However, new forms of tourism have less obvious but still existing unequal power relationship that could be connected to colonialism and dependency. A critique on these is formulated in Mowforth & Munt (2003:79) which introduces three other aspects to the debate that provide a deeper understanding. These are Fetishism and Aestheticisation (How far does new tourism retain the power to construct and represent the Third World?), Domination and control (How far can the new tourism change the distribution of ownership and power?), Intervention and commodification (how far does new tourism spread capitalist relations of production? and with what results?) However, a discussion on these topics would be a relevant topic for a dissertation.

³⁷ The following theoretical perspectives and concepts are characteristic for each period: 'post-development: rejection of the concept of development'; state-led development: more active role for the state; CS and social capital: work of voluntary organisations including NGOs, connect citizens and state; Transnational social movements: e.g. environmentalists, indigenous peoples, feminists, peace activists, ect.; Culture studies: different worldviews are accommodated; development and security: conflict and chaos with state disintegration (Telfer & Sharpley 2008: 12).

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the power to define development strategies as based on economic growth and catching up, a western view on what development constitutes started shaping the world. Not until the recognition of failures or negative side effects of aid programs, the development theory based on modernisation was questioned and new forms resulted such as the sustainable development paradigm (compare also Harris 2000: 5). The same may be true for approaches to sustainable tourism, as the ongoing positive rhetoric of tourism actors risk to neglecting actual downfalls.³⁸

However, this paper assumes that development paradigms can be identified as following the trend of certain global subjects or phases. It is closely linked to trend innovation and social construction aspects which are an important consideration in regard to development paradigms.

When analysing social change processes trend research³⁹ provides a useful approach as it looks at changes that are short or long term, in subsystems (stock, consumption, marketing) or in complex waves of changes (Konratieffs, epochal, and civilisation models). With the focus of analysis lying in the present processes of transformation are approachable. While Trend research is primarily about identification and documentation of transformations in each sector (economy, culture, consumption, technology) up to the small branches or sub/sectors (such as fashion trends), future research is about medium or longterm effects of these changes in a much broader allecompassing framework (Horx 2008e). The operative sector uses this information in regard to innovation and strategy processes and thus control is a side-effect of results. This is the approach⁴⁰ fostered in the paper.

It can be argued that trend and paradigm are kind of achronical in regard to their direction. A trend is based in the present and looks into the future. A paradigm is usually identified in the

³⁸ Even responsible tourism experts are not free of their own hegemonic biases. As noted during the international conference on responsible tourism in March 2008 in Kerala, ongoing differences did reflect the common incapability to merge effectively "policy and practice" and stop the "continued 'greenwashing' of the tourism industry" (Tourism Concern 2008b).

³⁹ The scientific background and methods of this meta science are occupied with the "becoming of the world" (Horx 2008b). One way of looking at it is the Long wave theory that was articulated by the Russian economist Kondratieff in the Kondratieff cycle, claiming that every 40 to 60 years, a new innovation push is transforming the whole economic world because of new resources or technologies. Nowadays, the period of information technology is slowly ending (productivity declines). He expects the next cycle to be characterised by breakthroughs in biotechnology and social innovations (such as maximisation of cooperation ability for example). Shorter waves are in the area of fundamental socio-cultural opinions/settings. About every 20 years a change between euphoria and pessimism appears (for example ecological fears of the 1970s were absorbed by the new economy euphoria which nowadays turns into fear of globalisation).

⁴⁰ Others would be statistical oriented future research (customers are often in politics). The marketing oriented trend research, or consumption trend research, looks at operational implementation in every-day consumption patterns. The management oriented trend and future research is about the consciousness and organisational processes in companies and their change via systemic approaches.

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present while analysing its past or present dominance. Hence, the combination of former development paradigms with trend theory may serve as a guideline to identify whether it is possible to recognize the beginning of a new development paradigm.

Like development paradigms, trends are constructed by external factors. Strategic management of development experts and other powerful actors can create new areas. Any trend could be planned (and fostered) which also works for development agendas. As shown before, the documentation of different trend or paradigm types (length, impact, strength, etc) is connected to knowledge about global circumstances. Related broader contexts allow a more or less clear hierarchy to base these paradigms in the broader framework of trends (Horx 2008a).

It has to be kept in mind that trend and future research belong to the controversial "sciences" which have a reputation for "wizardness" and looking into crystal balls (Horx 2008c). Despite this, trend researchers and futurists receiving increasing public and business recognition, as many companies use forecasting methods (such as having their own "Future Department", futurist or trend- analysts). This "trend to looking at trends" is related to the changing circumstances of global markets.⁴¹

5.3 Authenticity in tourism

“Small specialist operators catering for the new middle classes who form an increasingly significant market segment can translate their desire to be a twenty-first-century adventurer, explorer or ‘traveller’ ” (Mowforth & Munt 2003: 93)

5.3.1 The travellers experience

As mentioned before, the SADC initiative enriched their former three categories, with a more consumer oriented focus that involves Adventure Experience, Cultural Activities, Eating & Drinking, Information Centre, Shopping, Spa & Massages, Sport, Stopover, Volunteering, and Wildlife. For generating the authentic experience, a mixture of several components provides the traveller with options how to achieve his cultural satisfaction.

⁴¹ Prognostic and trend services are today offered by a wide range of small agencies, think tanks and professional groups, some of them with a long history and tradition such as the Basel based "Prognos". Some are organized in loose networks around characteristic persons (for example Peter Schwartz with his "Global Business Network"). Others work mainly for politics (like DEMOS in London"), and some are generalists (such as the German "Zukunftsinstitut" in Frankfurt/Vienna).

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“The emergence of these specialised markets is a feature of post-Fordist mode of consumption. In the same way that the new middle classes assume control of the ‘new’ activities through their exclusiveness, so the operators assume exclusivity, and therefore status for themselves on the ground of their specialised, individual offerings. The messy word of de-differentiation (a key feature of postmodernism) is used to convey a straightforward idea. It involves that tourism is not longer about tourism per se, but embody other activities” (Ibid).

This can be the combination of activities such as adventure, trekking, climbing or the mixture of intellectuals sphere with tourism such as academic, ecological archaeological or anthropological. Hence, it is the tourist or travellers’ experience that is foremost considered while trying to include sustainability aspects to make it more convenient and ethical for the host destinations.

Though environmentally sustainable, the equity aspect is not respected and creates discrimination.

“The issue of touristic equity is raised by the denial or access to such attractions to all other, less wealthy potential visitors, and especially domestic ones who may be excluded by economic discrimination from visiting and seeing the very sites for which their country acquired world wide fame.”(Cohen 2002: 275)

In less developed countries in the world, such as Cambodia, complex relationships between authenticity, equity, and sustainability in tourism are connected to the socio-political context. Furthermore, the relationship between discourse of authenticity and sustainability in tourism, and the problem of prioritisation of environmental sustainability over social equity is relevant (Cohen 2002: 268). Hence, the question remains whether sustainability in tourism is more than only a promotional gimmick (Ibid). This debate is embedded in the local success of sustainability aspects, but usually addressed in terms of the travellers’ experience who seeks authenticity on different levels. On the one hand, the travellers' awareness of negative environmental impacts challenge tourism businesses and increase the environmentally conscious services. On the other hand, the separation of authenticity in regard to the experience itself vis-a-vis the visited objects highlight the academic discussion that has diversified in favour of changing consumption patterns.

5.3.2 Authenticity and sustainability

Cohens’ critical observations of sustainability in tourism development form the basis for the following discussion (2002). Thus, in regard to Cambodia, this paper attempts to clarify whether

- the concept of sustainability in tourism development is vulnerable to misuses (as promotion and power tool),

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- the authenticity understanding has changed towards the (new) so-called hot authenticity of the subjective experience, and
- sustainability provision in rare attractions tends to be resolved by controlling and limiting access to them (Ibid: 274) which results in a policy of elite development (Ibid: 275).

Authenticity and sustainability are two prominent discourses in the social science of tourism. The former is from the consumer's point of view and stands for the quest for authenticity in the tourist experience. This can be problematic in regard to sustainability of tourism development. Hunter (1997 in Cohen 2002: 269) argues that when tourism is already in place, sustainable principles are more difficult to operate than in less touristy developed destinations, where the sustainable component are more easily applicable, which is especially true for Cambodia that only recently opened up to tourism development.⁴² Consequently, it is an antipodal movement. This means that sustainability concepts are providing the possibility to legitimise one or another development strategy. Furthermore, authenticity can be discussed in terms of tourism and modernity, which reveal the new authenticity-seeking modern tourist that ought to find simpler and purer lifestyles as another kind of reality (MacCannell 1973/1996 in Cohen 2002: 269). Cambodia, often described as a pure, friendly, untouched destination (Heritage Watch 2007a: 74) tends to attract a growing number of visitors due to its long isolation and global heritage sites.

"Such areas tend to become particularly valuable, not merely in ecological or cultural terms, but also in purely economic ones – as potential objects of development by the tourist industry. It is therefore to be expected that considerations of sustainability and development will clash most intensely in such sensitive and valuable areas."(Cohen 2002: 270)

The dilemma of tourism authorities, that is whether fostering tourism development and thus risking a possible decay by over usage, is observable in Angkor Wat. Depending on the number of visitors, change is enhanced and may result in the loss of its former attraction and purity.

Hence, to avoid the change of the authentic tourist experience, restrictions on visitors are often to be distinguished either in regard to numbers of tourists (exclusiveness), or prices of the product (price discrimination). However, these well meant development practices miss the point of equity as the underlying assumption within sustainability. Wang (2000 in Cohen 2002:270)

⁴² Only since the late 1990s it is safe to travel to Cambodia, whereas in between the 1960s until late 1980s due to the Civil War and Khmer Rouge terror and later Vietnamese occupation, the country remained relatively isolated. Only little foreign (western) involvement was found in the Thai border region, where illegal casinos and businesses operated.

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argues that the one-to-one link between the authentic site and authentic experience has become eroded when the theory realised that “authenticity is not a non-negotiable, given quality” (Ibid). By contrast, the practice is often socially constructed and subjective. Wang concludes that existential authenticity in the actual reality, in which sense and referent become completely disengaged. Thus, a shift from modern to post-modern tourism has been identified. The legitimate reasons for travelling change from cool to authentic. Thus, they reflect the increasingly hedonistic contemporary society which basically rediscovers authenticity through the new forms of tourism. Contrary trends, that enable authentic attractions to be sustainable, are for example theme parks.

“The growing importance of such attractions in tourism, even in Third World destinations may help in fact to deflect tourism from the more ‘sensitive’ natural environmental and cultural sites, and, by reducing pressure on them, facilitate their sustainability – just as the production of tourist-oriented arts and crafts by an ethnic group may reduce tourist demand for its increasingly rare, old, ‘authentic’ cultural objects.”(Cohen 2002: 271-272)

This is a challenging argument, as theme parks are typically looked upon as socially constructed and opposing to authentic culture. Cohen argues that the legitimate production of copies may enhance to sustain the few and disappearing ‘real’ experiences. For Cambodia however, this argumentation does not work. One example is Bokor National Park, a high plateau close to Kampot in the South. Attractive for its formidable view, abandoned houses and a casino, this historic place was bought by Sokimex, a South Korean company, which plans to invest in the infrastructure and aims to build an entertainment park. With the growing number of visitors, the safeguarding of the environment is not assured and thus Cohen neglects to understand the negative side of these theme parks that minimize the experience of the ‘real thing’ which is paid for by the consumers asking for authenticity.

The major problem of authenticity remains, which is connected to the industries inherent nature of ongoing growth. Because of the growing consumer demand the overuse of its resources is at risk. Undiscovered areas are penetrated and formerly mature tourist centres are getting developed into mass tourism destinations, as happened in Siem Reap because of the site development in Angkor Wat. By contrast, the adventurous and authenticity seeking travellers demand ‘pristine nature ad unspoilt natives’. Considered as the scouts or forerunners of future destinations, they contribute their own part to tourism development.

However, developing countries and their low living standards provide attractive conditions for experimenting with the new forms of tourism. Thus, the tourism sector in

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Cambodia provides tourists and travellers different options. While in mature tourist centres (such as resorts) specialised and expensive amenities are provided, an obvious side-effect is the separation from the local population.⁴³

The expansion of the tourist frontier is not endless and like in any other industry its resources are limited, even if it relies on free resources. Consequently, 'undiscovered' areas have a growing value (especially for government authorities and private tourism entrepreneurs)

"If in the past they were unmarked, peripheral locations open to all and of little interest to the tourist industry, owing to their remoteness and difficulties of access, they now become ever more valuable owing to their increasing rarity. Their preservation now raises the concern of authorities and entrepreneurs for ecological, cultural and especially economic reasons: they become a new economic resource, the sustainable exploitation of which necessitates the imposition of controls and limitations on access. The economic relationship has become inverted; if at an earlier stage the mature, centrally located destinations were expensive, while the peripheral ones were cheap, now an invasion occurs: the most remote, and hence as yet unspoiled sites, insofar as they harbour particularly valuable natural or cultural attractions, tend to become the most expensive ones" (Cohen 2002: 272).

This mechanism could be compared to a vicious circle. Once the traveller found the 'real' place, the discovery is spread out and results in the long run, depending on other variables of course too, in tourism development that endangers the 'rare' and exotic character.

5.4 International tourism and globalisation

"Proponents of the global economy would have us to believe that its spread brings democracy, peace, prosperity, sustainability and even respect for human rights. However, it is the exact opposite that is true. Economic globalisation has done more to create corruption, poverty, pollution, exploitation and inequality than even colonialism" (Vasudevan 2008).

5.4.1 The Lifestyle of Health and Sustainability (LOHAS)

Following the previous discussion, the question remains who are these consumers that identify themselves rather with being a traveller than a tourist? To what extent do they mirror features that are attributed with globalisation⁴⁴? While they are not rejecting consumption completely, they seem to share an ethical awareness in regard to impacts of production and consumption. They are

⁴³ By contrast, travellers in the periphery usually rely on local services, which are cheaper and simpler as in the centres (Cohen 2002: 272)

⁴⁴ Modernisation theory, a concept necessary to understand in relation to the globalisation discourse, is antipodal to the theoretical approach of dependency and later world system theory. The 80s approaches are of middle range that emphasized processes of differentiation within the Third World – without claiming comprehensive explanation of underdevelopment. With the globalisation discourse, new approaches analyse issues relating to the ground reality (such as informal sector, vulnerability, human-environment- impact or sustainability). These many topics increase in volume and nuance the rise of social differentiation in developing countries.

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identified as following a lifestyle of health and sustainability (LOHAS) in which ethical consumption is considered morally implicative and the right thing to do. However, this trend is only affordable for a certain part of society. Trend researchers named this changing consumption pattern “ethical consumption revolution” a concept that reflects the growing demand for fair trade products and ethical travel⁴⁵ (Fuchs, EED Tourism Watch in KATE 2008a). In particular long distance travellers consume fair trade products and demand transparency. Thus, fair trade in tourism should not be underestimated as a niche product because it can be considered as a retro trend with growing consumption potential. Hence, retro trends are characterised as a reflex or anti-movement that counteracts the dominant socio-cultural trend (e.g. cocooning versus mobility, or alternative tourism versus mass travel). They provide space for including counter trends and finally merge to something new (Horx 2008c). Thus, counter trends can be more productive than mainstream trends. For tourism, the emergence of sustainability concepts in mass tourism is the best example for its broader application and success (WTTC 2008c).

According to Horx (2008a), trends are in particular relevant since the 90s when the growing consumer society needed diversification schemes. Most basically, trend is a movement of change that entails a conversion process.⁴⁶ Consequently, trends are occurring in any area of life such as economy, politics and consumption. Aside from the informal use of the term in fashion, five types of trend are distinguishable according to length and intensity (Horx 2008b).

First, metatrends are classified as the evolutionary constant in nature found in all living systems, and also in societies that follow universal rules and natural laws (e.g. the trend to complexity).

Second, megatrends as blockbusters of change consist of three conditions: The half-life value time of 25 to 30 years; effects in all areas of life (not only in regard to consumption patterns but also changes of value that may impact politics); they are characterised as global changes that impact society, economy and technology, which are resistant against backlashes (e.g. trend to globalisation).

⁴⁵ For example, in Germany the market for fair trade products increased by nearly hundred per cent in 2006 (KATE 2008a).

⁴⁶ Horx (2008b) criticises that trend and future research are often used synonymously in public discourse. Trend research aims to identify specific converting systems in the present and within its single subsystems (such as stock market, consumption, fashion: relevant for marketing, product and innovation development over a period of 5-10years). By contrast, future research focus on more general and broad converting processes (with long-term trend projection such as 100 years, it provides inputs for strategic considerations).

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Third, sociocultural trends are medium term changes (5-8 years). Deriving from peoples' experiences, they show visible effects in consumption and product worlds (such as wellness). Often, societal deficits are counter balanced for finding equilibrium (e.g. the trend to cocooning).

Fourth, consumer trends (or style trends) are connected to the market cycle and societal changes of products and fashion (e.g. trend to bio-products).

Fifth, marketing trends and phenomena are exclusively concerned with the commercialisation of products and services (e.g. trend of promoting natural beauty in the Dove advertisements).

Consequently, trends are "no separate and singular phenomena but placed into systemic changes" (Horx 2008b). For example the consumer trend to buy bio-products is linked to the socio-cultural trend to sustainability and ecology, which in turn derived from post-material value shifts and a changing global economic situation of scarcity. Consumer trends can be used for influencing consumer behaviour. This approach assumes that spontaneous and collective temporary fashion trends are usable for own promotion as done by SADC that enriched its categories from three to thirteen in order to please consumer demands.

Hence, trend research does not orientate on short-term opportunistic trends but longs for intensive context. Phenomena have to be placed in a socio-cultural context that recognises the trend-counter trend reaction and provides space for anti-reactions to dominant trends. Best example here is alternative tourism that evolved out of criticising the mass tourism of the 60s. Due to the shortcomings and defects in one trend, a counter trend emerges that aim to overcome this imperfect state (such as fast food has engendered bioproducts success').

The short discussion has shown that trends can have complex or simple characters, be longterm or short term and in different areas such as consumption, society, lifestyles, global phenomena and thus are in particular relevant for tourism as a global industry that relies on local resources.

5.4.2 The locals' side

Globalisation has enhanced communication, exchange of cultures, sharing of experiences and solutions, but radical voices argue that economic globalisation is a major problem (Vasudevan 2008). Sudden western influences experienced by the destination population due to sudden increases in tourism arrivals as in Cambodia, may cause feelings of inferiority (especially for the

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youth). Increasing economic pressures of unemployment and competition can lead to violent conflict. Changes derive from shifting away from an economy based on local resources and local knowledge to a global economy based on capital and outside technology, which is affordable by only a few. This is in particular true for Cambodia. With the abrupt appearance of foreign goods and subsidised food, media, advertising and tourism an “idealised impression of a consumer culture of infinite wealth and leisure” (Ibid), locals come to see their own culture as backward and inferior. SADC tries to tackle this problem by investing in cultural heritage and traditions.

Another example how to overcome this situation is presented by Vasudevan and the ISEC-initiative⁴⁷. Hence, during the tourist season, ISEC provides daily workshops as part of the Tourist Education Programme to present tourists an experience that goes beyond the surface impressions and educates them about the local situation. Furthermore, the locals themselves, being the hosts for often wealthier travellers, are at the centre of an initiative that aims to overcome false images. Of special relevance, is an unique program that brings community leaders to the West on Reality Tours. This helps to “balance the glamorised image of modern, urban life that is spread through advertising, television and tourism.” (Ibid) Thus, to educate the locals about the tourists origin is an interesting approach to overcome wrong expectations.

5.5 How to achieve sustainability

“How many times have we travelled to a country and felt like we've only just glimpsed the real country? And how many times did we become conscious that despite the rapid growth in tourism, the benefits have not always trickled down to those who are most in need?” (SADI 2008b)

5.5.1 Sustainability by regulation

How is sustainability in tourism achieved, when so many aspects need to be considered that challenge the overall and effective implementation?

One possible way of attempting sustainability is regulation, as sustainability is to a large extent dependent upon the number of visitors. Hence, restrictions in numbers have become one

⁴⁷ ISEC's Ladakh Project offers foreigners to live and work with Ladakhi families for a month during the summer, which provides invaluable insights into both the strengths of the traditional culture and forces threatening to undermine it. For the host population, such foreigners interest in their way of life reinforces a sense of pride in their culture. Contrasting the images of the Western consumer culture that project challenges the original associated primitive and backward way. This has created confidence and different development understandings.

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principle means of safeguarding. Two consequences result from regulation of visitors: these are the rise of elite tourism and a problematic usage of the equity component of sustainable development.

Elite tourism (Cohen 2002: 273) excludes locals and other visitors from rare and often luxurious sites. Safeguarding sustainability is then used for legitimising high prices, comfort, access to undiscovered sites. One example in Cambodia is the Sokha Hotel in Sihanoukville.⁴⁸ Built on the best beach, the location is restricted to hotel guests and neither accessible for locals nor other tourists, if they are not willing to pay \$ 10 a day.

While they may enhance locals' employment, a side effect of the luxurious oriented consumer demands is the capability of providing this exclusive service. Personnel as well as food from outside the region have to be provided, and thus may not be local. High-quality products are needed to be brought in, sometimes even imported. Profits generated for the local community may only comprise a tiny portion of the actual enterprises revenue.⁴⁹ Thus, "the policy to restrict visitors to munificent elite tourists" (Ibid) may guarantee environmental sustainability. Nevertheless, it infringes upon equity in the distribution of the benefits of tourism development and furthermore limits access of locals towards the site.

Connected to the former kind of regulation is sustainability by price regulation. The different aspects of Equity in conceptualisations of sustainability in tourism have brought about the distinction of locals as partners (in the development of tourism/enterprises) and locals as users (which involves equity of access to tourist sites). By restricting numbers to those who can afford it, price discrimination infringes touristy equity. "Tourism to such exceptionally rare and valuable sites is thus kept sustainable for the benefit of a tiny minority of elite tourists at the cost of the exclusion of all others, even the nationals of the very country in which they are located." (Ibid: 274). Consequently, potential domestic visitors are excluded. The two tier pricing means that nationals pay less than foreigners. However, it is not considered as an option for heritage related sites such as the numerous Killing fields in Cambodia. These sites of national memorialisation can not be restricted for ethical reasons and thus overrules environmental sustainability.

⁴⁸ For more information on the Sokha hotel in Sihanoukville see also <http://www.sokhahotels.com/sokha-beach.php?pg=beach> (last retrieved on 27.06.2008).

⁴⁹ The lowering of standards, which may enable more locals to participate in the work force, however, might cause "dissatisfaction among the visitors and raise objections to the high rates charged, which are seen as essential to keep the enterprise profitable" (Cohen 202: 273).

5.5.2 Sustainability by certification

Another way of attaining sustainability is by certification, which remains voluntary until today.

Unfortunately, there exist more than 60 product labels for tourism offers worldwide which focus on different aspects. Hence, a wild labelling practice has captured management systems, related reports, and product specifics. While quality criteria and environmental criteria are implemented, labelling for social standards in tourism rarely do exist (KATE 2008a: 14). One promising example, though not implemented, is the Fairtrade Labelling Organisations International (FLO)⁵⁰ that analyses the potential for a fair-trade label in tourism. However, until now, external inspection is not on the agenda.

For bigger tourism businesses and multinational companies, the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) started to set certification standards which allow for comparison of different sustainability areas.⁵¹ In regard to the local involvement however, especially small and medium sized companies need a specification. KATE & al. (2008a) published such a guideline for Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) reporting in which tourism industry actors are subject to sharing social responsibilities, transparency, and quality aiming for credibility and economic sustainability all of which saves costs and optimises operations (KATE & al. 2008a:3). Unfortunately, it has not found widespread use yet.

Overall, eight CSR guidelines in tourism are recognized. These are travelling environmental friendly (transport choice), specific selection of accommodation facilities (environmental and social, such as local ownership), preference of destinations with sustainable development perspectives that adhere to environmental and human rights standards, local involvement and participation of revenue and stakeholdership, appropriate prices (cost-effective, securing ones livelihood, support the common welfare), fair labour standards (especially in regard to minority, woman and child protection from sexual and economic exploitation), fair relations between the tourism industry actors (such as respect, transparency, reliability, and

⁵⁰ See also <http://www.fairtrade.net/home.html> (last retrieved on 27.06.2008).

⁵¹ Minimum standards for guaranteeing sustainability for tourism operators is certificated by looking at the eight aspects (KATE et al 2008a:9-12). First, the corporate portrait indicators are collected. Second, the sustainability of the business itself is looked upon. Third, responsibility for customers as multipliers is important to consider as they are the key factors in consumption matters and satisfaction. Fourth, the environment and ecological aspects on the different locations are looked upon. Fifth, also the staff members are part of the social responsibility of the company. Sixth, responsibility towards the society is measured according to the contingent of supported sustainability projects in regard to the total revenue as well as signed voluntary commitment. Seventh, the product responsibility in the service chain is divided into indicators that check the code of conduct with social standards and service providers and transport according to the three sustainability aspects. Finally, innovation helps to define future goals, responsibilities, and planning for when to implement new measures

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accountability), transparency of tourism companies to communicate social responsibility towards their customers.

5.5.3 Cooperation in tourism

With the formulation in the Brundtland Report on intergenerational equity a distinction between status quo and enhancement dynamics was enforced. While intragenerational equity is on the agenda (and mainly fostered by Northern countries) to generate intragenerational equity, the unequal relationships and inequitable status quo of the world is kept. "At worst, intergenerational sustainability can be seen as an elitist principle that deliberately perpetuates societal and regional inequities in the distribution of power and wealth" (Weaver 2006: 21).

According to Cohen (2002: 268) sustainability in tourism cannot be considered without the socio-political context "in which it was born and in which it operates" (Cohen 2002: 268). While the vagueness of the concept has provoked its misuse, it has also enlarged its promotional value (consumer oriented point of view). In this context Cohen uses 'ecotourism' to exemplify the danger of empty concepts because widely adopted terms were used for advertisement but without practical realisation. Ecotourism then could be anything from trekking, to visiting remote areas by vehicle. Important is that the concept has become scrutinized, emptied out and resemble the pick and choose option, but not attempting a holistic approach to realise its potential. Hence, 'sustainable', just like ecotourism, would only involve one out of its three elements, namely that of economic sustainable. Consequently it would become only a 'promotional' gimmick.

However, another important factor tends to be overlooked, that is the embeddedness of the concept in the wider context. "Like 'development' and 'conservation' the concept of sustainable tourism is frequently couched in the apparently neutral, technical language of planning and management" (Cohen 2002: 268). Thus, socio-political implications reveal that it is the agents who have the power to define the criteria for sustainability. Consequently, 'sustainability' becomes an ideological tool that empowers and legitimated the agents of sustainable tourism development (Ibid). External agents, who have the authority and power to define, take control over valuable sites.

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In Cambodia the involvement of the South Korean company Sokhamex⁵² with government responsables' such as Prime Minister Hun Sen has resulted in a monopoly of tourism sites. Their ownership of Angkor Wat, Sokha Beach and Bokor National Park are the main projects used for revenue generation at the expense of the local population. Exclusion of locals by price discrimination is only one means to do so. The poor are depicted as harming the environment. Due to their poverty they have to engage in unsustainable practices such as deforestation (SADC). However, the land they occupy is the marginal, under-utilised or mismanaged. Further investments in tourism development may make them vulnerable to resettlement as happened in Siem Reap (SADC).

“While conceptualisations of sustainability include development which is beneficial to the local community, considerations of sustainability can be so constructed that the local population has first to be excluded, or its practices restricted, before a role for it can be found – often as service personnel in the tourist establishments” (Cohen 2002: 268-269).

Summing up, the political use of development (or conservation) is theoretically discussed widely, but the possibility to abuse sustainability as an instrument of control over sites and is especially for Cambodia are relevant. Local agents and external investors struggle over resources and leave the poor population behind.

Due to this imperfect state, networks and cooperations have been established to guarantee sustainability in tourism. As the *Stay another day* Initiative has shown, partnerships provide a useful tool not only to attempt sustainable development but also to overcome the separation of foreigners and locals in the host destination.

⁵² Paradoxically, Sokhamex works on the implementation of the ST-EP initiative in Cambodia together with other Mekong commission policy makers. This is interesting as they have a massive involvement in the tourism sector in Cambodia that is less sustainable than oriented on income generation by excluding the poor and limiting access to the most attractive sites by price discrimination.

6 Conclusion

“If something is sustainable, it means that you can go on doing it indefinitely. If it isn't, you can't” (Porritt 1996 in Hall & Brown 2006:1)

This paper assumes that the debate on sustainability in tourism, which promotes a win-win situation for both the ethical aware traveller as well as the host destination, is a valid approach for tackling poverty. In reality however, actors take out the suitable parts only, and thus render the concept of sustainability in tourism difficult to implement holistically. Connected to the origin of the concept of sustainable development, relevant criticism on equity prevails and reflects the challenge of implementing it in a developing country that undergoes major transformation processes such as Cambodia where the disadvantaged population needs to benefit more from tourism.

Tourism has been adopted as a development option because it is a basic economic driver and thus considered as a “realistic development path” (Telfer & Sharpley 2008:17). Tourism utilises natural infrastructure that is assumed to be free, though it is not infinite, which is part of the sustainable development approach. Tourism contributes positively to the infrastructure needed by the poor in form of health and sanitation access (for example in Siem Reap).

However, negative impacts can be connected to irresponsible foreign tourists that abuse their position and buy ‘services’ that they cannot afford at home. Thus, international tourism depends largely on the consumers which in turn are usually deriving from the developed or at least richer countries.

Changing consumption patterns demand more sustainability in tourism. However, the idea to make a positive impact by contributing time or financial resources is a legitimate way of trying to overcome unequal relationships, but still tourism seems to “maximize happiness” for a minority of tourists deriving from the developed world “at the relative expense of the majority” (Hall & Brown 2006: 3) in the less developed world. In combination with the nature and implications of tourism, development processes to achieve sustainability remain tricky. “Trade-offs between sectoral dimensions – economic, cultural, political, ecological – and between and within groups

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of actors – tourists, tourism workers, host populations and environments – render the achievement of such optima largely chimerical” (Hall & Brown 2006: 3).

The discussion on sustainability principles realised in the new forms of tourism in Cambodia has revealed that not only the term sustainable tourism, but also community-based tourism have lost their original meaning due to the inflationary usage. Moreover, another important finding of the paper is that sustainability principles in tourism are applied in form of actors' suitability, and less in regard to the holistic demands of the sustainable development approach.

Thus, in regard to sustainable development, the economic sustainability, as a means of addressing poverty, buys off the environmental as well as social component of sustainable development. Environmental sustainability has been fostered less than expected in Cambodia, mainly through several Ecotourism projects that aim at conserving biodiversity (11) but never in the form of carrying capacities that are relevant for managing adequate ecological sustainability. The diversity of what social sustainability contains has been surprising. While it was not possible to assess the reality of local participation, as each project is understood as fostering the development of the host community and involves varying degrees of participation, the study considered several other important aspects.⁵³

Consequently, one dominant feature in the new forms of tourism, which was confirmed by the findings in this paper, is the educational element in the form of learning. Thus, tourist education, closely linked to experiences of authenticity, is part of 30 projects and reflects the changing consumption patterns which are the main driver for alternative forms of tourism. However, more relevant is the concentration on locals training which amounts to 37 projects that is nearly seventy per cent of the listed initiatives. Partnerships either with local or foreign institutions and businesses are thus relevant when implementing these new forms of tourism successfully (30 initiatives are part of some kind of cooperation). Hence, the chance for marginalised individuals to be trained in the hospitality sector and thus earn their living is a reasonable approach to tackle poverty and should not be dismissed as solely serving the travellers or tourism industries' interest.

⁵³ Among those are the high number of initiatives (more than half of the sample: 32) that work on minimising social division. The overall change resistance or ability to absorb inputs by the local participation is twice as less (16) and confirming the cultural preservation element (19), a finding that contributes to the validity of the data. Cultural sustainability in form of enhancement of distinct Khmer features, may they be modern (4) or traditional (22), attempt to overcome the dominant foreign influence that prevails in Cambodia in form of foreign expertise.

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While the above is all relevant in regard to the changing consumption patterns of western derived travellers, it has to be kept in mind that the majority of tourists, about 63 %, visiting Cambodia originate from other Asian countries and demand sustainability elements to be attached to mass tourism, otherwise the massive growth of tourism will be devastating for the countries abilities to absorb negative impacts of tourism.

Additionally, it has to be kept in mind that newer forms of tourism have less obvious but still existing unequal power relationships. A debate on the influence of colonialism and dependency in Cambodia, being part of the former French colony Indochina and exposed to foreign rule for decades, would enrich further discussions. Also social differentiation in developing countries needs to be taken more into account. The uneven and unequal nature of development reflects the relationship between actors, power and control issues in tourism. It has become clear that sustainability in tourism development depends strongly on the tourism actors' power to define. Though, without question, alternative forms of tourism have to adhere to the economic sustainability in the form of income generation, also other motives may play a role. Strong rhetorical development talk by international tourism organisations (WTTC, UNWTO) that foster sustainable tourism agendas seems not to be realistic, as its components reflect the dilemma of sustainable tourism development.

Other new forms of tourism risk to be used as promotional gimmicks. In the Stay another day Cambodia initiative this becomes true for Community-based tourism as nearly all the projects claim to full fill some kind of fostering community issues. Thus, sustainable tourism development is understood as a merging of Ecotourism, Fair trade & Ethical tourism, and Pro-poor tourism but with varying degrees of each sustainability principles. What was more surprising, however, is that Community-based tourism has come to be seen as a promotional gimmick. Thus, sustainability and development principles are dependent on the consumers demand for authenticity. Hence, Fair Trade approaches are in particular relevant for tourism. Tourism can contribute to better living standards for the broad population in a region, especially in regard to disadvantaged groups. It remains a challenge to involve those most poor and contribute to broader equality. If this is not realisable, the plan to reduce poverty with tourism is at risk to loose credibility completely.

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