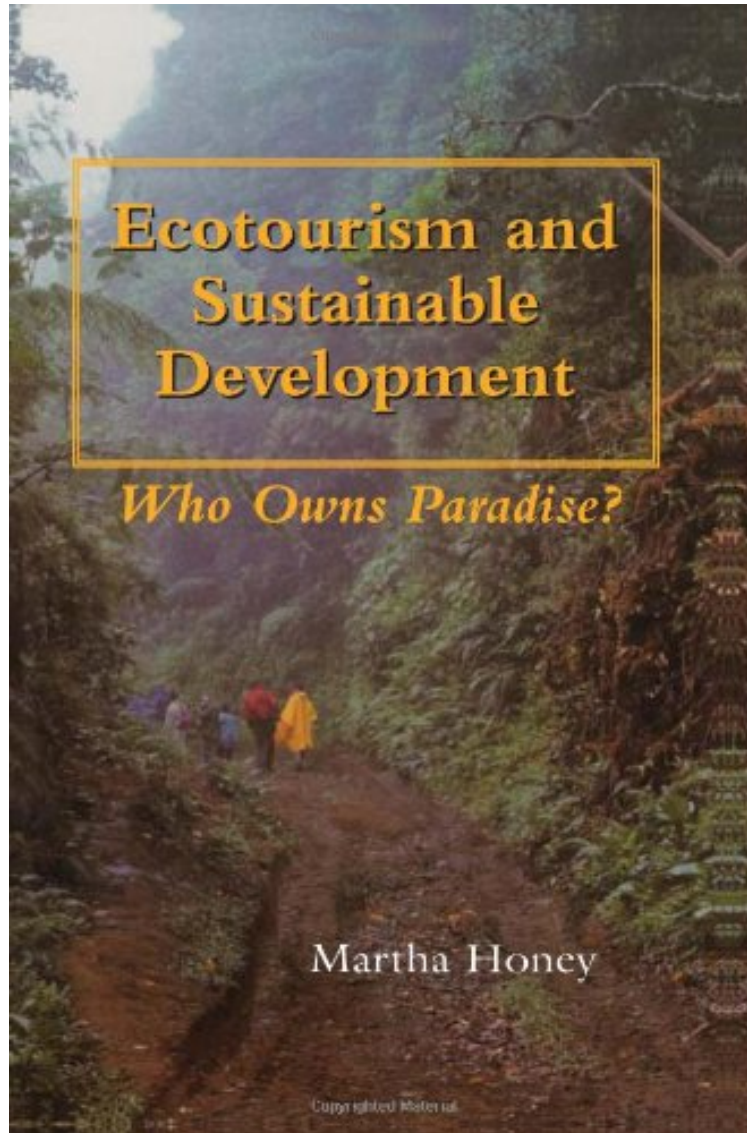


[Download] Ecotourism and Sustainable Development: Who Owns Paradise?

Ecotourism and Sustainable Development: Who Owns Paradise?

Dr. Martha Honey PhD

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Dr. Martha Honey PhD : Ecotourism and Sustainable Development: Who Owns Paradise? before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Ecotourism and Sustainable Development: Who Owns Paradise?:

3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Outdated but worth the reading, shows the complexities of ecotourism in its infancy By Emc2 This book presents a very comprehensive state-of-the-art review of ecotourism practices in Latin America and Africa, up to 1998, including very detailed discussions of study cases in seven

countries, some of which host prime examples of true ecotourism, such as Galapagos Island (Ecuador), several parks in Costa Rica, the Maasai Mara Game Reserve (Kenya), and the Kruger National Park (South Africa). Also, a scorecard for each of the seven countries is presented based on the seven principles of real ecotourism, as defined in the book. Throughout the book, Mrs. Honey makes crystal clear what is considered genuine ecotourism, ecotourism lite and what is pure greenwashing. As it is typical of social sciences, one of the main weaknesses of the analysis presented is that relies too much on anecdotal evidence, but in view of the lack of statistics or quantitative findings from ecotourism research, this limitation is unavoidable. After reading the book I reached two unexpected conclusions. First, ecotourism is full of contradictions and paradoxes. And second, the whole concept was developed exclusively from the point of view of conservationists and environmentalists, with complete disregard of the most basic principles of economics in a free market, despite being advocated as a means for sustainable economic development. The book also shows that by the late nineties there were several schools of thought within the field. On the one hand, the more radical conservationists and environmentalists, for whom tourism to pristine natural areas is simply not feasible, conservationism and economic development can't live together. For them, the negative impacts of ecotourism begin from the moment a tourist takes a jet plane to depart from home, and they see negative impacts everywhere, criticizing even the construction of any kind of infrastructure in the vicinity of the ecotourism locals, which is required to attend the tourists. There is another school that thinks the symbiosis is possible, but they set such contradicting goals, that the principles of genuine ecotourism are almost impossible to achieve in practice, and this is how the paradoxes begin. Some examples. Globalization is the main engine of today's international tourism, and ecotourism is the faster growing segment in the industry. However, scholars are very critical of capitalism and globalization, and sometimes they are advocating for highly centralized government planning of the industry. They want the activity to produce sustainable economic development in the third world, but they do not want too many tourists. They want everybody doing ecotourism during their whole trips, but is this what the regular tourist want? Or is this attractive just for a minority looking for an educational experience? Clearly, tourism is a demand driving industry, and even on green trips, most people also want beach and sun, adventure, and fun, not just the genuine ecotourism and its educational aspects, because as recounted in the book, some tourists rather spend the day by the swimming pool than participating all day in guided eco tours. And logically, tourism operators are providing what the market is asking for. Basic economics and business principles are work. Also, how can you keep the lion's share of ecotourism benefits within the local community? Tourism is done through a complex chain of providers, and as the experience has shown, as one site becomes successful, greater numbers of tourists arrive, and the services and infrastructure required become so huge, that these demands are almost impossible to be handled or financed by small businesses and the local community; and then, there is the risk of a bigger environmental impact, things begin to run out of control. And this goes on and on, full of contradictions and paradoxes. Clearly, what is described in the book is ecotourism in its infancy. As a new crop of books on ecotourism was published in 2007 (see *Critical Issues in Ecotourism: understanding a complex tourism phenomenon*, *Ecotourism Third Edition* or *Quality Assurance and Certification in Ecotourism (Ecotourism Book)*), let's hope that some of the key contradictions and paradoxes have been resolved, and that this time they get the economics right. Also, I am looking forward for the promised 2008 update of Mrs. Money book, particularly because several of the country cases are revisited. Anyway, I do recommend this book for those interested in the origin of ecotourism and the difficulties in keeping a sustainable symbiosis between conservationism and economic development. PS: An updated second edition (2008) is now available. See my review at *Ecotourism and Sustainable Development, Second Edition: Who Owns Paradise?* 10 of 11 people found the following review helpful. Highly recommended, most detailed overview available. By A Customer The release of Martha Honey's book investigating ecotourism marks the end of a 10-year era of gestation and growth in the field. Honey, who began research on the book in the early 1990s, does genuine investigative journalism on the many issues haunting the ecotourism field, from its definition to its sustainability, and provides honest assessments. This book offers the most detailed overview of the evolution of the ecotourism field available today. Highly recommended for ecotourism professionals, foundation officers, bank and multilateral investment specialists and others deeply involved in applying ecotourism as a sustainable development tool, this book is an advanced analysis. In the academic world, it will provide invaluable background information for all students performing research on the issues of ecotourism and sustainable development. *Ecotourism and Sustainable Development* gives context and history, but it does not offer applied solutions. On a philosophical note, Honey states that ecotourism should be "transforming the way modern, conventional tourism is conducted." This is a point of healthy debate within the field, but not a universally accepted goal. Ecotourism's role as a political instrument of change on the international scene is not its strong point, as Honey points out. But should this be the measure by which the ecotourism field is judged? Honey's book offers a wide variety of fascinating points for debate, and provides an excellent baseline of discussion for all those involved in the development of the ecotourism field. However, less sophisticated readers should be warned that Honey's assumptions need to be carefully debated, not simply accepted. Megan Epler Wood, President, The Ecotourism Society. 4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. An excellent choice for anyone interested in ecotourism. By A Customer Highly entertaining, joyfully optimistic and painstakingly researched "Ecotourism and Sustainable Development: Who Owns Paradise?" would

appeal to both neophytes and those more familiar with the study of ecotourism. The idea echoed throughout the work that one of the world's largest industries is in desperate need of a radical transformation is a very important one and must be recognized by everyone involved in tourism, including the consumer, if the industry is to continue its success into the twenty-first century and, more importantly, contribute to positive social change. The reader should be aware, however, that some of the views expressed in it have not been accepted by all social scientists or ecologists, among them being the idea that protected areas safeguard the environment -- John Vandermeer and Ivette Perfecto's "Breakfast of Biodiversity: The Truth About Rainforest Destruction" is perhaps the best example of a contrasting perspective regarding protected areas. Nevertheless, Martha Honey's latest is truly impressive and would be an excellent choice for anyone interested in ecotourism.

Ecotourism is defined as "responsible travel to natural areas which conserves the environment and improves the welfare of local people." Many see it as a panacea for developing nations -- a source of clean development that can bring wealth to rural communities while simultaneously helping to preserve pristine environments. But has the reality lived up to the promise? And is that even possible. In *Ecotourism and Sustainable Development*, Martha Honey presents an overview of the ecotourism industry and a first-hand account of ecotourism projects around the world. Based on interviews and visits to ecotourist hotspots in Latin America and Africa, she offers a vivid description and analysis of projects that meet the goals and standards of ecotourism as well as those that claim to be ecotourism but in reality fall short. She presents in-depth case studies of seven destinations (Galapagos, Costa Rica, Cuba, Zanzibar, Tanzania, Kenya, and South Africa) that serve to illustrate the real world of ecotourism. For each, she offers an ecotourism scorecard, grading it on its adherence to the enumerated principles of ecotourism and sustainable development. Honey addresses topics such as the evolution and principles of ecotourism, where profits go, and the mechanics and politics of the tourist industry as a whole. The case studies highlight the economic and cultural impacts of tourism development on indigenous populations as well as on ecosystems. Honey also surveys current thinking and policies of environmental groups, and looks at how political situations, human rights records, and natural resource management influence travel decisions. *Ecotourism and Sustainable Development* provides a unique and compelling look at the promise and pitfalls of ecotourism. It is the only such account of worldwide ecotourism available today, and is an important guide for students and researchers involved with international development, geography, or tourism, as well as for anyone interested in becoming a more environmentally sensitive traveller.

"Is *Ecotourism and Sustainable Development* a thought-provoking read you'll find hard to put down? Absolutely."