SUSTAINABLE

TOURISM

INDICATORS

FOR THE

NORTH EAST

FINAL
REPORT

JANUARY
2002

TTC INTERNATIONAL LTD

The Environment & Development Company

Dr Rebecca Hawkins

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

In July 2001 TTC International in association with The Environment and Development Company and Dr Rebecca Hawkins were appointed to conduct a study into the development of sustainable tourism indicators for the North East area.

The Causeway Initiative was established following the pressure on the environment in the area in 1995 'ceasefire year' when unprecedented numbers of visitors caused overcrowding and clear evidence of excessive pressure on facilities with accompanying environmental damage. Over the following few years a study was carried out and a seminar was held in 1998. In early 2000 a Project Manager was appointed to implement what became known as 'the Causeway Initiative'. A consortium of eight district councils covering the North East Area joined with the Environment & Heritage Service, NITB and others to undertake a series of actions including:

> ➢ Establishing a Tourism & Environmental Partnership;

> ➢ Undertaking a Visitor & Environmental Management Strategy and associated research to promote sustainable development in the area;

> ➢ To increase visitor awareness of the special attractions and sensitivities of the area;

> ➢ To promote the development of pilot sustainable tourism initiatives;

> ➢ To promote best practise visitor management at a number of key sites;

> ➢ To source long term funding.

This was always seen as an interim arrangement leading to the establishment of a longer-term management structure for the area. The new arrangements are now virtually in place with a recommendation to establish the Causeway Coast and Glens Heritage Trust and core funding from the EU Peace Programme Natural Resource Rural Tourism Initiative.

The Causeway Initiative set out to prepare the ground for its successor by commissioning a number of studies, including a visitor and environmental management study for the area and a baseline audit. This study is intended to complement the preceding work by providing some indicators that demonstrate the progress (or otherwise) that is being made towards making visitor and environmental management more sustainable.

| | Deleted: in securing sustainable tourism. |

1.2 Terms of Reference

 The principal objective of the TOR is to establish a series of indicators to measure progress towards making visitor and environmental management more sustainable within the North East area. The TOR concentrate on seven priority areas and following initial discussion with the Steering Group these have been analysed as they relate to the development of sustainable tourism.

| | Deleted: V |
| | Deleted: E |

Because this is uncharted territory – no sustainable indicators at a local level have been tested practically in the UK or Europe – the workflow has been adapted as progress was made, to take on board the latest thinking on the subject. It is likely that the GB initiative on

| | Deleted: or practically in |

Local Sustainable Tourism Indicators may wish to use this work and subsequent testing of indicators within the context of a UK Pilot project.

Deleted: as

1.3   Methodology

The study was conducted in four phases:

➢   Desk study and research – to establish the data available to inform indicators using the suggestions made in the terms of reference for the study and to seek out information from experience elsewhere on the establishment of local sustainable tourism indicators.

➢   Assessment – to bring together the information and data gathered to determine the most appropriate indicators and their inter-relationship.

➢   Pilot Survey - to test social indicators.

➢   Finally - to draft the indicators and identify the opportunities for their longer-term development.

Deleted: described

Deleted: 1.3 Sustainable Tourism

1.4 Definitions

The TOR asked the consultants to identify indicators to measure progress towards making visitor and environmental management more sustainable. It did not ask for indicators to measure progress towards sustainable tourism. Within the context of the brief, however, the underlying aim must be to measure progress towards sustainable tourism. One of the problems with aiming to measure progress towards sustainable tourism is defining exactly what sustainable tourism is. There are currently more than 100 definitions of the term and many conflict with each other in key ways. The World Tourism Organisation definition of sustainable tourism is perhaps the most widely quoted - it defines sustainable tourism as:

Deleted: It may be helpful at this point to present a definition of sustainable tourism. We use the

Deleted: , which is notable for its brevity and clarity.

Deleted: I

"*tourism that meets the needs of present tourists and host regions while protecting and enhancing opportunity for the future".*

In interpreting this definition, most businesses and destinations consider sustainable tourism to embrace the following key concepts:

Formatted: Bullets and Numbering

o   Management of visitor numbers to guard the quality of the natural environment, the integrity of the local community and the uniqueness of the visitor experience

Formatted

o   Management of the impacts of tourism businesses to reduce pollution, maintain diversity and ensure the local economy benefits from tourism income

Formatted

o   Partnerships to reduce the impacts of those businesses that can adversely undermine the tourism environment.

In interpreting the brief, therefore, we will ideally seek indicators that identify pressure, which could illustrate that tourism development is unsustainable or that other industries are compromising the environment on which tourism depends. In the long term, this will enable policy makers in the Causeway area to:

Deleted: IAN I AM NOT HAPPY WITH THIS, BUT HAVE NOT MANAGED TO RE-WORK IT.

Formatted

Formatted: Bullets and Numbering

o   Implement management plans to ensure that visitor numbers remain below a key threshold beyond which the natural environment will be damaged

Formatted

o   Implement management processes to measure the impact of tourism activity on local communities and to maintain tourism pressures below the level at which tourism activity threatens community integrity

Formatted

Formatted

o   Implement management plans to guard the quality of the tourism experience

    o   Implement management plans to encourage other sectors to improve their practices to guard the quality of the tourism environment.

| Formatted |

| Deleted: 4 |

1.5 Acknowledgements

This study has been assisted by the work and views of a number of individuals. We acknowledge their assistance and insight:

Professor Victor Middleton.

Claire Dinan –English Tourism Council.

Brian Human – Cambridge City Council.

Maureen McAllister – Birmingham City Council.

David James.

In addition the assistance of many of those more directly involved in Northern Ireland is acknowledged, particularly in the Environment & Heritage Service, Forest Service, Tidy Northern Ireland, SNIP and the Department of the Environment.

2. WHY LOCAL INDICATORS?

2.1 Background to Local Indicators

"At the local level, making tourism sustainable, will vary significantly from one area to another depending on a multiplicity of factors, some of which being destination typology, established or non-tourist destination, tourist product and characteristics of the businesses, residents and of course the visitors."

British Resorts Association Sustainable Tourism Working Group, 2001-10-25

"Not everything that can be counted counts and not everything that counts can be counted!"

Sign in Albert Einstein's office

Over the last decade, there have been numerous attempts to devise indicators of sustainable tourism. These indicator sets have differed from each other in two important ways.

  a. Some studies, for example that undertaken by the Department of Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS), primarily look at the state of the environment on which tourism depends and the contribution of the industry to the economy. Essentially these indicators assess river quality, area of landscape designated for conservation or heritage protection, beach quality, number of people involved in the tourism industry, GDP from tourism etc. These indicators provide an assessment of the overall economic health of the industry and the physical state of the environment to support tourism development generally. Given the relative abundance of general information about environmental and economic issues at a national level, these studies are often able to rely on data that already exists.

  By nature, however, the motivation to travel is based on seeking somewhere different – and usually this different flavour is comprised of the environment and *people*. Even the most severe examples of over-exploitation of tourism resources, manifest themselves on tightly defined geographical areas on the environment and communities in which they operate. These impacts cannot be identified by national/regional level indicators, because these inevitably assume that the appeal/impacts are evenly spread across the country/region and affect only the physical environment or the economy.

  b. Other studies, for example that undertaken by British Resorts Association Sustainable Tourism Working Group (BRASTWG) and the European Environment Agency, seek to assess the unique tourism appeal of different destinations and the impacts of the tourism and leisure industries on the local environment and communities in which they operate. Essentially, these studies seek to understand whether the tourism industry is adequately responding to protect and market its unique local flavour, or "killing the goose that lays the golden egg". They seek information about resident attitudes towards tourism (the visitor welcome), about the patterns of tourism demand in the area (and its economic contribution) and about the physical impacts that the industry has on perceptions in the area vis-à-vis second home ownership, employment

5

TTC International, The Environment & Development Company, Dr Rebecca Hawkins

conditions, congestion, litter, erosion, etc. According to a recent study for the European Environment Agency (1999), there is a relative lack of data to feed these studies, which usually operate from a local level and feed data upwards to inform policy decisions.

Deleted: 2000

2.2 Local Sustainable Tourism Indicators v Environmental Indicators

The initial brief provided for the North East Visitor and Environmental Management Strategy predominantly requires indicators to facilitate an assessment of whether or not the environment in which tourism and leisure activities take place is adequately protected (the first type of indicators). At a regional level these indicators will help to guide policy decisions that seek to reduce total pollution loads, improve overall beach quality, or ensure that tourist numbers and income are maintained. The indicators will not, however, be able to provide any assessment of the quality of the local unique attributes of tourism; of resident attitudes towards tourists; highlight localised problems relating to litter or identify areas in which congestion and visitor over-crowding is having a negative impact on visitor perceptions.

For some holidaymakers at least, these localised impacts have significant implications for the future of the industry. In 1989, two out of three German tourists to Britain encountered air pollution, damaged forests, waste or blighted landscapes and their experiences were sufficient to deter them from a return visit.[1] Table 1 illustrates the relative importance of a range of issues to tourists holiday decisions and a recent survey of UK travellers undertaken by MORI on behalf of the Association of British Travel Agents (2001) illustrated that:
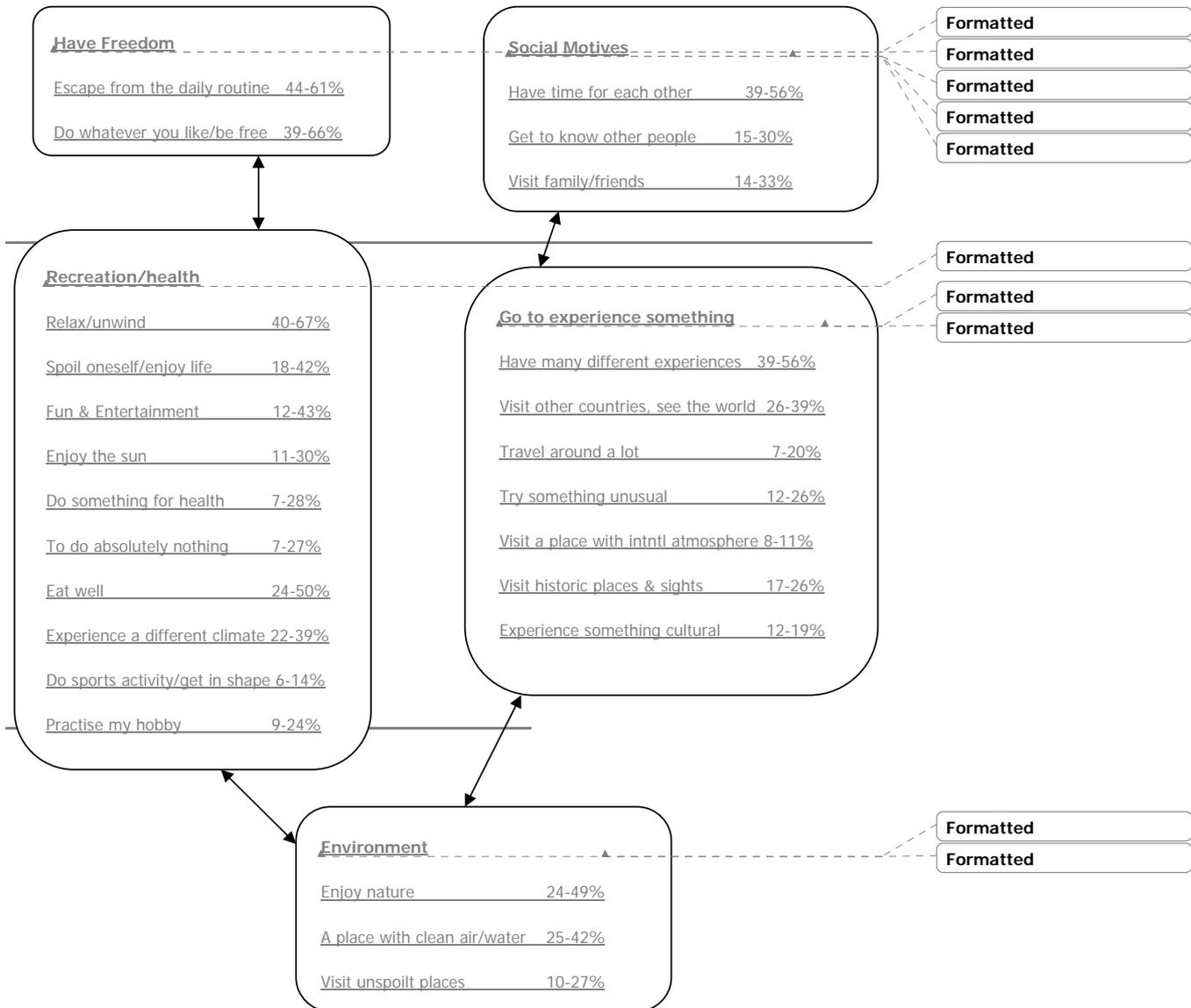
> ➢ 52% of travellers were very or fairly interested in learning more about local environmental issues/local people prior to their journey

> ➢ 83% considered that a dirty beach, 48% noise, 43% litter, 24% buildings out of character with the local environment would influence their holiday choice and prevent them from recommending a destination[2]

> ➢ Reports of pollution/degradation etc from programmes such as Holidays from Hell would deter some 23% of all visitors from selecting a destination.

Indicators for many of these issues (and especially issues like litter and resident welcome) can only be produced at a local level and we would propose that such indicators are essential for developing and monitoring effective visitor management within the North East area.

---

[1] Boers, H and H Bosch (1994) The Earth as a Holiday Resort, Institute for Environmental Communication and Netherlands Institute of Tourism and Transport Studies, Utrecht.

[2] MORI, Package Holidays 2000 Survey for ABTA. 963 Respondents interviewed face-to-face in street.

TTC International, The Environment & Development Company, Dr Rebecca Hawkins

Table 1 – The relative importance of different factors in holiday motivations.

Have Freedom

Escape from the daily routine   44-61%

Do whatever you like/be free   39-66%

Social Motives

Have time for each other   39-56%

Get to know other people   15-30%

Visit family/friends   14-33%

Recreation/health

Relax/unwind   40-67%

Spoil oneself/enjoy life   18-42%

Fun & Entertainment   12-43%

Enjoy the sun   11-30%

Do something for health   7-28%

To do absolutely nothing   7-27%

Eat well   24-50%

Experience a different climate 22-39%

Do sports activity/get in shape 6-14%

Practise my hobby   9-24%

Go to experience something

Have many different experiences   39-56%

Visit other countries, see the world 26-39%

Travel around a lot   7-20%

Try something unusual   12-26%

Visit a place with intntl atmosphere 8-11%

Visit historic places & sights   17-26%

Experience something cultural   12-19%

Environment

Enjoy nature   24-49%

A place with clean air/water   25-42%

Visit unspoilt places   10-27%

Formatted
Formatted
Formatted
Formatted
Formatted

Formatted
Formatted
Formatted

Formatted
Formatted

7

Note the importance of getting to know other people, experience culture and the environment.

2.3 What is Local?

"Many indicator projects turn into an agglomeration of data from which it is hard to draw useful conclusions. By defining what sustainability means to the people in a local area, it is easier to assess how it can be measured and monitored over time."

(International Institute for Sustainable Development, 2001)

The development of indicators that are relevant to local people is in the words of the International Institute for Sustainable Development (2000) a formidable but necessary task. Even though the task is challenging, it is only by working at this level that public participation and interest can be stimulated.

One of the key problems when developing local indicators is assessing what comprises local. In a tourism context, local areas whether experiencing visitor pressure or aspiring as visitor attractions usually define themselves (and are often referred to as honey-pot sites) but do not conform to local administrative boundaries. Statistical data, however, is usually available only within the context of administrative boundaries. Collating data from a whole administrative area (in the case of the North East a district council) may dilute the specific visitor or community issues that are relevant to the honey-pot area.

To overcome this problem, we suggest a dual approach that primarily relies on data available at the district council level. This data can be complemented by survey data collected from honey-pot sites when they are considered to be:

> ➢ exceeding their natural or social capacity at specific times of the day or year

> ➢ under threat from new tourism developments

> ➢ in decline.

Honeypot sites can be identified very easily within the area and indeed it was the 1995 pressure on such honeypots as the Causeway and Carrick – A – Rede, which led to the eventual establishment of the Causeway Initiative and its successor.

2.4 Local in Northern Ireland

For Northern Ireland the most useful local area will normally be the District Council area as stated above. Tourism statistics are available by each area, including volume and value statistics and employment. Such data is not available normally in the rest of the UK, or only becomes available through one-off surveys, which are expensive and may not be sustainable over time. Statistics will be by region and cannot be disaggregated to a local level.

The other advantage in Northern Ireland is NITB's Statutory Scheme for Accommodation, whereby all tourist accommodation must be registered and approved by the Board. This gives a monthly measure of the supply of key product, which is analysed by District Council area. Even in ROI, which has a statutory scheme, B&Bs are excluded so the change of supply is not entirely measured.

TTC International, The Environment & Development Company, Dr Rebecca Hawkins

---

Deleted: ¶
Note the importance of getting to know other people, experience culture and the environment.¶
¶
¶
¶

Deleted: c

It is to be hoped that in the current DETI Review of NITB that the statutory scheme remains. It is a first class asset and, in combination with other data, is an excellent sustainable tourism indicator.

Deleted: as a

Another Northern Ireland difference to GB is that the District Councils have fewer powers than across the water, and Central Government or a Central Agency takes on functions that would be local authority responsibilities in England or Scotland. This helps provide, in some cases, a higher standard of availability of data, and certainly more consistent data, than might be obtained in GB – water quality sampling seems a good example of this.

In some instances District Council boundaries are not appropriate for measurement where there is a natural phenomenon, such as a river catchment area. However most results can be provided by DC area on request and this will be highlighted where appropriate.

To suggest moving down to town or village level as the local definition is not in our view appropriate. No consistent information will be available and all data would have to be obtained by one-off surveys. Furthermore District Council areas in Northern Ireland are relatively homogenous and small in size. They do have a meaning as local areas after nearly thirty years in existence.

In summary, for Northern Ireland we consider local to be best defined, as by District Council Area and in some instances a honey pot where there is a specific issue or problem.

Deleted: a

3. DEVELOPMENT OF INDICATORS

3.1 Introduction

" Those given the responsibility of formulating and implementing policy for the protection of environmentally valuable and sensitive areas are facing the challenge of finding approaches that will forge a meaningful and effective alliance between those whose primary concern lies with preserving nature, and those who seek to manage the human presence so as to enjoy its economic and social bounties".

Writing this of the Banff-Bow Valley area of Western Canada, Brent Ritchie added that it was a critical test of the country's ability to host global tourism in a highly profitable manner without destroying the foundations of its international appeal. Work done in Canada has some resonance for the Causeway, as indeed has European work done in the Alps for example.

The somewhat opposing priorities of 'ecological integrity', of 'visitor enjoyment' and 'community well-being' are found in all areas where the problem is being tackled. However we believe it is important to tie the work in the Causeway area into the wider UK context rather than draw on too much overseas experience, which may or may not fit into comparisons in the UK itself, which can be utilised for policy development.

3.2 Progress towards Local Indicators

The UK has taken a lead in the formulation of a series of indicators relating to Sustainable Development and which in turn enable international comparisons to be made. Following the publication of the Brundtland Report in 1987 the UK made a commitment to sustainable development, reinforced by the outcome of the Rio Earth Summit in 1992 and its commitment to international protocols and to Agenda 21.

The Rio Earth Summit identified tourism as a key industry with the potential to help the transition to sustainable development, through giving economic opportunity to diversify the economy in an environmentally sensitive way, generating funds for marginal local services and crafts, stimulating cultural exchange and helping landscape and heritage conservation.

The World Tourism Organisation defines sustainable tourism as "tourism that meets the needs of present tourists and host regions while protecting and enhancing opportunity for the future". Other distinguished international bodies such as the World Travel & Tourism Council and the Earth Council have all signed up to this definition and adopted principles, which underlie it.

UK Tourism Policy is to be set within the context of sustainable tourism, as the DCMS Paper 'Tourism – Towards Sustainability' made clear. In summary the UK Government is committed to enabling tourism growth that is economically, socially and environmentally sustainable. It is assumed that the devolved administrations share these sentiments although it is stressed that devolved administrations have the opportunity to develop their own indicators and policies.

In England the Government promoted the inclusion of sustainable tourism considerations in Local Agenda 21 strategies and has developed '**a series of national statistical indicators to help measure progress in achieving sustainable tourism'.** These were launched by the English Tourism Council on the 11th April.

The twenty indicators produced by the English Tourism Council cover three key areas:

❖ Protect & Enhance the Natural & Built Environment – 6 Indicators;

10

| Deleted: – |
| Deleted: r |

❖ Support local Communities & their Culture – 6 Indicators;

❖ Benefit the Economies of Tourism destinations – 8 Indicators.

These indicators are geared to the national level and while a useful guide cannot substitute for locally developed area indicators. There is also some serious doubt as to the value and integrity of these national indicators, including their practicality and usefulness in relation to policy guidance.

The recent work on local indicators in the UK is considered separately below.

3.3 UK Local Indicator Work

Over-arching the tourism layer of indicators are the 147 core indicators of sustainable development for the UK. These were set out in the Quality of Life Counts document. These are underlain with guidance on regional and local indicators to which the local sustainable indicators would also be related. The 147 indicators are somewhat unwieldy and in turn a subset of **headline indicators** has been developed.

Packages of indicators have been grouped for use by say the business sector or the transport sector, but no package for tourism was available – hence the national Sustainable Tourism indicators work published by ETC in April.

The key work in the UK for local level indicators, which took place over the year culminating in August 2001, was that of the *British Resorts Association Sustainable Tourism Working Group* (*BRASTWG*). This group under the aegis of Department of Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) in London was to develop guidance to local sustainable tourism indicators for the UK. Clearly such guidance would have been very helpful to this study. NITB could participate in this group but has been represented by the Wales Tourist board.

The Chairman of the Group has been helpful to this study and welcomes the idea of it being used as a UK Pilot. However the report of the group has not produced a definitive statement on indicators at local level. Instead it has reviewed the development of indicators in many places, considered approaches and options and suggested groups of indicator types. As the conclusion states:

> "We are only at the beginning in the development and use of local sustainable tourism indicators"
>
> *'Measuring Sustainable Tourism at the Local Level' - BRASTWG – DCMC LSTI Guidance Note 2001*

The report goes on to recommend a pilot phase of actual development and use of indicators – to see if they are practical, useful and effective. An 'indicator bank' is suggested whereby an array of indicators is tested to see which best meet the needs of the industry at local level.

Unfortunately, the document remains 'not for publication'.

In our opinion Northern Ireland is better placed to use indictors at local level than many parts of the UK, because of the availability of information from various Government Agencies and Departments and because of tourism data from NITB.

3.4 European Indicators

In addition to the UK indicators there is a need to consider the value of others developed by the European Environment Agency (EEA) and their typology of indicators:

❖ Descriptive (*or Process*) or Type A;

❖ Performance or Type B;

❖ Efficiency or Type C;

❖ Total Welfare or Type D

These types are also useful pointers for sustainable tourism, although Type C are rare and Type D virtually non-existent.

There is no merit in our opinion in pursuing these indicator types as they are not practical to implement or understandable in a straightforward way.

3.5 Further Afield

Pioneering work has been carried out by *Groupe Developpement* with EU funding and tested in the Seychelles, Indonesia, Madagascar and Dominican Republic. However it is geared towards totally different environments and issue sets.

Also, much useful work has been done in the State of Montana on the *usefulness* of sustainable tourism indicators, bearing in mind the original concept that indicators should be *reliable, easy to measure, quantifiable, relevant to important conditions* and *sensitive to change.* This work is too much geared towards mountain and wilderness issues, coupled with Alpine type concerns over ski development.

In Canada the emphasis has shifted towards more practical implementation of sustainable tourism policies through initiatives such as the Green Ontario Provincial Strategy and its Green Hotels, or the Ecotourism Society of Saskatchewan and its Accredited Ecotourism Provider programme.

3.6 Indicators in Northern Ireland

The Draft Consultation Paper on Sustainable Development in Northern Ireland was due at the end of October 2001. It will be somewhat different to the *UK Quality of Life Counts* document but the Executive has, apparently accepted the fifteen headline indicators. Detailed indicators will not be published in the draft document. District Councils in particular will need to respond by next March, so the issue of sustainable development is moving up the Agenda.
SNIP – Sustainable Northern Ireland Partnership will lead the consultation. Discussions on indicators were held with SNIP and Local Indicators recommended to us from Belfast, Fermanagh and Lurgan.
The Belfast Tourism Indicator is simply the number of visitors to Belfast each year, with some analysis of jobs and spend. The response recommended is to welcome visitors and show them round. A copy of the Belfast Indicator is included as an Appendix.
The Fermanagh local indicators are to include tourism but have not been developed beyond 'number of visitors' level.
The work carried out in Northern Ireland on local indicators for tourism is not particularly useful in moving forward the subject. It is however important to note this in the context of what is to come and who will take responsibility for measurement and policy. As some Councils are

Deleted:

Deleted: in it

appointing an officer to move forward their LA 21 Agenda the relationship of tourism and its indicators to the broader Northern Ireland Agenda must be borne in mind.

3.7 Conclusion

Local tourism indicator development has been evident at a fairly academic level in many countries. The work of BRASTWG in the UK summarises the situation – no real testing of the practicality and utility of indicators has been clearly evident. For the Causeway project therefore, there is real pioneering work to be undertaken. We believe that this can be done.

Deleted: ¶
¶

TTC International, The Environment & Development Company, Dr Rebecca Hawkins

4. INDICATORS

4.1 Characteristics

In the Draft Report to DCMS on Local Sustainable Tourism Indicators '*Measuring Sustainable Tourism at the Local Level' August 2001,* some useful definitions and pointers emerge. The fundamental need for such indicators is defined as:

> '*to demonstrate change that has occurred over time, whether engineered or by chance'.*

The report reinforces the need to have SMART objectives: *Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time-based.* This concept is at the forefront of our thinking on developing the Indicators for Tourism.

Previous work (*Indicators to Monitor the Wilderness Recreation Experience: Merigliano 1989*) confirms that indictors should be:

➢ Reliable;

➢ Easy to measure;

➢ Quantifiable;

➢ Relevant to important conditions;

➢ Sensitive to change.

For local indicators in particular the general consensus is that they must be:

> **Meaningful** – this implies that they must be generally understandable to a wide audience and not just a scientist or economist. They should be seen as relevant to the experience of people and not an abstract or obscure scientific marker. They should also be comparable between location and over time. When thinking about measurement, according to the DCMS Guidance on local measurement it is important to:
>
> ▪ consider the benefits of additional information
>
> ▪ consider the cost/complexity of collecting specific information
>
> ▪ make use of relevant sources such as local visitor surveys or other local research
>
> ▪ assess whether original research might be required to gather required information
>
> ▪ make sure the information source and method of measurement are clearly identified
>
> ▪ clearly allocate responsibility for collection, analysis and dissemination of the information.

This indicates the difficult complexity of gathering information at a local level in GB, but as explained in Northern Ireland there are fewer problems.

> ➢ **Reliable –** this implies that they are generally considered accurate and not open to more than one interpretation. They must produce comparable results in different locations and over time and not be subject to random fluctuation. If opinion based they must be measured in a scientific way that can be audited.

> ➢ **Practical** – this implies that they can be obtained without excessive cost and without interrupting business or daily life in an unacceptable way. The practicality must extend over time rather than be achieved on a once only basis again perhaps because of cost or opportunity.

4.2 Levels of Indicator

In general terms there are three levels of indicators:

- o Headline indicators. These are generally agglomerations of large amounts of data (from across a range of issues and from a range of levels). They help inform policy decisions. A headline indicator may be the level of air pollution in the UK. Embracing data about emissions of a range of gases from a number of local sampling stations, this data would help policy makers at a macro level assess whether air pollution regulations are operating effectively nationwide.

- o Indicators. These are generally agglomerations of data at a smaller scale that illustrate progress towards (or away from) a specified sustainable development objective.

- o Individual data sets. This is the disaggregated data that feeds the indicator process at local and national level. In isolation, however, data sets cannot be used as indicators and may be misleading if used in isolation. For example, the data illustrating the weight of waste paper sent for recycling cannot be used as an indicator of recycling activity (it may simply indicate an increase in paper consumption). To become an indicator, it would have to be combined with the volume of virgin paper purchased.

[Formatted: Bullets and Numbering]

At the current time, the brief deals with indicators and data sets. Over time, these may build into indicator sets.

The national tourism indicators that the English Tourism Council have launched earlier this year are not appropriate for use at local level or even regional level. They are set out as an Appendix to this report.

Regional indicators do not exist per se, and the local indicators have not been tested yet on a UK wide level. Therefore from this study's point of view we are dealing with a clean sheet. We also will make some recommendations below local level – at community level because some types of indicator only take on a meaning at this aspect. This is particularly true of social indicators. These are explained below.

4.3 Types of Indicator for Local Use

There are essentially three principal elements to Sustainability – ***Economic Impact, Environmental Impact*** and ***Social Impact***. For these elements we then need to derive ***State Indicators*** and ***Response Indicators***. The first tell us where we are, and the latter what actions or policies are in place to move us in another direction. This is the general thinking applied in the UK LSTI Draft Report and we intend to use this style and format, to meet one of the first essentials of sustainability indicators –comparability.

15

The Government's UK – in reality English - growth strategy for tourism fits within the overall national and international vision for sustainable development and seeks to balance:

- ➢ **Economic growth in tourism (with benefits spread throughout society);**

- ➢ **Environmental benefits and impacts from tourism;**

- ➢ **Social benefits and impacts from tourism.**

It is from these three precepts that the three indicator types emerge. They are interrelated and only when considered together give a full picture of sustainable tourism.

Deleted: ¶

Alongside the three indicator types is a subdivision of each which makes them more useful and results oriented.

State Indicators – these provide the baseline measurement in the three areas of economic impact, environmental impact and social impact. There are a wide range of possible state indicators and the following chapter will analyse these in depth.

Response Indicators – these measure the actions or policies that are introduced by society in any of its manifestations, to bring about change – having hopefully assessed the state indicators to inform decision and policy making.

Deleted: ¶

Fig 4.1: INDICATOR – IMPACT MATRIX

Deleted: ¶
¶
¶

TTC International, The Environment & Development Company, Dr Rebecca Hawkins
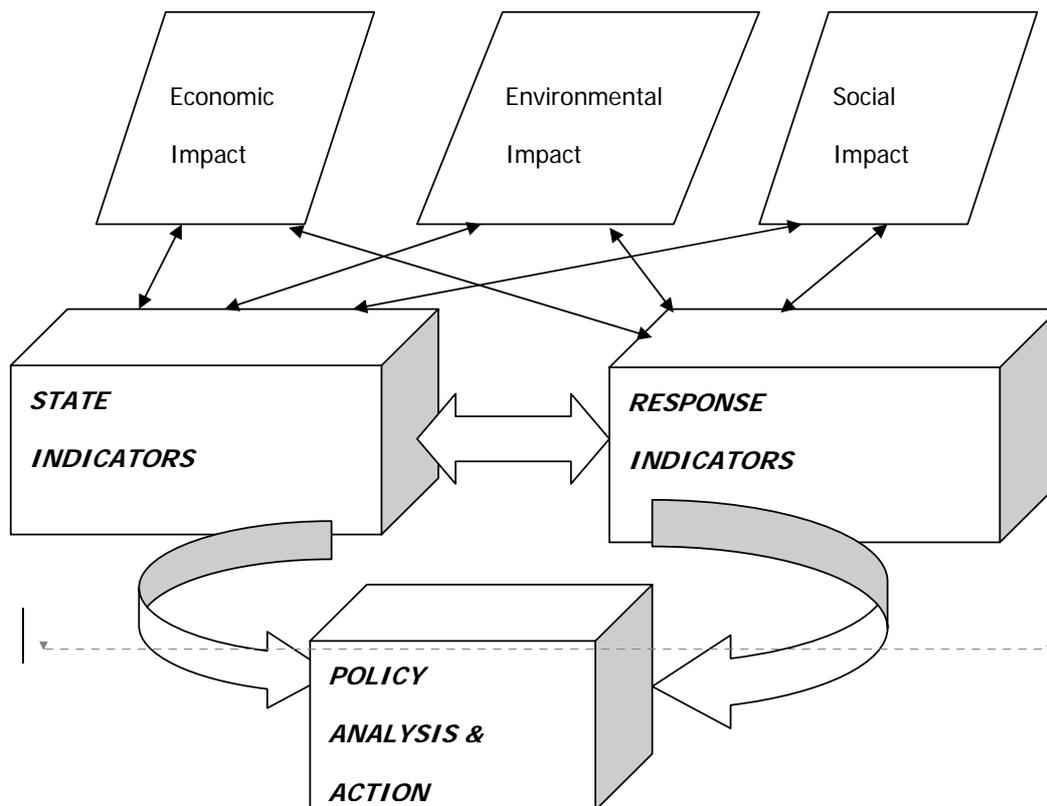
At this stage in the development of local tourism indicators there will be a difficulty in tying response to state – the actual actions resulting from analysis need to be in the hands of the appropriate decision making body if the cause –effect path is to be a smooth one.

This problem is discussed at length in the implementation section of the report. For Northern Ireland it has already been established that the state indicators may be more easily available than in GB, but the policy process is much less likely to be effective at local level than 'across the water' certainly for District Councils.

TTC International, The Environment & Development Company, Dr Rebecca Hawkins

5. LOCAL INDICATORS FOR THE STUDY AREA

5.1 An Overview

"Many indicator projects turn into an agglomeration of data from which it is hard to draw useful conclusions. By defining what sustainability means to the people in the local area, it is easier to assess how it can be measured and monitored over time"

International Institute of Sustainable Development

The table beneath gives a snapshot assessment of the availability of local sustainable tourism indicators as we assess the situation:

Table 1. Availability of Sustainable Tourism Indicators

Indicator *Type*	ECONOMIC IMPACT	ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT	SOCIAL IMPACT
STATE	GOOD	GOOD	POOR
RESPONSE	GOOD	GOOD	POOR

After our extensive review of what is available and the level and regularity of information, with cost factored in, we conclude that the position for the Causeway Coast & Glens and indeed for all of Northern Ireland is good on the whole. The notable exception is for social indicators, something that is not unusual in any location.

We will now examine all of the potential indicators that were outlined in the Terms of Reference in relation to environment and the other segments, which together can produce the overall sustainable tourism picture.

Deleted: r

The indicators will be examined by category first as **State** and then as **Response**

5.2 STATE INDICATORS – ECONOMIC IMPACT

As already indicated Northern Ireland is in the fortunate position where the relevant economic indictors for the economic impact of tourism are widely available, at a District Council level. The DCMS LSTI Draft Guidance Note refers to these indicators as 'promoting economic success'.

The following four economic indicators are the most appropriate to implement for the area:

Table: 5.1 ECONOMIC INDICATORS FOR TOURISM - STATE		
INDICATOR	*REQUIREMENT*	*AVAILABILITY*
1. Tourism Numbers	An accurate, annual statistical assessment of the number of **staying visitors** to each District Council area. No additional work or expenditure by DC to be incurred.	NITB produces these statistics on an annual basis, in the autumn of the following year to that surveyed. They are generally considered accurate. The number of bednights is also available as another measurement. Day-tripper numbers are not assessed on a DC basis.
2. Tourism Spend	An accurate, annual statistical assessment of the value of **staying visitor** spend to each District Council area. No additional work or expenditure by DC to be incurred.	NITB produces this data on an annual basis, in the autumn of the following year to that surveyed. The data is generally considered to be accurate. Day-tripper spend is not included.
3. Employment	An accurate, annual assessment of the numbers employed in the tourism industry in each DC area. Could be backed up by trend analysis in each area, carried out as telephone survey at beginning and end of each season.	NITB produces an estimate of tourism employment in each District Council area. The estimate may have a weakness, but this stems from the definition of what is or is not tourism as there is no Standard Industrial Classification.
4. Accommodation	An annual assessment of the numbers of premises in each District Council area, that are: ➢ Hotels ➢ Guest Houses	Northern Ireland is unique in the UK in having a statutory scheme whereby all tourist accommodation providers must be inspected by NITB, and are therefore known and listed accurately.

> **Deleted:** for it

19

	➢ B&Bs ➢ Self catering ➢ Tourist Hostels ➢ Touring Caravan & Camp Sites	This information is classified by accommodation type – these are defined in law – and the statistics are available by DC area. Change could be measured monthly if necessary, but we recommend annually at a fixed date.

Other economic indicators considered and discarded related to:

➢ **Percentage of Local GDP derived from tourism expenditure.**

This is notoriously difficult to estimate at a local level. GDP measurement for a District Council area is itself not available.

➢ **Leisure day visits.**

To produce this data would require a major new statistical survey on day tripping that would be quantitatively accurate. While there is a survey for the RTO's which covers this, it produces qualitative data, rather than definitive volume and value statistics. In terms of assessing visitor impacts in the Causeway area, this data may become absolutely essential.

➢ **Tourism spend per head of population.**

Here the problem lies with the meaningfulness of the statistic and the comparability of it. The figure can be produced based on staying visitor spend but the issue is –so what? Comparability of spend will vary enormously dependent on the structure of the industry, type of tourism, length of stay and so on.

➢ **Visitor numbers at local attractions.**

This would be a very simple indicator to implement as the data for tourism attractions is collected every year by NITB. It is not included here as on balance it is too simplistic and is used where no other data is available. Equally some DC areas have virtually no visitor attractions so for them it is irrelevant or the one attraction in the area becomes the sole yardstick for the whole tourism industry's performance. Such issues as opening hours, closure days, and accuracy of data supplied to NITB also have a bearing.

Deleted: ¶

TTC International, The Environment & Development Company, Dr Rebecca Hawkins

5.3 STATE INDICATORS – ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

The Terms of Reference provided a list of possible areas of relevance for the study and the development of local tourism indicators. Each of these areas has been analysed and examined in depth and from this work the following indicators are recommended. Following the recommended list we also analyse those we consider inappropriate.

Table: 5.2 ENVIRONMENTAL INDICATORS FOR TOURISM - STATE		
INDICATOR	*REQUIREMENT*	*AVAILABILITY*
1. Beach Awards	To measure the cleanliness water quality and management of beaches used by tourists, in both urban and rural areas. To have a reliable independently verified assessment of the ongoing state of beaches.	The Blue Flag and Seaside Awards are independently verified and well understood by the public. They are annually assessed and must assess the water quality, environmental management & education and cleanliness of the beaches. Water quality and tourist use interact as does litter and cleanliness. All tourist beaches are assessed by Tidy Northern Ireland, while E&HS Water Quality Unit monitors water quality during the season. Results are published at the beaches. Blue flag status means meeting 27 criteria and Seaside Award 17.
2. Rivers	To assess on an accurate and regular basis the quality of the rivers in the area, as fishing, boating and general ambience of an unpolluted countryside are key promotional tools.	The E&HS Water Quality Unit monitors all arterial rivers at 480 sites in NI using the General Quality Assessment. A further 180 sites on minor rivers are monitored annually. The WQU is fully compliant with EU requirements and is a leader in this field. Rivers are measured for Chemical & Biological Quality on a Scale of A-F. Results are available by

21

		District Council map and are colour keyed to understand at a glance. Further EU required monitoring on fish content will take place when the methodology is available.
3. Litter	An accurate measurement of litter in tourist areas, using a recognised system of assessment.	Tidy Northern Ireland already carries out an annual litter survey in each District Council area. The results are published and the system used is accepted nationally and further afield. The survey at present takes place in January and covers key town centres. As it stands it is not adequate as an indicator, as it only covers key town centres outside the tourism season. Tidy NI can undertake similar work at key tourist sites in the season at modest cost. This indicator will require additional expenditure to be implemented, but it is worthwhile being easy to understand, accurate and directly linked to the effects of tourism on the environment and with a direct bearing on the quality of the visitor experience

Deleted: .

These three indicators are directly tourism linked and are available without further work in two of the three instances.

Selection of the environmental indicators was a complex task and involved extensive consultation and policy analysis. There are a variety of possible indicators available to use, but which on balance we believe are not adequately influenced by tourism in either physical or policy terms. Set out beneath is our analysis of these indicators and the reasons for setting them aside as Local Sustainable Tourism Indicators.

Table: 5.3 ENVIRONMEMTAL STATE INDICATORS –NOT RECOMMENDED			
INDICATOR	*REQUIREMENT*	*AVAILABILTY*	*PROBLEM*
1. Biodiversity	An enhanced variety of landscape and habitat for all living things.	The NI Biodiversity strategy has 76 recommendations, which Government is now starting to implement. Biodiversity is affected by changes in land use and lifestyles. Government has allocated additional resources and work has started on SLNCIs and Habitat Action Plans.	Biodiversity has taken on significant importance of late and a major programme of action has begun. It is driven by Government Policy and its own intrinsic worth. It is helpful to tourism and can be set back by tourism. It can influence a choice of destination in itself. However it is not a useful LSTI as tourism is not either a driver or prime beneficiary – it is a good indicator for sustainable development overall.
2. Waste Management, Dumps & Recycling	An assessment of the effects of waste & dumping coupled with recycling strategies.	A waste management strategy was published in 2000. There are major issues in this for District Councils and the whole community. Recycling rates are bad and the landfill directive is difficult.	Tourists do not add significantly to waste in Northern Ireland, unlike in some major tourism areas. While dumping and tips are not helpful to a tourist environment the issue is hugely important in itself. Tourism will not affect the major policy decisions that must be taken.
3. Conservation Areas	An assessment of the growth potential of Conservation Areas as tourism	Plans of the Planning Service for the growth of such areas are known. In the Coleraine Planning division there are no	Conservation Areas are very beneficial to tourism in giving an attractive heritage environment.

23

	assets.	urban conservation areas planned or likely due to lack of quality remaining while in Ballymena Division there is a long-term proposal relating to Raloo and Gleno, which cannot be resourced.	However, as they are not to be expanded in number, are constrained from future growth and cannot 'shrink' by law then they cannot be used as an indicator. The maintenance of standards within Conservation Areas is essential, but is not a tourism issue per se.
4. Planning Applications	An assessment of the number of planning applications for tourism and other uses in each area, and in AONBs, Conservation Areas and listed buildings, analysed by rejection or approval.	This approach requires the full co-operation of the Planning Service and a readily available analysis by the parameters listed. Trend analysis would then indicate the desire to build in various areas and the robustness of Planning Policy.	After some time it was established that Planning Service could not analyse by computer or otherwise, the information required. What was offered instead was a complete print out of applications at £100 per run from Planning Service HQ, which would then have to be hand marked on maps and analysed. Decisions would then have to be linked in later. We consider this to be unwieldy and time consuming. The overall Planning Policy must be examined and monitored and exemptions noted, to assess the implementation of policy on the ground.
5. Forests	An assessment of the extent of forest cover and the availability to visitors, coupled with management strategies and	The extent of forest cover in Co Antrim is 4% and Co Londonderry 5% (NI overall 6%). Most is in Forest Service ownership. 80% of	Compared with say France where there is 30% forest cover, NI is bare. Schemes exist to assist reforestation but with high land prices

	policies.	forest is coniferous. The public may enter any forest and the FS objectives include extending the area of woodland in NI, and promoting access and use of the forests. Community groups may develop access e.g. under Natural Rural Tourism Prog. Forests meet the UK Woodland Assurance Scheme standard.	progress is painfully slow. The Plantation of Ancient Woodland Sites scheme tries to bring back ash & oak with targets for NI of 50 hectares by 2005. In our assessment because of the slow pace of new woodland and the current accessible policy by FS there is nothing to be gained by using this as an LSTI. Change will barely register and the policy is driven by biodiversity and community good, rather than tourism. The high price of land in NI and reluctance to sell or change makes further afforestation a slow process and barely perceptible process.
6. Land Use/ Towns & Villages	An assessment of overall management of towns & villages, coupled with the extent of bad neighbour planning.	There is no single easily accessible source of such diverse information. Equally there is no pattern that can emerge from measurement that is meaningful. Full time staff would virtually have to act as permanent monitors of what DCs, Planning Service, E&HS and others do.	The concept is not feasible as an LSTI. It may be possible and justifiable for a group such as SNIP. It is not a useful concept for an Indicator fro Tourism. This does not negate the need for Town Centres to be managed and presented in a tourism friendly fashion.

This completes the assessment of environmental indicators

Deleted: ¶
¶

TTC International, The Environment & Development Company, Dr Rebecca Hawkins

5.4: STATE INDICATORS –SOCIAL IMPACT

This is the most underdeveloped area in relation to sustainable tourism indicators at a local level. It is arguably the least developed area for other elements of sustainability. The DCMS LSTI Draft Guidance note suggests the following areas for consideration. They are based on the notion of the characteristics of a sustainable society – one where there is a long-term faith in the value system and where those living and working in an area consider their social needs are adequately met. This ties in with the *'Local Quality of Life Counts'* handbook on sustainable development published by *DETR* in 2000:

   ➢ Number employed in tourism;

   ➢ Education & training in tourism;

   ➢ Access for those with disabilities;

   ➢ Amenities created or supported by tourism;

   ➢ Tourist traffic;

   ➢ Crime;

   ➢ Resident/visitor ratio;

   ➢ Housing pressure;

   ➢ Community well being;

   ➢ Number of visitor codes in operation;

   ➢ Number of local tourism forums;

   ➢ Voluntary work;

   ➢ Brownfield site tourism developments.

We do have an affinity for many of these proposed social indicators. A number already appear as state indicators such as the number of visitors and number employed. The number trained in tourism could also have appeared as a state indicator. Others such as voluntary work are so vague as to be meaningless. We therefore go back to the purpose of social impact indicators.

PURPOSE

The social impact of tourism at a local level will relate to the benefits and disbenefit it appears to bring to community. It may bring wider choice in amenities and employment and diversify social contact and cultural interaction.

On the other hand tourism may lead to higher house prices, traffic congestion, increased crime and loss of distinctiveness.

An indicator is needed which measures these aspects in terms of people's perceptions and understandings at a local level.

TTC International, The Environment & Development Company, Dr Rebecca Hawkins

The number involved in community forums or the number of tourism associations is not a reliable indicator in terms of the requirements laid out in earlier chapters – meaningful, reliable and practical. Neither is something as undefined as housing pressure.

Instead the social impact is expressed most thoroughly through the attitude of the community if it is measured in a scientific way, with known sampling error, that can be replicated over time.

No pilot work has been carried out on this topic so a pilot exercise was developed for this study.

PILOT STUDY

In association with Market Research Northern Ireland, a pilot survey of community attitude to tourism was carried out in Bushmills on Saturday 2 November 2001. It was carried out by trained researchers who interviewed 200 residents or second homeowners, no tourists – and has a confidence limit of +or- 7%. The survey can be replicated in any town and at any time a give fully comparable results. It will therefore measure change in attitudes.

The Questionnaire and Report on the Survey are included as an Appendix to this report.

Bushmills was chosen as the location for the pilot because of its proximity to many tourism attractions (particularly the Causeway), the number of second homes and tourist accommodation being developed and it being the home of a major tourism employer. Budget considerations prevented a further pilot in a location that did not have such an interest in tourism. However Bushmills also appeared most likely to have some sort of negative attitude growing from overcrowding and tourism fatigue.

Table: 5.4 SOCIAL IMPACT INDICATOR - STATE		
INDICATOR	*REQUIREMENT*	*AVAILABILITY*
1. Community Attitude	An objectively measured assessment of attitude by a local community towards tourism and its associated issues for sustainability.	A professional market research company can undertake a community survey over one day and produce results that are significant to + or – 7%. Such a survey can be replicated over time and produce results comparable between local areas or even countries.

The usefulness of the indicator relies heavily on the professionalism of the market research agency and the objectivity of the questions asked, which must not lead the subject in a particular direction. If these elements are achieved then the results should be useful and reliable.

In the table below are set out the headline results from the Bushmills Community Attitude Survey, which indicate a very high acceptance of tourism and the belief that saturation point is still some time and distance away. This is fully understandable in the Northern Ireland context where tourism has under performed for many years due to the political situation. This positive attitude does not detract from the validity of the methodology.

Table: 5.5 HEADLINE RESULTS OF BUSHMILLS COMMUNITY SURVEY		
1.	*Importance of Tourism to the Economy*	*95% consider Tourism to be Very Important or Important*
2.	*Welcome to Tourists*	*99% in Bushmills welcome tourists to the area*
3.	*Drawbacks from Tourism*	*Congestion 65% & Property prices 64% topped the poll*
4.	*Awareness of Tourism Organisations*	*23% were aware of groups linked to tourism –of these 13% had heard of the Causeway Initiative*
5.	*Need for More Tourism*	*85% believe A Lot or Some More Tourism is needed in the area*
6.	*Crime Involving Tourists*	*6% had heard of some tourist-related crime*
7.	*Importance of Giants Causeway*	*99% consider the Giants Causeway to be Very Important*

Deleted: *m*

The full report on the survey may be read in the Appendix. This snapshot indicates a picture of opinion that is very positive towards tourism at this moment in time.

This pilot survey of attitudes to tourism acts as a blueprint for future use as a Social Indicator.

5.5 RESPONSE INDICATORS

Once again we find the DCMS LSTI Draft Guidance to be unconvincing on an aspect of the work that brings a purpose to the whole exercise – that is the policy reponse to bring about change. Possible response indicators for the **economic impact** are the **cost of local authority tourism service** or the **economic contribution of tourism to the economy**. These appear to be state indicators rather than response.

Under **environmental indicators** there is some more purpose with for example **planning for tourism through a strategy** and **inclusion of tourism in LA 21 action plans** although coupled with **the number of visitors to the area.**

Under **social indicators** there are suggested the **percentage of enterprises and their staff involved in Green Globe or Green Audit**, the **awareness of recycling** and **use of low energy light bulbs**. Lastly **effective local transport** is included.

These suggested indicators vary widely in their scale and scope and indeed intellectual rigour. Finding alternatives does however require more thought.

EUROPEAN ENVIRONMENT AGENCY REPORT by PROF. VICTOR MIDDLETON with Dr Rebecca Hawkins.

> **Deleted:** *s (I did much of the research!!!)*

This 1999 Report considered tourism and the environment at European level, focusing in particular on the Coastal Mediterranean and Alpine Regions. While the report is more focused on high density resorts both sun and snow, and with international tour operators and large-scale providers involved, it nevertheless gives significant pointers to usable response indicators. We acknowledge this excellent work by Professor Middleton.

From this work it is possible to abstract some likely response indicators for both the public and private sector. This difference has not yet been highlighted but it points to the need for hoteliers and attraction operators to have sustainable practises embedded in their psyche.

PUBLIC SECTOR TOURISM MANAGEMENT RESPONSE INDICATORS

Professor Middleton refers to management response indicators again making the point that this is the purpose of the exercise – to respond through policy. He suggests:

➢ **Monitoring the Volume & Value of Staying & Day Visitors –** not simply measuring but taking note of changes and considering what action should result.

➢ **Monitoring Income & Employment –** again not just measuring but considering the implications of labour supply or low pay or training needs.

➢ **Blue Flag & Similar eco labels** – actively deciding and taking action to gain such status for a beach or attraction.

➢ **LA 21 Programme to include Tourism** – not just on a list but also as an active policy issue.

➢ **Local Tourism Forum** – contributing to an environmental agenda and consisting of public, private and voluntary sectors, with environmental goals, action plans and monitoring.

➢ **Tourism Management Plan** – as part of an area plan, with a budget and staff and setting capacity limits, car constraints, building controls, design criteria and biodiversity protection.

> **Setting Environmental Design criteria for Planning Permissions** –this should cover energy efficiency, water efficiency, sewage treatment and waste control.

> **Annual Licensing for Tourism Businesses** – those who are annually licensed could have sustainability criteria imposed over time.

What is emerging here is a set of response indicators with teeth and not just a series of platitudes or targets that have no means of being achieved.

In welcoming this work there must be factored in the local government and central government structure of Northern Ireland. This comes into play especially in relation to the policies with 'bite' described above, relating to design criteria, zoning and annual licensing. Most of these are centrally controlled and are within the powers of devolved Government. This then relates back to the Sustainable Development Strategy for Northern Ireland, which is due in Draft shortly.

For the purpose of this report at this stage, we will ignore the responsibility issues and recommend Response Indicators that are themselves meet the criteria set earlier.

Table: 5.6 RESPONSE INDICATORS – LOCAL SUSTAINABLE TOURISM		
INDICATOR	*REQUIREMENT*	*AVAILABILITY*
Economic **1. Monitoring Volume & Value of Tourism & Employment Levels**	To have in place a mechanism to assess the meaning of changes in local tourism numbers and revenue and take action as a result.	District Councils have tourism responsibility and tourism marketing is delegated to the RTO. An annual assessment by the relevant Councils and RTO should inform policy decisions and the need to lobby elsewhere. Additionally action could be the encouragement of new business formation through a series of policy actions. Action might be focused on spreading tourism to reduce pressure on honeypots.
Environmental **1. Actively Promote further Blue Flag or Seaside Award Beaches**	Where a beach does not qualify, assess the reasons and actively pursue an award. This may involve central government lobbying if the problem relates to sewage outfall for example.	The mechanisms for Blue Flag are in place and policies can be pursued with full information available. Seeking out other award schemes should be actively encouraged for other aspects of the environment.

Environmental 2. Local Agenda 21 Tourism Input	To ensure that tourism is properly on the Agenda of all bodies who respond to LA21. While there are issues that are much more troublesome and costly to address, this does not mean neglecting a key industry.	Until the launch of the Draft Sustainable Development Strategy for NI it is unclear exactly how this policy is to be moved forward generally. It is clear that tourism has not figured high on the Agenda and this must be guarded against and the profile of the issue raised.
Environmental 3. Local Tourism Management Plan	To ensure that there are responsible and sensible planning and building controls relating to tourism, with proper constraints set in place that take account of environmental issues.	Here the impact of the NI system comes into play, as this is the responsibility of the Planning Service and other agencies and Departments. Lobbying and pressure groups have a key role, as have local politicians. Partnerships are vital to influence in this regard.
Social 1. An Effective Local Tourism Forum	This forum is essential in NI as there is the great need to engage and lobby central agencies and Departments. Equally there is a need to communicate effectively locally – at community level to inform, influence and engage.	The Causeway Coast & Glens Heritage Trust will fill this role! Covering 8 DC areas there is a danger that the local element is lost. A clear plan for communication at a local level is essential.

These five Response Indicators embrace a major workload if they are taken seriously. Coupled with the State Indicators they provide a planned and useful approach to sustainable tourism in the local area.

Deleted: serious

Lastly in this section we discuss an approach to developing a honey pot indicator, which may be deployed at any time.

31

5.6 HONEY POT SITES

As indicated earlier some pressure points do not conform to administrative boundaries and may be identified as:

> ➢ Exceeding their natural or social capacity at specific times of the day or year;

> ➢ Under threat from new tourism developments;

> ➢ Or in decline.

It may be that management or those responsible for such sites or locations in the area – e.g. Giants Causeway, Carrick – a - Rede, Coast Road, Cushendall Village, Rathlin Island, already carry out regular surveys to identify the nature of problems. Management solutions are sometimes easily available to evident problems – more litter bins, development of off-site interpretation and provision of remote car parking.

Attached at Appendix 2 to this report is a survey proforma – devised by Dr Rebecca Hawkins - that was tested by the World Travel & Tourism Environment Research Centre in Australia using tour guides attached to coaches passing through a remote area.

This was a successful trial and the proforma and methodology could be <u>refined and</u> used by site managers or interested groups, for what we have called honey pot sites – locations under tourism pressure of some sort.

5.7 A NOTE ON MEASUREMENT

Data collection for sustainability indicators needs to be clear and precise, so that what is being measured is clearly understood and how the measurement results may be interpreted correctly.

For instance under the Economic State Indicator the volume of visitors in each DC area will be indicated using NITB's annual survey. However for the policy maker the interpretation must be – what does this tell me? Is a 5% increase in visitors alone a good thing? Perhaps not if combined with a decline in spend and bednights. Similarly was the 67% increase Northern Ireland experienced in 1995 an entirely good thing? It led to overcrowding at the honey pot sights and was not sustainable. It raised many policy questions and needed serious responses.

There must therefore be an 'educated ' interpretation of the Indicators that are suggested and this interpretation will vary over time as external factors change and as policy develops.

A Guidance Note such as that set out below would need to be updated each year for the benefit of the team involved and the policy makers.

Table: 5.7 Guidance Notes on Water Quality & Environmental Management of Beaches

1. Excellent Water Quality	This means that the EC Bathing Water Directive's most stringent standard was met. Total Coliforms no more than 500 per 100ml of water. Faecal Coliforms no more than 100 per 100ml of water. Annually 80% of samples must meet these standards. Faecal Streptococci no more than 100 per 100ml of water. Annually 90% of samples must meet these standards.
2. Good Water Quality	These means the weekly sample meets the following EC mandatory standards. 10,000 total coliforms per 100ml of water and 2,000 faecal coliforms per 100ml of water. Annually 95% of samples must meet these standards.
3. Poor Water Quality	This indicates that the samples failed to meet the Standard required for Good Quality waters.
4. Seaside Award	These are awarded to resort and rural beaches which reach a high standard of cleanliness on land and sea and which have Excellent facilities.
5. Environmental Management	Litter bins in adequate numbers, properly secured and regularly maintained and emptied. Adequate provision for refuse, algal matter and other pollutants collected on the beach. The waste collected on the beach must be disposed of in a licensed facility. A daily beach clean must occur during the bathing season. Beaches on which cars are allowed must have designated areas on the beach for parking, car-free zones and the waters edge must always be kept entirely free from cars.

The above are extracts from the notes that form the assessment for the standards and awards*. They are assessed by professional people and stand rigorous scrutiny. All other indicators must be based on the same rigorous approach if they are to have credibility and value as policy guides.

*Published on Tidy Britain Group's Blue Flag Website www.blueflag.org and www.seasideawards.org.uk and part extract from EU Bathing Water Directive 76/160/EEC.

TTC International, The Environment & Development Company, Dr Rebecca Hawkins

6. IMPLEMENTING THE INDICATORS

6.1 A National Approach?

As the Causeway Initiative has commissioned this work, we make the assumption that its successor – the Causeway Coast & Glens Heritage Trust will wish to implement it. As already discussed there are issues in Northern Ireland relating to local government responsibilities which make implementation more difficult, and there are benefits as well relating to availability of data.

While it is welcome that 8 District Council areas wish to implement Local Sustainable Tourism Indicators it is self evident that there may be a need to do so across Northern Ireland. If sustainable tourism is to be taken seriously then local indicators are needed across the whole Province.

As the EEA Report in 1999 pointed out:

" *It is strongly recommended .. that the primary focus of data collection for indicators of more sustainable tourism (private & public sector) will not be national but on selected tourism destinations at local authority/ municipality level".*

This may indicate that NITB should focus on areas that may be under pressure or potentially so rather than an across the Board approach, involving Councils with little or no tourism focus. Arguably the new Natural Resource Tourism Initiative Areas could provide a focus for rural areas at least.

6.2 A Mechanism

The indicators proposed in this report will not impose a heavy burden on the Trust, but are achievable. A Steering Group, possibly the Board, can supervise the work of a collator of all the data, working at group level. It is suggested that this would be a part time use of an existing employee. The collator in turn gets data input from each council area, where there is also a part time collator, liasing with the various bodies and agencies – NITB Research, Water Quality Unit, Tidy NI and so on.

Table: 6.1 AN IMPLEMENTATION MECHANISM

TTC International, The Environment & Development Company, Dr Rebecca Hawkins
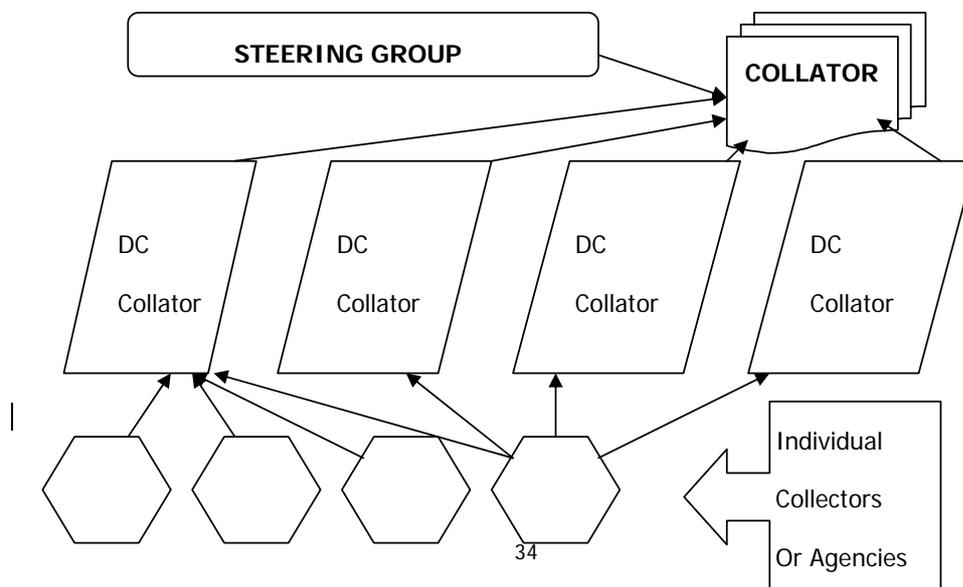
6.3 Thresholds of Acceptable Change

Over time, the indicators will facilitate the compilation of time series data that will facilitate an assessment of whether the Causeway area is making progress towards or away from sustainable tourism. There is no current consensus on the point at which an activity or an indicator illustrates unsustainable development. The decision upon when an indicator illustrates progress away from (rather than towards) sustainable tourism must lie with the policy making body –here the Trust – and its constituent members. An informed debate about the precise components of a sustainable tourism industry may help to identify the point at which patterns of tourism development are becoming less sustainable.

We would suggest that the Trust or the Steering Group meets annually to review progress on the indicators to assess whether the pressures on the environment and communities are reducing or increasing. It will be up to the Trust to agree the threshold at which pressures are such that management processes require a review to prevent unsustainable development. Then the Trust will have to convince Councils, Government Departments and Agencies that there is a need for policy change.

In our view, the following instances may trigger management responses:

- o An increase in visitor numbers, accompanied by a decrease in visitor spend and/or tourism related employment

- o A decrease in the number of beaches applying for and achieving the Blue Flag or Seaside award

- o A decrease in the area of river falling into category C or below for river water quality

- o An increase in litter

- o An increase/fall in tourist numbers combined with a negative community attitude towards tourism
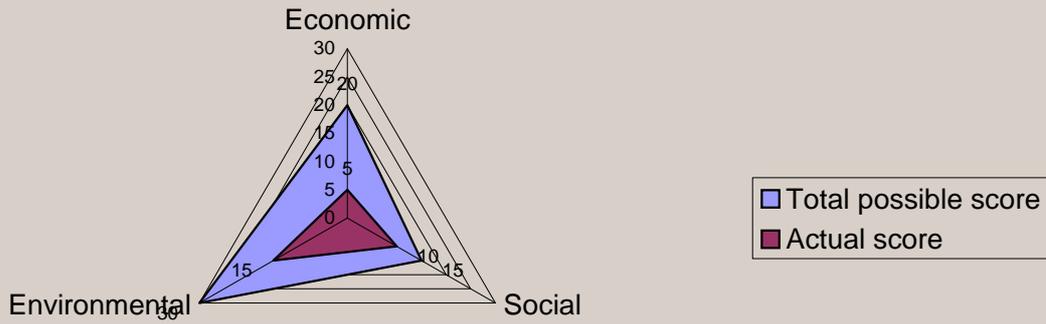
Overall, when using the indicators within a policy context, a simple means of communication will be essential. We would suggest that **simple bar charts** are used to illustrate progress on single issues. These bar charts will compile essential time series data on progress to date.

A **radar chart** could be used to weight this data according to policy priorities. The consultants have experience of working with policy makers to provide appropriate weightings for data sets and can advise on the development of such a radar chart if appropriate. Radar charts provide a simple assessment of progress towards the agreed vision of sustainable tourism. They allow communication to the public and other policy makers and are an ideal mechanism to allow for a review of areas in which policy is not producing results. Such a chart will illustrate the extent to which sustainable tourism issues have been tackled and will highlight those aspects of sustainable tourism on which progress is particularly strong or weak.

Deleted: a

Deleted: c

Deleted: ¶
IAN THIS NEEDS SOME TIDYING UP

Deleted: Steering Group

Deleted: Steering Group

Deleted:

Formatted: Bullets and Numbering

Formatted

Formatted

Formatted

Formatted

Formatted

Formatted

The Radar Chart shown here is a device used to communicate the effectiveness of policy and the interaction between policies. A maximum score in the light shaded area indicates that policies are at maximum effectiveness while the darker shaded area indicates what is actually happening – in this hypothetical situation. Here the environment is given greater weight than either social or economic issues.

6.4 Expanding the Indicator Set

In developing this report, we have considered and rejected a wide range of potential indicators because the core data is not available at the current time in a sufficiently robust format to support its inclusion as well as those, which we considered inappropriate. However many of the issues that we have rejected have considerable importance to the achievement of sustainable tourism and we would recommend that more robust data is developed to facilitate the use of this information within a policy framework, Specifically, we consider that the following data sets could to make a valuable contribution to any assessment of progress towards sustainable tourism:

- o The number of leisure day visits per month and associated spending data

- o Biodiversity on key tourism honey pot sites focussing on species that are prone to trampling or disturbance

- o The use of resources by tourism businesses compared to international norms established by the Hospitable Climates and IHEI/WWF benchmarking programmes for issues such as recycling, energy conservation, use of local produce etc

- o Indicators relating to tourism related development within the planning system

- o Honey-pot site indicators that can be deployed at any time at specific sites,

## 6.5 Using the Indicator to Inform Policy and Decision-making

The structure set out above in 6.2 and an annual review will produce a report each year that the Trust's Board will eventually endorse.

The Board will have examined the movement of the indicators and considered their relationship individually, to each other, and in the context of Local Agenda 21 and the Sustainable NI Strategy.

The Trust will then have a requirement to take action in relation to the root cause of problems that have emerged and to do so with the appropriate Council, Department or Agency.

The sequence of events is as follows:

Table 6.3: Influencing the Policy Jigsaw

37
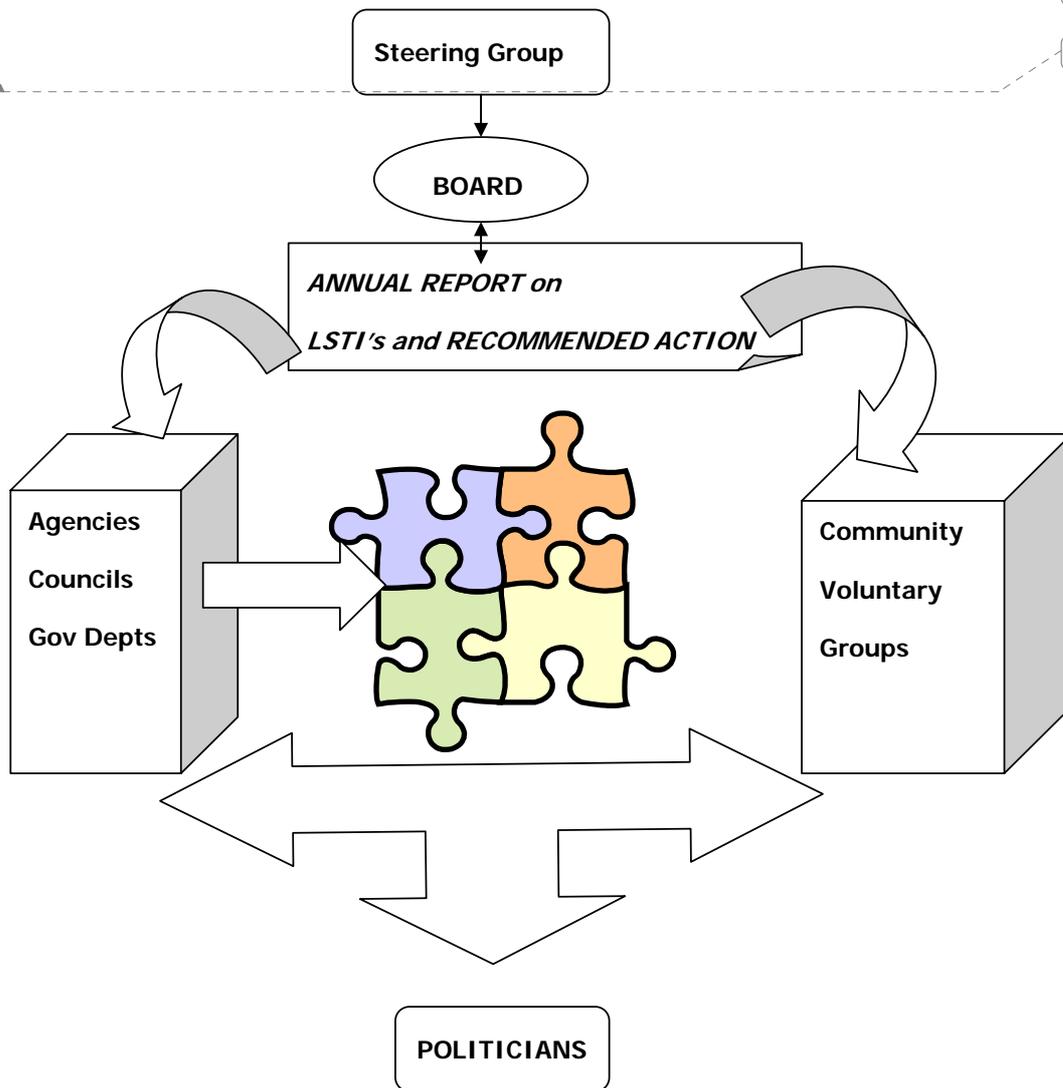
Deleted: i

Deleted: i

Deleted: p

Deleted: d

Deleted:

Deleted: IAN I AM NOT SUFFICIENTLY FAMILIAR WITH NI TO WRITE THIS SECTION. HOWEVER, WE NEED TO WRIT UP A FRAMEWORK ABOUT HOW THE INDICATORS COULD BE COMPILED INTO A SIMPLE FORMAT THAT HIGHLIGHTS PROGRESS TOWARDS OR AWAY FROM POLICY OBJECTIVES.¶

Formatted

While the Trust has its own corporate entity, its policy making is limited to the objectives for which it is funded, and now focused on through the Natural Resource Rural Tourism Initiative for a substantial part of its geographic area. It will therefore have to influence outcomes not just through its own grant programmes and strategies, but also through influencing those who take decisions that result in the LSTI's showing change. Change may have come about not through their policies per se, but can be stemmed or halted in a direction considered beneficial by their policies and actions.

All of these bodies will therefore have to 'buy in' to the work on Local Sustainable Tourism Indicators and take action from the assessment of the results by the Trust Board.

This will be a major lobbying exercise for the organisation and will require full, backing of constituent members and observers such as Environment & Heritage Service and NITB.

Simultaneously the Trust will have to ensure that local communities understand the annual report and see and comprehend whatever warning signs are emerging. They in turn will then influence the policy makers and politicians. Voluntary groups that have a knowledge and interest in the environment as well as tourism will also need to be 'on side'.

This represents overall a major communications challenge for the Trust, if the development of LSTI's is to result in action.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Formatted

Formatted

Formatted

Formatted

Appendices:

1. Bushmills Survey Report

2. An Approach to Honey Pot Sites

3. ETC National Indicators

Formatted