Perceptions of Impacts of a Tourism Mega-Project in a Rural and Remote Region in Jalisco State, Mexico: The New Cancun

Dr. Derrek Eberts
Department of Geography, Brandon University

Dr. Rodrigo Espinoza Sánchez, Centro Universitario de la Costa, Universidad de Guadalajara

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Outline

• Overview of Tourism Impacts
• The New Cancun: Location and Context
• Perceptions of the Impacts the New Cancun Mega-Project in Rural and Remote Communities in Jalisco
Overview of Tourism Impacts

We generally recognize three categories of tourism impacts:

• Economic
• Environmental
• Cultural / Social

... Also can think in broader terms of Quality of Life
Economic Impacts

• Positive
  – Employment
  – Local business effects
  – Taxes / federal/state/municipal revenue
  – Investment

• Negative
  – Increased displacement of poor; increased disparity between rich and poor
  – Competition with other industry, displacing other industry
  – Risk of over-dependence, decreased regional economic resilience
  – Leakages (profits leave the region)
Economic Impacts

• Key challenges and criticisms:
  – Often only considers what can be measured in $ value
  – Abstracts from human level impacts, experiences
Environmental Impacts

• Positive
  – Protected areas
  – Awareness – ecotourism as educational

• Negative
  – Ecosystem and habitat destruction for development
  – Waste (compared to non-tourists, and to tourists’ home lifestyles)
  – Macro-level costs (pollution, fuel, greenhouse gas emissions, etc.)

http://pcag.uwinnipeg.ca/Prairie-Perspectives/PP-Vol14/Tousignant-Eberts-Sanchez.pdf
Environmental Impacts

• Key challenges and criticisms:
  – What are the metrics to measure these?
  – In particular, how can environmental impacts be valued (good and bad) economically?
  – Whose values have priority?
Socio-Cultural

• Positive
  – Preserve traditions
  – Maintain cultural spaces / artifacts
    ... IF they are the tourist amenity

• Negative
  – Selective keeping and losing – ‘remembering and forgetting’
  – Community self-determination
  – Access by local community
  – Over-use, destruction of amenity value
Socio-Cultural

• Key challenges and criticisms:
  – Question of authenticity
  – Who decides what parts of culture have value, what parts are to be preserved?
  – Question of commodification (and again, determining value in terms of $)
  – Problem of ‘freezing’ culture in time
  – Is culture misrepresented?
Overview of Tourism Impacts

A key question for each: How can the impacts be measured?

An over-riding interest for us: How does tourism affect ‘Quality of Life’?

Can we consider all three categories at once? Do they complement or contradict each other?

  e.g. Environmental vs Economic
The New Cancun: Location and Context
CAMPO ACOSTA
Perceptions of the Impacts

• Method
  – Survey of residents of small towns in the region: Tomatlan, Campo Acosta, Morelos, Perula
  – Simple questions, short survey
1. Currently, the quality of life in [name of town] is:
   - Very poor
   - Poor
   - Good
   - Very good

2. When/if the “New Cancun” development project is completed, I think that life in [name of town] will be:
   - Much worse
   - Worse
   - No different
   - Better
   - Much better

3. List 3 benefits to [name of town] of the “New Cancun” development.
   1 ____________________________
   2 ____________________________
   3 ____________________________

4. List 3 negative effects to [name of town] of the “New Cancun” development.
   1 ____________________________
   2 ____________________________
   3 ____________________________

5. Do you expect to have a new job in the “New Cancun” development? YES/NO

6. Do you expect your children to work in the “New Cancun” development? YES/NO

7. In your opinion, what are the top 3 priorities/needs for the future of [name of town]?
   1 ____________________________
   2 ____________________________
   3 ____________________________
Thank you! Questions?