

ADVANCES IN HOSPITALITY AND LEISURE

Edited by Joseph S. Chen

ADVANCES IN HOSPITALITY
AND LEISURE

VOLUME 20

**ADVANCES IN HOSPITALITY AND
LEISURE**

ADVANCES IN HOSPITALITY AND LEISURE

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ADVANCES IN HOSPITALITY AND LEISURE

EDITED BY

JOSEPH S. CHEN

Indiana University (Bloomington), USA



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INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

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LIST OF CONTRIBUTORS

<i>Dilmurad Bekjanov</i>	Urgench State University, Uzbekistan
<i>Carolín Bode</i>	IU International University of Applied Sciences – Bad Honnef, Germany
<i>Juan G. Brida</i>	Universidad de la República, Uruguay
<i>Tai-Ying Chiang</i>	Chienkuo Technology University, Taiwan
<i>Chia-Ning Chiu</i>	National Ilan University, Taiwan
<i>Clare Hindley</i>	IU International University of Applied Sciences – Bad Honnef, Germany
<i>Ergash Ibadullaev</i>	Mamun University, Uzbekistan
<i>Colin Johnson</i>	San Francisco State University, USA
<i>Thomas Jones</i>	Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University, Japan
<i>Tang-Chung Kan</i>	National Kaohsiung University of Hospitality and Tourism, Taiwan
<i>Elbek Khodjaniyazov</i>	Urgench State University, Uzbekistan
<i>Kyungmi Kim</i>	Incheon National University, South Korea
<i>Kula Kularadhan</i>	Central Queensland University, Gladstone, Australia
<i>Tian-Yu Lee</i>	National Chung Hsing University, Taiwan
<i>Willy Legrand</i>	IU International University of Applied Sciences – Bad Honnef, Germany
<i>Chieh-Lu Li</i>	National Dong Hwa University, Taiwan
<i>Kuo-Chung Liao</i>	National Dong Hwa University, Taiwan
<i>Wan-Yu Liu</i>	National Chung Hsing University, Taiwan
<i>Umidjon Matyakubov</i>	Urgench State University, Uzbekistan
<i>Victoria Mogni</i>	Cure Udeler, Uruguay
<i>Yutaka Nakajima</i>	Japan Travel Bureau Foundation, Japan
<i>Fayzullaev Nodirbek</i>	Tashkent State University of Economics, Uzbekistan
<i>Bruce Prideaux</i>	Central Queensland University, Cairns, Australia

<i>Olimjon Saidmamatov</i>	Urgench State University, Uzbekistan
<i>Miriam Scaglione</i>	Institute of Tourism, HES-SO Valais/Wallis, Switzerland
<i>Yuldoshboy Sobirov</i>	Jeonbuk National University, South Korea
<i>Michelle Thompson</i>	Central Queensland University, Cairns, Australia
<i>Shih-Shuo Yeh</i>	National Cheng Kung University, Taiwan
<i>Chin-Chun Yen</i>	National Chung Hsing University, Taiwan

AIMS AND SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

Advances in Hospitality and Leisure (AHL), a double-blind peer view journal published annually since 2004, attempts to promote seminal and innovative research outputs pertaining to hospitality, leisure, tourism, and lifestyle. Specifically, this journal encourages researchers to investigate new research issues and problems that are critical but have been largely ignored while providing a forum that will disseminate singular thoughts advancing empirical undertakings both theoretically and methodologically.

This 20th annual volume includes nine full papers and one research note. As for data collection, the articles present both quantitative and qualitative research methods. The contributors to the present issue come from 10 nations/regions entailing Australia, Germany, Japan, South Korea, Switzerland, Thailand, Taiwan, the United States of America, Uruguay, and Uzbekistan.

For submission to future issues, please review the following guidelines.

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Style and Length of Manuscript: 12 pt. Times Roman font; double spacing; APA; 7,000 words (Full Paper) or 4,000 words (Research Note).

Layout of Manuscript: First page: title of paper and author contact information; second page: title of paper, an abstract of 120–140 words, and keywords; third page and beyond: main text, appendix, references, figures, and tables.

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FULL PAPER

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ACHIEVING SOCIAL SUSTAINABILITY THROUGH LONG-TERM DESTINATION PLANNING: A THEORETICAL MODEL FOR COASTAL DESTINATIONS THREATENED BY CLIMATE CHANGE

Kula Kularadhan^a, Michelle Thompson^b and
Bruce Prideaux^b

^aCentral Queensland University, Gladstone, Australia

^bCentral Queensland University, Cairns, Australia

ABSTRACT

Climate change continues to be one of the major threats to tourism development, with coastal destinations particularly vulnerable to impacts such as extreme weather events, rising sea levels, hotter temperatures and the loss of ecosystem diversity. While the environmental and economic impacts of climate change are widely acknowledged, less research has identified the impacts on the destination community. This paper explores the concerns about climate change in a small coastal community and how responses to this threat by the destination's local government authority may affect its long-term social sustainability. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 20 government representatives and community members in the Livingstone Shire, Queensland, Australia. Thematic analysis identified several key themes including infrastructure, collaborative planning, climate impacts, response to climate change, vulnerability and achieving long-term social sustainability. This research makes an important contribution by proposing a theoretical model that demonstrates how achieving long-term social sustainability requires destination

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planning through stakeholder collaboration and community consultation and takes into account several dynamic factors at the destination level. The model also has practical implications and can be adopted by destination communities to encourage long-term planning that maintains and enhances social sustainability as part of a destination-wide response to climate change.

Keywords: Destination planning; coastal tourism; climate change; social sustainability; theoretical model

INTRODUCTION

Coastal tourism destinations are becoming increasingly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change including extreme weather events, increased sea levels, higher daily temperatures, ecosystem damage, flooding and drought (Santos-Lacueva et al., 2017). The impact of these factors, both individually and collectively, will affect the type of tourism development that coastal destinations can support in the coming decades (Jarratt & Davies, 2019) as well as the quality of life of the destination community. As Elkington (1997) noted, the environment, economy and community are interrelated and impacts on one element will flow through to the other elements. To respond to the threats posed by climate change, coastal destinations will be forced to implement long-term planning strategies to combat the impacts of these threats. While considerable attention has been given to the climate-driven impacts on destination ecosystems (Arabadzhyan et al., 2021) and destination economies (Scott et al., 2012), less attention has been given to the impacts on destination communities. In this paper, we explore the concerns about climate change of a small coastal community and how responses to this threat by the destination's local government authority (LGA) may affect the long-term social sustainability of the destination community.

It is now impossible to ignore the impact of anthropogenic climate change. Mounting evidence in the scientific literature and reports published by bodies such as the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC, 2023) highlights the enormity of the problem and the need for an urgent response. According to the World Meteorological Organization (WMO, 2024), the mean global temperature in 2023 was 1.4C above the preindustrial revolution mean and climbing. Given the rapid pace of climate change, it is becoming increasingly important for all destinations to accept the reality of climate change, consider how to respond as well as consider the impacts that both climate change and planned responses will have on the destination's economy, its environment including unique ecosystems and importantly, its community.

Apart from the need to ensure that a destination can offer a quality experience that provides visitor satisfaction and promotes emotional well-being, there is also a need to consider the impacts of tourism on the quality of life of the local population (Juvan et al., 2021). Juvan et al. (2021) further argued that the quality of life of residents is an important feature of sustainable tourism development as it influences the attractiveness of a particular destination and may provide a

marketing benefit. [Juvan et al. \(2021\)](#) also found that increased interactions with tourism can limit or decrease the quality of life of the host community, which may result in poor satisfaction with life and less than desired levels of happiness of hosts as well as visitors. Furthermore, while increased tourism generates additional revenue flow into a region, it may lead to increased public expenditure on infrastructure and create social costs, such as increased crime and reduced access to other services including health ([Zaei & Zaei, 2013](#)).

Aside from the impact of climate change on the destination economy and environment, there is an urgent need to consider how the impact of both climate change and measures to mitigate and adapt to climate change will affect the long-term social sustainability of the host community. In this paper, we explore issues related to long-term social sustainability from the perspective that the destination environment, economy and community are closely linked and impacts on one part of this system will have knock-on effects on other parts of the system. The triple bottom line (TBL) approach suggested by [Elkington \(1994\)](#), highlights the linkages between the economy, environment and society that underlies much of the discussion on sustainability. While acknowledging the role of the TBL in highlighting issues related to social sustainability, the model fails to provide suggestions on how to achieve social sustainability. To address this issue, we investigated how [Vallance et al.'s \(2011\) Three strands of social sustainability](#) model (see [Fig. 1](#)) could be extended to provide a pathway for achieving social sustainability at the destination level. The key outcome of this research is a

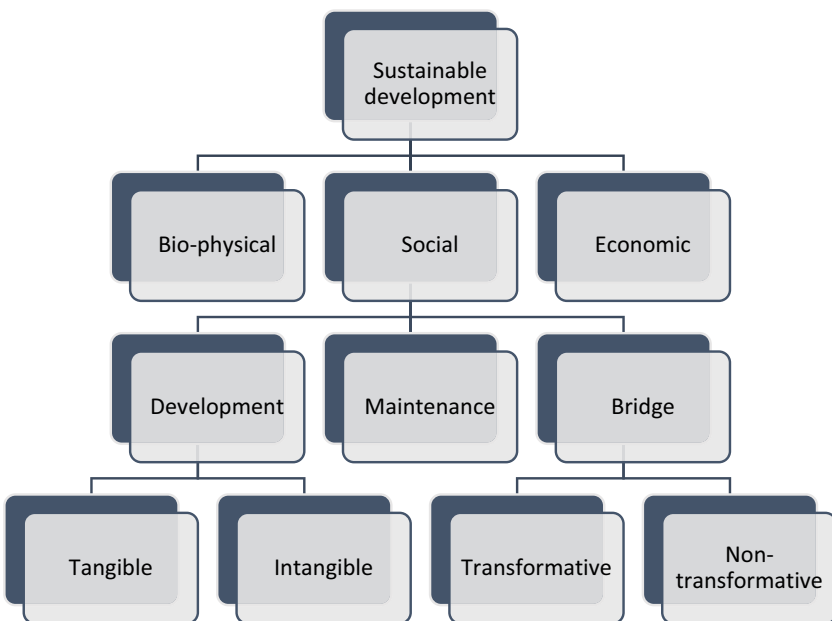


Fig. 1. The Typology of Social Sustainability ([Vallance et al., 2011](#)).

theoretical model that can be adopted to promote long-term planning that maintains and/or enhances social sustainability in a climate threatened coastal destination.

LITERATURE REVIEW

This review highlights the importance of social sustainability within the overall consideration of long-term destination sustainability. The review also highlights the need to ensure that the wishes and concerns of the community in relation to its long-term social sustainability are both acknowledged and incorporated into long-term strategies to deal with climate change. The review commences with an overview of issues associated with social sustainability, followed by climate change and planning issues that impact social sustainability.

Social Sustainability

Social capital is described as the quality of a person in a social setting, an independent asset or a set of qualities or standards within community life that brings people together more effectively to fulfill their common targets (Mauerhofer, 2013; Osborne et al., 2016; World Bank, 2020). Social justice is the recognition of economically disadvantaged people in the community and uplifting equality to maintain human dignity (Clingerman, 2011).

Social sustainability is achieved when progressive communities enrich their recognized and unrecognized practices, systems, make-ups and networks to succeed in attaining a high quality of life by being fair, diverse, interconnected and democratic (McKenzie, 2004). McKenzie (2004) concluded that a progressive state within communities and ongoing activities within communities to achieve a progressive state or environment are considered social sustainability. Furthermore, McKenzie (2004) identified an extensive catalogue of indicators and drivers of social sustainability including the equity of access to vital services including health, education, transport, housing and recreation; intergenerational equity; the state of intercultural relationships; the recognition of community ownership; intergenerational transmission of the role of the community in maintenance of social sustainability; and the ability to politically advocate the requirements of the community that cannot be resolved through community activities.

Elkington (1994) observed that progress is influenced by the economy, and the economy is influenced by its environment, which acts as an important bottom line. Elkington (1997) further argued that society, economy and environment are interconnected by direct and indirect factors and stressed that it was important for the community and its stakeholders to understand that this concept occurs during each stage of the development process. Elkington's (1994) TBL categories were described by Portney (2015) as the "3Es" of sustainable development: economy, environment and equity (Social Justice). Slaper and Hall (2011) referred to them as the "3Ps" of sustainable development – profit, planet and people. The concepts underlying the TBL approach and its use as a platform for

understanding the need for development that is sustainable in the long term provides a useful tool that can be employed by tourism destinations to achieve better outcomes within their destinations (Gunesh, 2017). The TBL framework was later expanded by Žak (2015) to incorporate three additional elements of sustainable development. Žak (2015) evaluated the behaviors of companies in economic, environment and social performance areas, with a focus on corporate social responsibility, and identified three additional areas where indicators could be developed. These additional indicators occur at the intersections between the environment and economy, economy and social, and social and environmental areas. The impact of each intersection can be measured by indicators.

Gunesh (2017) observed that the TBL approach can be employed by tourism organizations to undertake tasks and strategies such as identifying the key drivers required to achieve sustainability in a particular destination; identifying barriers to sustainability; providing a platform for achieving transparency and accountability in dealings with stakeholders and the community; increasing opportunities for collaboration between stakeholders; and improving destination reputation. While Žak (2015), Gunesh (2017) and others provide a useful conceptual approach to understanding the interactions of the key elements of sustainability, they didn't outline a process for achieving social sustainability.

Vallance et al. (2011) suggested a typology of social sustainability based on three interlinked and sequential stages: *development*, *bridge* and *maintenance* (See Fig. 1). The first stage "development sustainability" focuses on basic requirements ranging from the tangible including clean water, healthy food, health services and housing to less tangible needs including employment, justice and education. Vallance et al. (2011, p. 333) suggest that if these needs can be met there is an expectation "that positive environmental benefits will follow." Bridge sustainability addresses changes in behaviors required to achieve biophysical environmental goals. Maintenance sustainability focuses on the preservation of sociocultural characteristics in conditions where the public can accept or counter change (Vallance et al., 2011). These aspects of social sustainability are interrelated and changes to one element of social sustainability can be expected to impact other aspects of social sustainability. While providing a useful perspective on the processes required to achieve social sustainability, the model does not explain how this can occur, what factors may be involved and how changes in factors over time and from externalities such as climate change can alter the long-term maintenance of social sustainability. Given the problems that climate change is likely to begin to create in the near, medium and distant future, the research reported in this paper focused on how climate change could affect long-term social sustainability.

The Role of Resilience in Social Sustainability

Resilience is the capacity of a social system to react to a disaster and regain what was lost, while maintaining its inbuilt capabilities for adaptation and coping with such events and their aftermaths, resulting in the capacity to adjust to the changes and reflect on possible threats (Jones & Phillips, 2011). Jones and Phillips (2011)

further refer to the definition by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) which states that resilience is the ability of a system, community or society that is potentially subjected to disasters to adapt by withstanding or transforming in such a way that it can achieve and sustain a particular level of function or structure. Further, this level of function or structure is established by the extent to which this particular social system holds the ability to understand and restructure from the after-effects of those events, leading to increased security and reduced risks for the future.

To achieve long-term social resilience in the face of climate change, destinations must begin to consider their level of climate change resilience. Climate resilience describes the capability of a destination's social, economic and environmental competencies to counter an adverse disruption and reemerge, reorganise and reestablish its vital capabilities, uniqueness and construct, while reestablishing its capabilities for adjustments, education and makeover (Portner et al., 2022). Climate change adaptability is the correction of natural or human systems in response to the real or predicted climatic provocations or consequences (West, 2014). Penuel et al. (2013) described climate change adaptation as the response by the environment and species to impending climatic-related change to reduce the effects of climate change. Identifying the features of a destination that protect it from climate change, and the adaptive practices and strategies that could be used by authorities to protect against aspects of climate change, can benefit a tourism destination. Understanding climate change adaptation has been recognized as a new area in development research (Ireland, 2012). Bilateral, multilateral and nongovernment organizations have started to adopt this area of research in their planning processes (Ireland, 2012). Business adaptation, consumer adaptation, destination adaptation, adaptation policy studies, adaptation frameworks and sustainable adaptation have been identified as the main features of tourism adaptation to climate change (Njoroge, 2015).

Climate Change

Climate change is defined as the transformation that occurs in the climate during a period of time caused by normal processes or as a consequence of human action and is now recognized as a major threat to human welfare (Solomon et al., 2007). The direct causes of anthropogenic climate change are increased greenhouse gas emissions that result from the use of fossil fuels to power the global production system, rapid global population growth and an economic production system that focuses on annual growth as a key indicator of economic, social and political success (McKercher & Prideaux, 2024).

Climate change is now beginning to have a significant impact on sea levels and coastal environments (IPCC, 2023). Extreme weather events including marine heatwaves can lead to the decline or extinction of marine species, coral bleaching, destruction of kelp forests and seagrass meadows, rapid fluctuations in marine ecosystems and the interruption of food webs (Prideaux, 2023). These changes can flow through to the tourism industry causing the loss of coastal areas through